

GROUNDWORK GREATER MANCHESTER



Complaints Policy



Groundwork GM strives to work to the highest standards of quality and service for all beneficiaries, clients, customers, learners and partners. When we do not achieve this standard we hope that those affected will let us know by means of a complaint and will support us in our attempts to improve our services.

A complaint is defined as a formal representation by: a beneficiary, client, funder, learner, member of the public, a partner or other organisation regarding dissatisfaction with the standard or quality of:

- Our physical work, such as installation of Nature-Based Solutions, grounds maintenance or hard or soft landscaping
- The provision of a professional service, such as community engagement, , energy advice or landscape design
- Our teaching and learning or Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services
- Consultation or public survey services
- The management of a grants programme
- General customer service, conduct and professional behaviour

All of our staff are made aware that they must follow this policy in the event of a potential complaint being made and that they must inform all beneficiaries, customers and stakeholders of the complaints procedure when appropriate.

Opportunity for Informal Resolution

Should any staff member become aware that a person or organisation is dissatisfied with any aspect of our service, they should listen to that person / organisation and try to resolve the matter promptly where possible. If the dissatisfaction persists, they should inform the person

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/ organisation of their right to use our complaints procedure, provide them with a copy of it (Appendix 1) and alert the Strategic Lead for Quality and Environment to the issue. In some instances the Formal Complaints Procedure will be needed to reach a resolution.

Formal Resolution

Anyone wishing to make a complaint should be encouraged to do so by phone or in writing to the Strategic Lead for Quality and Environment. If they consent to sharing their name and contact details, a staff member will pass these to the Strategic Lead for Quality and Environment who will make contact to start the formal process. People will be invited to complete a complaints form (Appendix 2) but complaints may also be made verbally. Verbal complaints will be recorded on the complainant's behalf on the complaints form and an investigation will not usually proceed until the complainant has approved the contents of the form.

All complaints, however made, will be acknowledged within 5 working days and will be dealt with according to this policy.

The Director of Finance and Resources will be notified of every complaint made and will assign a Trust manager to carry out an investigation. The only exception is where the complaint is about the Director of Finance & Resources in which case this role will pass to another Director. Investigations may involve phone / video calls / meetings with the complainant and with the staff members involved in providing the service to them.

Following the investigation a response will be agreed to be provided to the complainant. This response may be made by telephone but always followed up in writing within 10 working days of acknowledging the complaint. Actions will be agreed internally to improve our service and to prevent a repeat of such a complaint. It will not always be appropriate to inform the complainant of the details of these actions. They will be recorded on the MY Compliance system and monitored by the Strategic Lead for Quality and Environment, with status updates regularly reported to the Board of Trustees.

Unless the complainant indicates that they wish to pursue the matter further the complaint will be considered to be resolved. The central record will be updated to reflect this and the associated documentation will be held securely.

Final stage

If the complainant is still dissatisfied they may proceed to the final stage of the procedure which is to write to the Executive Director at the following address, in an envelope marked “confidential – COMPLAINT APPEAL”: c/o Trafford Ecology Park, Lake Road, Manchester M17 1TU or by email to GreaterManchester@groundwork.org.uk. If using email the header should include the words: CONFIDENTIAL – FINAL STAGE COMPLAINT FAO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GROUNDWORK GREATER MANCHESTER

The Executive Director will consider the complaint and will decide whether to deal with it direct or delegate to a nominated deputy.

The Executive Director or their nominated deputy will acknowledge the appeal within 5 working days and outline the review process. A final written response will be provided within 28 days. Where this is not possible, an explanation will be provided to the complainant and they will be provided with a new expected date for receipt of the final written response. The final response will explain the appeal outcome, the reasons for that decision, and agreed actions relating to the complaint.

Data Protection

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Trust’s Data Retention Policy a written record of complaints received will be retained for a maximum of three years outlining the nature of the complaint and how the matter was resolved. An anonymised log of complaints is maintained, summarising the nature and timeframe of historic complaints. This allows trend analysis, which is reported to the Board of Trustees.

Complaints about the Executive Director

Complaints relating to the Executive Director should be directed to the Chair of Trustees in the first instance, by writing to the Chair of Groundwork Greater Manchester at the following address, in an envelope marked “confidential - COMPLAINT”: c/o Trafford Ecology Park, Lake Road, Manchester M17 1TU or by email to GreaterManchester@groundwork.org.uk. If using email the email the header should state: CONFIDENTIAL – COMPLAINT FAO CHAIR OF GROUNDWORK GREATER MANCHESTER. Such complaints will be overseen by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board and the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee.

Complaints about Trustees

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Groundwork Greater Manchester is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity, the work of which is governed by a Board of Trustees, none of whom are paid employees of the Trust. Details of Board members can be found on the Trust's website:

<https://www.groundwork.org.uk/hubs/greatermanchester/>.

The behavioural and ethical standards for Charity Trustees and Company Directors are established and overseen by the Charity Commission and Companies House respectively. The Trust's internal governance processes, including the Articles of Association also set out expected standards of conduct for Trustees.

Any complaints regarding a Trustee should be addressed to the Chair of the Board of Trustees in the first instance, by writing to the Chair of Groundwork Greater Manchester at the following address, in an envelope marked "confidential – COMPLAINT": c/o Trafford Ecology Park, Lake Road, Manchester M17 1TU or by email to

GreaterManchester@groundwork.org.uk. If the complaint relates to the Chair of the Board of Trustees then the complaint should be addressed to the Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees, using the same details. If using email the email the header should state: CONFIDENTIAL – COMPLAINT FAO CHAIR / VICE-CHAIR GROUNDWORK GREATER MANCHESTER

Reporting to Board of Trustees

A written summary of all complaints received, including details of the number, nature and status of complaints received and status of agreed actions is reported to the Board of Trustees via the Audit and Risk Committee. Anonymised details of significant complaints may be shared with Audit and Risk Committee or the full board where this is necessary for learning and continual improvement.

APPENDIX 1 – Complaints Procedure

GROUNDWORK | GREATER MANCHESTER

Our commitment to customers: We aim to ensure that:

- Making a complaint is as easy as possible
- We treat your complaint seriously
- We deal with your complaint promptly and in confidence
- We learn from complaints and use them to review and improve our service

What is a complaint? A complaint is when you tell us you are not happy about the service we provide. It can be about anything and could include:

- When we do not deliver a service on time
- When we give you the wrong information
- When you receive a poor quality service
- When you have a negative experience with a member of staff

How to make a complaint: If you wish to make a complaint you can contact our Strategic Lead for Quality & Environment and ask for a complaint form in any of the ways listed below:

- By email to evelyn.brookfield@groundwork.org.uk
- In writing to Strategic Lead for Quality & Environment, The Ecology Park, Lake Road, Manchester M17 1TU
- By phone to our Strategic Lead for Quality & Environment on 0161 220 1000

Response times: When you have returned your completed complaint form we will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 5 working days. Your complaint will be fully investigated and a response issued within 10 working days. If there is a delay in responding we will keep you informed of our progress.

Appeals: If you are unhappy with the response you can write to the Executive Director in an envelope marked "confidential", at the following address: c/o Trafford Ecology Park, Lake Road, Manchester M17 1TU or by email to GreaterManchester@groundwork.org.uk. If using email the header should include the words: CONFIDENTIAL – FINAL STAGE COMPLAINT FAO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GROUNDWORK GREATER MANCHESTER

If you feel that there is a serious risk of significant harm to or abuse of the charity, its assets, beneficiaries or reputation, you can contact The Charity Commission at: Charity Commission Direct PO Box 1227 Liverpool L69 3UG Tel: 0845 300 0219 or email via www.charitycomission.gov.uk.

The Charity Commission will not normally investigate a complaint unless an internal complaints procedure has been exhausted.

A full copy of our Complaints Policy is available on request.

APPENDIX 2 – Complaints Form

GROUNDWORK | GREATER MANCHESTER

Your name	
Your email address	
Telephone number	
Your address	

Please detail the nature of your complaint. Please include any dates or locations where any incidents took place, if relevant to your complaint. Please use the table on the back of this form if you need more space to write about your complaint.

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What would you like to see done about this complaint?

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Please name all the people who were there when this happened (if relevant)

Signature	
Date	

Please send your completed form to: Strategic Lead for Quality & Environment, The Ecology Park, Lake Road, Manchester M17 1TU / evelyn.brookfield@groundwork.org.uk / Call 0161 220 1000

APPENDIX 2 – Complaints Form

Complaint continuation sheet