

Foundry Street Community Centre

Document	COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE
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1. COMPLAINTS POLICY

1.1 Purpose

- 1.1.1 The Foundry Street Community Centre 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.
- 1.1.2 Our policy is:
- (a) To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint.
 - (b) To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint.
 - (c) To make sure everyone at Foundry Street Community Centre knows what to do if a complaint is received.
 - (d) To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.
 - (e) To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired.
 - (f) To gather information which helps us to improve what we do.

1.2 Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of Foundry Street Community Centre and the service it provides or any activities it undertakes.

1.3 Where Complaints Come From

Complaints may come from any individual, volunteer or organisation who has a legitimate interest in Foundry Street Community Centre, including the general public if something is perceived to be improper. A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing. This policy does not cover complaints from staff, who should refer to Foundry Street Community Centre's internal policy on such matters.

1.4 Confidentiality and Data Protection

To process a complaint Foundry Street Community Centre will hold personal data about a complainant, which the individual provides and which other people give when investigating the complaint. We will hold this information securely and only use it help address the complaint., telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements. The identity of the person making the complaint will only be made known to those need to consider the complaint and will not be revealed by Foundry Street Community Centre to other people or made public. However, it may not be possible to preserve confidentiality in all circumstances, for example, where relevant legislation applies, or allegations are made which involve the conduct of third parties.

1.5 Responsibility and Review

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the board of trustees of Foundry Street Community Centre. This policy is reviewed regularly and updated by the trustees as required.

1.6 Monitoring and Learning from Complaints

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

2. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

2.1 Publicised Contact Details for Complaints:

- 2.1.1 Details of how and where complaints can be made will be published by Foundry Street Community Centre from time to time at the Centre and on its website.
- 2.1.2 Complaints can be made in writing to our main address and by email. Complaints can also be made by phone or in person to any of the Foundry Street Community Centre's staff or trustees.

2.2 Receiving Complaints

- 2.2.1 Complaints may arrive through channels publicised for that purpose or through any other contact details or opportunities the complainant may have, such as social media.
- 2.2.2 Complaints received by telephone or in person need to be recorded.
- 2.2.3 The person who receives a phone or in person complaint should:
 - (a) Write down the facts of the complaint.
 - (b) Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number.
 - (c) Note down the relationship of the complainant to Foundry Street Community Centre, e.g. member, user, volunteer, sponsor.
 - (d) Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure.
 - (e) Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take.
 - (f) 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.

2.3 Stage One

- 2.3.1 In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate. Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to

the Chair of the trustees within five business days. If the complaint concerns the Chair then it should be passed to the Vice-chair.

- 2.3.2 On receiving the complaint, the Chair or Vice-chair will record it in the complaint register. If it has not already been resolved, they will delegate an appropriate person to investigate it and to take appropriate action.
- 2.3.3 If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.
- 2.3.4 Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within five working days.
- 2.3.5 The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaint procedure should be attached. Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within a month. 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.
- 2.3.6 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 as a result of the complaint.

2.4 Stage Two

- 2.4.1 If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can request that the complaint is reviewed at Board level.
- 2.4.2 At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the Board of Trustees. The request for Board level review should be acknowledged within five working days of receiving it. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply.
- 2.4.3 The Board of Trustees 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. The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage One should be kept informed of what is happening.
- 2.4.4 If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond. Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within a month. 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.
- 2.4.5 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, unless the Board decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

2.5 Variation of the Complaints Procedure

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

3. EXTERNAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

As Foundry Street Community Centre is a registered charity, there are a number of other options to complain to relevant regulators. The guidance is to complain to the charity direct unless you suspect illegal activity, like terrorism or abuse. Information about the kind of complaints the regulators can involve themselves in can be found at: [Complain about a charity - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complain-about-a-charity)