



**THRALE ALMSHOUSE**  
**& RELIEF IN NEED CHARITY**

## **COMPLAINTS POLICY**

Thrale Almshouse and Relief in Need Charity (Thrale) will strive to uphold its mission, values and responsibilities and treat all people with dignity and respect both within the organisation and the communities it works with including partners, residents, other stakeholders and members of the public. However, we recognise that there may be times when an individual or group may want to express dissatisfaction with a service provided, relationship issue or an action taken by a Thrale volunteer or employee. The underlying aim, when responding to complaints will be to enable them to be resolved informally, speedily and fairly by discussion, problem solving, mediation or negotiation. If, this is not achieved then formal written procedures will be followed and Thrale will commit to investigate and resolve the matter in a timely and fair manner.

Thrale is committed to providing quality services that meet the individual needs of those who seek our assistance or support. We strive to maintain open and positive relationships with beneficiaries and stakeholders. However, there may be times when there is dissatisfaction with the level or type of service received and a complaint is made. We recognise the importance of complaints in enabling us to identify areas where we could make changes or improve our approach. We therefore understand the requirement to have in place robust and effective procedures to ensure complaints are properly managed and acted upon.

Thrale will maintain appropriate systems to enable us to record, manage, respond to and report on complaints. We will ensure that all staff and agents are fully aware of the procedure. We aim to embed a culture of valuing and learning from complaints. We will promote and publicise our procedure to ensure, as far as possible, an awareness of the right to complain. We intend our complaints procedure to be easy to use and transparent, with clear definitions, timescales and responsibilities.

In accordance with our commitment to equality and diversity we will ensure that information about our complaints procedure is available in appropriate formats. We will treat all complainants fairly and respectfully and endeavour to accommodate any specific needs they may have. We will support complainants by explaining our procedure and offering a range of methods of complaining or providing practical help to do so.



## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

Thrale Almshouse and Relief in Need Charity is committed to providing high-quality services. We try to get things right first time and value compliments if they are deserved, but we know that sometimes things can be done better or they can occasionally go wrong. We value complaints as much as compliments and suggestions and use information from them to help us improve our services, therefore if something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with our services, please tell us.

This Procedure describes how to make a complaint and tells you what you can expect from us. You can use the form at the end of this document to tell us if you:

- Are unhappy with the service you have received from us or the way you have been treated (a complaint)
- Have suggestions on how we could improve the services we provide or wish to comment on them (a suggestion or comment)

All formal complaints and suggestions will be logged and regularly reported to Trustees. (Complaints made by staff or volunteers will be dealt with under Thrale's grievance procedure)

### **What is a complaint?**

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with any of our services or the service provided by anyone on our behalf. Examples include where you believe:

- Something was done poorly or too slowly
- We failed to do something
- We did something that should not have been done
- We treated you unfairly or staff behaviour was not good enough
- One of our policies or procedures needs changing

### **What is not a complaint?**

- A first request for a service or to report a fault, for example reporting a repair
- A report of anti-social behaviour, neighbour problems, nuisance or harassment. These issues are dealt with through separate procedures.
- Dissatisfaction with a policy or procedure that has a separate right of appeal, for example our policy and procedure for selecting residents
- A third party enquiry, for example from an MP or Councillor unless s/he is complaining on your behalf
- Issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or tribunal
- A complaint which has previously been resolved
- A request for information or an explanation of our policies or procedures

### **Who can complain?**

Anyone who uses our service or is affected by our services can complain. We understand that you may be unable or reluctant to make a complaint yourself, so you can ask someone to complain on your behalf. Thrale will check with you that you consent to a friend, relative or an advocate complaining for you.



# THRALE ALMHOUSE & RELIEF IN NEED CHARITY

## Procedures:

### How do I complain?

You can complain in person, by telephone, in writing, by email or online. You can also use the form at the back of this procedure.

**Phone:** Please contact Teachers Housing Association if it is a complaint about housing management (make sure to be clear that it is a complaint about Thrale almshouse housing).  
0207 440 9440 between the hours of 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday

Or Jenny Rogers for other complaints:

**Email:** [jenny.rogers@thralealmshouses.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:jenny.rogers@thralealmshouses.onmicrosoft.com)  
Or [admin@thralealmshouses.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:admin@thralealmshouses.onmicrosoft.com)

**Address:** Thrale Almshouse and Relief in Need Charity, c/o Alwyns LLP, Crown House, 151 High Road, Loughton, Essex, IG10 4LG

**Website:** [www.thralealmshouses.org.uk](http://www.thralealmshouses.org.uk)

### If you have a complaint, please tell us:

- Your name and address
- As much as you can about the complaint
- What has gone wrong
- How you would ideally like us to resolve the matter

### How long do I have to make a complaint?

Normally you must make your complaint within six months of:

- The event you want to complain about
- Finding out that you have reason to complain, but no longer than 6 months after the event itself.

### What remedies and solutions does Thrale offer?

If we have made a mistake we will try to put it right. We may:

- Apologise
- Carry out work, for example a repair
- Review a decision made previously
- Review our procedures or policies
- Give an explanation
- Provide more staff training
- Consider compensation



# THRALE ALMHOUSE & RELIEF IN NEED CHARITY

## How does the complaints procedure work?

Our Complaints Coordinator is Jenny Rogers.

Our formal complaints procedure has three stages. If the complaint is about a member of staff or an agent it will be dealt with at Stage One; a complaint about the Complaints Co-ordinator or a Trustee will go straight to Stage Three and any other complaint will be dealt with on a case by case basis –we also expect staff and agents to regularly report on complaints, compliments and suggestions to the Trustees meetings.

Your complaint will be handled confidentially and will be closed 20 working days after we have sent you our response unless you tell us that you are dissatisfied.

### Informal complaints

We aim to resolve most complaints quickly. So, if something has clearly gone wrong, and if we can, we will offer you an explanation, an on-the-spot apology and immediate action to resolve the problem. Informal complaints will usually be dealt with by the member of staff/agent receiving them.

### Stage One

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive to an informal complaint, you can make a formal complaint. Formal complaints must be in writing, (there is a form at the end of this policy document) but we can write down what you say on the phone or face to face if you would prefer this or you can ask someone else to write on your behalf. We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within five working days and your complaint will be allocated a reference number.

Our housing agents staff or Jenny Rogers, or, if appropriate, a trustee, will then investigate. We will give you our decision regarding your complaint in writing as soon as possible and within 15 working days unless there are exceptional circumstances. Our response will explain the results of the investigation and the proposed resolution. If the complaint is more complicated and it is not possible to resolve the matter within this time, we will let you know when to expect an answer and why there is a delay.

If you are dissatisfied you can ask, within 15 working days of our decision, for your complaint to be investigated further. Please tell us in writing why you are not happy and what you would like to happen. We will then move your complaint to Stage Two.

### Stage Two

We hope you will be satisfied with the response you receive to your Stage One complaint but if you are not, please let us know in writing as soon as possible and within 15 working days. Your complaint will then be passed to the complaints Coordinator.

The Coordinator will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within five working days and give you a full response in writing as soon as possible and within 15 working days. If the investigation will take longer than 15 days, we will tell you.

We hope that you will be happy with the result, but if you are not, please tell us in writing within 15 working days of receiving our response. Please tell us why you are not happy and what you would like to happen. We will then move your complaint to Stage Three.

Charity Number 225709 Company Number 7960096

Registered Office c/o Alwyns LLP, Crown House, 151 High Road, Loughton, Essex, IG10 4LG



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## **Stage Three**

If you are not satisfied with the response to your Stage Two complaint, please let us know in writing within 15 days of receiving the Complaint Coordinator's decision. Please tell us why you are not satisfied, for example what you feel has not been fully considered, what you think is incorrect or what additional information you have. We will acknowledge your complaint within five working days.

Your complaint will then be reviewed by the Board of Trustees at its next meeting. The Board will investigate and respond to you in writing within 20 working days. If the investigation may take longer than this, we will let you know. This is the last stage of the Thrale complaints procedure.

## **External Review of Complaints**

### **1. Complaints made by almshouse residents**

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your Stage Three complaint and you are an almshouse resident you can wait eight weeks and then **ask the Housing Ombudsman** to investigate your complaint.

Address: Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 1484, Unit D, Preston, PR2 OET  
Telephone: 0300 111 3000  
Email: [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)  
Website: <http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk>

There is an online complaint form that you are strongly encouraged to use.

### **2. Other Agencies**

Thrale Almshouse and Relief in Need Charity is regulated by the Charity Commission and the Regulator of Social Housing and complaints can also be made to these bodies, although the Housing Ombudsman should be your first port of call.

The Charity Commission

Complaints can be made online at <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>

Regulator of Social Housing (RSH)

Address: Fry Building, 2 Marsham Street, Westminster London SW1P 4DF  
Email: [enquiries@rsh.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@rsh.gov.uk)  
Phone: 0300 124 5225

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Independent Housing Ombudsman, the Charity Commission and the Regulator of Social Housing will expect you to have exhausted the charity's complaints procedure before bringing your complaint to them.

### **Anonymous complaints**

Anonymous complaints cannot be dealt with through this complaints procedure. However depending upon the nature of the complaint, Thrale may decide that it is necessary to investigate the matter.

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**THRALE ALMSHOUSE AND RELIEF IN NEED CHARITY**  
**COMPLAINTS & SUGGESTIONS FORM**

You can use this form to make a complaint or suggestion. Please return to Jenny Rogers (Complaints and Compliments Coordinator)

1. Are you making a complaint or suggestion? (please tick)

Complaint		Suggestion	
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2. Your Details please:

Name:	
Address	
Telephone No.	
Email Address	

If you are filling in this form for someone else, please give their details and your relationship to them:

Name:	
Address	
Telephone No.	
Email Address	
Relationship	

3. How would you like us to contact you about this? (please tick)

Phone	
Letter	
Email	



# THRALE ALMHOUSE & RELIEF IN NEED CHARITY

## 4. Your complaint or suggestion

Please provide details of your complaint or suggestion here (continue on a separate sheet if necessary):

Your Signature		Date	
Name & Signature of the member of staff receiving it		Date	

Data Protection: We will only share the personal information you give us within Thrale and its agents in order that we can investigate your complaint more fully.