



# HYDE PARK SOURCE

## Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy & Procedure

### Introduction

HPSource is committed to providing a high quality service. Our handling of compliments, comments and complaints supports this. Effective communication is a vital part of the process in dealing with comments and complaints as people are more likely to forgive errors when they are discussed in a timely and thoughtful manner.

One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the feedback from our volunteers and stakeholders, and in particular by responding positively to complaints. Sometimes we can put things right, sometimes complaints are unjustified or vexatious and sometimes we can only explain our actions and apologise.

This policy is not intended for use by staff who should use our [grievance policy](#).

### What happens to Compliments and Comments

We welcome your compliments about our services. When you send in a written compliment we will ensure that it gets passed to the member of staff or volunteer.

Comments are really helpful to us in reviewing the services we offer; it is even better if you can suggest a solution. We will consider all reasonable ideas and we will let you know if we have made any changes as a result

### Complaints

We aim to ensure that:

- Making a complaint is as easy as possible;
- We treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response;
- We deal with it promptly, politely and in confidence. It is likely however that we will need to share details with relevant employees in order to investigate your complaint fully
- We respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken etc;
- We learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review annually our complaints policy and procedures.

We recognise that many concerns will be raised informally, and dealt with quickly. Our aims are to:

- Resolve informal concerns quickly;
- Keep matters low-key;
- Enable mediation between the complainant and the individual to whom the complaint has been referred.

We encourage and support volunteers and anyone else involved in the organisation to communicate openly and assertively in the first instance to try to resolve the complaint at an informal level. Dealing with issues directly in this way maximises the likelihood of a positive outcome.

Persistent/vexatious complainants may have a genuine grievance but take inappropriate steps to complain. All complaints will be dealt with fairly and appropriately while ensuring that staff or volunteers do not suffer detriment and that the resources of HPSource are used effectively.

An informal approach is recommended when it can be achieved. If concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the *formal complaints procedure* should be followed.

If any member of staff receives a complaint either verbally or in writing, they should pass the complaint to a member of the core staff team. If appropriate, this person will arrange a meeting with the complainant to try and resolve the complaint informally, this is not part of the *complaints procedure*, but precedes it. Notes will be taken at or after this meeting to document the issue and the resolution.

If a complaint has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant informally, then the procedure at Appendix 1 should be followed:

### **Monitoring of compliments, comments and complaints**

A log of all compliments, comments and complaints is kept by the Core Staff Team and a quarterly report is prepared for the Management Committee.

Complaints are monitored to identify ways to improve practice and maintain a high quality service.

## **Appendix 1. Complaints procedure**

### **Stage 1: Submit a complaint in writing**

In order to resolve issues as efficiently as possible, the complaint should be made as soon as possible after the incident.

1. Using the Complaint Form, giving as much detail as possible.
2. The complaint should be submitted to: [info@hydeparksource.org](mailto:info@hydeparksource.org) or Hyde Park Source, 2 Rosebank Rd, LS3 1HH, with the subject line 'Formal Complaint'. We will send you written acknowledgement of receipt of your complaint within 5 working days.
3. A member of the Core Staff Team will investigate the complaint (this will never be carried out by the person a complaint is made about).
4. You can choose to make a complaint via an advocate, relative or friend. If this is the case, it should be made clear that it is you making the complaint supported by the 3rd person, rather than the 3rd person making the complaint. All communication will be sent to the complainant and if requested copies can be sent to the 3rd person.
5. If a third person (such as a relative or friend) makes a complaint, the person investigating the complaint will first inform the individual concerned about this complaint. A meeting will be set up between the investigator, the individual making the complaint and the person they are making the complaint for

When dealing with any complaints, the processes will be open to scrutiny, records of the complaint and any actions shall be made and, kept in a secure place accessible only by the Core Staff Team and the Management Committee. All persons involved in dealing with complaints shall at all times observe the confidentiality of the proceedings.

### **Stage 2: Investigating the complaint**

1. A member of the Core Staff Team (as stated above) will first arrange a meeting to discuss the complaint with the complainant, to get full details of the complaint and find out how the complainant would like to see it resolved. They will complete their investigation within 15 working days. If this is not possible, they will write to you to explain the reasons why.
2. The person investigating the complaint will inform the person or persons who the complaint has been made against, and their supervisor(s), outlining details of the complaint. As part of their investigation, they will interview this person or persons and any other witnesses.
  - i. All interviews throughout the complaints procedure will be conducted in a private space to minimise interruptions and another member of staff or member of the Management Committee will be present to take notes. At any point, a meeting can be adjourned if further advice is required.
3. The person investigating will write to the complainant, outlining the facts they have ascertained and the decision they have come to. The complainant will be asked to give their response in writing either that they are happy with the outcome or that they wish to appeal the decision.

### **Stage 3: Appealing against the decision**

1. If the complainant is not happy with the outcome of the investigation and wishes to Appeal against the decision made, they must complete the Appeal form and send in to the 'Management Committee' 2 Rosebank Rd, Leeds, LS3 1HH within 10 working days of receiving the decision. The Management Committee will review the complaint and make further investigation if necessary.
2. You will be informed of the outcome of your appeal within 15 working days
3. The response of the Appeal will be final and no further internal investigations will take place. If the complainant is still unsatisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they can contact external agencies such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, your local Councillor, or your Member of Parliament.