

Code of Conduct and Complaints Policy

Our Culture

The Management Committee's culture is for all persons, including its trustees, employees and hirers, to be treated with respect, courtesy and fairness at all times. Abuse by any member of the Management Committee, employees, hirers or other persons using the hall, be it by sexual harassment or exploitation, bullying or other forms of harassment, poor behaviour, lack of accountability or abusing a position of trust, will not be tolerated. Any such allegations of abuse should be reported immediately to the Chair or in their absence or for any other reason to the Vice-Chair for investigation and, where appropriate, resolution as quickly as possible in accordance with this policy and procedure. Where the alleged abuse involves children or adults at risk the matter should be referred to the appropriate authorities without delay by the Management Committee's Safeguarding Trustee in accordance with the Management Committee's Safeguarding policy and procedure document.

Policy Statement

- Before any person is appointed or nominated to be part of the CIO Management Committee, checks should be made that they are suitable to act as a trustee and they do not have any criminal convictions which would make their role incompatible.
- The Management Committee should consist of a balance of trustees, who have a range of skills and experience, working together and a culture that does not allow one trustee to dominate its work.
- Any complaint made against a trustee, employee, hirer or other relevant person connected to the village hall should follow safeguarding statutory guidance, good practice guidance and relevant legislation.
- The Management Committee will be quick to respond to any concerns and, where appropriate, carry out appropriate investigations.
- It will not ignore harm or downplay failures.
- Protecting people from harm is central to its culture.
- If the alleged complaint refers to a criminal offence, the police should be informed without delay. The Information Commissioner's Office should be notified within 3 days if the complaint refers to a breach of the Data Protection Act(s).
- This policy will be reviewed annually in tandem with the procedure.

Procedure for dealing with a complaint

Stage 1

Any complaint made against a trustee, employee or other relevant person should be made in writing to the Chair of the CIO Management Committee. Complaints against the Chair should be made to the Vice-Chair. Receipt of the complaint should be acknowledged within 7 days and a copy of the Complaints Procedure will be attached. The Chair (or Vice-Chair in appropriate cases) will investigate and use reasonable endeavours to provide a full response in writing to the complainant within 21 days of the complaint being received. If for good reason it is not possible to provide a full reply within this time an interim response will be provided informing the complainant what has been done and when they can expect to receive a reply.

Stage 2

If the complainant is unhappy with the response at Stage 1, they may ask for it to be referred to Stage 2. That should be done in writing within 14 days of the date of the letter informing them of the outcome of Stage 1. They should be asked why they are dissatisfied with the response and requested to provide any additional information which may assist the investigation. Complaints at Stage 2 will be dealt with by a panel of trustees, none of whom shall be connected with or have had any previous involvement with the complaint. The panel will review the complaint and the Chair's response. Unless there is good reason for not doing so, the complainant should be notified in writing of the panel's decision within 21 days from the date of receipt of the matter being referred to Stage 2. The response should include the findings and conclusions behind the decision and any action taken to address the complaint.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the panel's decision, they should be informed they can refer their complaint to the Charity Commission, details of which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>.

This procedure shall be reviewed annually in tandem with the policy.

Adopted by the CIO trustees on 1st June 2026.