



COMPLAINTS POLICY

Nottinghamshire Sexual Violence Support Services (Notts SVSS) is committed to providing high quality support for all service users. One of the ways we do this is by listening to those who are in contact with our service.

Ways to give us Feedback

Sometimes you might want to give us feedback that is not a complaint. Whether you want to tell us something good or something bad or have an idea how things could be done differently, we would really like to hear from you. You can do this anonymously if you choose. Anything you share will not negatively affect the support you receive from us or your space on a waiting list.

The main ways people usually give feedback is by:

- Speaking to your worker if you are currently getting support from us.
- Using the feedback form on our website: <https://nottssvss.org.uk/feedback-questionnaire/>
- Calling our admin team: 0115 9470064

Notts SVSS will use feedback to understand where we are getting things right and to make changes where things could be done better.

We believe:

- Feedback helps us to resolve problems quickly.
- Feedback can help us to improve services.
- That people can see how their feedback has made a change to the service via 'you said – we did' page on our website.

What is a Complaint?

Notts SVSS defines a complaint as “any expression of dissatisfaction (with Notts SVSS, a member of its staff or volunteers, or a Trustee of Notts SVSS) that relates to Notts SVSS and that requires a response or a response has been requested”.

We aim to make our complaints process as easy as possible, but we understand that sometimes making a complaint can be hard. Our complaints process helps us to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly and consistently.

We believe:

- Making a complaint should be as easy as possible. We can support you with making a complaint if this would be helpful to you.
- Making a complaint will not negatively affect the support you receive from us or your place on a waiting list
- Complaints should be dealt with quickly, politely, professionally and, where appropriate, confidentially.
- Complaints should be responded to in the right way - for example, with an explanation or an apology where we have got things wrong or information on any action taken where appropriate.
- Complaints help us to improve our service.

Some people may want to raise a complaint anonymously. Unfortunately, we will not normally be able to investigate a complaint made in this way. This is because we won't be able to identify the issues rising to the complaint, investigate it fairly or provide an outcome. We would always seek to support people who are worried about making a complaint to do so in a way that is comfortable to them.

Stage 1 Making an Informal Complaint

Advantages of raising a complaint informally:

- It can stop a problem from developing into something that needs a more formal complaint.
- You might feel it is less stressful to manage things this way.

You can make an informal complaint by:

- Raising an informal complaint through our Helpline by phoning 0115 9470064 and asking to make an informal complaint. They will then contact the team manager, who will arrange to discuss this with you further.

If the informal process has not worked or you feel the situation cannot be resolved informally, you are welcome to raise a formal complaint and we are happy to support you in this.

Stage 2 Making a Formal Complaint

How to make a formal complaint:

- Raise within 6 months unless there is a good reason for a delay.
- This should be done in writing either by:
 - email to admin@nottssvss.org.uk
 - or by post to Admin, Notts SVS Services, 30 Chaucer Street, Nottingham, NG1 5L
- While it is easier for us to deal with complaints given to us in writing, we know that this is not always possible. Formal complaints can also be made through the Helpline by phoning 0115 941 0440 and asking to make a 'formal complaint.'
- The complaints should be addressed to the department you want to complain about. Our services are grouped into the following departments:
 - Counselling / Therapeutic Services
 - Helpline / Hub
 - ISVA Service / Survivors Support Service
 - Admin and Buildings
 - Campaigns, Communications and Engagement

In your complaint, it would be helpful if you explain the problem as clearly and fully as possible, including any action taken to date. If you have already tried to raise the issue informally, it would help us to know this.

When we have received your complaint, we will:

- Acknowledge the formal complaint in writing within 5 working days.
- Undertake an investigation and respond within 6 weeks. If, for any reason, we are not able to respond within this time, we will give you an update and let you know when we expect to send a full response.
- Take action and follow up action if necessary.

Stage 3 Appeals

Grounds for stage 3 appeal.

If you:

- feel that your complaint has not been investigated fully.
- or the procedure has not been followed.
- or you have new information available that you feel should be considered as part of your complaint.

You should appeal in writing to Notts SVSS's CEO within 10 working days of our response date. You can do this by email admin@nottssvss.org.uk or by post to Admin, Notts SVS Services, 30 Chaucer Street, Nottingham, NG1 5LP. You should set out the grounds for your appeal, which must come within one of the three grounds set out above.

We will acknowledge the receipt of your request within two weeks. A full and final response will be sent within 6 weeks.

Stage 4 Final

If you are still not satisfied with the final reply from Notts SVSS, then you have the option of writing to the Charity Commission at Charity Commission Direct, PO Box 1227, Liverpool, L69 3UG, stating the reason why you are dissatisfied with the outcome. All information on making complaints to the Charity Commission can be found on the Charity Commission's website www.charity-commission.gov.uk in information Form CC47.

The Charity Commission will usually get back to you within 15 working days. This response might include the following:

- Acknowledgement of your complaint
- Information about the action they will take to investigate your complaint
- Details of when you can expect to hear the outcome of the investigation.

Confidentiality

In line with Notts SVSS's Confidentiality Policy all information will remain strictly confidential. However, in exceptional cases, the circumstances giving rise to the complaint might mean that we are not able to maintain complete confidentiality. Each complaint and the information in it will be judged on its own merit. If we need to break confidentiality, the situation will be explained to you before this is done. See Privacy Notice on the Notts SVSS website. <https://nottssvss.org.uk/privacy-notice/>

*Last review: February 2026
Next review due: February 2028*