



Herts Disability Sports Foundation

Registered Charity No. 1156034

Complaints Policy

Version control : 1.1

Date of Policy – March 2026

Last Review – May 2021

Date for Review – March 2029

Approved

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K. King', written over a faint circular stamp or watermark.

(Signature of Chair)

Date 18th March 2026

Herts Disability Sports Foundation - Complaints Policy

Contents	2
Policy	3
Confidentiality	3
Responsibility	4
Contact details for complaints	4
Procedure	
Stage One - Complaints received on site	5
Stage One – Complaints received by the Chief Operating Officer	6
Stage Two - Resolving Complaints	7
Complaints from employees of HDSF	8
Variation of Complaints procedure	8
Monitoring and Learning from Complaints	8

Policy

1. Herts Disability Sports Foundation (HDSF) views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person (or organisation) that has made the complaint.
2. Our policy is:
 - To provide a fair complaints procedure that is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint.
 - To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint.
 - To make sure everyone at HDSF knows what to do if a complaint is received.
 - To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.
 - To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired.
 - To gather information that helps us improve what we do.
3. We genuinely welcome feedback (both positive and negative) from any individual, volunteer or organisation who has a legitimate interest in HDSF, including the general public. A complaint can be made in person, by phone, by email or in writing.
4. A complaint is when an individual or our group is unhappy about the service provided by HDSF, where this affects them directly. If we cannot resolve the issue immediately, you are welcome to contact HDSF and we will deal with the complaint as quickly as we can. We will use every complaint as an opportunity to learn more about our community and how we can provide the best service possible.
5. If your complaint is about a more strategic matter, such as where a charity's independence is seriously called into question or it is suggested that the charity is being run for significant personal advantage, this may be a matter for the Charity Commission. Details on what the Charity Commission will and will not investigate can be found [here](#). However, the Charity Commission advises that complaints should initially be directed to the charity to allow them to review the situation.

Confidentiality

6. All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

Responsibility

7. Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Board of Trustees of HDSF.

Receiving Complaints from members of the public

8. If complaints are received in person, or over the phone, HDSF staff will make a written record of;
 - the facts of the complaint,
 - the complainant's name, address and telephone number,
 - the relationship of the complainant to HDSF, e.g. donor, volunteer, sponsor or service user.The member of staff will advise that a copy of our Complaints Policy is available on our website and the complainant will be offered the opportunity to submit their complaint in writing.

Contact details for complaints

9. If you wish to make a complaint, please speak to the lead member of staff at the activity or event who will do their best to solve the issue. If you are not satisfied, please contact the Chief Operating Officer (COO) with your complaint;
 - in writing to Herts Disability Sports Foundation, Knights Templar School, Park Street, Baldock, Herts SG7 6DZ, or
 - by email to Sine@hdsf.co.uk
 - by phone on 01462 542498.
10. If you believe that your complaint should not be reviewed by HDSF staff as it is sufficiently serious to need the direct and immediate attention of the Board of Trustees you should;
 - contact the Chief Operating Officer as above with a direct request that your complaint be immediately shared with the Board of Trustees, or
 - contact the Board of Trustees directly by email; HDSFTrusteeBoard@hdsf.co.uk

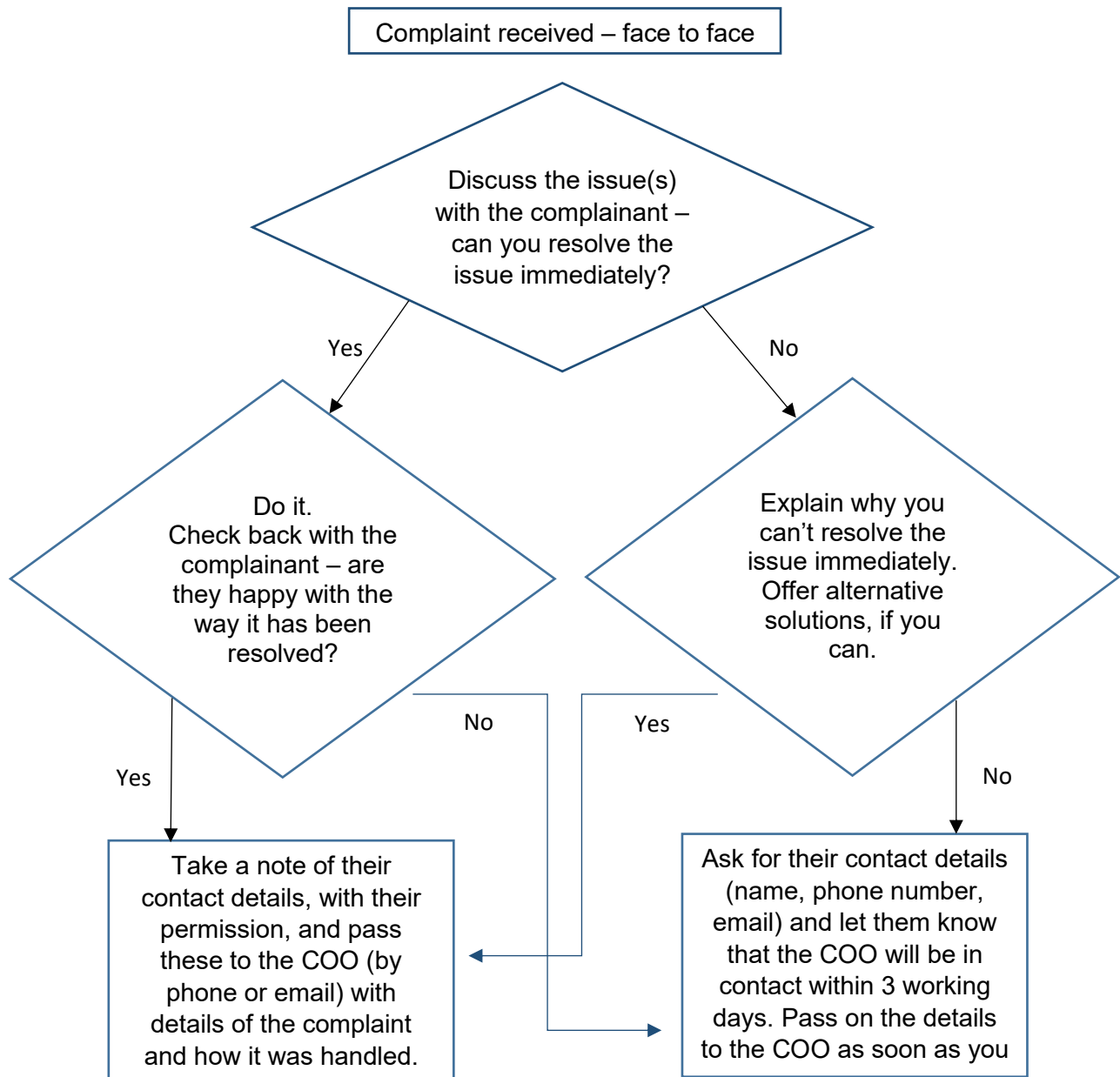
Your complaint will be acknowledged within 3 working days.

HDSF Complaints Procedure

Resolving Complaints

Stage One – complaints received on site

11. Complaints received on site/at an activity

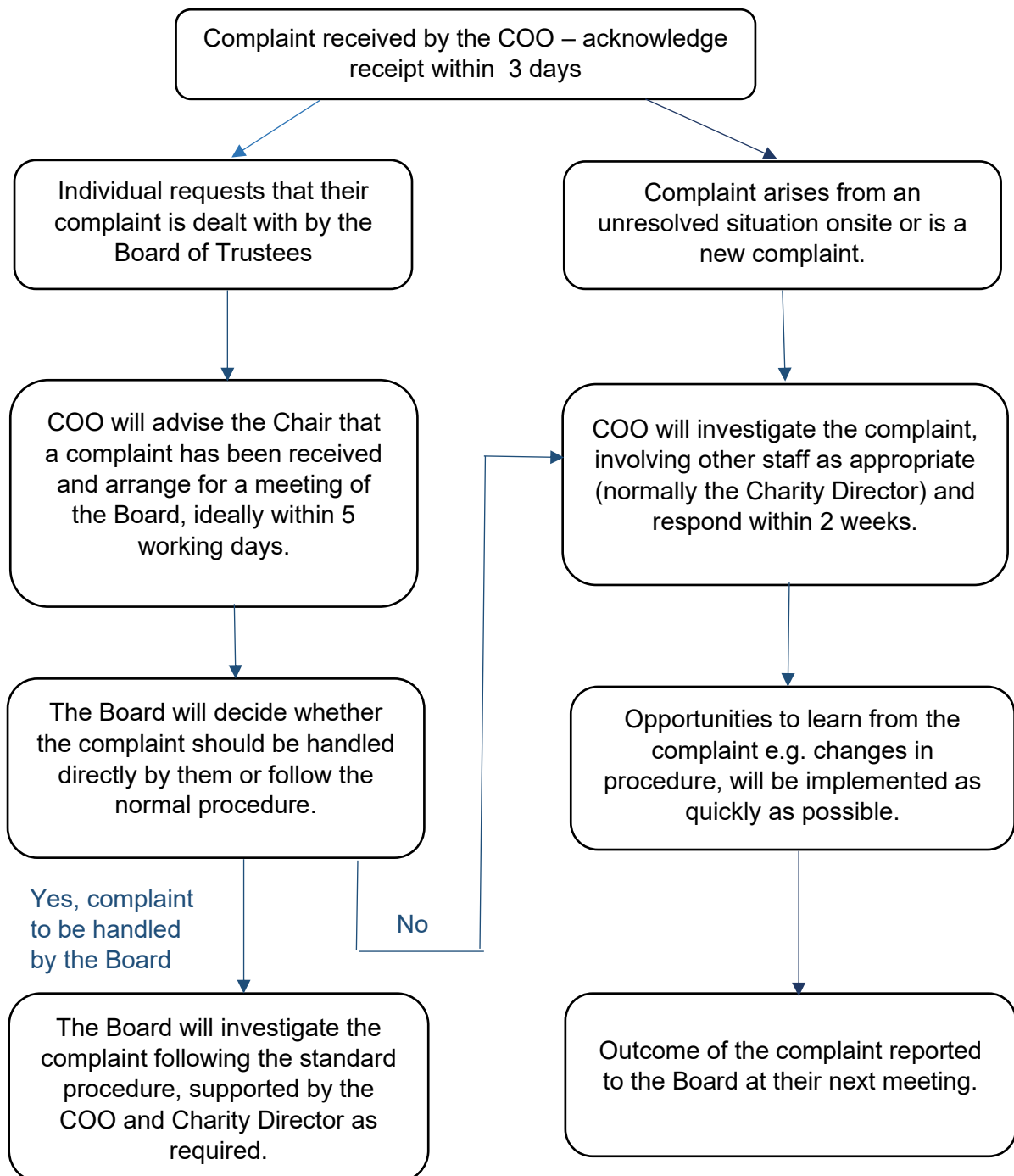


A complaint will always be referred to the most senior member of delivery staff available for a response, before being referred to the COO.

Stage One – complaints received by the Chief Operating Officer (COO)

12. Where details of a complaint that has been resolved on site are received by the COO, the details will be logged by the COO and reported to the Board of Trustees at their next meeting.

13. Active complaints received by the COO will be handled as a Stage One complaint.



14. If it is not possible to respond to the complaint within 2 weeks, the complainant will be provided with an update and a revised timescale for response.
15. If the complaint is about the COO, their role in the complaints procedure will be assumed by the Charity Director.
16. If the complaint is about the Charity Director, the complaint will be handled by the Board with administrative support from the COO.
17. The Chair of the Board of Trustees will not be involved in Stage One review of complaints except where it relates to a serious incident which must be reported to the Charity Commission. If the Board of Trustees has reviewed the complaint as a Stage One referral, the Chair of Trustees will carry out the Stage Two Review.
18. Where the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond to the complaint as part of the investigation.
19. Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint. The reply will also advise the complainant that they may request that their complaint, if appropriate, may be reviewed by the Board (Stage two).

Stage Two – Resolving Complaints

20. If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can request that the complaint is reviewed at Board level.
21. At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the Board of Trustees. The request for Board level review should be acknowledged within five working days of receiving it. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply.
22. The Board of Trustees may investigate the facts of the case themselves or delegate a suitably senior person to do so. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage One. The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage One should be kept informed of what is happening.
23. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond. Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within a month of the original complaint. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given. Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint. The decision taken at this stage

is final, unless the Board decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

24. Where the Board have reviewed the complaint as a Stage One referral, the Chair of Trustees will carry out the Stage 2 Review (following the process detailed above), seeking advice as appropriate.

Complaints from employees of HDSF

25. Complaints from employees of HDSF will be dealt with under the Grievance or Whistleblowing Policy, as appropriate.

Variation of the Complaints Procedure

26. The Board may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about the Chair or a Trustee should not also have the Chair and/or trustee involved as a person leading a Stage Two review.

Monitoring and Learning from Complaints

27. Complaints are reviewed annually to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.