CLIFFORD VILLAGE HALL

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Clifford Village Hall views complaints as an 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.

Our policy is:

1. To provide a fair complaints procedure that is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint.
2. To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint.
3. To make sure everyone at Clifford Village Hall knows what to do if a complaint is received.
4. To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.
5. To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired.
6. To gather information which helps us to improve what we do.

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Management Committee. This policy is reviewed regularly and updated as required.

Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of Clifford Village Hall. Complaints may come from any hirer, contractor or member of the local community and may be received by phone, by email or in writing.

Confidentiality

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only

those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

Complaints Process

Complaints should initially be e-mailed to the Bookings Secretary, unless the complaint concerns the Bookings Secretary in which case proceed to **Stage 2** below.

Contact can be made by telephone or email, details of which are shown below:

Telephone 07760 444457

e-Mail glennis06@btinternet.com

The Booking Secretary who receives a telephone complaint shall:

1. Write down the facts of the complaint.
2. Take the complainant's name, address, and telephone number.
3. Note down the relationship of the Clifford Village Hall (for example: client, contractor, etc).
4. Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure.
5. Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take.
6. Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

For further guidelines about handling verbal complaints, see **Appendix 1.**

Resolving Complaints

Stage One

On receiving a complaint, the Bookings Secretary shall record it in the complaints log and acknowledge receipt in writing of the

complaint within one week, together with a copy of the Complaints Policy and let the person complaining know when they can expect a reply.
If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.
Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within four weeks. If this is not possible, because for example an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.
Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken because of the complaint.

Stage Two

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can request that the complaint is reviewed at Trustee level. At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the Chair.

The Chair may investigate the facts of the case themselves or delegate a suitably senior person to do so. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage One.

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

The Booking Secretary who dealt with the original complaint at Stage One should be kept informed of what is happening.
Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within four weeks. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.
Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the

complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint. The decision taken at this stage is final.

Charity Commission

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].

Variation of the Complaints Procedure

The Trustees may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about the Chair should not also have the Chair as the person leading a Stage Two review.

Monitoring and Learning from Complaints

Complaints are reviewed annually to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.

February 2021

Appendix 1 – Practical Guidance for Handling Verbal Complaints

- Remain calm and respectful throughout the conversation
- Listen – allow the person to talk about the complaint in their own words. Sometimes a person just wants to "let off steam"
- Do not debate the facts in the first instance, especially if the person is angry
- Show an interest in what is being said
- Obtain details about the complaint before any personal details
- Ask for clarification wherever necessary
- Show that you have understood the complaint by reflecting what you have noted down
- Acknowledge the person's feelings (even if you feel that they are being unreasonable) – you can do this without making a comment on the complaint itself or making any admission of fault on behalf of the organisation e.g. "I understand that this situation is frustrating for you"
- If you feel that an apology is deserved for something that was the responsibility of the Village Hall, then apologise
- Ask the person what they would like done to resolve the issue
- Be clear about what you can do, how long it will take and what it will involve
- Do not promise things you can't deliver
- Give clear and valid reasons why requests cannot be met
- Make sure that the person understands what they have been told
- Wherever appropriate, inform the person about the available avenues of review or appeal