

## OPERATIONAL POLICY – COMPLAINTS

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APPROVED JULY 2024

### 1. INTRODUCTION

**We are Suffolk's nature charity. Action for wildlife, led by local people is our great strength and everything we do, and the way we do it, reflects this.**

Our localness gives us a direct relationship with our members, volunteers, funders and the wider public. As keen observers of our day-to-day activity, they help to keep us true to our values and ensure accountability at every level of the organisation.

We welcome feedback, negative or positive, to help us do more to champion Suffolk's wildlife and inspire more people to get involved.

### 2. OUR POLICY

We will:

- Publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint.
- Make sure everyone in our organisation knows what to do if a complaint is received.

When handling complaints, we aim to:

- Provide a fair complaints procedure that is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint.
- Direct complaints to the person who is most appropriate to respond and escalate as necessary.
- Investigate complaints fairly and without prejudice, as appropriate to the issue.
- Respond to all complaints in a timely, respectful and open way.

If we cannot resolve a complaint about our fundraising activity, we accept the authority of the Fundraising Standards Board to make a final adjudication.

### 3. HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

**If you have a complaint or other feedback you would like to share with us, please contact us:**

- By email (for complaints about our sites or activities): [teamwilder@suffolkwildlifetrust.org](mailto:teamwilder@suffolkwildlifetrust.org)
- By email (for complaints about one of our staff, volunteers or Trustees): [recruitment@suffolkwildlifetrust.org](mailto:recruitment@suffolkwildlifetrust.org)
- By telephone: 01473 890089
- By post: Suffolk Wildlife Trust, Brooke House, The Green, Ashbocking IP6 9JY

### 4. CONFIDENTIALITY

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, in line with data protection requirements.

## **5 - APPROVAL AND REVIEW**

**Suffolk Wildlife Trust is committed to reviewing this policy and practice annually and whenever new legislation or practice makes it necessary.**

**Approved by SWT Leadership Team: July 2024**

Author: Chief Executive (Christine Luxton)

Accountable: Chief Executive (Christine Luxton)

**Next review due: July 2025**

## Appendix to the complaints policy – for internal reference

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### WHERE TO DIRECT COMPLAINTS?

In line with our policy, complaints sent to: [teamwilder@suffolkwildlifetrust.org](mailto:teamwilder@suffolkwildlifetrust.org) or [recruitment@suffolkwildlifetrust.org](mailto:recruitment@suffolkwildlifetrust.org) should be forwarded to the person who is most appropriate to respond and will be escalated as necessary.

### FOR COMPLAINTS ABOUT OUR SITES OR ACTIVITIES

#### a) COMPLAINTS ABOUT OUR NATURE RESERVES

Our nature reserves are Suffolk Wildlife Trust's pride and joy. In the first instance direct complaints to the appropriate area manager:

- **NE Suffolk Sites Manager**
- **SE Suffolk Sites Manager**
- **W Suffolk Sites Manager**

If our Sites Managers are unable to resolve the issue they will refer it to:

- **Director of Wildlife Conservation & Recovery**

If the complaint is about a legal or ownership issue regarding one of our sites, in the first instance please direct it to:

- **Head of Project Development**

#### b) COMPLAINTS ABOUT OUR LANDSCAPE ADVICE ACTIVITY

We support action for wildlife beyond our nature reserves through our team of expert wildlife advisers.

In the first instance please direct complaints to the team manager:

- **Wilder Landscapes Manager**

If our Wilder Landscapes Manager is unable to resolve the issue they will refer it to:

- **Director of Wildlife Conservation & Recovery**

#### c) COMPLAINTS ABOUT OUR PLANNING & ADVOCACY ACTIVITY

We effect positive change for nature through our planning and advocacy work.

In the first instance please direct complaints to the team manager:

- **Planning & Advocacy Manager**

If our Planning & Advocacy Manager is unable to resolve the issue they will refer it to:

- **Director of Wildlife Conservation & Recovery**

#### D) COMPLAINTS ABOUT OUR ECOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY

Our ecological consultancy, Wilder Ecology provides a professional service specialising in ecology, conservation and Biodiversity Net Gain.

In the first instance please direct complaints to our consultancy manager:

- **Wilder Ecology Manager**

If our Wilder Ecology Manager is unable to resolve the issue they will refer it to:

- **Director of Wildlife Conservation & Recovery**

### **c) COMPLAINTS ABOUT OUR VISITOR CENTRES AND ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY**

Our team of Engagement Officers and Visitor Officers take pride in creating inspiring and inclusive opportunities to help people of all ages to get closer to nature, including visitors to our centres.

In the first instance please direct complaints to the appropriate area manager:

- **NE Suffolk Engagement Manager**
- **SE Suffolk Engagement Manager**
- **W Suffolk Engagement Manager**

If our Engagement Managers are unable to resolve the issue they will refer it to:

- **Head of Engagement**

### **d) COMPLAINTS ABOUT OUR PUBLICATIONS AND MEDIA ACTIVITY**

We share news of our activities directly through our own publications, website and social media and indirectly through broadcast and print media.

In the first instance please direct complaints to our comms managers:

- **Communications Manager**
- **Design Manager**

If our comms managers are unable to resolve the issue they will refer it to:

- **Head of Engagement**

### **e) COMPLAINTS ABOUT OUR FUNDRAISING OR MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITY**

Our membership and fundraising activities support our conservation and learning activities across the county. Suffolk Wildlife Trust is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and endorses The Fundraising Promise.

In the first instance please direct complaints to the appropriate team manager:

- **Membership Manager**
- **Community Fundraising Manager**

If our team managers are unable to resolve the issue they will refer it to:

- **Head of Philanthropy & Partnerships**

The Head of Philanthropy & Partnerships is the first point of contact with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

If we cannot resolve a complaint, we accept the authority of the Fundraising Standards Board to make a final adjudication.

### **f) COMPLAINTS ABOUT OUR FINANCE ACTIVITY**

Our finance team works with the utmost integrity and this is overseen by the annual independent audit.

In the first instance please direct complaints to:

- **Finance Manager**

If our Finance Manager is unable to resolve the issue they will refer it to:

- **Head of Finance & Resources**

### **g) COMPLAINTS ABOUT OUR HR OR VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITY**

Our team of staff and volunteers are the talent behind everything we do.

In the first instance please direct complaints to:

- **People & Culture Manager**

## **FOR COMPLAINTS ABOUT MEMBERS OF OUR TEAM**

### **a) COMPLAINTS ABOUT OUR STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS**

Our staff and volunteers are ambassadors for the Trust. In the first instance please direct complaints to:

- **People & Culture Manager**

If Debbie is unable to resolve the issue, they will refer you to the appropriate Head of Department:

- **Director of Wildlife Conservation & Recovery**
- **Head of Engagement**
- **Head of Philanthropy & Partnerships**
- **Head of Finance & Resources**

If our Department Heads are unable to resolve the issue they will refer it to our **Chief Executive**.

### **b) COMPLAINTS ABOUT OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

In the first instance, please direct complaints about our Chief Executive to:

- **Chair of the Board of Trustees**

### **c) COMPLAINTS ABOUT OUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

In the first instance, please direct complaints about the Board or one of our Trustees to:

- **Chair of the Board of Trustees**

Please direct complaints about our Chair, to the Chief Executive, who will refer them to another Trustee:

- **Chief Executive**

## **CHANGE LOG**

<b>Date of Change</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Summary of Change</b>
June 2024	SLT Chief Executive (Christine Luxton)	Separated external policy from internal signposting (appendix 1) Managers (OLT) added as first point of enquiry. Updated personnel.
December 2022	Chief Executive (Christine Luxton)	Updated personnel. Added 'Feedback about our Ecological Consultancy' Added 'If your complaint is about our CEO'
February 2021	Chief Executive (Christine Luxton)	Updated personnel. Added 'Feedback about our Board'