

WILTSHIRE CENTRE FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

Introduction

Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living (Wiltshire CIL) is committed to providing an excellent service working in an open and accountable way that builds trust and respect. We have developed a Complaints Policy and Procedure that explains our approach to receiving complaints.

Our Aim

Wiltshire CIL aims to resolve complaints quickly, fairly and effectively. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve the services that we provide is by responding positively to complaints, and by putting mistakes right.

Wiltshire CIL aim to ensure that:

- making a complaint is as easy as possible;
- a complaint is treated as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response;
- a complaint will be dealt with promptly, politely and when appropriate confidentially;
- we will respond in the correct way e.g. with an explanation, or an apology or information on any action taken;
- we will learn from complaints and use them to improve the services that we offer;
- we review annually our complaints policy and procedures.

Wiltshire CIL recognises that many concerns raised will be informal, and we aim to deal with these quickly. In the first instance we would expect any complaint to be raised directly with the member of staff concerned. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

Definition

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction with our services; whether justified or not; with Wiltshire CIL, with a member of staff/volunteer, or with a Wiltshire CIL Trustee, that relates to Wiltshire CIL and that requires a formal response.

Purpose

Wiltshire CIL's complaint procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

Wiltshire CIL's responsibility will be to:

- acknowledge the formal complaint in writing;
- respond within a stated period of time;
- deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint;
- take appropriate action if required;

The complainant's responsibility is to:

- raise their concerns promptly and directly with the person concerned and if their concerns cannot be resolved satisfactorily informally, then to follow the formal complaints procedure guidelines as detailed;
- explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date;

- allow Wiltshire CIL a reasonable amount of time to deal with the matter as detailed in the formal complaints procedure guidelines;
- recognise that some circumstances may be beyond Wiltshire CIL's control.

Monitoring and Reporting

The trustees of Wiltshire CIL will receive regularly anonymised reports of complaints made and their resolution.

Confidentiality

Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and Wiltshire CIL maintain confidentiality. However, circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality. Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

Principles of the Complaints Policy

- Wiltshire CIL's Complaints Policy is based on the principle of a four stage process as detailed in the Complaints Procedure Guidelines.
- The Complaints Policy will apply to all the services provided by Wiltshire CIL.
- If, at any time during the investigation of a complaint, matters arise that warrant investigation under disciplinary proceedings, or through a criminal investigation, the complaints procedure will be suspended until those investigations are concluded. Similarly, the complaints procedure should be suspended if a complainant is actively seeking legal redress.
- Where a complaint is against a member of staff they should be informed of the support services available to them.
- The Chief Executive Officer should be informed of the receipt of a formal complaint.
- A complete record of the entire process should be kept.
- Wiltshire CIL may, at any stage of the formal complaints procedure, review a complaint and give a decision, without a formal investigation, where a member of the Senior Management Team deem the complaint to be deliberately repetitive or vexatious. Examples of such complaints being: unsubstantiated or repetitive complaints against an individual or service, or where a complaint has previously been investigated and appropriate action taken.
- When appealing against a previous decision, the complainant will be asked to state why they are dissatisfied with how their complaint was handled.

This policy was passed on (date):	
Signed by two Trustees:	
Next review date:	

A guide to making a complaint about us or our services by using our formal Complaints Procedure

Introduction

Of course we hope you do not feel you need to complain about us, but we think it is important that if you do, you have the information you need to make it as easy as possible.

Who can complain?

Anyone who comes into contact with any part of the organisation and is dissatisfied with our services.

What can I complain about?

Any aspect of our work and how you have been treated.

This is how our Complaints Procedure Works:

You are welcome to raise your concerns first of all with any member of staff or Management Committee member. The person you raise your complaint with will:

- Clarify the issues with you
- See if it is possible to resolve your concerns informally

If this is not possible, ensure you know how to use our formal complaints procedure which has **four stages**.

Stage 1

You should contact the Wiltshire CIL Chief Executive Officer to make your complaint. In response, Wiltshire CIL will:

- Ask to arrange a meeting between you and the member involved in the complaint.
- Advise you about being entitled to advocacy support or any other personal assistance, e.g. interpreters at Wiltshire CIL's expense.
- Have a meeting to record the nature of your complaint in a way you agree to.

Stage 2

Within 10 days of meeting you, Wiltshire CIL's Chair and Director will meet to clarify the action necessary to investigate your complaint. After carrying out their investigations, they will decide what action (if necessary) Wiltshire CIL should take in response to your complaint. This could be, for example, an apology or a change in our practice.

We will report back to you within 7 working days of our meeting. If you are not happy with our decision, you have a right to go on to Stage 3.

Stage 3

Your complaint will be considered at the next meeting of the Management Committee or a sub-group they appoint. You can choose to submit your complaint either in writing, or in person (with any support you need).

The decisions of that meeting will be made known to you within 7 working days.

Stage 4

If you are not satisfied, you can refer the matter to mutually agreed independent arbitration and both sides will agree in advance that the finding will be binding.

A list of staff and Management Committee members is available from our office.
We welcome feedback on our services—positive as well as negative—at any time.
Please contact the Chair or the Chief Executive Officer.

Contact us:

Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living

11 Couch Lane Devizes Wiltshire SN10 1EB

Tel: 0300 1233 442 Email: info@wiltshirecil.org.uk