FIELDS OF LIFE TRUST (FOLNI)

COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURES

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1. Introduction

FOLNI is committed to high standards, accountability, and continuous improvement. We welcome all feedback, including complaints, as an opportunity to listen, reflect, and make changes where needed. This policy sets out how to raise a complaint and how we will respond.

2. Scope

This policy applies to complaints from the public, service users, donors, and partner organisations. It covers all aspects of our work, including fundraising activities. Internal staff grievances are handled under our separate grievance procedure.

3. Definition of a complaint

A complaint is defined as *an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about actions taken or a lack of action*. Where it is unclear whether a communication is a concern or a complaint, we will treat it as a complaint to ensure it is handled appropriately.

4. Principles

We commit to:

- **Accessibility** – Our complaints process is publicised on our website and available in alternative formats on request.
- **Fairness** – Complaints are investigated by someone not directly involved, where possible.
- **Transparency** – Complainants are informed of the process, timeline, and outcome.
- **Confidentiality** – Information is shared only as needed to investigate and resolve the issue.
- **Respect** – All parties are treated with courtesy and dignity throughout.

5. How to make a complaint

Complaints can be submitted:

- **By email** to: complaints@fieldsoflife.org
- **By post** to: Fields of Life, House of Vic-Ryn, Moira Road, Lisburn, Co. Antrim. BT28 2RF
- **Or in person/by phone** to any staff member (who will inform the Senior Leadership Team [SLT]): 028 9263 6200

We ask that complaints be made within 3 months of the issue arising.

6. Complaints process

Stage 1 – Informal Resolution: Where possible, we will seek to resolve the issue quickly and informally. This may involve a phone call or brief investigation by the relevant team member.

Stage 2 – Formal Complaint: If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, or the complainant prefers a formal process, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will investigate. We will:

- Acknowledge the complaint within **5 working days**
- Explain the process and timescales
- Provide a written response within **20 working days**, or update the complainant if more time is needed

Stage 3 – Appeal: If the complainant remains dissatisfied, they may appeal in writing. This will be reviewed by the Chief Executive or a Trustee, and a final response issued within 30 working days.

7. Fundraising complaints & external recourse

If your complaint relates to fundraising and you are not satisfied with our response, you may contact the **Fundraising Regulator**:

www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk
complaints@fundraisingregulator.org.uk

You may also raise serious concerns with the **Charity Commission for Northern Ireland** if appropriate: www.charitycommissionni.org.uk

8. Learning from complaints

We treat complaints as an opportunity to improve. We:

- Keep a log of all complaints received and outcomes
- Report regularly to the Senior Leadership Team and Board of Trustees
- Analyse trends to inform service improvement, staff training, or policy revision

- Take appropriate remedial action, including apologising or adjusting services when things go wrong.