



## THE SCOTS' GUARDS CHARITY COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. This document details the Scots Guards Charity's commitments relating to complaints by third parties (beneficiaries and stakeholders) in the event that they have a complaint against The Scots Guards Charity in relation to its charitable activities. There is a link to this policy on the Scots Guards Charity website.

### Our policy

2. The Scots Guards Charity is committed to providing the highest levels of service to all beneficiaries and stakeholders.

Our policy is:

- a. To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- b. To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
- c. To make sure complaints are investigated fairly
- d. To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved

### What is a complaint?

3. A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of the Charity.

4. A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing.

### Confidentiality

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

### Responsibility

6. Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Board of Trustees.

### Scope of the policy

7. The policy applies to all complaints made against the Scots Guards Charity which have been raised as a matter of concern, but which have not been capable of informal resolution and which the complainant or the Charity considers should be dealt with on a formal basis.

8. The Charity expects that before seeking to use this formal policy the complainant will have made reasonable attempts to seek an informal resolution of the position.

## **Formal Complaints Procedure**

### **STAGE 1**

- a. The complainant must put the complaint in writing by letter or by email unless the complainant has a disability which prevents this, in which case the complainant may contact the Charity for assistance. The complaint should be addressed to the Regimental Finance and Welfare Officer, or the Regimental Adjutant, as appropriate.
- b. The Scots Guards Charity will aim to acknowledge receipt of the complaint in writing within ten working days of receipt.
- c. The Scots Guards Charity will notify the complainant of the person who will consider the complaint before taking a decision (the "Decision Maker"). The complainant will be invited to discuss their complaint with that person. This may be during a meeting or on the telephone. Whenever reasonably possible such discussion will take place within 15 working days of the complaint being received. When this is not possible, the Charity will provide an explanation and set out expected timescales.
- d. The Decision Maker will take appropriate steps to consider the complaint and investigate if necessary. The Decision Maker will then notify the complainant of the outcome of the complaint in writing. Whenever reasonably possible this will be done without undue delay and normally within 20 working days of the discussion with the complainant.
- e. It is likely that the Decision Maker will be a Trustee but in certain cases it may be necessary for the Scots Guards Charity to appoint a third party as a Decision Maker, depending upon the nature of the complaint.

### **STAGE 2**

- a. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the first stage, she/he may request that the complaint be considered by the Chairman of the Trustees. Such a request should be made in writing addressed to the Regimental Adjutant or the Regimental Finance and Welfare Officer, as appropriate, who will notify the Chairman of the Trustees.
- b. The request should be made within ten working days of receipt by the complainant of the Decision Maker's decision.
- c. The request should set out briefly the reasons why the complainant is dissatisfied with the response.
- d. The Chairman of the Trustees will conduct a review of the matter to date
- e. The Chairman of the Trustees will report his/her findings to the complainant, where possible within 15 working days of receipt of the written request to use Stage 2.
- f. The Chairman of the Trustees may recommend that the complainant and the Charity participate in formal mediation in respect of the complaint, if it is considered appropriate, before he reaches his findings.

### **Procedure**

- a. A record will be kept of all complaints, and of whether they are resolved at the first stage or proceed to further stages.
- b. There may be occasions where, despite all stages of this procedure being followed, the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome. If the complainant tries to reopen the same issue, the Chairman of the Trustees is able under this policy to inform him/her in writing that the procedure has been exhausted and that the matter is now closed.
- c. If the complaint is serious, for example, if there is the potential for significant harm to the Charity, its work, its beneficiaries and other people coming into contact with the charity in the

course of its work, a complaint can be made directly to the Charity Commission: <https://forms.charitycommission.gov.uk/raising-concerns/>

### **Responsibility for the policy**

9. The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for this policy and for reviewing the effectiveness of actions taken in response to concerns raised under the policy.

10. The Company Secretary has day to day operational responsibility for this policy and must ensure that any Trustees who may deal with concerns or investigations under this policy receives any necessary training.

### **This policy does not cover:**

a. complaints from volunteers, which should be raised under the Scots Guards Charity whistleblowing procedure.

b. complaints relating to grants made by the Charity, which are in the absolute discretion of the Trustees.

The Charity may alter or adapt this Policy, and any components of it, at any time.

### **Review**

11. This policy was approved by the Board of Trustees on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

12. It is to be reviewed every three years, with the next review due in May 2024.