

Garden Organic Complaints Policy and Procedure

Our promise

Garden Organic is committed to providing an exceptional level of service and achieving the highest standards of conduct with everyone we interact with. In the vast majority of cases that is exactly what happens, however occasionally something goes wrong and there is cause to raise a formal complaint.

Processing formal complaints in a prompt and professional manner is important to ensure people are treated fairly and we learn from any mistakes. As such, we will:

- ensure making a complaint is as easy as possible;
- treat as a complaint, any clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for a response;
- treat all complaints seriously, regardless of how they are made and whether they are made directly by the individual or by someone else on their behalf;
- deal with complaints promptly and politely;
- ensure complainants are not treated any differently as a result of their complaint;
- respond in the right way – for example with an explanation, an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken;
- learn from complaints, using them to improve our service where suitable; and
- share information on complaints to our board of trustees.

The scope of this document

This document covers any complaint where we have not met the expectations of those we interact with, that includes members, supporters, garden visitors, project beneficiaries and funders/donors. Staff members or volunteers wishing to make a complaint should refer to their handbook for processes.

How to make a complaint

Complaints can be made in writing, over the phone or by email to:

- Postal address: Garden Organic, Ryton Gardens, Wolston Lane, Coventry, CV8 3LG
- Telephone: 024 7630 3517
- Email: enquiry@gardenorganic.org.uk

Complaints should include as much detail as possible to help us with our investigation including, where appropriate:

- details of the complaint;
- an ideal outcome;
- information on any relevant communication on the subject, including times and dates;
- membership number;
- the name of the individual or individuals at Garden Organic who have been involved in the complaint;
- a preferred method of contact.

What happens next?

Within 5 working days we will acknowledge receipt of the complaint.

All complaints will be referred to the most relevant person depending on the nature of the issue. This may be escalated to a member of the Management or Executive Team, or the Board of Trustees.

Within 15 working days we will respond to the complaint. We will aim to give a full response and details of any actions that will be taken. If that is not possible, we will send an interim response with an update on what action has been taken so far, and when a full response can be expected.

We will always acknowledge where things could have been done better and include information on what will be done to avoid the issue arising again. For any complaints that are not upheld, we will explain why not. Complaint responses will include details of who to contact next if the complainant is not satisfied with the response. Where appropriate, we will inform the relevant industry official or ombudsman of the complaint.

All complaints, including resulting actions or resolution, will be recorded in a central document, with anonymity maintained where appropriate, and reported to the Audit and Risk Committee of Garden Organic trustees each quarter.

Where a complaint relates to a project run in partnership with another organisation or funding body, they will be informed of the complaint, if appropriate, and any resulting actions.

Complaints about fundraising

Garden Organic is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and strives to maintain the highest standards in our fundraising activities. Complaints relating to fundraising should be made directly to Garden Organic in the first instance, within 12 weeks of the fundraising incident which the complaint is about, following the complaints process outlined above.

If, after four weeks, we have not addressed the matter or the complainant does not feel their concerns have been resolved satisfactorily, the complaint can be referred to the Fundraising Regulator (England and Wales) or the Independent Fundraising Standards and Adjudication Panel for Scotland using the contact details below. This should be done within eight weeks of the issue in concern taking place.

Fundraising Regulator

- Postal address: 2nd Floor, CAN Mezzanine Building, 49-51 East Road, London, N1 6AH
- Telephone: 0300 999 3407

- Email: complaints@fundraisingregulator.org.uk
- Online form (including Welsh language version):
www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/make-a-complaint/complain-about-a-fundraising-approach/

Independent Fundraising Standards and Adjudication Panel for Scotland

- Postal address: Scottish Fundraising Adjudication Panel, c/o The Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), 2nd Floor Quadrant House, 9 Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4NY
- Telephone: 0808 164 2520
- Online form: www.goodfundraising.scot/make-a-complaint/

This policy is accessible via our website in the Charity information section of www.gardenorganic.org.uk/who-we-are

