

# DEWSBURY & DISTRICT THIRD AGE

## COMPLAINTS POLICY

### Aim of this policy

Problems and grievances will occur from time to time and it is important that members know where to turn for help, advice and support so that, whatever the issue, it can be dealt with quickly, objectively and appropriately.

The Tutor should not allow a situation to continue which impacts on the enjoyment of other members of the class.

### Informal Resolution

**Stage One:** It is hoped that complaints/concerns can, in the first instance, be resolved informally by discussion with the tutor. If the complaint should involve the tutor, the matter should be referred to the Link Trustee. If the Link Trustee feels there may be a conflict of interest in dealing with the situation, they may ask another Trustee to help. (The details of the Link Trustee are shown on the front of the class information folder or can be obtained by telephoning 07842284778.)

**Stage Two:** If the solution has a wider implication, it may be necessary to refer the matter to the Trustees as a whole.

If the complaint refers to a breach of our policies, this will be dealt with formally.

### **Formal Resolution:**

**Stage One:** If the member(s) making the complaint wish to opt for a more formal route to resolve their complaint, they should inform the Link Trustee in the first instance. They must submit details of the complaint in writing or via email to the Link Trustee, who will then raise the matter with the committee. After discussion, the committee will appoint two Trustees to investigate the matter further. One will be nominated as Lead Trustee and the second person to take notes of the meeting and seek clarification if needed. The member(s) involved will be invited to a meeting with the appointed Trustees at a neutral venue and will be invited to bring along another person to provide support during the process. This would usually be another member. The supporter may take notes and seek clarification but may not express an opinion or speak on behalf of the member, unless the member requires assistance with communication.

If other members have been involved as witnesses, the Trustees may arrange to meet with the members to gather as much information as possible to assist in investigating the complaint. Copies of the notes of the meeting will be sent to the members involved to ensure that all relevant information has been recorded.

If needed, the Trustees will discuss the matter at committee or convene a special meeting of Trustees, if appropriate, to try to find an acceptable solution and discuss any further action that may be required. The committee will act in accordance with the Constitution and Policies of the Group at all times. September 2019 The Lead Trustee will communicate with the members involved and will advise the member how the matter is to be resolved.

**Stage Two:** If the member(s) involved are not satisfied with the outcome, they may request a meeting with the Chairperson but the Chairperson's decision is final. The Chairperson will have another Trustee, not previously involved in the investigation, in attendance at the meeting to take notes and the member(s) may bring along a person for support.

If the Chairperson is not available, the Vice Chair will deputise as “Chairperson” with appropriate authority.

In the unlikely event that the complaint has the potential to become a legal issue, the committee will seek advice from their legal representatives and may be advised that a different process must be followed.

**Right of Appeal:** If the member(s) involved do not feel that a fair process has been followed in accordance with the Group’s Policies and Procedures, they have the right of appeal, which must detail their specific grounds for appeal. This cannot be against the actual decision.

If the complaint has involved a breach of the Group’s Policies, this will be dealt with in accordance with the Group Disciplinary Procedure.

**Data Protection:** All records of meetings and any correspondence will be held on file and destroyed after 12 months of the matter being resolved.

In line with Dewsbury & District Third Age Policies, this Policy will be reviewed annually or when the situation dictates.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Data Protection Policy, Equality & Diversity Policy, Health & Safety Policy, Safeguarding Policy, and Volunteer Policies.

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