

Complaints Policy

Owner: Chief Executive Officer

Reviewed: 10 December 2025
Next Review: 10 December 2026

1. Introduction

At Providence Row, we are committed to providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all individuals who engage with our charity. We recognise that, despite our best efforts, there may be times when people feel unhappy with the services they receive or the way they are treated. This policy outlines how complaints can be made, how they will be handled, and how we use them to improve.

This policy is informed by our values and commitment to person-centred, trauma-informed practice, ensuring that everyone, particularly those who have experienced homelessness, trauma, or exclusion, are listened to and treated with dignity.

2. Who can make a complaint

Complaints can be made by:

- Anyone who uses or has used our services
 - Someone acting on a service user's behalf (with their consent)
 - Partner organisations, supporters or volunteers
 - Anyone who has donated through fundraising
 - Members of the public
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3. Why someone might make a complaint

We recognise that individuals may want to make a complaint for many different reasons including:

- Concerns about how services were delivered
- Disagreement with decisions made about support or access to services
- Feeling unsafe or witnessing inappropriate behaviour
- Experiencing discrimination
- Not being afforded privacy or confidentiality linked to the support being offered

We understand that for some individuals who have experienced homelessness, trauma, or exclusion, raising a concern may be difficult or triggering. That's why we commit to responding with care and with a non-judgmental attitude.

4. Our commitment

If you choose to make a complaint, we will:

- **Listen** without making judgment
- **Support** you to make a complaint
- **Investigate** to fully understand any impact
- **Take action** to address any complaints
- **Learn and adapt** regardless of the outcome

No one will be treated unfairly or lose access to services because they have complained.

5. How to make a complaint

We have a number of ways to make a complaint:

- **In person:** Talk to a member of staff or ask for a private conversation with a manager
- **In writing:** Fill in a complaint form available at The Dellow Centre reception desk or write your own letter. You can post it or hand it to a staff member
- **By email:** Send your complaint to info@providencerow.org.uk
- **With support:** Ask an advocate, support worker, or trusted person to help you or to make the complaint on your behalf

We will also accept anonymous complaints, although how we are able to investigate and then respond may be limited.

Our address is Providence Row, The Dellow Centre, 82 Wentworth Street, London E1 7SA.

6. Accessibility and support

We understand that not everyone finds it easy to express concerns or complete forms. We can:

- Offer help to complete the complaints process
- Provide information in accessible formats e.g., Easy Read, large print
- Ensure interpreters are available where possible
- Provide emotional support or access to an Advocate if the process is distressing

7. The complaints process

Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

Where possible, we encourage concerns to be raised informally with a staff member so that we can try to resolve them directly with you and quickly.

Stage 2 - Formal Complaint

If the issue cannot be resolved informally or is more serious:

- We will acknowledge your complaint within 3 working days
- A manager not involved in the incident will investigate the complaint – provided the complaint is made within 3 months of the incident
- We will provide a full response within 10 working days. If more time is needed, we will let you know and explain why

Linked to any fundraising complaint, we will uphold the Fundraising Regulator standards in dealing with complaints and file an annual return with the Fundraising Regulator about the number and nature of complaints received.

Stage 3 - Appeal

If you are unhappy with the written outcome, you can appeal in writing within 10 working days. A senior manager, Director or the CEO will review the case and provide a final response within a further 15 working days.

We understand that in some instances, our responses may need to be provided in person e.g. handing over a letter, for some of our service users who do not have a postal address and are continuing to access The Dellow Centre for support.

8. Complaints about serious misconduct or safeguarding

Complaints that involve potential abuse, safeguarding issues, or criminal behaviour will be dealt with under our Safeguarding or Whistleblowing policies.

We will involve external agencies such as the Police or Safeguarding Boards where appropriate.

9. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All complaints will be treated confidentially and in line with our Data Protection policy.

Information will only be shared with those who need it to investigate or respond to the complaint.

Records of complaints will be stored securely and kept for 6 years.

10. Learning from complaints

We use all complaints to shape any improvements needed. We will:

- Review complaints monthly at Leadership Team meetings to identify any trends
 - Use learning to improve staff training, policies and service delivery
 - Share anonymised summaries of complaints and outcomes with our Trustee Board and Commissioners where appropriate
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11. Escalating a complaint

If you are not satisfied with how Providence Row has managed your complaint, we will let you know on next steps which will include contacting one of the following organisations:

a. Housing Ombudsman Service

To access the independent complaints procedure linked to **service delivery**:

- Website: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk
- Phone: 0300 111 3000

b. Fundraising Regulator

To access the independent complaints procedure linked to **fundraising**:

- Website: www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk
 - Phone: 0300 999 3407
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c. The Charity Commission

To access the independent complaints procedure linked to our complaints process:

- Website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>
- Phone: 0300 066 9197

Or, if relevant, you can contact an Independent Advice Organisation who can help guide you on any next steps.

12. Contact us

If you would like more information or help to make a complaint, please contact us:

Providence Row

The Dellow Centre, 82 Wentworth Street, London E1 7SA

Phone: 020 7375 0020

Email: info@providencerow.org.uk

Website: www.providencerow.org.uk
