

Selsey Community Forum



Complaints & Grievances Policy

Aim

Complaints and grievances are treated very seriously by Selsey Community Forum; this policy details the actions to be taken in response to receiving complaints from external sources or grievances from staff or volunteers.

Complaints

Complaints received from external individuals or other sources are to be fully investigated, handled fairly and politely dealt with as quickly as possible. Verbal complaints should be referred to the relevant manager or project leader who will be responsible for investigating the matter and providing the complainant with a suitable response as well as advising them that, if they are not satisfied, they should submit their complaint in writing for the attention of the Chair. Complaints which are made initially in writing are also to be passed to the Chair. In either case, the Chair is responsible for acknowledging receipt of the complaint, investigating the matter and providing a response as well as advising the complainant that if they are not satisfied, the matter can be considered by the Trustees. The Trustees' decision is considered to be final.

Grievances

The internal grievance procedure is similar to that for external complaints. Again, staff and volunteers can initially notify grievances verbally or in writing and either for themselves or on behalf of someone else. The grievances procedure has 3 stages:

- ◆ **Informal Notification.** Staff or volunteers should, in the first instance, make their concerns known to their manager or project leader who will try to resolve the matter. Failing this, the individual will be asked to make a Formal Notification.
- ◆ **Formal Notification.** Staff or volunteers should submit their grievance in writing for the attention of the Chairman who is responsible for acknowledging receipt of the grievance, investigating the matter and providing a response. If the complaint involves the Chair, the individual can submit their Formal Notification to a Trustee of their choice.
- ◆ **Final Notification.** If the individual is not satisfied with the outcome of their Formal Notification, they can submit their grievance for consideration by the Trustees. The Trustees' decision is considered to be final.

Each stage should be dealt with as quickly as reasonably possible. Staff and volunteers who face an allegation have the right to receive a copy of the allegations against them and to respond to the allegations as part of the process.

Whistleblowers

Selsey Community Forum encourages staff and volunteers to be alert to any wrong-doing and to report any matter that they believe to be seriously wrong or even illegal. If they choose to do so internally, they should use the Formal Notification procedure. In certain circumstances, such whistleblowers are protected by law and, provided the allegation is made in good faith and with reasonable suspicion that the alleged malpractice has occurred, is occurring, or is likely to occur, they should not be penalised in any way as a result of having reported the matter.

Other Matters

A written record is to be retained detailing the outcome of all complaints and all Formal Notifications.

Any complaints or grievances related to a safeguarding issue are to be dealt with in accordance with Selsey Community Forum's Adult Safeguarding Policy or Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy as appropriate.

All staff and volunteers are to be provided with appropriate induction training and a handbook providing information and guidance on complaints and grievances.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Selsey Community Forum's Complaints & Grievances Procedure and is applicable to all the activities in which Selsey Community Forum is or becomes involved; it is to be reviewed and updated as necessary at least annually.

Reviewed and Approved by Trustees: October 2023

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Mike Nicholls, Chair, Selsey Community Forum