



# Complaints Policy & Procedure (external stakeholder copy)

Dudley CVS aims to provide high quality services, which meet your needs. Dudley CVS views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the individual or organisation that has made the complaint. In order to ensure our services remain at a high and improving standard, we have a procedure through which you can let us know if for any reason you are not satisfied with your dealings with the organisation.

Our policy is:

- 1.1.1 To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- 1.1.2 To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
- 1.1.3 To make sure everyone at Dudley CVS knows what to do if a complaint is received
- 1.1.4 To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way
- 1.1.5 To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
- 1.1.6 To gather information which helps us to improve what we do

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of Dudley CVS. Complaints may come from any person or organisation who has a legitimate interest in Dudley CVS, which may include our clients and customers, members, funders, and wider community. A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing.

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Board of Trustees and the Chief Executive. The Board may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about the Chair, Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive or Line managers.

Written complaints for stage two of the process may be sent to Andy Gray, Chief Executive, [andygray@dudleycvs.org.uk](mailto:andygray@dudleycvs.org.uk) or in his/her absence, Kate Green, Deputy Chief Executive, [kategreen@dudleycvs.org](mailto:kategreen@dudleycvs.org).

Dudley CVS, 7 Albion Street, Brierley Hill, DY5 3EE. Telephone: 01384 573381. Dudley CVS is a registered charity (no. 517766) and company limited by guarantee (no.1998105).

## **Stage One**

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, in liaison with their line manager.

If it has not already been resolved, the person receiving the complaint should liaise with their line manager who will delegate an appropriate person to investigate it and to take appropriate action.

Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint with 5 working days. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaints procedure should be attached. 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 as a result 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 this stage, the complaint will be passed to the Chief Executive or in his/her absence the Deputy Chief Executive. The request for senior review should be acknowledged within 5 working days of receiving it. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply.

The Chief Executive 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 Chief Executive may also decide to involve the Chair of Trustees in the investigation.

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

The person 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, unless the Board decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

## **External Stage**

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 [www.charitycommission.gov.uk](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk)