

# Complaints Policy

## 1. Purpose and scope of policy

Our intention is to deal with people fairly and properly. If you feel that we have not met that standard, please let us know. Where there is reason to believe our conduct has fallen short, we want to be able to resolve any issues and learn from what has happened so that we can continuously improve.

## 2. What is a complaint?

We endeavour to assist you appropriately. We will treat any expression of dissatisfaction about our conduct as a complaint. However, we ask you to contact us in writing as set out in the next section, so that we can consider the matter properly.

This policy covers complaints about:

- How you or others have been treated by Radcliffe Animal Centre.
- Our conduct and compliance in performing our charitable aims.
- Behaviour of our Staff, Trustees or Volunteers.

It may be the case that we receive correspondence that in our view does not fall under our definition of a complaint or does not raise any issue that calls for in depth investigation. This may apply, for instance, to:

- Objections to certain steps, recommendations, or decisions we have taken in compliance with a legal requirement.
- Disapproval of Radcliffe Animal Centre's refusal to take action in a matter where we have no legal power to act.
- Anonymous complaints.
- Malicious, repetitive or vexatious claims such as harassment of staff or repeated submissions of a complaint to which a response under stage two of our complaints procedure has been provided. We will not reply to rude or abusive emails, calls or letters.

In all other cases we will give brief reasons for our views but having done so once will not normally engage in further correspondence on the merits of the position we have taken.

The policy does not cover matters that are subject to separate procedures, which include the following:

- Dissatisfaction or disagreement with decisions or policies of the National RSPCA or another RSPCA Branch.
- Requests, or refusals for requests, for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or Data Subject Access Requests under the UK General Data Protection Regulation.
- Concerns raised by workers which are dealt with under our Grievance Procedures or Whistleblowing policy.

### **3. How to complain**

Our contact details are available on our website - <https://rspca-radcliffe.org.uk>

A complaint may be emailed to [info@rspca-radcliffe.org.uk](mailto:info@rspca-radcliffe.org.uk) or by post to:

32 Nottingham Road  
Radcliffe on Trent  
Nottingham  
NG12 2DW

It will help us to deal quickly and fully with your complaint if you can state that you are making a complaint, set out your concern in writing as clearly as possible, and provide your contact details.

### **4. What you can expect from us when handling a complaint**

Our policy is to take legitimate complaints seriously and deal with them according to the procedures set out in this policy.

### **Our service standards**

We aim to deal with complaints promptly and sensitively and be courteous and helpful at all times. We would hope, too, that you will be courteous and fair in your dealings with our staff at all times. All complaints received will be dealt with confidentially and in accordance with the requirements of the UK General Data Protection Regulation.

We will keep full and accurate records of all complaints we receive so that we can monitor the types of problems reported to us, the best way to resolve them and how long we are taking to deal with complaints. This also helps us to take a closer look at how we can improve in the future.

If you make a complaint, we will investigate it thoroughly and impartially, without discrimination or prejudice. We aim to resolve matters as promptly as we can, but if a complaint gives rise to serious issues, we may need to take extra time in order to investigate it fully and properly so that, wherever we can, we resolve the issue first time and learn from it and make improvements.

We will ensure that all decisions we make are proportionate, appropriate and fair given the circumstances of each individual complaint.

## **Stage one**

If you have supplied your contact details, we will send an acknowledgment of your complaint within five working days. Your complaint will then be passed to an appropriate person who was not involved in the events which led to the complaint and who is in a position and has the relevant experience to consider the complaint. We will aim to respond as soon as possible, and in any event within 20 working days. We may need to contact you to ask for more information or clarity before making a final response.

When we provide you with a final response, we will clearly set out the steps we took in investigating the complaint along with our views and reasons for this. Where we identify mistakes in our approach we will acknowledge those mistakes, set out details of remedial steps or changes we think are appropriate in the circumstances, and explain what we will do to prevent the problem from reoccurring. We will also indicate your right to request a review of your complaint if you are not satisfied with our response.

## **Stage two**

We expect most complaints to be resolved at stage one. However, if you consider the response you have received is not fair or appropriate, you may contact us to request a review of your complaint by the board of Trustees. You should do this within 20 working days of receiving a stage one response unless there is special reason for doing so later.

We will acknowledge your request to review the complaint within five working days of receipt. Again, we may need to contact you to ask for more information or clarity before making a final decision. We will aim to respond within 20 working days of receipt.

## **Extending time limits**

We aim to complete all complaints within the timescales above; however, if a complaint is very complex it may occasionally be necessary to extend the time limit. If this is the case, we will keep the complainant informed of progress with the investigation, the reasons for the delay, and the new deadline.

## **Other information**

We welcome any comments or suggestions about our complaints procedure, to make sure it operates as efficiently and effectively as possible. Please send any comments to us by email or post.