



## **RIDGELINE TRUST**

### **COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS POLICY**

The Ridgeline Trust aims to provide the best possible service to our service users and to the wider public who come into contact with the Charity. However we recognise that there may be times when people are dissatisfied with the service or response they have received from us and the purpose of this policy is to explain how they can raise their concerns

This policy is for clients, their carers or families and members of the public who wish to make a comment or complaint about Ridgeline. The Volunteer Problem Solving Procedure will deal with complaints and comments from volunteers

#### **Ridgeline's approach to dealing with Comments and Complaints**

- We welcome all feedback both positive and critical as this can help us to improve our services
- We will listen carefully to all concerns in order to clarify the issues. We will address the issues raised and we will not be evasive or defensive
- We want to make it simple to contact us. You can make your complaint or comment in person, by email or by letter. You can use the form attached to this leaflet if you wish
- You can make your complaint or comment to a Ridgeline member of staff, volunteer or Trustee
- We will respond quickly to your comments and complaints. You will receive an acknowledgement within 5 working days.
- We will keep you informed about the progress of your complaint
- To listen carefully to all feedback to help us review and improve our services

Please complain or comment as soon as possible after the event – it makes it easier for us to find out what happened and put things right.

## The three stages of the Ridgeline Trust Comments and Complaints Procedure

There are three stages to the complaints and feedback process at Ridgeline Trust

**1: Informal stage.** At this stage, please mention issues or ideas you may have to improve the service – whether it is the timing of the sessions, the type of activities offered, the accessibility of the Pavilion and garden or refreshment breaks. Please speak to the Development Manager or one of the Horticultural Therapists or send a letter or an email to explain what you feel might be better done. We expect that the majority of concerns will be dealt with informally.

**2: Formal stage.** If you are not satisfied with the response you receive at the informal stage, or if you think that your complaint cannot be resolved informally for example if you are complaining about a Ridgeline member of staff or volunteer you should raise the matter with one of the Trustees. At this stage it would help us to understand your complaint if you can put it in writing. If you are unable to put your complaint in writing we will meet with you to discuss your concerns.

A Trustee will investigate the complaint to find out what happened, why it happened and what can be done. The investigation may involve talking to staff, volunteers or service users, looking at files or other records and checking whether policies and procedures have been followed. The Trustee will respond to the complaint in writing within 10 working days. The response will address the points raised by the complaint and will state whether Ridgeline consider the complaint to be justified. Where appropriate the response will include an apology and/or a commitment to address any issues raised by the complaint including changes to our policies and procedures

**3: Appeal stage.** If you are unhappy with the response, please let us know as soon as possible. You can appeal in writing to the Chair of Ridgeline Trust. The appeal will be considered by a panel of three Trustees who will re-investigate the complaint and review the earlier response. The Trustees will respond in writing within 10 working days of notification of the appeal

### How to get in touch with us

Write to us at: The Ridgeline Trust Therapeutic Garden, 25 Whiteknights Road, Reading, RG6 7BY or

Email us at [admin@ridgelinetrust.org.uk](mailto:admin@ridgelinetrust.org.uk)

This policy is to be reviewed every two years or in the light of new legislation

Approved by Trustees September 2019

Reviewed & Approved January 2022