

Bridport & District u3a Complaints Policy & Procedure

Policy

Introduction

Bridport & District u3a endeavours to offer the best possible service to all our members. We want to ensure that any and all complaints are investigated and resolved quickly and fairly for everybody, appropriate action is taken to prevent a recurrence and to ensure continuation of a quality service.

Policy Statement

The u3a will treat any expression of dissatisfaction from any source as a complaint, and dealt with in accordance with this policy.

The u3a understands that a complaint can be defined in several ways and our definition is as follows:

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with the standard of service, action or lack of action by the u3a, volunteers or committee that affects an individual or group of service users. Such an expression can be expressed verbally and/or in writing.

This definition covers situations where someone believes that we have

- Done something wrong
- Failed to do something we should have done
- Provided services that fail to meet the national standards for u3as
- Acted unfairly, unethically or discourteously

Our complaints procedure can be used by anyone who is using, or has used, or is planning to use any of our services. We can also accept complaints from people who are directly affected by someone using our services.

We aim to resolve complaints within 14 days, or where a more detailed investigation is necessary, within 30 days. If we cannot meet this timescale we will explain this to the person making the complaint and provide regular updates until the complaint is resolved.

Guidance

Principles

Anyone receiving a complaint should be courteous to the complainant, respond positively and offer constructive solutions. Complaints should be handled confidentially, fairly and promptly.

Exceptions

We will usually not consider a complaint unless it has been raised within three months of an alleged incident or dissatisfaction occurring.

Complex complaints can be considered as complaints involving large numbers of people or several alleged incidents occurring over time.

Our Committee have the final say in adjudicating whether a complaint is considered to be vexatious.

Procedure

All complaints received, in person, by telephone, by email or in writing, must be treated in the same manner and the following procedure will apply:

When making a complaint, complainants should be encouraged to say or write clearly about

- What went wrong
- When and where it happened
- Who was involved

- What they are seeking from the complaint

If possible, the complaint should be resolved informally by discussion with an acceptable resolution for both parties.

If a complaint requires further investigation or action, it should be passed to the Group Co-ordinator (groups@bridportu3a.org.uk), or if it is about the Group Co-ordinator then to the Business Secretary (secretary@bridportu3a.org.uk). We will send an acknowledgement to the complainant within 7 days, and in this we will state the target timescale for our response. The complaint will be adjudicated by the appropriate committee member initially. All investigations undertaken and the response given should be reported to the next committee meeting, where any lessons learned can be shared and disseminated. The committee's decision in any complaint is final.

The complainant will be advised in writing of the final outcome within 5 days of the resolution being agreed.

Responsibilities

The person receiving the complaint is responsible for ensuring the complaint is handled appropriately and in a timely manner, attempting an informal resolution as appropriate, and only escalating through this procedure where an acceptable remedy cannot be achieved.

All volunteers will cooperate with the Committee in the proper investigation and resolution of complaints.

All members of the Committee are responsible for ensuring complaints about their area of expertise are handled appropriately and in a timely fashion.

All volunteers are required to adhere to the policy and cooperate in its implementation and enforcement.

Version 1.0

Agreed by the Committee June 2021