

ACCESS TO TBF

This explains how members and beneficiaries may access records we hold on them, have access to the Trustees and contact us out of normal hours.

Access to TBF records

Our policy is to be as open as possible with members and beneficiaries, whose well-being is the only reason we exist. Records are kept fairly and objectively and we try to avoid expressions of opinion. We keep them securely and will not normally disclose them to anyone other than the person to whom they relate, but our Committees must have the information they need to enable them to make decisions.

Membership records are held on computer, along with details of benefits granted. We also hold paper-based records in connexion with requests for help. We always point out to those seeking help that records will be kept in accordance with Data Protection legislation and members and beneficiaries have the right to inspect much of the data held on them. TBF is registered under the Data Protection Act 1998.

There is normally no charge for a member or beneficiary to see their record, nor for any copies supplied where these are required to be provided by law. Where a member or beneficiary seeks the same or similar information twice or more in a year the right is reserved to charge £10 per enquiry after the first.

Members and beneficiaries who wish to inspect data held on them must apply to the Director in writing. The necessary action will be taken within two weeks.

Access to the Trustees

The Trustees delegate day-to-day responsibility for running TBF to the Director. In taking decisions he considers the provisions of the Trust Deed, TBF rules, policies, budget and the law. His decisions are not final, but he is not expected to refer routine matters to the Trustees.

If a beneficiary tells the Director that s/he believes an inappropriate decision has been taken, the Director will review the decision with an open mind and modify it if necessary. A prompt reply will be sent. If the Director feels the Trustees need to examine any factors he will advise them of the facts and seek their decision - before the next meeting if necessary.

If the beneficiary still objects to the decision s/he will be told impartially by the Director whether an appeal to the Trustees would be to any possible effect. In giving this advice the Director will bear in mind not only his duty to implement the Trustees' decisions, but to keep them abreast of developments without the need for them to constantly review policy or examine day-to-day issues.

Where the Director believes there is a case for the Trustees to consider he will place the matter impartially before them and implement their decision. Where he does not believe any useful purpose would be served by an appeal he will tell the beneficiary why. If the beneficiary seeks to insist on a further appeal the Director will discuss the matter with the President, whose decision on behalf of the Trustees is final.

Beneficiaries are not expected to appear before the Trustees, but the Director will normally make himself available to meet any aggrieved member.

There is no appeal against the decision of the Trustees as they alone bear the legal responsibility for the control of the charity's affairs.

Annual report and accounts

This document is normally published during August each year, covering the year to the previous March 31. Copies will be made available to any member on request and to outside bodies, but the right is reserved to charge anyone who is not a member the costs of production and postage.

Contacting TBF out of normal hours

The TBF office is normally staffed from 0845 to 1630 Monday to Friday (except Bank Holidays) and often from 0830 to 1700.

Outside these hours (and very occasionally between them) an answering machine will ask callers who need urgent attention to call the emergency mobile phone number. Please do not call this number between 2300 and 0700 (0900 at weekends or on Bank Holidays) unless essential.