

**NAILSEA & DISTRICT
COMMUNITY TRANSPORT
LIMITED**

**COMPLAINTS POLICY
Version 3**

VERSION HISTORY

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1.0 OUR AIM

1.1 Nailsea & District Community Transport Limited (N&DCT) 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 and stakeholders and in particular by responding positively to complaints and by putting mistakes right.

1.2 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.

1.3 We recognise that many concerns will be raised informally and dealt with at the time. 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 if required.

1.4 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.

2.0 COMPLAINTS POLICY

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

2.2 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.

2.3 N&DCT's responsibility will be to:

- acknowledge the formal complaint in writing;
- respond within a stated period of time;
- deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint;

- take action where appropriate.

2.4 A complainant's responsibility is to:

- bring their complaint either verbally or in writing to N&DCT's attention, normally within 8 weeks of the issue arising;
- raise concerns promptly and directly with a member of staff in N&DCT;
- explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date;
- allow N&DCT a reasonable time to deal with the matter;
- recognise that some circumstances may be beyond N&DCT's control.

2.5 Responsibility for Action: The Office Administration staff and Trustees of N&DCT.

2.6 Confidentiality: Except in exceptional circumstances every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and N&DCT 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. To process a complaint N&DCT will hold personal data about the complainant, which the individual provides, and which other people give in response to the complaint. We will hold this data securely and only use it to address the complaint. N&DCT will normally destroy complaints files in a secure manner six years after the complaint has been closed.

2.7 Monitoring and Reporting: Trustees of N&DCT will receive annually an anonymised report of complaints made and their resolution and complaints will be dealt with in accordance with N&DCT's Privacy Policy.

2.8 Formal Complaints Procedure:

Stage 1:

2.8.1 In the first instance if you are unable to resolve the issue informally, you should write to the Operational Manager of N&DCT so that he or she has a chance to put things right.

2.8.2 If your complaint concerns an N&DCT employee or a Trustee, then you should write formally to the Chairman of Trustees.

2.8.3 If your complaint concerns the Chairman of Trustees, then you should write formally to the Trustees who will appoint a Trustee to deal with the matter.

2.8.4 In your letter you should set out the details of your complaint, the consequences for you as a result and the remedy you are seeking.

2.8.5 You can expect your complaint to be acknowledged within 4 working days of receipt. You should get a response and an explanation within 15 working days.

2.8.6 Our contact details can be found on the N&DCT Website.

Stage 2:

2.8.7 If you are not satisfied with the initial response to the complaint then you can write to N&DCT's Chairman of Trustees and ask for your complaint and the response to be reviewed. You can expect the Chairman of Trustees to acknowledge your request within 4 working days of receipt and a response within 15 working days.

2.8.8 N&DCT'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

2.8.9 If you are not satisfied with the subsequent reply from N&DCT's Chairman of Trustees, then you have the option of writing to the Trustees stating the reason why you are dissatisfied with the outcome. You must do this within 10 days of receiving the written response from N&DCT's Chairman of Trustees.

2.8.10 The Trustees (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.

3.0 REVIEW

3.1 This policy will be reviewed once a year to ensure that it conforms to current legislation and is fit for purpose.