



# The Green Backyard

YOUR Urban Green Space

## Complaints Policy & Process

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## Introduction

The Green Backyard aims to provide high quality services which meet your needs. We believe we achieve this most of the time: if we are not getting it right please let us know.

In order to ensure our services remain at a high and improving standard, we have a procedure through which you can let us know if for any reason you are not satisfied. Learning from complaints helps us to improve the service we provide and builds our relationships with all those on whom The Green Backyard depends.

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy and process is to:

- help us to provide a service of the highest standard to all those who come to The Green Backyard
- help us to deal with complaints in a positive way and use them to improve our service
- set out the steps that you should take if you wish to make a complaint, so they are dealt with in a fair and consistent way.

**Note:** If you are concerned that a child or vulnerable adult may be at risk of harm, please use The Green Backyard's safeguarding policy and procedures rather than this complaints policy or procedure.

## How We Listen to You

To help us build our relationship with our supporters, learn from your suggestions and provide opportunities for you to engage with us, we want to encourage your feedback.

We have an active programme of engagement, through our on-site volunteering, Backyard Food shop, on-site events, AGM and Membership communications.

Some feedback requires a formal response: this policy explains how we do that.

## What is a Complaint?

All feedback will be treated with courtesy and respect, and handled sensitively within an appropriate timescale. Comments are opportunities for organisational learning and while we will always aim to respond to comments, the response is not part of a formal process. We will always try to resolve issues informally first.

A complaint is a formal claim that The Green Backyard has failed to meet an organisational commitment. Trustees will review complaints to identify trends and recurring themes.

Since investigating a complaint makes use of The Green Backyard's limited resources, we expect the person making the complaint to:

- provide sufficient information for us to be able to understand the complaint;
- be willing to be contacted and engage in the complaints process if necessary;
- understand that making a complaint triggers a more formal process than a comment.

We may choose not to respond to feedback that is abusive, prejudiced or offensive; seeks to bypass stages of the complaints process; is repeatedly stated in a manner not conducive to resolution; unreasonably pursues a complaint we have already responded to; or has clearly been sent to The Green Backyard as part of a bulk communication with other organisations.

## Our Process

**Stage 1:** If you are not happy with The Green Backyard please tell our Trustees in writing by emailing [secretary@thegreenbackyard.com](mailto:secretary@thegreenbackyard.com).

Please provide your name, address and contact telephone number. When contacting us, please feel free to let us know how you think the matter could be resolved, your ideas and suggestions are always very helpful to us.

All written complaints will be logged. You will receive a written acknowledgement within three working days.

A member of the Board of Trustees will be designated to investigate your complaint with support of our secretary. We will work hard to fix problems, correct mistakes and address concerns. Often we will be able to give you a response within ten working days setting out how the problem will be dealt with. When the matter is more complicated we will give you at least an initial response within ten working days informing you of the action taken to date or being considered, and a date by which you can expect a full response.

**Stage 2:** If you are not satisfied with our response, please write to the Chair of the Board of Trustees by emailing [chair@thegreenbackyard.com](mailto:chair@thegreenbackyard.com) within 1 month of receiving our response.

Under stage 2, the Chair will designate another member of the Board of Trustees to reconsider the information already collected, re-investigate if necessary, and consider what further action may be taken. Again, they will be supported by our secretary.

The Chair will consider their report and notify you of the outcome of this final review within ten working days where possible. Again, this will be an initial response if the matter is more complicated and include the date by which you can expect the outcome of this final review.

Stage 2 is the final stage of the complaints process.

A stage 2 process may also be triggered by the Trustee designated to investigate the complaint at stage 1, if they decide to escalate the complaint. Or if a previous complaint, dealt with under stage 1 in the last 12 months, has resurfaced.

Records of notes made during the stage 1 and stage 2 investigation, where applicable, will be kept confidentially by the Trustees.