

LYMPSTONE VILLAGE HALL CIO - COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

December 2020

Lympstone Village Hall CIO views complaints as a valued opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the complaint. We define a complaint as a communication either verbally or in writing where the complainant is dissatisfied with some aspect of the Hall's operations and expects a remedy. We will not log minor issues as a complaint, where we are simply informed of a problem, for example a light not working.

Our policy is to:

- provide a complaints procedure that is clear and easy to use
- ensure complaints are, wherever possible, resolved informally and that relationships are repaired
- ensure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely manner
- gather information that helps us to improve what we do
- review complaints annually at a Board meeting, to identify any trends that may indicate a need to take further action.

EXTERNAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

An external complaint could be a complaint made by users or hirers of the Village Hall facilities, or other affected by the use of the hall and its environs. All complaints should be handled considerately and compassionately.

1 Informal complaint: Those involved with the day-to-day running of the Hall should aim to resolve minor issues quickly and informally, liaising with the Chair or Bookings Coordinator to agree any appropriate action or compensation as required. The Bookings Coordinator has discretion to offer compensation up to a maximum value of 50% of the hire cost up to a maximum of £100.

2 The Secretary should be informed of any informal complaint where financial compensation has been given. The Secretary will log the complaint, record its status, date received and date resolved. We do not log minor issues where no compensation is required.

3 Formal complaint: where an informal resolution is not possible the complainant should be informed of their right to have a written response (where applicable) from a named person at Trustee level. This is then a formal complaint and should be dealt with within 2 weeks. Formal complaints should be handled by the Chair, if it is about the Chair, it should be handled by the Secretary. Details should be recorded and the complainant informed of the complaints procedure and how long it will take. The record should include:

- the complainant's name, address, email and/or telephone number –
- the relationship of the complainant to Lympstone Village Hall (e.g. client, contractor, etc.)
- the facts of the complaint. Where appropriate, the complainant should be invited to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

4 If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.

5 The complainant should be responded to as soon as possible. Where the 2 week timescale is not possible (e.g. the investigation is not complete), a progress report should be sent which will include an indication of when a full response will be given. The full response should cover:

- the action taken to investigate the complaint
- the conclusions from the investigation
- any action taken as a result of the complaint.

6 If the complainant is not satisfied with the result they can request that the complaint is reviewed at Board level. This will take place at the next quarterly Board meeting (the Chair has the discretion to call a special meeting of the Board if the circumstances warrant it).

Complainants should be notified of the date of the Board meeting and expect to hear the outcome within 1 week of that meeting.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond. The decision taken at this stage is final.

7 The complainant can complain to the Charity Commission at any stage. Information about the kind of complaints the Commission can involve itself in can be found on their website at:

www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc47.aspx .