

Procedure for Managing Complaints and Procedures

Introduction

In any organisation, complaints and grievances (c/g) will occur from time to time and it is important that any such issues are managed quickly, objectively and appropriately. This set of procedures is to be used for both complaints and grievances.

In the first instance, a c/g should be directed to the person with whom the complainant has an issue by the complainant. If the issue is not resolved by this method, and it is an Interest Group issue, then the next point of contact should be the Group Contact and thereafter the Groups Coordinator. If it is a more general complaint then the first contact would be the Culm Valley u3a (CVu3a) Committee through the Chair.

Depending on the nature of the c/g the Committee will make a decision as to how best to resolve the issue.

In dealing with c/g the CVu3a Committee will ensure:

- The complaint will be dealt with quickly and fairly.
- Attempts will be made to settle the issue/s without having to resort to formal action.
- Decisions will be based on facts and evidence gathered.
- Actions and decisions will be documented.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process. Information will only be shared with those who have a genuine need to receive it including Trust staff and volunteers (National Office). All situations will be dealt with discreetly and by showing respect for the parties and views involved.

Communication

Written letters and/or documents may be sent using email or by post.

Informal Process

It is anticipated that the majority of c/g can be dealt with informally as detailed below:

Who	Actions	Timescale
A Trustee selected by the Chair of the CVu3a committee and the individual/s involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • informal discussion to identify and understand the facts of the issue and hear each party's views. • The parties may decide to put the facts of their issue in writing. • Agree actions with all parties to ensure there is no repeat of the situation. 	To be completed within 10 days of the c/g being received by the Chair.

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Formal Process

If the c/g is considered to warrant a more formal approach or a specific course of action; or the individual raising the c/g wishes the issue to be dealt with through the formal process, the matter will be referred, in writing, to the Chair of the CVu3a Committee by the Trustee selected to manage the informal process.

Step	Who	Actions	Timescale
1	Chair	Receives written referral and all documents/reports of the c/g from the Trustee who dealt with the informal process.	Within 3 days of the Trustee referring to the Chair
2	Chair	May contact the Third Age Trust to request support from the Regional Trustee, a Trust volunteer and/or National Office staff. [Dependent on circumstances of the complaint] Will inform member that additional support has been requested and the reasons why.	Within 3 days of the receiving written referral from Trustee.
3	Appointment of Panel of THREE Trustees	Appointed by Chair and issued with all relevant documentation. [One trustee to be appointed Panel Chair]	Within 3 days of receiving written referral from Trustee.
4	One member of Panel	Gather and compile all factual information relating to the case, including original documents and any supporting documentation or statements from other members. <i>The documentation will not be disclosed to any other Trustees at this stage, in order to ensure any appeal is un-biased.</i>	Within 5 days of being selected as the panel.
5	Panel Chair	Agree date, time and venue with member to hear the case.	Within 2 days of collation of documentation being completed.
6	Panel and member	Meet in confidence	On agreed day
7	Panel	Matter considered by Panel taking into account any mitigating circumstances.	Once complainant has left the meeting.
8	Panel Chair	Decision about whether the c/g has been upheld or not upheld and any specific actions required will be communicated, in writing, to all parties involved. Member notified of their Right to Appeal the decision.	Within 2 days of the meeting being held.

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Right to Appeal

Right of Appeal			
Stage	Who	Action/s	Timescale
1	Member/s	Lodge appeal, in writing, with the CVu3a Chair	Within 5 days of receiving Panel decision
2	CVu3a Chair	Convene a meeting of THREE Trustees (including him/herself) as the Appeal Panel. <i>[Will not include any trustees involved in initial investigation.]</i>	Within 2 days of receiving written appeal
3	CVu3a Chair	Offer to member of a verbal right of reply at a meeting of the Appeal Panel. Where the verbal right of reply involves the member against whom the c/g has been made, that member will be offered the option to attend with a companion who may also speak in a personal capacity.	Within 2 days of the written appeal being received by Chair
4	Member/s	Confirm intentions to attend (or not) an appeals meeting	Within 2 days of receiving offer of a verbal right to reply.
5	CVu3a Chair and members	If attendance at appeals meeting is confirmed, agree date, time and venue for the appeal to be heard	Within 2 days of receipt of confirmations.
6	Appeal Panel and members	Meet in confidence	On agreed day
7	Appeal Panel	Review the decision based only on the facts included in the original hearing, taking into account any mitigating circumstances, and make a final decision,	On day of meeting
8	CVu3a Chair	Communicate final decision in writing to all members involved.	Within 2 days of the date of the meeting

This procedure was adopted on:

Signed:

Committee role:

Print name:

Signed:

Committee role:

Print name:

Policy review date: