

# BRF Complaints Procedure (customer information)

## Publicised Contact Details for Complaints

Written complaints may be sent to BRF at 15 The Chambers, Vineyard, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 3FE or by email to [complaints@brf.org.uk](mailto:complaints@brf.org.uk). Verbal complaints may be made by phone to 01865 319700 or in person to any of BRF's staff at the above address.

## Receiving Complaints

Complaints may arrive through channels publicised for that purpose or through any other contact details or opportunities the complainant may have.

Complaints received by telephone or in person need to be recorded on a Complaints form.

The person who receives a phone or in-person complaint should:

- Write down the facts of the complaint including the date the complaint is made
- Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number
- Note down the relationship of the complainant to BRF (for example: subscriber, donor, Messy Church leader)
- Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure
- Tell 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.

## Resolving Complaints

### **Stage One**

In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue that is the subject of the complaint. If the complaint is 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 your Line Manager within five working days.

On receiving the complaint, your Line Manager should record it in a Complaints Log. If it has not already been resolved, the Line Manager should delegate an appropriate person to investigate the complaint and take appropriate action.

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

Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within five working days. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the complainant can expect a reply. A copy of BRF's Complaints Procedure should be attached.

Ideally, complainants should receive a definitive reply within 20 working 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.

Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the steps being 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 at Board Level. At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the Chair of Trustees.

The request for Board-Level review should be acknowledged within five working days of receipt. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the complainant can expect a reply.

The Chair of Trustees may investigate the facts of the complaint personally or delegate a suitably senior person to do so. This may involve reviewing paperwork 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 20 working 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.

Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the steps being 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 Board 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 be involved in can be found on their website at [www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc47.aspx](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc47.aspx).

## **Variation of the Complaints Procedure**

The Board 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 annually to identify any trends that may indicate a need to take further action.

*January 2017*