

RFS Complaints procedure

We welcome feedback and complaints as an opportunity to improve our services. We will treat all complaints seriously, fairly, promptly and confidentially.

It is in everyone's interest that concerns and complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Many issues can be resolved informally, without the need to use the formal stages of this complaints procedure.

Please raise concerns as soon as possible and within three months of the incident or, where a series of associated incidents have occurred, within three months of the last of these incidents. We will consider complaints made outside of this time frame if exceptional circumstances apply. Complaints can be made by email, in writing or by telephone via our Head Office. You can use the Complaint Form at the end of this policy to help you structure your complaint.

Email: rfshq@rfs.org.uk

Tel: 01295 678588

The Hay Barns, Home Farm Drive, Upton Estate, Banbury OX15 6HU.

Complaints against staff (except the Chief Executive) or members of the Board of Trustees should be made in the first instance, to [the Chief Executive](#) via our Head Office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

Complaints that involve or are about the Chief Executive should be addressed to The Chair of the Board of Trustees, via the Head Office. Please mark them as Private and Confidential.

Complainants should not approach individual Trustees to raise concerns or complaints. They have no power to act on an individual basis and it may also prevent them from considering complaints at a later stage of the procedure.

If we receive your complaint by telephone, we will try to resolve the matter immediately. For complaints received by email or post, we will acknowledge receipt and aim to provide a full response within 10 working days. If this is not possible, we will explain why, give a revised timescale, and keep you informed.

If a complainant commences legal action against [the Royal Forestry Society](#) in relation to their complaint, we will consider whether to suspend the complaints procedure in relation to their complaint until those legal proceedings have concluded.

If you have difficulty discussing a concern with a particular member of staff, we will respect your views. In these cases the Chief Executive, will refer you to another staff member. The member of staff may be more senior but does not have to be. The ability to consider the concern objectively and impartially is more important. Complaints about staff will be dealt with under the Royal Forestry Society's internal disciplinary procedures, if appropriate. Complainants will not be informed of any disciplinary action taken against a staff member as a result of a complaint. However, the complainant will be notified that the matter is being addressed.

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you may ask for the complaint to be reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Please mark your correspondence for the attention of the CEO. The complaint will be reviewed and a response given within 10 working days of the request being received.

If the matter remains unresolved, you may ask for a final review by the Chair of the Board of Trustees. The Chair, or a trustee acting independently on the Chair's behalf, will review the complaint and issue a final written response within 10 working days of the request being received.

If your complaint relates to fundraising activity, you may also contact the Fundraising Regulator.

The RFS will keep a record of the complaint, correspondence, evidence considered, outcome and any actions taken. Information will be handled in line with data protection requirements.

No one will be disadvantaged for raising a complaint in good faith, whether or not it is upheld.

RFS Complaints Form

Please complete and return to rfshq@rfs.org.uk. A member of RFS staff will acknowledge receipt and explain what action will be taken.

Your name:

Address:

Postcode:

Day time telephone number:

Evening telephone number:

Please give details of your complaint, including whether you have spoken to anybody at the RFS about it.



What actions do you feel might resolve the problem at this stage?

Are you attaching any paperwork? If so, please give details.

Signature:

Date:

Official use

Date acknowledgement sent:

By whom:

Complaint referred to:

Date: