**Complaints Policy & Procedure**
Reviewed: May 2026
Next review due: May 2027

**Introduction**

Think Active views complaints as opportunities to improve our services and address concerns raised by individuals or organisations. We are committed to resolving complaints fairly and learning from them to improve what we do.

**Our policy is:**

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint.
- To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint.
- To make sure everyone at Think Active knows what to do if a complaint is received.
- To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired.
- To gather information which helps us to improve what we do.

**Definition of a Complaint**

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of Think Active.

**Where Complaints Come From**

Complaints may come from any individual, volunteer or organisation who has a legitimate interest in Think Active, including members of the public if something is perceived to be improper. A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email, via social media or in writing.
This policy does not cover concerns or grievances raised by employees, workers, or volunteers, which are managed through separate internal procedures.
Anonymous complaints will be considered at the discretion of Think Active. The level of investigation possible may be limited if insufficient information is provided.

**Confidentiality**

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

Personal data associated with complaints will be processed in accordance with our Data Protection Policy and relevant UK GDPR requirements.

Complaint records will be retained securely in accordance with Think Active's data retention procedures.

**Responsibility**

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the executive team and the board of trustees of Think Active.

**Review**

This policy is reviewed annually and updated as required.

**Contact Details for Complaints**

Complaints can be made via the Think Active online complaints form by **clicking on the link.**

Written complaints may be sent to:
**Think Active**
1 Mill Street,
Leamington Spa,
Warwickshire,
CV31 1ES.

Email complaints may be sent to:
**hello@thinkactive.org**
Verbal complaints may be made by phone to Business Operations on 07885 200524 or in person to any of Think Active's team at any of our events.

**Receiving Complaints**

Complaints may arrive through channels publicised for that purpose or through any other contact details or opportunities the complainant may have, including social media.

Complaints raised through social media channels may be acknowledged publicly where appropriate, but detailed complaint handling will normally move to private communication channels to protect confidentiality.

Complaints received by telephone or in person may need to be recorded. The person who receives a phone or in person complaint should:

- Write down the facts of the complaint.
- Take the complainant's name, address, and telephone number.
- Note down the relationship of the complainant to Think Active
- Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure.
- Allocate a complaint reference number and advise the complainant of that number.
- Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take.
- Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

**Resolving Complaints**

Stage One

In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate.
Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to the Think Active Chief Executive within five working days. On receiving the complaint, the Chief Executive records it securely within the central complaints log. If it has not already been resolved, the Chief Executive will delegate an appropriate person to investigate it and to take appropriate action.
If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.
Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within five working days. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply.
A copy of this complaint's procedure should be attached.
Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within one month. If this is not possible because, for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.
Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe:

- The action taken to investigate the complaint
- The conclusions from the investigation
- Any action taken as a result of the complaint

Any complaint that raises safeguarding concerns relating to children or adults at risk will be managed in line with Think Active's safeguarding procedures and may take priority over the standard complaints process.

Stage Two

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can request that the complaint is reviewed at Board level.
Requests for a Stage Two review should normally be made within 20 working days of the Stage One response.

At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the Board of Trustees. The request for Board level review should be acknowledged within five working days of receiving it. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply.
The Board of Trustees may investigate the facts of the case themselves or delegate a suitably senior person to do so. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage One.
The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage One should be kept informed of what is happening.
If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond.
Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within a month. If this is not possible because, for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.
Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe:

- The action taken to investigate the complaint
- The conclusions from the investigation
- Any action taken because of the complaint

The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the Board decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

External Stage

As a charity registered in the UK, the complainant can complain to the Charity Commission at any stage.
Information about the kind of complaints the Charity Commission can involve itself in can be found on their website at:
www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity

**Unreasonable or Persistent Complaints**

Think Active recognises that, in rare cases, complainants may pursue complaints in a way that is unreasonable, excessive, or disproportionate.
Examples may include:

- Repeated complaints about the same issue after procedures are complete
- Aggressive or abusive behaviour towards staff
- Excessive contact that impacts operational delivery

In such cases, Think Active may limit communication methods or close correspondence while ensuring complaints are still handled fairly and appropriately.

**Variation of the Complaints Procedure**

Think Active reserves the right to vary this procedure where appropriate and proportionate to ensure fairness, independence, or safeguarding.
This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest. For example, a complaint about a Chair or trustee should not also have the Chair and/or trustee involved as a person leading a Stage Two review.
In the case of a variation to the procedure, the complainant should be advised accordingly.

**Monitoring and Learning from Complaints**

Complaints are logged and reviewed annually by the Executive Team and Board of Trustees to identify patterns, trends, or areas for service improvement.
The complaints log will include:

- Date received
- Complaint reference number
- Nature of complaint
- Person responsible for handling
- Outcome
- Date resolved
- Any learning or actions identified

Where appropriate, learnings from complaints will inform staff training, operational improvements, or policy changes.

**Accessibility**
Alternative formats of the policy (e.g., large print) are available upon request.

This policy should be read alongside the following Think Active policies:

- Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Children and Young People Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy

**This procedure has been approved & authorised by:**

**Name:** Vicky Joel
**Position:** Chief Executive
**Date:** 21/05/2026
**Signature:**

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