

the Eternal Forest Trust Ltd  
Charity No. 1110801, Company No. 5163451

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## **COMPLAINTS POLICY**

### **Introduction**

The Eternal Forest Trust ("the charity") believes that if someone would like to comment / complain, it should be easy for them to do so. The charity welcomes complaints as an opportunity to engage more fully with our public, to review our practices and procedures, and to learn from these contributions. This policy endeavours also to ensure that the charity responds appropriately and fully to the issues raised by people concerned with all of our business and with the woodland burial site at Boduan.

This policy is not about blame or compensation but about improving our services and methods. By engaging promptly with any complaints and comments, the charity may sort the issue(s) out personally, sensitively and honestly. If the issue(s) are not sorted to the complainant's satisfaction, then they are encouraged to take the matter to the Association of Natural Burial Grounds \*(contact details below), of which the charity is a member.

### **IN SUMMARY:**

When we get things wrong we will act to:

accept responsibility and apologise

explain what went wrong and why, and

put things right by making any changes required

learn lessons from mistakes and change policies and practices where proportionate and sensible to do so

The action we take to put matters right (i.e., redress) in response to a service complaint can include any combination of the remedies set out in the list below. The general principle we follow is that complainants should, so far as possible, be put in the position they would have been in, had things not gone wrong.

The remedy applied needs to be proportionate and appropriate to the failure in service, and take into account what redress people seek when they complain. An apology is generally the most appropriate action, but other action may also be necessary in some circumstances.

### **List of remedies**

A full apology, explaining what happened and/or what went wrong. (an apology is not an acceptance of liability under Section 2 of the Compensation Act 2006)

Remedial action, which may include reviewing or changing a decision on the service given to an individual complainant

Provide the service required in first instance (immediately, if appropriate)

Putting things right (for example a change of procedure to prevent future difficulties of a similar kind, either for the complainant or others)

Training for staff / Trustees / volunteers as appropriate.

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

- Anyone who is dissatisfied with any aspect of the Charity's activities is encouraged to contact the Office (see contact details above) or any member of staff or the Board of Trustees who they may know or who may be on hand.

- All complaints and concerns will be addressed within one week of the complainant's contact with the Office and responded to in writing (in addition to any agreed personal contact).

- When anyone working on behalf of the Charity (for example, in the wood) encounters an individual or group who finds fault with any aspect of the Charity's activities, they should inform the office, giving (if possible) the name and contact details of the person who is willing to discuss the problem, assuring them that either the Chief Executive or the Complaints Manager will respond within seven days. The source of the dissatisfaction will also be addressed and appropriate action taken as soon as possible, with the complainant being kept informed of progress.

Comments and complaints can be made by the most suitable means for the referrer - in Welsh or English, verbally / written / email or by a third party if the complainant so wishes. It may be possible for a representative of the charity to record the comments on their device and / or take photographs of the cause of the complaint / comment.

The complaint could be sorted on the spot, of course. In which case, a record will be made by the charity (with appropriate anonymity of the complainant) for

review purposes by the Complaints Manager and the CEO and referred to the Board of Trustees for further review or and/ or to be duly noted.

· Staff or volunteers of the Charity who encounter someone expressing concern or dissatisfaction with any aspect of the Charity's actions and / or policies will be receptive to the individual(s) concerned and acknowledge their distress/concerns. They will be polite and receptive as possible.

· If any complaint cannot be resolved by the Chief Executive and the Complaints Manager, it will be passed promptly to the Board of Trustees for further investigation, and dealt with within 28 days of the issue being raised. If either party remains dissatisfied, the matter will be referred to the ANBG\*

\* The Association of Natural Burial Grounds: <http://www.anbg.co.uk/> Telephone: 01962712690

**Date approved** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of next review** \_\_\_\_\_

**Person responsible** \_\_\_\_\_ **signed**

**Print name**

<b>Date of change</b>	<b>Changed by</b>	<b>Policy approved by trustees</b>