

Complaints Policy



Foothold Cymru is committed to providing high-quality service to all stakeholders, including beneficiaries, donors, volunteers, partners, and the wider community. Feedback and complaints are valued opportunities for learning and continuous improvement. This policy outlines how we handle complaints in a fair, accessible, and effective manner, and reflects good governance as well as legal obligations as of 2025.

What is a Complaint?

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether oral or written, about any aspect of Foothold Cymru's work or conduct. This includes:

- **Service delivery:** Delays, missed appointments, project issues.
- **Fundraising:** Concerns regarding methods, communications, or ethics.
- **Governance:** Issues with policy application or decision-making.
- **Staff or volunteer behaviour:** Incidents of rudeness, discrimination, or unprofessional conduct.

How to make a Complaint?

Early Resolution: We encourage raising concerns as early and as informally as possible.

Contact Methods:

- Email: [janice@footholdcymru.org.uk]
- Phone: [01554 779910]
- Post: [The Lord Arthur Rank Centre, Trostre Road, Llanelli, SA14 9RA]
- In person: Speak to a staff member or volunteer.

Details to Include:

- Name and contact information (if willing to provide)
- Description of the issue
- Relevant dates, times, and location
- Impact of the issue
- Desired resolution or outcome

Anonymous Complaints:

Anonymous complaints will be considered and investigated where possible, but limited contact details may reduce feedback and resolution options.

Complaints Procedure

Acknowledge:

- Complaints will be acknowledged within 3 working days.
- Acknowledgement will set out next steps and expected timelines.

Investigate:

- All complaints will be investigated thoroughly, impartially, and confidentially.
- The process may involve speaking with complainants, interviewing those involved, and reviewing documentation.
- Investigators will receive relevant complaints-handling training.

Respond:

- We will provide a written response within 15 working days of receipt wherever possible.
- The response will explain findings, any corrective action, and steps to avoid recurrence if applicable.

Appeal:

- If unsatisfied, stakeholders may appeal within 10 working days.
- Appeals are reviewed by the designated Appeals Committee, independent from the original investigation.
- A final written outcome will be communicated within 10 working days of the appeal submission.

Equality, Access and Support

- We are committed to treating all complaints equitably and with respect.
- Support is available for those needing assistance to access or understand the policy or to lodge a complaint (including alternative formats and advocacy support).
- The policy is available in alternative formats upon request.

Confidentiality & Data Protection

- All complaint information is handled sensitively, in line with UK GDPR, and access is restricted to those involved in resolution or legal compliance.
- Complaints data is retained only as long as necessary and reviewed for broader service improvement.

External Escalation

- If dissatisfied after the appeals process, complainants may refer unresolved concerns to the Charity Commission or a relevant regulator.
- Details for escalation will be included in all final responses.

Learning and Continuous Improvement

- Complaints, trends, and outcomes will be reviewed quarterly by senior management to improve practices and prevent recurrence.
- Policy effectiveness will be reviewed annually, taking into account stakeholder feedback, legal changes, and sector developments.

Documentation

- All complaints and their outcomes are recorded securely.
- A summary of complaints (anonymized) will be reported annually to the Board for oversight.

For any queries or requests about this policy, please contact janice@footholdcymru.org.uk