

Ellingham Village Hall - Complaints Policy

Ellingham Village Hall ('EVH') views 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 is:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure that 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 EVH Trustees know 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.

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the EVH Trustees. This policy is reviewed regularly and updated as required.

Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of EVH. Complaints may come from any hirer, contractor or member of the local community and may be received verbally, by email or by letter.

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 addressed to the Chair of EVH Trustees. If the complaint concerns the Chair, then please contact the deputy-Chair.

If the complaint is delivered verbally then whoever receives it shall:

- Write down the facts of the complaint.
- Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number.
- Note down the relationship of the complainant to Ellingham Village Hall (for example: client, contractor, etc.).
- Inform the complainant that we have a complaints procedure.
- Inform the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take.
- Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words. For this purpose, our contact email address is admin@ellinghamvillagehall.com and our postal address is

Ellingham Village Hall, Ellingham, Chathill, Northumberland NE67 5HA. Alternatively, a letter can be posted directly into the letterbox adjacent to the front door of the village hall.

If the complaint is received by email or by letter then the two-stage process set out below will be implemented.

Stage One

On receiving the complaint, the Chair shall record it in the complaints log and acknowledge receipt in writing within one week, together with a copy of the Complaints Policy, and let the complainant know when they can expect a reply.

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 by the EVH Management Committee.

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

The Committee may consider the facts of the case themselves or delegate a suitably senior person to do so. This may involve reviewing any documents related to 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.

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.

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 Committee 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 have the Chair as the person leading a Stage Two review.

Learning from Complaints

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

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