

Hypo Hounds Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy

1. Purpose

Hypo Hounds aims to provide its members and service users with the highest possible standard of service. We value feedback of all kinds, as it helps us recognise good practice, identify areas for improvement, and resolve concerns fairly and transparently. This policy explains how compliments, comments, suggestions and complaints can be made, and how Hypo Hounds will respond.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all service users, members, families, volunteers, staff, and members of the public who interact with Hypo Hounds.

3. Our Commitments

We commit to:

- Treating everyone with respect, fairness and courtesy
- Listening carefully to feedback and concerns
- Responding in a timely, open and transparent way
- Learning from feedback and complaints to improve our services
- Ensuring staff and representatives are trained to handle feedback appropriately

4. Compliments

We are always pleased to hear when our work has made a positive difference.

If you would like to share a compliment about our services or staff, please email **info@hypohounds.co.uk**. We will ensure that your feedback is shared with the individuals involved and recorded as part of our continuous improvement process.

5. Comments and Suggestions

We welcome comments and suggestions on how we can improve our services.

Please send your feedback to **info@hypohounds.co.uk**. Or via the i-trust app

We will:

- Acknowledge receipt of your comment or suggestion
- Record it appropriately
- Review and report on feedback to help inform service development

6. Complaints

We recognise that sometimes things can go wrong. When this happens, our aim is to resolve complaints quickly, fairly and transparently.

We welcome complaints from service users, their families, and the wider community. Complaints help us learn and improve, and we take them seriously. Sadly, we are unable to investigate anonymous complaints.

6.1 How to Raise a Complaint

Stage 1 – Local Resolution

If you have a concern or complaint, please raise it as soon as possible with the person you have been working with (for example, your trainer). If you feel uncomfortable doing this, you may contact the Welfare Officer instead. Many complaints can be resolved quickly at this stage, and we aim to put things right promptly wherever possible.

Stage 2 – Formal Investigation

If you remain dissatisfied after completing Stage 1, you may make a formal complaint to the Operations Manager.

Complaints must be submitted in writing to operationsmanager@hypohounds.co.uk. The Operations Manager will aim to provide a written response within six weeks of receiving your complaint. If the complaint is complex or cannot be concluded within this timeframe, you will be contacted and kept informed of progress.

Following the investigation, your complaint will be recorded and one of the following outcomes will apply:

- **Upheld** – We agree with your complaint, will apologise, and will take steps to put things right where possible. As a charity, Hypo Hounds is unable to provide financial compensation for loss of earnings, time, inconvenience, or personal distress.
- **Not Upheld** – We do not agree with the complaint and will explain the reasons for this decision.

Stage 3 – Review

If you remain unhappy with the outcome of Stage 2, you may request a formal review by the Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive will review the investigation process, findings and recommendations. You will be informed in writing of the outcome. The decision will either uphold or not uphold the findings of the previous investigation.

Stage 4 – Chair of Trustees

Should you still not be satisfied with the outcome you can request a review by the board of trustees. Please bare in mind that trustees are all volunteers for Hypo Hounds and will conduct the review in their own time. There maybe times when the Chief Executive will take your complaint to them as part of her investigation. In this instance you will be notified of this and their decision will be final.

Charity Commission

You are within your rights to go to the Charity Commission to raise any concerns you have, however depending on the circumstances of the complaint, they MAY require you to have gone through the charities internal complaints process first.

7. Vexatious Complaints

In rare cases, the complaints process may be misused in a way that is excessive, repetitive, or unreasonable, such as repeatedly raising the same issue after it has been fully resolved.

A decision to apply the vexatious complaints policy will only be made with the agreement of the Chair, the Chief Executive, and at least one other Trustee. Any such decision will be proportionate and documented.

8. Monitoring and Review

All compliments, comments and complaints are recorded and monitored to identify learning and improvement opportunities. This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains effective and up to date.

Hypo Hounds is proud to be working with i-trust to provide a safe and anonymous way of leaving feedback for the charity to aid with our learning and development.

Date implemented: 8th January 2026

Approved by: Chairman Mike Newton, Nicholas Bills, Jo Herbert

Date of review: 8th January 2028 unless deemed appropriate to amend prior due to changes in staff.