

THE BEDFORD CHARITY (THE HARPUR TRUST)

HARPUR TRUST OFFICE (HTO) - COMPLAINTS POLICY

Introduction

1. It is the policy of The Charity to take all complaints about the Harpur Trust Office (HTO) seriously and respond promptly. The complaints policy below provides the framework by which this will be done. The HTO is responsible for providing a range of administrative services to the Charity's schools and Pilgrims Pre Preparatory School. It also administers the Charity's investment and property portfolios, including the Pilgrim Centre, administers the Charity's Almshouses and Grants Programmes and acts as a central information point for enquiries and publicity concerning the Charity's activities.

Scope

2. This policy covers complaints from members of the public and external customers of the HTO, such as commercial tenants and suppliers, concerning the HTO.

Exclusions

3. This policy does not cover complaints from Almshouse residents, HTO staff, other operational units of the Charity, or from parents of pupils at Harpur Trust Schools or Pilgrims Pre Preparatory School (unless their complaint relates solely to their dealings with the HTO). Alternative routes for such complaints are given at the end of this policy.

4. Grant applicants cannot use the complaints procedure to appeal against our decision on making a grant if we have followed our decision making process correctly. Where normal procedures have been followed properly the Trustees' decision is final.

Grounds For Complaint

5. You can complain if you are unhappy with the way you have been treated by staff of the Charity. For example, if you think that:

- we have given you incorrect advice or information
- we have not treated you fairly
- we have not treated you politely

How to Make a Complaint

6. If you feel you have cause for complaint, you should write to the Chief Executive¹ (address at the end of this policy) explaining the circumstances forming the basis of the complaint.
7. The Charity will acknowledge all official complaints in writing within 7 working days of receipt.
8. The complaint will be investigated and we will attempt to resolve the matter through informal discussion with you. You will receive a written response summarising those discussions and their outcome.
9. If you are not satisfied that the issue has been resolved by our initial inquiry you should write to the Chief Executive again. You must do this within 10 working days of receiving the written response to your original complaint. The Chief Executive will carry out further investigations and you will receive a reply within 10 working days. If we cannot give a full reply in this time, we will tell you why and when you are likely to receive it.

Arrangements for Complaints Outside the Scope of this Policy

10. Complaints by staff in the Charity's schools and Almshouses should follow the published grievance procedure.
11. Parents of pupils at the Charity's schools should follow the complaints procedure of the relevant school unless the complaint relates solely to dealings with the HTO in which case this Policy may be used instead.
12. Residents of the Charity's Almshouses should use the established procedures published in the residents' handbook.

Address for Complaints under this Policy:

**The Chief Executive
The Bedford Charity (The Harpur Trust)
Princeton Court
Pilgrim Centre
Brickhill Drive
BEDFORD
MK41 7PZ**

Please mark the envelope with the words "Official Complaint"

David Russell
Chief Executive

5 October 2009

¹ In the event that the complaint concerns the Chief Executive personally, the complaint should be addressed to the Chairman of the Charity at the same address and marked "Complaint - Personal for the Chairman".