



Eden Gate Newport

Improving communities by tackling homelessness and substance dependence

Volunteer Complaints Policy

April 2016

Policy Statement

Eden Gate Newport believes that if a volunteer wants to make a complaint or register a concern they should find it easy to do so. It is our organisations policy to welcome complaints and look upon them as an opportunity to learn, adapt and improve the way we operate. This policy is intended to ensure that complaints are dealt with properly and that all complaints or comments by volunteers are taken seriously.

Eden Gate believes that failure to listen to or acknowledge complaints will lead to an aggravation of problems, leading to volunteers being unhappy and not enjoying the volunteering experience. Eden Gate supports the concept that most complaints, if dealt with early, openly and honestly, can be sorted out at a local level between just the complainant and immediate line management. If this fails due to either the establishment or the complainant being dissatisfied with the outcome the complaint will be referred to the board of trustees to be dealt with.

The involvement of volunteers in this organisation is essential to the operation of this organisation and we try to ensure that the volunteering experience is a rewarding one. We try to get things right but occasionally we fall short of volunteers' expectations. We therefore welcome comments on how volunteering with us can be improved. However, if something is not resolved to your satisfaction you have the right to make a complaint. This procedure is set out below.

Responsibilities

The person with the initial responsibility of investigating your complaint is the Operations Manager. Should you be unhappy with the outcome of your initial complaint the procedure will be escalated as shown in this policy. The person with the responsibility of investigating your complaint at Stage 3 is The Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Our Aims

Your complaint will be:-

- dealt with as quickly as possible
- handled fairly and politely; and
- investigated fully

Goals

The goals of Eden Gate Newport are to ensure that:

- volunteers are aware of how to complain, and we provide easy to use opportunities for them to register their complaints
- a named person will be responsible for the administration of the procedure
- every written complaint is acknowledged within 3 working days
- investigations into written complaints are held within 28 days
- all complaints are acknowledged in writing
- complaints are dealt with promptly, fairly and sensitively with due regard to the upset and worry that they can cause to both staff and volunteers.

Communication

This policy will be communicated to all new volunteers as part of the induction package.

How can a volunteer complain?

We wish to be as flexible as possible in receiving complaints. Volunteers can complain:

- by letter
- by phone
- in person
- by email
- on behalf of someone else

Our **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE** has three stages:

STAGE 1: FIRST INFORMAL COMPLAINT

You should, in the first instance, make your concerns known to the Volunteer Manager. S/he will try to resolve the matter immediately and informally, but if this is not possible, you will be asked if you wish to make a formal complaint.

STAGE 2: FORMAL COMPLAINT

If you wish to proceed, you will need to put your complaint in writing addressed to the Volunteer Manager. Your complaint will be acknowledged in writing or by phone within 3 working days and we will aim to resolve the complaint within 10 working days. If this target of 10 days cannot be met, you will be informed of the delay, the reason for the delay, and the new target for responding. If the complaint involves the volunteer manager, you may address it directly to the Chairman of Trustees

STAGE 3: MY COMPLAINT HAS BEEN INVESTIGATED, BUT I AM STILL NOT SATISFIED

At this stage the complaint will be dealt with by the Chairman of Trustees in conjunction with one of the other trustees who will carry out an investigation and provide a response within 28 working days. Their findings will be presented to the Trustees and their response will be final.

RECORDING OF COMPLAINTS

Every complaint will be recorded on receipt by the Volunteer Manager in a log of complaints. S/he will also record in the log as soon as possible details of the complaint, the responses made and actions taken to rectify the complaint.

The Volunteer Manager is Marc Hepton

The Chairman of Trustees is Chris Pennant

Guidance & Support

If you are feeling worried and anxious about your complaint, please speak to the Volunteer Manager who can support you through the complaints process. If your complaint is about the Volunteer Manager the trustees will appoint a suitable person to support you.