

## **NewstrAid Benevolent Fund Complaints Policy**

We set ourselves high standards but we know there may be times when we fall short of those high standards. When we do, we want you to be free to tell us (hopefully before you tell everyone else) and give us a chance to put things right and learn lessons for the future.

If you are not happy with us, please begin by contacting the relevant member of our charity. If you are not happy with an individual, it is usually best to tell him or her directly. If you are not able to do this, or you feel it is inappropriate, contact the staff member's manager or a trustee; if your initial contact fails to resolve the issue, then we want you to be free to escalate the matter by contacting us at a higher level.

The work of the charity also depends upon the freely given help and assistance of volunteers, outside agencies and companies so contacting them may also take longer than purely internal contacts. We would again ask you to understand this when we investigate a matter concerning them.

We will take your complaint seriously and see it as an opportunity to improve what we do. Therefore, we are glad to hear from people who are willing to take the time to tell us where they feel we have let them down. Please feel free to write to us with your comments and your concerns.

***How long will our response be if you write to us?*** We will acknowledge your contact immediately, and we will give you a contact name. We aim to get a detailed response to you within ten days. If it takes longer than this, we will let you know.

***How far back can we research a complaint?*** Owing to data protection regulations, we are only allowed to keep certain types of data for a very limited period. This could inhibit any research of your complaint and we will tell you if this is the case.

***What will we do?*** We will work hard to find out what went wrong and fix the problem and address your concerns. When you contact us, please feel free to offer your suggestions on how you feel it can be resolved. We will always treat you with courtesy and respect, listen to what you say, and keep you informed of progress. We will advise you of your options if you are not satisfied.

***What if I am still not satisfied?*** We have an arrangement with an independent complaint investigation organisation, which undertakes to review all complaints sent to them and provide an appropriate response. This is not a legal process, but it is a genuine and serious attempt to ensure that all complaints are given the attention they deserve. At your request, we will involve the outside investigator.

***What we will not or cannot do:*** We cannot engage in lengthy debates on issues that are not directly related to our work. We will not reply to complaints that are abusive, prejudiced, offensive, or illegible. Where a complaint is made anonymously, clearly we cannot reply to it, but we will investigate the complaint to see what lessons can be learned.

**The Code of Fundraising Practice:** The Code of Fundraising Practice is supervised by the Fundraising Regulator. The Fundraising Regulator will deal with all complaints that are concerned with a breach of the Code of Fundraising Practice, provided that the complainant has first directed the complaint to the charity concerned but has not been satisfied with the answer received. In Scotland, this supervision is undertaken by the Scottish Fundraising Standards Panel.

**The Charity Commission:** The Charity Commission would deal with complaints regarding such issues as the dishonest handling of funds, the misapplication of charitable funds and alleged malpractice or misconduct.

**Our pledge:** We treat all complaints seriously and see them as an opportunity to improve what we do, and the way we do it. We are happy to acknowledge mistakes that we make, sincerely apologise for them, and try to prevent them happening again.

**Contact details:**

Address: The NewstrAid Benevolent Fund  
Suites 1 & 2  
Thremhall Estate  
Start Hill  
Bishop's Stortford  
CM22 7TD

Telephone: 01279 879 569

Email: [oldben@newstraid.org.uk](mailto:oldben@newstraid.org.uk)

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

**Contact details of the Fundraising Regulator:**

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

Website: [www.goodfundraising.scot/](http://www.goodfundraising.scot/)

**Contact details of the Charity Commission:**

Website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission)

**National Annual Draw:**

For the purposes of the national annual Draw, we are regulated by the Gambling Commission:

Website: [www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/home.aspx](http://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/home.aspx)

*This policy was approved by the Board on 13.12.18*

*Date to be reviewed: As required.*