



**Dunstable Good Neighbours**

# Complaints Policy and Procedures

# 1. General Statement

Dunstable Good Neighbours aim to provide a good quality voluntary service which meets the needs of the local community. If we are achieving our aim, we hope you will tell us, however if either a volunteer or service-user feels dissatisfied in any way we hope you will let us know so that we can investigate the reasons and make every effort to improve our service.

Unlike employees, volunteers do not have particular rights in law but are covered by the same legal rights as members of the general public. Whilst the organisation has no legal obligation to offer volunteers a role, or keep them in the role, volunteers can equally stop working at any time and are under no obligation to carry out work if they choose not to.

By complying with the Equality Act 2010 this organisation ensures that volunteers and service-users are protected from discrimination and are treated fairly

## 2. Good Practice

Dunstable Good Neighbours endeavour to achieve good practice for volunteers and service users by:

- Having up to date policies
- Accepting responsibility to treat volunteers and service-users fairly
- Listening to concerns of volunteers and service-users
- Having an open and transparent procedure for dealing with situations where things go wrong

## 3. What to do if you need to make a complaint

Stage 1 - Informal complaint made verbally.

If a volunteer or service-user has cause to make a complaint, either against the organisation or an individual, this should first be discussed informally to see if the issue can be resolved amicably.

The complainant should first raise their concern with the phone-holder or a member of the steering group. If the complaint cannot be discussed and resolved immediately, a meeting to discuss the issue informally will be arranged within 5 working days of the issue being raised.

## Stage 2 - Formal written complaint

If the volunteer or service-user is dissatisfied with the outcome of the informal discussion, the complaint should be made formally in writing to the Secretary of Dunstable Good Neighbours, within 10 working days of the informal complaint being raised. If the complaint is against the Secretary, the written complaint should be forwarded to the Vice-Chair.

A written acknowledgement of the complaint will be made within 5 working days outlining how the complaint will be investigated. The outcome of the investigation will be notified to the complainant within a further 10 working days.

## Stage 3 - Appeal against decision

If the volunteer or service-user is dissatisfied with the outcome of the formal complaint, an appeal can be made in writing to the Chair of Dunstable Good Neighbours. A written acknowledgement of the appeal will be made within 5 working days. The Chair will report to the Honorary Officers and, if the decision is made to take further steps to resolve the situation, the complainant will be invited to a meeting with the Honorary Officers to discuss the complaint further. The complainant may be accompanied at the meeting by a person of their own choice. The Chair will respond to the appeal within 10 working days and their decision is final.

The postal address for all written complaints can be obtained from the Help Desk on 07491455777

Or email: [dunstablegoodneighbours@yahoo.com](mailto:dunstablegoodneighbours@yahoo.com)

## 4. What will happen if the complaint is against a volunteer

If a service-user or volunteer makes a complaint against another volunteer the procedure will follow the Stages as outlined in (3) above.

If the situation cannot be resolved informally in Stage 1 the volunteer will be issued with a written statement outlining the reason for the complaint. In some cases, a volunteer may be asked to stop volunteering immediately while an investigation is carried out, particularly if the complaint relates to harassment, theft, verbal abuse, or violent behaviour. All written complaints and outcomes of investigations will be logged.

This policy will be reviewed biannually.

5. Signature:



Andrew Harland

Position/Role:

CHAIRPERSON

Dated:

17<sup>th</sup> June 2021