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Reviewer's signature:	

1. Introduction

The Complaints Procedure is intended to be non-contractual and is a statement of good practice.

2. Summary Statement of Procedure

Age Concern Kingston upon Thames aims to provide a high quality of service and it welcomes complaints from users when its services have not met their expectations or needs. The purpose of the Complaints Procedure is to provide a framework within which such dissatisfaction can be identified and addressed promptly and fairly.

Age Concern Kingston upon Thames will:

- respond to and address complaints at the earliest stage and provide a response to the complainant as quickly as possible
- seek to assist people to obtain appropriate support to help them present their complaint (e.g. independent advocate, interpreting services etc.)
- ensure that the quality and accessibility of Age Concern Kingston upon Thames to individual users is not affected by their right to make complaints.

3 Making an Informal Complaint

An informal complaint should be made to the relevant member of staff responsible for the activity concerned either by telephone or in person. If you are unsure which member of staff to contact, informal complaints should be addressed to the Chief Executive who will pass the complaint on to the appropriate person. Every informal complaint will be entered into the Complaints Register held at the Age Concern Kingston upon Thames Head Office at 14 Nelson Road, New Malden.

If the member of staff cannot resolve your informal complaint it will be passed to their line manager to deal with and, if practicable, a response will be made to the complainant within 24 hours.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied or if the complaint is of a very serious nature, a formal complaint should be lodged.

4 Making a Formal Complaint

A formal complaint must be made in writing to the Chief Executive, Age Concern Kingston upon Thames, 14 Nelson Road, New Malden. The Chief Executive or his/her deputy will acknowledge receipt of the complaint by return of post and will enter a record of the complaint in the Complaints Register. Any formal complaint will be investigated by the Chief Executive. The complainant will be notified as quickly as possible of the outcome of the investigation and any proposed action.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the resolution proposed, the matter may be referred to the Board of Trustees by writing to the Chairman at the Age Concern Kingston upon Thames Head Office.

5 Monitoring and Review

The following procedures will apply:

- a) All complaints whether formal or informal will be entered into the Complaints Register and the Register will be analysed and reviewed annually.
- b) The Board of Trustees will be responsible for ensuring that any formal complaints have been adequately dealt with.
- c) A complainant may withdraw the complaint at any stage of the process and will be asked to confirm this in writing.
- d) The principle of confidentiality will be observed in relation to all complaints and the source of the complaint will not be disclosed except to those investigating it. At the discretion of the Chief Executive, any staff member named on the complaint will be advised of the nature of the complaint but the identity of the complainant will not be revealed. The term 'service user' will be used.
- e) Access to records of complaints held on the Complaints Register will be similarly restricted and subject to the discretion of the Chief Executive except where such access is necessary as a result of legal action arising from the complaint.