

Open House Festival

COMPLAINTS POLICY

We welcome the involvement of volunteers in 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. The complaints policy and procedures allow Open House Festival to record and review how it does things enabling improvements to be made where required. 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. We aim to resolve all complaints within 28 working days of receipt.

Your complaint will be:-

- dealt with as quickly as possible
- handled fairly and politely; and
- investigated fully
- the results of your complaint will be communicated to you

How can a volunteer complain?

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

- by letter - The Fountain Centre 2 Queens Parade Bangor BT20 2BJ
- by phone -02891471780
- in person - The Fountain Centre 2 Queens Parade Bangor BT20 2BJ
- by email -janet@openhousefestival.com (Volunteer Coordinator)
kieran@openhousefestival.com (Festival Director) chair@openhousefestival.com
(Chair of the Board of Open House Festival)
- on behalf of someone else

You can use the complaints form below if you wish to.



Our **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE** has three stages:

STAGE 1: FIRST INFORMAL COMPLAINT

You should, in the first instance, make your concerns known to the Volunteer Coordinator. She 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. If your complaint is in relation to inappropriate behaviour towards a child/young person/adult at risk please report these to the safeguarding contact- Janet Hughes. Please give as much clear detail as possible, including any documents (where applicable) and your contact details.

STAGE 2: FORMAL COMPLAINT

If you wish to proceed, you will need to put your complaint in writing addressed to the Volunteer Coordinator. 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 Kieran Gilmore.

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

At this stage the complaint will be dealt with by Kieran Gilmore in conjunction with a member of the board of Open House Festival who will carry out an investigation and provide a response within 28 working days. Their findings will be presented to sub group of the management committee and their response will be final. If the complaint is about Kieran Gilmore a complaint can be made directly to the Chair of the Board of Directors of Open House Festival.

Complaints Procedure - Confidentiality

While Open House Festival will treat any information given to us sensitively we cannot always guarantee to keep your identity confidential as we may need to disclose your identity if required to do so by law. It should also be recognised that your identity may be recognisable to others during the investigation due to the nature of the complaint, although we will endeavour to limit the risk of this where possible.

All complaints will be logged for reporting and monitoring purposes. Details of complaints are kept in accordance with our data protection policy.

Complaint Procedure – Closing an Investigation

Open House Festival will consider each complaint carefully and decide upon an appropriate course of action. All complaints will be reviewed. In some cases it may not be possible to investigate or substantiate complaints, or it may fall outside of our responsibilities.

If the complainant has given contact details, they will be informed of any part of the investigation which may involve them directly. However, due to confidentiality and legal restrictions Open House Festival may not disclose the outcome of the investigation or any



information gained during the investigation, for example, Open House Festival may only report that an investigation has been carried out and appropriate action taken. All complainants will be responded to as per the procedures and time frames set out above.

Further Appeals

If the complainant feels the response from the Open House Festival Board was not appropriate or has not been resolved to their satisfaction, they can complain to The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.



For Staff Use Only

Form Received By: _____ **Date** _____

Forwarded to: _____ **Date** _____

