

Making a complaint

We welcome compliments and comments as it helps us to develop as a charity, giving us the chance to monitor and improve our services. We set ourselves a high standard of care for our animals and the people who come into contact with our charity. If this is not met we want to hear about it.

We are sorry if you feel that you need to make a complaint but the following information will help you understand our complaints procedure.

What is the complaints procedure for and what does it cover?

The procedure is for complaints from members of the public, supporters, staff and volunteers about any aspect of our organisation. This also includes any fundraising activities held.

Comments and questions about general matters can be sent to us at: Eden Animal Rescue, Moorlands Head Farm, Newbiggin, Temple Sowerby, Cumbria, CA11 1TH

How do I make a complaint?

Complaints can be made in the following ways:

In person:

If your complaint is about our rescue centre then you can talk with the centre manager. Our Centre Manager will do all they can to discuss your concerns and resolve the matter. If this is not possible, they may ask you to write to us so that your complaint can be investigated fully under the [complaints procedure](#). If the complaint is about our Charity shop then you can talk to the Shop Manager. Again if this is not possible then you may write to us.

In writing:

You can send a letter to: ***The Chairperson, Eden Animal Rescue, Moorlands Head Farm, Newbiggin, Temple Sowerby, Cumbria, CA10 1TH***

By telephone:

Please note that we prefer all complaints to be made in writing or in person. However if you prefer to contact the centre by telephone on 01931 716114 please leave your name and contact details clearly and an appropriate member of the organisation will call you back as soon as possible. If you have difficulty writing to us you may want to ask for assistance from friends, family, care workers, etc. or an organisation such as Citizens Advice. If you are unable to use any of these options we will offer assistance where we can.

What information do I need to provide?

To ensure that your complaint can be dealt with quickly and efficiently you should provide the following Information:

- Full name
- Postal address
- Email address
- Telephone number
- Any contact details that are different from the above
- Full details of the complaint including relevant dates
- Whether you have a relationship with us, e.g. as a volunteer, supporter, former member of staff
- If you have any evidence available to support your complaint, e.g. photos, letters, emails, the names of witnesses, vet's bill, or other paperwork.

How long do I have to make a complaint?

Complaints will only be considered if they are received within three months of the time when you were first aware of the situation. We do not handle complaints that date back further than this.

If you remain dissatisfied following a reply to your complaint and you wish to escalate your complaint to the next level, this should be done within 15 working days of the date of our reply. We will not consider complaints outside this timescale.

How long will it take to reply to my complaint?

Complaints will be acknowledged within five working days and then replied to in full within a further 15 working days. Although we reply to the majority of complaints within 15 working days, if the matter is complex and requires greater investigation it may take longer. If this is the case, we will contact you again to let you know and advise how much longer it will take and why.

What happens to complaints about financial irregularities?

Complaints about financial irregularities will be dealt with under the [Complaints Procedure](#). If you have any concerns or complaints about any of our fundraising activities then please also put these in writing.

Please also refer to the Code of Fundraising Practice for more detailed information.

If you remain unhappy, you may wish to contact the Charity Commission, the regulator and registrar for charities in England and Wales. Its website page www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity explains how to complain about a specific charity.

What happens to a complaint about our staff or volunteers?

We expect our staff and volunteers to be professional and courteous at all times so we take complaints about poor conduct very seriously. Any complaints or concerns regarding a member of staff or volunteer are passed on to their managers for investigation.

Please be aware that if the matter falls under our employee/employer confidentiality agreement or our volunteer policy, we may not be able to inform you of the outcome but will still send you a reply when the investigation has been completed.

How do I know my complaint will be treated fairly?

We appreciate honest feedback as it helps us to learn and develop as a charity. So we investigate all complaints thoroughly to see what we can learn from them and where we can improve our relationship with the public. Our investigation and response to complaints will be fair and without bias. A full explanation and an apology (when appropriate) will be included in our reply.

Will you give my details to other people?

In order for a complaint to be investigated fully, we will need to share your details and the complaint itself with the individuals concerned. If it is essential that we do not share it with someone please tell us this in your complaint.

We have comprehensive data protection policies. Any personal information you provide when complaining to us will not be given to any other organisation. We will take all reasonable steps to ensure your data is kept secure and that we comply with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulations.

Are there some complaints you don't respond to?

The charity will not engage with a complaint which is unreasonable, in that it is abusive, frivolous, vexatious or malicious in the reasonable opinion of the Director or Chair of Trustees, as appropriate. The Charity will not engage in repetitive discussions about a closed complaint. If the complaint is made in writing by letter, email or via our website and uses abusive language or threats, we will not respond.

We expect our staff to handle complaints politely at all times. If the person making the complaint uses abusive language or an aggressive tone, we will not engage with this. So if the complaint is made in person, the member of staff may walk away or seek assistance from another staff member. In these circumstances it is unlikely that your complaint will be taken seriously.

We may terminate correspondence about a specific complaint if it is clear that despite our best efforts we are unlikely to satisfy you. If you write to us again about a different issue, it will be treated as a new complaint and replied to.

The decision to terminate correspondence will only be made by the Trustees after making sure that the matter has been investigated thoroughly and in line with our procedures. We will always tell you when we are terminating a complaint and the reason we are doing this.

Complaints will also only be considered if they are received within three months of the time when you were first aware of the situation. We do not handle complaints that date back further than this.

Compiled by S. Taylor
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