

## Healthwatch Kingston Complaints Policy and Procedures

### 1. Scope

This policy applies to

Anyone who is not an Employee	x
-------------------------------	---

### 2. Policy Statement

Individuals and organisations have the right to express their views about the performance of Healthwatch Kingston and the way in which it conducts its business.

Healthwatch Kingston is committed to learning and improving its service as a result of feedback and complaints. If Healthwatch Kingston is perceived to have fallen short of the high standards it sets, by someone who has received a service, then it is imperative that they can provide feedback or voice their concern easily and expect a prompt response.

### 3. Definitions

Anyone who is dissatisfied with any aspect of the service received by Healthwatch Kingston can provide feedback, raise a concern, or make a complaint. This includes complaints against the Board of Trustees (hereafter trustees), employees, volunteers and any others acting on behalf of Healthwatch Kingston.

This policy does NOT cover:

- Complaints or concerns about the NHS, which should be dealt with through the [NHS complaints process](#)
- Complaints about the provision of social care services, which should be dealt with by the [Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames complaints process](#)

### 4. External Standards

None.

### 5. Procedure

There are four stages to Healthwatch Kingston's Complaints Procedure and wherever possible an emphasis is placed on resolving any concerns as quickly as possible:

1. Individuals are encouraged to contact the office in the first instance and ask to speak to the Chief Executive Officer who will provide the complainant with this Complaints Policy and Procedures. Providing information or correcting possible misunderstandings or misconceptions at this early stage may enable the issue to be

promptly resolved at a local level without the need for an individual to make a formal complaint. If acceptable to the individual an offer to meet and discuss the concern with the Chief Executive Officer will be provided.

2. If the concern is not resolved to an individual's satisfaction, or the complaint is about the Chief Executive Officer, then they should notify the Chair in writing to the Healthwatch Kingston office address. and state that they wish to make a formal complaint and provide details of the nature of their concern(s). The Chair will acknowledge the complaint. Attempts to resolve the complaint will be completed within 15 working days of establishing the nature of the complaint. This stage will also include an offer to meet with the Chief Executive Officer or Chair of the Board of Trustees. Exceptionally, if further time is needed, and where possible, this will be agreed with the individual. A revised timescale will be provided in writing. A written response will be provided to the complainant on conclusion of this stage of the complaints process.
3. If an individual is not happy with the outcome of their formal complaint, they will be able to appeal to a panel of two to three trustees who have not previously been involved in the matter who will then review the complaint. A timescale will be provided (within 15 working days) and, once the appeal process has been completed, the complaint will be closed. A written response will be provided to the complainant on the conclusion of this stage of the complaints process.
4. If an individual remains dissatisfied, they can take their complaint to the [Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames](#). The individual may also subsequently take their complaint to the [Local Government Ombudsman](#).

## 6. Supporting Documents

Healthwatch England: Complaints Guidance, 2021

HW England: Complaints template, 2021