Complaints Policy

Our Commitment

We are committed to providing funeral services with care, dignity, and professionalism. We recognise that, on occasion, things may not go as expected. When this happens, we encourage clients to let us know so that we can address concerns promptly and fairly. This policy applies to concerns about our employees and services and the services of third-party subcontractors acting on our behalf (e.g., bearers, vehicle providers, out-of-hours removals, embalming, repatriation).

We view complaints as an opportunity to:

- Put things right where they have gone wrong.
- Review and improve the quality of our services.
- Strengthen trust and transparency with the families we serve.

Policy Principles

- Respect and sensitivity: Complaints will be handled with compassion, discretion, and respect.
- Accessibility: Clients may raise a complaint in person, by telephone, in writing, or by email.
- Fairness: All complaints will be investigated objectively and without prejudice.
- Timeliness: We will acknowledge complaints promptly and provide a full response within a reasonable timeframe.
- Transparency: Clients will be kept informed of the progress and outcome of their complaint.

How to Make a Complaint

You can complain about our employees and services, or about a subcontractor providing services on our behalf, by contacting us:

- By email at info@haroldwhitefunerals.co.uk
- By telephone on 0208 529 1530
- In writing to Harold White Independent Funeral Directors Ltd

When making a complaint, it is helpful if you can provide:

- Your name and contact details.
- Details of the service received.
- A clear description of your concerns.
- Any supporting documents or information.

Complaints Procedure

Step 1 – Acknowledgement

- We will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days of receiving it.
- We will explain how your complaint will be handled and provide a named contact person.

Step 2 – Investigation

- Your complaint will be investigated by a senior member of staff not directly involved in the matter.
- Where a subcontractor is involved, we will liaise with that provider and gather their account and records to complete our investigation.
- If needed, we may share relevant complaint details with the subcontractor strictly for investigation and resolution, in line with UK GDPR and our Data Protection Policy.
- We may contact you for further information or to clarify your concerns.

Step 3 – Response

- We aim to provide a full written response within 20 working days.
- If the investigation takes longer, we will keep you updated and advise you when a final response will be provided.

Step 4 – Resolution

- If your complaint is upheld, we will explain what went wrong, apologise where appropriate, and set out the steps we will take to put things right.
- If your complaint is not upheld, we will explain our reasoning clearly.
- If a subcontractor is responsible for any part of the issue, we will set out corrective actions for them (and for us, if applicable), including timescales and how we will monitor completion.

Escalation and Independent Review

If we cannot resolve your complaint, whether about our service or a subcontractor acting for us, you may refer the matter to the National Society of Allied & Independent Funeral Directors (SAIF). We are a member of SAIF and subscribe to its Code of Practice, a copy of which is available on request. As members of SAIF, we are required to provide a high-quality service in all aspects.

If we cannot resolve your complaint to your satisfaction, you may refer the matter to:

- The Chairman of the SAIF Standards Committee for investigation and amicable resolution; or
- The Independent Consumer Arbitration Service (ICAS), which provides independent conciliation and arbitration through IDRS Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators.

All correspondence should be addressed to:
Professional Standards Committee, SAIF Business Centre, 3 Bullfields, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire, CM21 9DB

Monitoring and Review

- All complaints will be recorded and monitored.
- We record whether each complaint involves a subcontractor and track trends to improve supplier oversight and service quality.
- Senior management will review complaints regularly to identify trends and make improvements.
- This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains effective and fair.

Updates to This Policy

We may update this policy periodically. The latest version will always be available on our website or in our office.