

REFUGEES WELCOME

Westminster Road, Macclesfield SK10 1BX (Reg Charity no:1169909)

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE **Beneficiaries of any Refugees Welcome** **Service**

STATEMENT

REFUGEES WELCOME aims to ensure that the service it provides is professional, friendly, effective and participative.

We welcome feedback on the service we provide and suggestions and comments for improvement as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the individual/s who have made the complaint.

Refugees Welcome hopes that where concerns are raised, every effort should be made to resolve these informally, directly with the relevant individual, or with their Team Leader.

Where this is not possible or the complaint is of a serious nature, we want the Beneficiaries to know that they have the right to make a complaint using the following complaints procedure.

Where complaints come from

Complaints may come from any refugee group with whom we work. A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing.

This policy is strictly for complaints from members of a resettled family and does not cover complaints from Trustees, Advisors, Contractors or Volunteers providing resettlement care.

Confidentiality

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

Responsibility

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Refugees Welcome Trustee Board

Review

This procedure will be reviewed annually for currency and accuracy by the Chair of Trustees or individuals delegated by him/her. This does not prevent any changes taking place to this policy at any other time due to changes in practice or legislation.

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Policy date: 28.5 19
By: Anne Towers Trustee
Status: policy v2

Adopted on: 7.6.19

Reviewed: Sept 24
Key jobs contacts updated.

SIGNED BY: N. A Campbell
[Trustee/Chair of Trustees]

DATE: 19.9.24

POSITION in REFUGEES WELCOME: Chair of Trustees

Date for review: Sept 2025

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Complaint by Beneficiaries of the Service

Refugees Welcome understands that it may be very difficult for Beneficiaries of the service to make a complaint should they feel that to be necessary.

Refugees Welcome complaints policy aims to:

- Make sure beneficiaries are aware of the existence of our Complaint's Procedure by interpreted discussion, so that resettled families know how to make a complaint even if they are not literate in their own language.
- This should include a mechanism for obtaining translation when the beneficiaries have little knowledge of English.
- Make sure the complaints procedure is fair, clear and easy to use for resettled families under any scheme wishing to make a complaint.
- Make sure everyone providing resettlement support knows what to do if a complaint is received.
- Make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.
- Make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired.
- Make sure we gather information which helps us to improve on the services provided as part of the sponsorship agreement

Complaints procedure Beneficiaries

Definition of a complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of care provided as part of the sponsorship agreement. A list of the kinds of issues that may cause complaint is given below. These are called 'Grounds for Complaint'

Grounds of Complaint

- Where Refugees Welcome fails to deliver good practice in its work with individuals or families
- Where there is poor or ineffective communication by Refugees Welcome to individuals or family groups it is working with.
- Where Refugees Welcome fails to maintain good practice by not following our Policies and Procedures.
- Where a breach of confidentiality by Refugees Welcome causes the leakage of material which might prejudice or injure the interest of the resettled families we work with.
- Where the quality of support received does not meet the reasonable needs and expectations of the individual or family.
- Where the relationship with a volunteer working with the family has broken down to an extent that the individual or family do not feel comfortable to work with that person.

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- Or any other issue where the individual or family feel they have not been treated fairly or respectfully.

Contact Details for Complaints

A complaint can be made verbally to any volunteer in the first instance.

Individuals or families who feel that they have a complaint should be able to approach any of the volunteers working with them for help with the process. They can also approach the Project Manager or Supervising Trustee for their project. Volunteers can consult the Volunteer Supervisor for advice.

If an individual or family wish to make a formal written complaint this may be sent to Refugees Welcome Complaints Trustee at the Westminster Road address, or emailed to refugeescheshireeast@gmail.com

Verbal complaints should be recorded as follows:

- Write down the name, address and telephone number of the complainant.
- Remind the complainant that there is a complaints procedure available to them.
- Where appropriate and feasible, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email to the complaint Trustee, Project Manager or Supervising Trustee for their project.

Resolving Complaints

Every effort should be made to resolve the issue through dialogue facilitated by the Volunteer Supervisor, Project Manager or Supervising Trustee with unaligned interpretation facilities where necessary.

If the complaint cannot be resolved amicably and effectively by informal means then a formal complaint should be made as above and the individual or family given any help needed to use the process, including the use of interpreters or translators to enable a complaint to be made and to receive feedback on the outcome of the complaint.

All complaints of which we are notified, whether formal or informal and whether resolved or unresolved, should be reported to the appropriate Complaints Trustee and recorded on the complaints log for quarterly scrutiny by the Trustee Board.

If RW is made aware of a formal complaint about a volunteer, the volunteer should not contact the individual or family for any reason until such time as the complaint is resolved. Depending on the outcome it could mean that the volunteer may no longer be able to work with them in the future as trust may be damaged. If gross misconduct or illegal activity is alleged volunteers can be suspended from all work with individuals and families until the outcome of the investigation is known and the police may have to be informed.

If an individual or family has a complaint about a service being provided by someone other than Refugees Welcome e.g. accommodation (after phase 1 in sponsor provided accommodation), medical, interpreters, English Tuition Providers or other statutory services, volunteers can help the family to use the complaints process of that service. Interpreters or

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translation services may be needed to enable the individual or family to make a complaint using the complaints procedure of the service that is the subject of the complaint.

All complaints will be reviewed by the Trustee board on a quarterly basis to ensure that any lessons can be learned and any changes to Refugees Welcome policies, procedures and ways of working can be taken forward.

Key to job roles and contacts referred to in this policy & procedures as at Sept 2024:

RW Volunteer Supervisor (CVSCE) All RW Projects: Estelle Worthington 01270 763100
estelle.worthington@cvsce.org.uk Work mobile 07565 338 486 during normal work hours/days (9 - 4.30pm Wed - Thur, and 9 - 12.30pm on Fri)

Complaints Trustee Syrian families & Ukraine Evacuees (Macclesfield): Anne Towers

Complaints Trustee CSS, Nantwich & Alsager/ Crewe Afghan & Ukraine Evacuees:
Dr. Gill Appleton

RW Volunteer Project Lead Nantwich : Alan Brown

RW Trustee/Volunteer Project Lead Alsager: Tony

RW Supervising Trustee Crewe Afghan: Gill Appleton

RW Supervising Trustee Macclesfield Afghan : Nicky Campbell

RW Supervising Trustee Alsager Afghan, Ukraine (Congleton) : Judith Mayer:

RW Trustee /Volunteer Project Lead Ukraine (Bollington): David Raines

RW Trustee/Volunteer Project Lead CAUSN: Paul Nixon

RW Designated Person – Chair Trustees refugeescheshireeast@gmail.com

To contact any Trustee please email:
refugeescheshireeast@gmail.com

and put FAO: (the name) in the subject bar.

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Appendix 1.

Stage 1 – Making a formal complaint

If the individual or family need to make a complaint about the kinds of issues listed above they should:

- Speak to any volunteer working with the Beneficiary or speak directly or by phone to Project Manager or supervising Trustee as appropriate or other person from Refugees Welcome with whom they feel comfortable.
- **The person who receives a phone or in person complaint should:**
 - Write down the facts of the complaint for the individual or family on the complaints form.
 - Make sure they have up to date contact details for the person making the complaint.
 - Remind the individual or family that we have a complaints procedure and provide a copy they can read or that can be explained to them.
 - Tell the individual or family what will happen next and how long it will take
 - Where appropriate and feasible, ask the person to send a written account by email to the Complaints Trustee at refugeescheshireeast@gmail.com so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words. This can be facilitated by volunteers, interpreters or translators.

In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate.

Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to the appropriate RW Complaints Trustee **within 2 working days and recorded in the complaints log.**

Complaints in writing should be sent to the Complaints Trustee at Refugees Welcome either using the Complaint Form or in other written form as desired by the individual or family. (See list of Project Managers and Supervising Trustees).

All complaints in whatever form will be recorded on the complaints form and passed to the RW Complaints Trustee as appropriate to be recorded in the complaints log.

Stage 2 – Investigation of the Complaint

- If the complaint has not been resolved by the person responsible for the issue complained about or who first received it, the complaint should be fully investigated by the Project Manager or other person designated by the Complaints Trustee.
- The person investigating the complaint will contact the individual or family making the complaint to let them know that the complaints process has been started and who will be looking into it, **within 3 working days of receipt of the complaint.**

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- If the complaint is about Refugees Welcome policies or procedures and found to be valid, the policy or procedure will be reviewed and a plan of action will be made to correct this.
- If the complaint is about an individual i.e. Trustee, Manager, worker or volunteer and is deemed a valid complaint they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.
- Once the investigating person has interviewed the people concerned The Manager or Trustee will report back to the Trustees Board on the outcome of the interview/s and how the complaint will be answered.
- Following the investigation, the Manager or Trustee will contact the individual or family to let them know the conclusion, any action/s required and who will take action. **This should take no longer than 14 days.**
- If it is not possible to resolve the complaint in 14 days, the person who is investigating the complaint should let the individual or family know what progress has been made and when a final outcome should be known.

Stage 3 – Opportunity to Appeal

- If the individual or family is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, or the action taken by the Project Manager or Complaints Trustee the complaint will be referred to the Chair of Trustees. The Chair of Trustees will contact the individual or family **within 7 working days** to arrange a meeting with the individual or family to agree a mutual way forward.
- The Chair of Trustees (or a suitable senior person) will review the original complaint, any conclusions and actions required with the original investigator and respond to the individual or family **within 1 month**. If the process is longer than this, the complainant should be informed of progress and the likely conclusion date. The final reply, whether the complaint was upheld or not, should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, conclusions and any action taken because of the complaint
- Any individual who is the subject of the complaint should have the opportunity to respond further as part of the review of the facts and decisions taken.
- All individuals dealing with the complaint should be kept informed of the process.
- In cases where the complaint cannot be fully resolved by Refugees Welcome involvement of an independent arbitrator (e.g. Community and Voluntary Services Cheshire East) could be considered.
- The whole matter will be put before the arbitrator and the arbitrator's findings will be final and must be accepted by both Refugees Welcome and the individual or family making the complaint.

Variation of the Complaints Procedure may be undertaken if for good reason by the Complaints Trustee

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2. ACTION TAKEN BY REFUGEES WELCOME

Outcome of investigation

Restorative actions/policy or procedure changes undertaken by Refugees Welcome

3. CLOSING OF COMPLAINT

Has complaint been satisfactorily resolved? Complaints Trustee YES /NO

Signed _____ Date _____

If No what further Action is required?

Name (Manager or Trustee).....Date.....