



Complaints Policy of Martin Village Hall

Martin Village Hall Committee of Management recognises 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.

Our Policy

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

Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of Martin Village Hall.

Where Complaints Come From

Complaints may come from any person or organisation who has a legitimate interest in Martin Village Hall. A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing.

Confidentiality

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

Complaints Process

Complaints should initially be e-mailed to the Chair, unless the complaint concerns the Chair, in case it should be addressed to the Vice-Chair or other officer.

Contact can be made by telephone or email, details of which are shown as follows:

M: 07763 045293

E: Martinlincvillagehall@gmail.com

The receiver of the complaint should write down the facts of the complaint, the complainant's name, address, and telephone number.

The receiver should note down the relationship of the Complaint (for example, neighbour, parish councillor, hirer etc).

The receiver should, when appropriate, ask for the Complainant to send details of the complaint in writing (post or email)

The receiver should advise the timeline for dealing with the complaint which is as follows:

An initial response within 14 days (this may be a request for more information)

A final response within 28 days. 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.

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

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved, they can request that the complaint is reviewed at Trustee level. This should include all Trustees (other than if one of the Trustees is the person complained about) and may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint. The decision taken at this stage is final.

Charity Commission

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 at:

www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc47.aspx].

Variation of the Complaints Procedure The Trustees may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about the Chair should not also have the Chair as the person leading the review.

Monitoring and Learning from Complaints

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

Responsibility

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with Martin Village Hall Management Committee.

Review

This policy is reviewed regularly and updated as required.

Date issued: 1st January 2023

Next review date: 1st January 2025

Author

Kevin Garner-Smith (Trustee & Treasurer)



Complaints Procedure of Martin Village Hall

Contact Details for Complaints

Written complaints may be sent to Martin Village Hall, High Street, Martin, LN4 3QT or by e-mail at martinvillagehall@gmail.com

Verbal complaints may be made by phone to Craig Garner-Smith, Chair-Martin Village Hall Committee of Management on 07763 045293 or in person to any Trustee of Martin Village Hall.

Complaints received by telephone or in person will need to detail:

- The facts of the complaint
- The complainant's name, address and telephone number
- The relationship of the complainant to Martin Village Hall
- In certain circumstances the complainant may be asked to submit the complaint in writing

Resolving Complaints

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.

Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to the Chair of Martin Village Hall Committee of Management within 7 days.

On receiving the complaint, the Chair should make note of the date and time of receiving it in the next available committee meetings minutes. If it has not already been resolved, they delegate an appropriate person to investigate it and to take appropriate action.

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

Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within 7 days. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaint's procedure should be attached.

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 to them with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

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Charity Commission Number 521854

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 because 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 Committee level. At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the Chair of the committee.

The request for Committee level review should be acknowledged within 7 days of receiving it. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply.

The Chair 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. 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 Committee 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 at: www.charitycommission.gov.uk.

Variation of the Procedure

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

Monitoring and Learning from Complaints

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



Guidance notes for MVH Committee when handling verbal complaints

- Remain calm and respectful throughout the conversation.
- Listen - allow the person to talk about the complaint in their own words. Sometimes a person just wants to express their opinion.
- Don't debate the facts in the first instance, especially if the person is angry.
- Show an interest in what is being said.
- Obtain details about the complaint before any personal details and ask for clarification wherever necessary.
- Show that you have understood the complaint by reflecting back what you have noted down.
- Acknowledge the person's feelings (even if you feel that they are being unreasonable) - you can do this without making a comment on the complaint itself or making any admission of fault on behalf of the organisation E.g. "I understand that this situation is frustrating for you".
- If you feel that an apology is deserved for something that was the responsibility of your organisation, then apologise. If a written apology is required this should come from the Martin Village Hall Chair.
- Ask the person what they would like done to resolve the issue.
- Be clear about what you can do, how long it will take and what it will involve.
- Don't promise things you can't deliver.
- Give clear and valid reasons why requests cannot be met.
- Make sure that the person understands what they have been told.
- Wherever appropriate, inform the person about the available avenues of review or appeal.