

Name of Policy & Procedure: Status: Discussed with Board (<i>Governance & Quality Committee</i>): Date: Review:	Complaints Approved Service & Quality Board 18 th September 2025 18 th September 2028
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COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. Introduction

Richmond Borough Mind is committed to ensuring that its work is of the highest quality. We believe that through effective management and investigation of comments, compliments and complaints we can identify learning to achieve high-quality work and continuous improvement as an organisation.

2. Purpose

Richmond Borough Mind is committed to ensuring that its work is of the highest quality. We believe that views and learning from these views are an important part of achieving high-quality work. In order that users, carers, and family members can fully influence services offered, Richmond Borough Mind hopes that those who come into contact with its services can easily voice their views and opinions about them and seek to effect changes where possible and appropriate.

Richmond Borough Mind views complaints as a useful and constructive way to develop its services to meet the needs of users and aims to listen without judgement, reprisal, or discrimination.

3. Definition of a Complaint

Complaints are any views about any aspect of the services provided by Richmond Borough Mind. They could cover a very wide range from simple matters of everyday organisation to major allegations of unacceptable behaviour on the part of staff, volunteers, trustees, other users or anyone else associated with Richmond Borough Mind.

4. Our policy

The following principles underpin Richmond Borough Mind's approach to handling comments, compliments, and complaints.

- RB Mind recognises that **comments, compliments and complaints** are an important part of customer feedback.
- The procedure is **fair, easy, and as transparent** as possible.
- The procedure is **accessible** to all regardless of age, disability, gender, ethnicity, belief or sexual orientation.
- Making a complaint will **not harm or prejudice** the service/dept that is given to the complainant.

- Concerns and complaints are **dealt with efficiently**, appropriately and are investigated within the agreed time frame.
- Complainants are treated with **respect and courtesy** and receive appropriate support throughout the handling of the complaint.
- Complainants receive a **timely and appropriate response**, identifying the outcome of any investigation.
- **Action is taken where necessary** in the light of the outcome of the complaint. This might include an explanation or an apology and if relevant and appropriate, information on any action taken.
- **Learning from complaints** will be used to improve Mind's work and drive forward a culture of continuous improvement.

5. How to make a Complaint

5.1 Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

If you wish to raise a complaint, you should first speak with a staff member from the relevant service. Any staff member can discuss the issue and attempt to resolve it informally. It may be that the matter can be settled satisfactorily in the course of this conversation. Staff need to respond quickly and effectively to these complaints. These complaints may require an explanation or apology, but will not require direct management action.

- 5.2 All complaints **MUST** be recorded by staff on the complaints form (Appendix i), and logged with the relevant Senior Managers (5.9), even if they are resolved at the informal stage. Service Leads and all Managers must review these issues regularly to ensure that any recurring themes are highlighted and action is taken.
- 5.3 If, after this, complainants feel that their concerns have not been settled, then you do have the option to move to a more formal process and proceed to **Stage 2**:
 - Ask a member of staff at RB Mind for our complaints procedure, which has our complaints form attached, which you can complete independently and email back.
 - or you can ask a member of staff for a private meeting and their support in completing the complaints form with you confidentially,

All stage 1 complaint forms are to be submitted to the following:

- Services-related complaints - to Head of Services
- Organisational complaints – to CEO

5.4 Stage 2 - Formal Resolution

If it is not possible to settle the problem through the informal process, and a Formal complaint has been submitted (note 5.3), your formal complaint will be acknowledged within 7 working days. The complainant will be informed who the Investigating Officer is for their complaint at this point.

- 5.5 If the complainant is unhappy with the complaint resolution at Stage 1, they can then ask for the complaint to be referred to Stage 2. The Investigating Officer for Stage 2 will be the Head of Services or Chief Executive Officer. If they both have already investigated the complaint at Stage 1, the complaint will be investigated by the Chair.

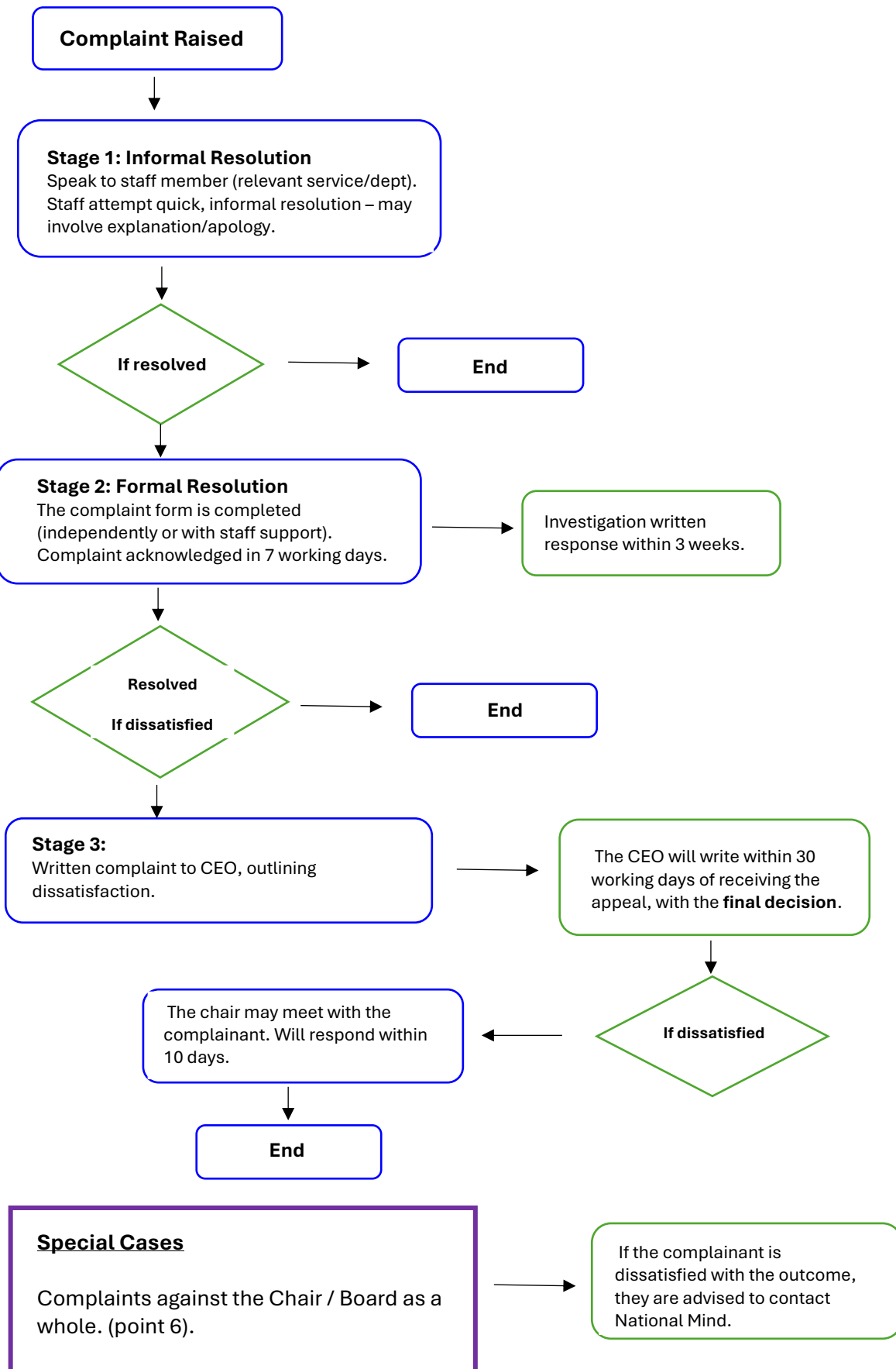
In the first instance, the Stage 2 complaint should be investigated by an appropriate member of staff, depending on the complaint issue, for example:

Complaint subject matter:	Investigating Officer:
Member of staff/volunteer Quality of service/service practice/accessibility Venue/accommodation	Service Manager
Service Lead Contractual compliance Health & Safety Data Protection	Head of Services
Operations staff Gross Negligence Organisational concerns	CEO
CEO or Trustee	Chair of the Board
Chair	CEO for attention of external Trustees



- 5.6** The Investigating Officer will try to resolve the complaint and respond in writing, within 3 weeks, to the complainant and the relevant members of staff. The complaint response should include details of who to contact if they wish to appeal against the response, and how to do this.
- 5.7 Stage 3:**
- 5.8** If you are unhappy with the results of the investigation, you can then appeal. Please outline the reason for your dissatisfaction in writing or electronically to the CEO (email: info@rbmind.org). Written complaint can be sent addressed to the Chief Executive at Richmond Borough Mind, 82 Heath Road Twickenham TW1 4BW, marking the envelope **Private and Confidential**.
- 5.9** This will be the final decision of the complaints process and will ensure the CEO has reviewed the investigation, made any further enquiries, and it is they who delivers the reason for the final decision. The CEO will write within 30 working days of receiving the appeal.

Complaints Procedure Flow Chart



5.10 Appeals

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive at Stage 3, you can further complain in writing to the Chair of the Richmond Borough Mind, marking your correspondence Private and Confidential. You should also use Stage 4 if your initial complaint is about the Chief Executive and you have been unable to resolve the matter by a Stage 1 informal approach. The person dealing with the complaint will be the Chair who will also wish to meet with you and if appropriate, will inform the board that a complaint has been made. The Chair will respond within 10 working days of the meeting. The decision of the Chair shall be final subject to the appeal procedure as outlined below.

5.11 Investigating Officer

The Investigating Officer is responsible for clarifying the issues raised in the complaint and ensuring a thorough and impartial investigation. This may involve meeting with service users, staff members, volunteers or external organisations, as appropriate, and gathering relevant information to fully explore the concerns. The complainant should be offered a face-to-face meeting with the Investigating Officer, either during the investigation or once it has been completed, to ensure their views are properly heard. Complainants may bring a friend, supporter, or independent advocate to any such meeting.

5.12 To maintain fairness, investigations will always be conducted by an individual who has had no prior involvement in the matter under complaint. This principle applies consistently throughout all stages of the complaints procedure.

5.13 Complainants must be kept informed of the progress of their complaint, either in writing or verbally. Where time targets cannot be met, the complainant will be notified promptly and provided with a revised timescale for response.

6 COMPLAINT AGAINST THE CHAIR OR BOARD OF DIRECTORS AS A WHOLE

6.1 Informal resolution of the complaint may be attempted through a meeting between the complainant and the Chair. If this fails, the formal resolution stages of the procedure will not apply. Instead the Chair of another local voluntary organisation, another local Mind association, or a person of similar experience unconnected with RB Mind, will be asked to investigate the complaint and make recommendations. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the investigator and any action taken as a result of the recommendations made, they should contact National Mind for advice.

7 CONFIDENTIALITY

7.1 RB Mind will respect the confidentiality of both the complainant and any person complained about, subject to the provisions of RB Mind's Confidentiality Policy.

7.2 In some cases, if a complaint is to be properly investigated and action taken as a result of the complaint, it may not always be possible to avoid a breach of confidentiality. The permission of the complainant will be sought for this, but when the welfare of the

complainant or other people is seriously at risk, it may be necessary to breach confidentiality, even if that permission is withheld.

- 7.3** All correspondence relating to a complaint must be logged on the complaints form (Appendix i) and submitted to the relevant Senior Manager. **Complaints MUST NOT be logged on views with an individual service user**, to ensure a degree of anonymity for their continued access to the service. The level of access allowed to view the complaint must also be considered to ensure that staff anonymity is also upheld.
- 7.4** Some complaints may highlight serious matters where we may need to consider recourse to disciplinary, safeguarding or criminal justice proceedings. In these cases, information gathered during the complaint resolution may be used in a subsequent investigation.
- 7.5** The outcome of all complaints and investigations will be reported in confidence to the Senior Management Team and in writing to the complainant. Complaints are discussed regularly with our Governance & Quality Committee. A report on complaints will also be made available to funders of RB Mind services as part of the evaluation of these services.
- 7.6** Any complaints that are reported to Safeguarding, the Police, Care Quality Commission, any other regulatory bodies, or those that appear likely to result in litigation or a financial claim against RB Mind, will be communicated as a matter of urgency to the Chair.

8 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- 8.1** This policy must be applied consistently and in line with RB Mind's Equality and Diversity Policy.

9 MONITORING AND Learning from Complaints

- 9.1** RB Mind will monitor the policy to ensure consistency and ensure that it is meeting the needs of complainants.
- 9.2** Complaints are reviewed annually to identify any trends that may indicate a need to take further action.

10. Compliments

If you have positive comments about our work or how we have helped you, Please email – info@rbmind.org

Or telephone or write to – Richmond Borough Mind, 82 Heath Road Twickenham TW1 4BW or [020 8948 7652](tel:02089487652).

RELEVANT POLICIES

- Confidentiality Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Disciplinary Policy

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Managing Challenging Behaviour Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Local Mind Groups Specialist Insurance Policy

Appendix i

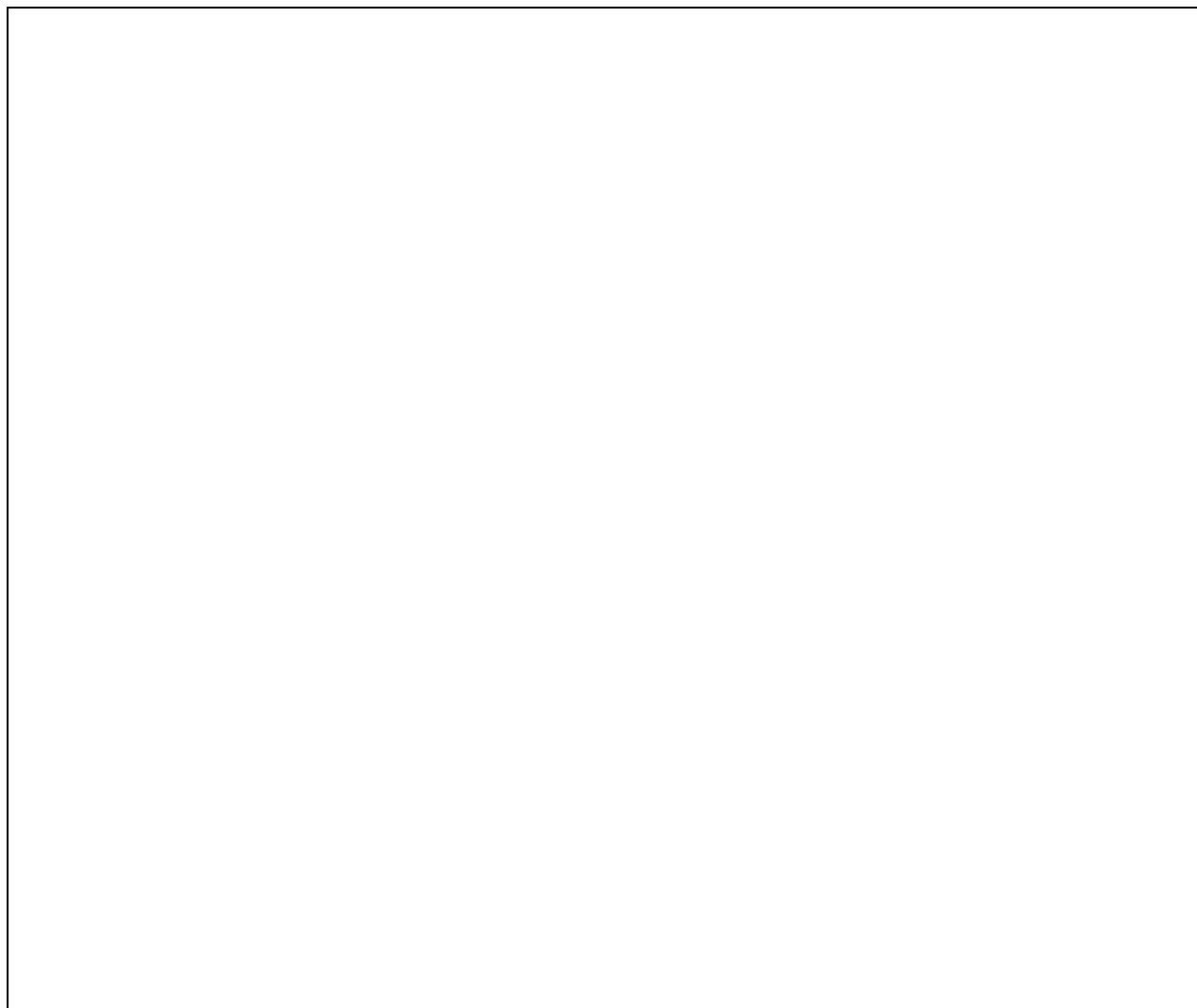
Complaints Form

RB Mind takes a positive approach to feedback. We feel that the opportunity to make a complaint is an essential right for all those who use the services provided by RB Mind. Complaints can be a valuable way of evaluating and improving our services and making sure that they are meeting the needs of our users.

Please provide details of your contact details and concerns below, and our team will be in touch with you shortly:

Name:	
Address:	
Post code:	
Telephone number:	
Email address:	
Date complaint submitted:	
Service complaint relates to (if applicable):	

DETAILS OF COMPLAINT: Your description should be as full as possible including any relevant events leading up to this complaint. (Please continue on extra sheets if necessary).



RB Mind takes all complaints received by the organisation seriously, and will respond accordingly. Our Complaints Policy is available to all, and is intended to be speedy, effective and easily understandable.

After a complaint is made, RB Mind will identify an appropriate Investigating Officer, in line with our policy. You will hear from this individual within 5 working days of us receiving your complaint.

Please forward your complaint to:

Richmond Borough Mind
32 Hampton Road,
Twickenham,
TW2 5QB

Telephone: 020 8948 7652

Email: info@rbmind.org

Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix ii Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Could a particular group be affected either positively or negatively by this policy?

1. Purpose of the policy.
2. How in practice the policy will achieve this?
3. Who is benefiting, who is not and how?
4. Any secondary aims of the policy and what they are.

Indicate in the table with a Y for any negative or positive impacts identified

Group	Negative Impact	Positive Impact	Evidence
Age			
Sex			
Gender reassignment			
Sexual Orientation			
Being married or in a Civil Partnership			
Disability	Y		below
Pregnancy/Maternity Leave			
Religion or belief			
Race including colour, nationality or national origin			
Any other groups	Special educational needs		below

Give Details of any identified impacts: We need to be conscious as service providers that not all individuals can exercise their rights to raise concerns or complain about the service they receive due to their disability, especially those who have a mental health condition or learning disability, and those who may have language issues.

Where a negative impact is identified are there any policies, procedures, services, strategies or functions that need to be assessed alongside this policy for further screening? Please list: To mitigate this can we accept complaints, both informal and formal, in a variety of methods to ensure the service is as accessible as possible and is not dependent on visiting our offices – complaints of an informal nature can be made through any means and do not need to be received in writing.

In relation to negative impacts identified, does the policy need to proceed to a more detailed equality impact assessment to understand fully the impact and seek ways of reducing or removing this? Indicate with a Y/N – If yes, ensure a full equality impact assessment is completed and relevant actions and outcomes followed through to update this policy prior to this policy being approved. If no give reasons: Paragraphs – No, Complaint Policy - Stage 1 and Stage 2 adequately mitigate the negative impact of clients who may not find it easy to complain without support.

Declaration:

We are satisfied that an initial equality impact assessment has been carried out on this policy, and no further action is required.

Carried out by (Name): Pritty Rana

Signed: PR

Date: 18/9/2025

Approved by (name): Sarah Talbot

Signed: ST

Date: 18/9/2025