

Volunteer Action – Complaints Procedure

What is a complaint?

Volunteer Action (VA) sees a complaint as being an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, the policies of Volunteer Action, behaviour of staff, behaviour of volunteers, actions or lack of action by the Volunteer Action members, staff and volunteers, which affect an individual or group.

A complaint may be about a Community Car waiting times or a problem with a pick up of a passenger. We encourage all our passengers to ring the office to discuss problems quickly to help us resolve them. Often this is the best way to sort things out quickly. Our complaints procedure will be available to all of our users.

Introduction to Formal Complaints procedure

Volunteer Action aims to provide the best possible service. However we recognise that there may be occasions when users of the service feel that the quality or level of service provided falls short of what they could reasonably expect. This procedure sets out the steps that we will take when we receive a complaint from users of the service, an organisation or members of the public.

The aims of the procedure are to help Volunteer Action pick up on problems and put them right. An apology for any errors or mistreatment will be provided where a complaint is justified and complaints will be reviewed to help make improvements to the service we provide.

Stage 1

The complaint should be made in person or in writing to the Manager of Volunteer Action who will acknowledge in writing within 7 days of receipt of the complaint. Where the complaint concerns the Manager, the same procedure will be followed by a Volunteer Action Trustee substituting for the Manager role at all stages.

The Manager is authorised to deal with all complaints in an informal manner. At this stage all possible attempts will be made to resolve the complaint as soon as possible and normally within 21 days.

The outcome shall normally be given in writing. Verbal complaints about waiting or opening times will generally be treated as informal and outside the scope of this procedure. Such feedback may be kept for monitoring purposes.

The Manager will explain the outcome of the complaint verbally if required. The complainant will also be informed of the next stage of the complaints procedure if they still feel dissatisfied.

A record of all complaints at this stage will be maintained in the complaints file and any formal Stage 1 complaint will be reported to the next Executive Committee Meeting.

Stage 2

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their initial complaint they will be invited to either make a written complaint to the Chair of Trustees or to put their case personally to him/her. The Chair may appoint another Volunteer Action Trustee to deal with the case.

The Chair of Trustees will notify the complainant in writing that they are dealing with the complaint within 7 days of receiving the complaint. They should review the events in Stage 1 and may seek further clarification from any of the parties involved. This may include talking with the complainant if necessary.

The Chair of Trustees will notify the complainant of the outcome of their findings within 21 days of receiving the complaint unless they notify the complainant of a reason for delay.

The Chair of Trustees decision is final and he/she will report their findings and decision to the next meeting of the Management Committee.

Outcome

If the Manager or Chair of Trustees finds that the complaint is justified options for redress may include:

- An apology which may be written or verbal from the Manager or Chair of Trustees
- An undertaking or report on improving or developing policies or procedures where these appear to be at fault or absent
- An agreement to do specific work on behalf of a client

Before any of the above is undertaken legal advice may be needed to be obtained.

Recording and Monitoring

All complaints will be recorded and kept in the Complaints File held in the Volunteer Action office