**POLICY ON COMPLAINTS**

Vine Communities is committed to being accountable for its actions and takes complaints seriously. If any person notices wrongdoing in the work of Vine Communities in Australia or in its programs, they can report this confidentially and safely to Vine Communities. This ensures that stakeholders are able to hold Vine Communities to account for its actions or decisions through a complaints process where these can be queried and a response obtained.

**Scope of policy**

This policy is intended to apply to any complaint, regardless of who makes it. This could be a member of the general public, a beneficiary, a representative of Vine Communities, or anyone else who is in contact with our work and the work of our in-country partners.

Vine Communities regards a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our organisation, our staff, our volunteers, our board, our in-country development partners, or anyone else acting on our behalf.

**Publicising this policy**

Vine Communities has identified its Executive Officer and its Board Chairman on its website as points of contact for complaints. This includes the words ‘*We welcome feedback or complaints on our operations and conduct. Should you wish to provide feedback or complaints, please contact us by email, mail, or phone on the contact details above* (which list the details of the Board Chairman and the Executive Officer)*. We will respond to your feedback or complaint.*’

Complaint contact details for Vine Communities are detailed on the Vine Communities website and appear below.

Volunteers, staff, and members of the Board are made aware of this complaints policy through their induction so that they understand the importance and scope of the policy.

Vine Communities’ in-country partners also have contact details listed on their websites. If they do not have a website, points of contact for complaints are available within their community. Vine Communities’ in-country partners are made aware of this policy when they begin their partnership with Vine Communities. The importance of the policy is also reinforced throughout the partnership during visits by Vine Communities representatives, and partners have regular meetings with project beneficiaries and stakeholders to encourage feedback and reporting of complaints.

**Handling of complaints**

When Vine Communities receives a complaint, it registers this on the confidential Complaints Register. This Register includes date of receipt, summary, type of complaint, who received the complaint, process to deal with complaint, and complainant. The matter is first discussed on a personal basis with the complainant and the Executive Officer or Chairman of the Board to determine the magnitude of the complaint. If the complaint involves the Executive Officer or Chairman of the Board, then the matter is raised with a senior Board official (eg Secretary or Treasurer).

If the issue cannot be resolved through discussion, the complaint is presented in written form and is then addressed at a meeting of the Board where a decision can be made. The person making the complaint is then advised by the Executive Officer and/or the Chairman of the Board, both verbally and in writing.

Vine Communities reserves the right to intervene without notice should a situation arise which requires immediate investigation. In the event of a complaint requiring investigation, whether that complaint be in relation to a child protection, financial, or other matter, the Vine Communities Board will appoint a suitably qualified person to undertake the investigation on its behalf. A report of the investigation is to be provided to the Vine Communities Board, which will be responsible for determining any action to be taken and for providing a report to the Board. Where an investigation reveals criminal wrongdoing, the matter is reported to the relevant authority.

**Timeframes**

For complaints that are not resolved within 5 days, Vine Communities acknowledge the complaint either by telephone or in writing. If the complaint has not been resolved within 30 days, Vine Communities contacts the complainant to update them on the progress of the complaint.

**Confidentiality**

Full confidentiality is assured in the complaints process, enabling staff, members of the Board, office holders or members of the public to report misconduct under conditions of confidentiality. Vine Communities will not reveal the complainant’s name or personal details to anyone outside the organisation without the complainant’s permission.

**Resources**

**Complaint Contact**

To make a complaint to Vine Communities contact:

Vine Communities

Postal: 99 Tallawang Av

Malua Bay

New South Wales Australia 2536

Phone: (61) 421611993

Email: carlginger3@gmail.com

Board Chairperson: Carl Ginger M: (+61) 0421 611 993