

Complaints Procedure & Policy

Our aim:

The Learning through Landscapes Trust is committed to providing a quality service for its members and working in an open and accountable way that builds the trust and respect of all our stakeholders. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our members, customers and stakeholders, and in particular by responding positively to complaints, and by putting mistakes right.

Therefore we aim to ensure that:

- making a complaint is as easy as possible;
- we treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response;
- we deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially;
- we respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken etc;
- we learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review annually our complaints policy and procedures.

We recognise that many concerns will be raised informally, and dealt with quickly.

Our aims are to:

- resolve informal concerns quickly;
- keep matters low-key;
- enable mediation between the complainant and the individual to whom the complaint has been referred.

An informal approach is appropriate when it can be achieved but if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

Definition: LTL defines a complaint as 'any expression of dissatisfaction (with LTL, with a member of staff, or with an LTL Trustee) that relates to LTL and that requires a formal response'.

Purpose: The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

LTL's responsibility will be to:

- acknowledge the formal complaint in writing;
- respond within a stated period of time;



- Where the complaint should be directed to another organisation, explain why this is so and pass the complaint on.
- deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint;
- take action where appropriate.

A complainant's responsibility is to:

- bring their complaint, in writing, to LTL's attention normally within 8 weeks of the issue arising;
- raise concerns promptly and directly with a member of staff in LTL;
- explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date;
- allow LTL a reasonable time to deal with the matter;
- recognise that in many cases LTL works in partnership with other organisations. LTL may be fully responsible; partly responsible; or not responsible at all for the matter being complained about.

Responsibility for Action: All Staff, and Trustees of LTL.

Confidentiality: Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and LTL maintain confidentiality. However the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (with each complaint judged on its own merit). Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

Monitoring and Reporting: Trustees of LTL will receive annually an anonymized report of complaints made and their resolution.

Formal Complaints Procedure

Stage 1

In the first instance, if you are unable to resolve the issue informally, you should write to or email the member of staff who dealt with you, or their manager, so that he or she has a chance to put things right. If your complaint concerns a Trustee of LTL, rather than a member of LTL's staff, you should write formally to the Executive Director who will discuss your complaint with the Chairman.

You can expect your complaint to be acknowledged within 10 working days of receipt. You should get a response and an explanation within 15 working days. If you are unsure which member of LTL staff to write to, your complaint should be sent to LTL's Business Services Manager.

Our contact details can be found on the [Contact Us](#) part of the LTL Website.

Stage 2

If you are not satisfied with the initial response to the complaint then you can write to LTL's Executive Director and ask for your complaint and the response to be reviewed. You can expect the Executive Director to acknowledge your request within 10 working days of receipt and a response within 15 working days.

LTL's aim is to resolve all matters as quickly as possible. However, inevitably some issues will be more complex and therefore may require longer to be fully investigated. Consequently timescales given for handling and responding to complaints are indicative. If a matter requires more detailed investigation, you will receive an interim response describing what is being done to deal with the matter, and when a full reply can be expected and from whom.

Final Stage

If you are not satisfied with the subsequent reply from LTL's Executive Director, then you have the option of writing to the Chair of the Executive Committee, Ground Floor, F Block, Clarendon House, Monarch Way, Winchester, SO22 5PW, stating the reason why you are dissatisfied with the outcome. You must do this within 10 days of receiving the written response from LTL's Executive Director.

The Chair of the Executive Committee (or their nominee) will respond normally within 10 working days to inform you of the action which will be taken to investigate your complaint, and when you can expect to hear the outcome of the investigation.

Note. If your original complaint was against the Chair of the Executive Committee, then the final stage will be handled by the Chair of the Board of Governors of LTL or by the vice chair.