

Introduction

Nailsea Shedders views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person that has made the complaint.

Our Policy is:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for all involved
- 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 Nailsea Shedders 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 Complaints and Compliance

- A **Complaint** is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of the operation of Nailsea Shedders.
- **Compliance** in terms of this Policy is being able to formally show how a Complaint is documented, followed up and resolved.

Where Complaints Come From

Complaints may come from any individual, member of the public or organisation who has or has had a legitimate involvement with Nailsea Shedders, if something is perceived by them to be improper. A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing. This policy does not cover complaints from Nailsea Shedders members arising from any fellow member. In this instance, the relevant member should refer to the Membership Secretary or if unavailable, the

Chair or Vice Chair for resolution.

Confidentiality

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

Responsibility

Overall responsibility for this Policy, implementation and adherence lies with the Trustees of Nailsea Shedders.

The Committee is responsible for supporting the Trustees in its development and the execution within day to day operations.

This means ensuring people who are involved with us are aware of its existence and where necessary, where they can get a copy.

Complaint Resolution

Whilst it is difficult to spell out exactly how resolution can be achieved to cover every type of complaint, general rules should be followed. Nevertheless, if a complaint is treated as an opportunity, it allows Nailsea Shedders to hear constructive feedback and benefit. The key is how to react and herewith an outline approach.

1. Listen to the Complainant

The complainant is concerned about an aspect of the service provided by Nailsea Shedders and you need to figure out what exactly happened. Whether we have not done what was requested, the quality of work was substandard, the time taken was not as promised, etc., it is important to listen carefully to understand and document the issue. This is pertinent to establishing how to solve it.

2. Empathise and apologise for the situation.

Once you understand the issue, empathise with the complainant to validate their concerns. This creates a bond between you and the complainant knowing that you will do everything in your power to correct the situation. Apologise for the issue even if it is not your fault. You are representing Nailsea Shedders. Be genuine and sincere. This will come across to the complainant as if you are in this together and want to make it right. All that matters is that you are understanding towards their needs and work to resolve the situation.

3. Offer and execute a solution.

Before a solution can be established, it is essential that the root cause of the issue being raised by the complainant is established. Once the root cause of the issue is established, possible solutions with the complainant can be explored. Assuming time is needed to talk to other members of Nailsea Shedders. Let the complainant know that you will discuss the issue and be prepared to always offer solutions that can be done as opposed to resolutions that are impossible. Keep in mind that there is always a solution. If the complainant asks for a resolution that cannot be done, focus on finding something that will meet the same need instead of denying the request.

If the complainant is unhappy with the solution that has been provided, think about other options that could be done to remedy the situation. It's important that the complainant sees that you are working with them to satisfy their needs. Once you agree on the solution, put the plan into action. Addressing the concerns right away will allow both you and the complainant to put the situation to rest and move on.

4. Follow-up and thank the complainant for bringing the complaint to Nailsea Shedders' attention.

Once you have gone through all the steps above, make sure to follow-up with the complainant to ensure that they are satisfied with the solution. Thank the complainant for bringing the situation to your attention and for the opportunity to resolve it. Let the complainant know that you appreciate their support of Nailsea Shedders and that you look forward to seeing them again. Even if you had to offer an alternate solution to what the complainant proposed, the complainant will leave the experience knowing that their concern was addressed in the best possible way.

A complaint should give opportunities to problem solve and learn how to handle similar situations in the future. If there is a specific area of regular complaint, it is an opportunity to make a bigger change.

Review

This Policy is reviewed regularly and updated as required.

Our Procedure:

Publicised Contact Details for Complaints:

Written complaints may be sent to Nailsea Shedders c/o.....

or by e-mail at Verbal complaints may be made by phone to

+44 (0) or in person to any of Nailsea Shedders members or Trustees at The Scout Hall or address as above or at any of our events.

Receiving Complaints

Complaints may arrive through channels publicised for that purpose or through any other contact details or opportunities the complainant may have, such as social media.

All complaints, including those received by telephone or in person must be recorded.

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

- Write down the facts of the complaint
- Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number
- Note down the relationship of the complainant to Nailsea Shedders, e.g. donor, member of public, etc
- 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 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 appropriately. Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to Nailsea Shedders Chair within five days

On receiving the complaint, the Chair records it in a dedicated complaints Logbook held by the Chair. If it has not already been resolved, the Chair must delegate an appropriate person to investigate it and to take appropriate action. If the complaint relates to a specific person, that person should be informed as soon as possible 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 person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaint procedure should be attached. Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within a month. 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 at Trustee level.

At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the Trustees. The request for Trustee level review should be acknowledged within five working days of the request being referred to it. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply.

The Trustees 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. The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage

One should be kept informed of what is happening.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, that person should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond. Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within a month from referral to the Trustees. 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 Board of Trustees decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

External Stage

As Nailsea Shedders hopes to become a registered charity, the complainant may in due course be able to complain to the Charity Commission Regulator at any stage. Information about the kind of complaints the Committee can involve itself in can be found on their website at:

<http://www.oscr.org.uk/charities/raise-a-concern-about-a-charity>.

Variation of the Complaints Procedure

The Board of 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 or individual Trustee should not also be the Chair and/or Trustee involved as a person leading a Stage Two review.

Compliance

Complaints shall be reviewed by the Trustees and Committee annually to ensure that

- The Policy and Procedure are fit for purpose
- Trends are monitored and changes are implemented arising from “Lessons Learned”

When Nailsea Shedders is robust enough, the role of “Complaints and Compliance Officer” will be created to review the operation of this Policy. For the foreseeable future however, Complaints and Compliance will be handled by the Committee and the Trustees as appropriately.

At the AGM, a brief overview of effectiveness of this Policy and Procedure shall be given however

strict adherence to Confidentiality should be respected so that no-one is identified.

NB It is **not** the role of the Complaints or Compliance Officer to draft or review operating procedures, Health and Safety Policies, Risk Assessments, etc. All such activity should be addressed by the Chair.

Proposed wording ref Repair Liability:-

Thank you for bringing your item to Nailsea Shedders to see if we can fix it. Repairs are important to us because they help with our main objectives, namely:-

1. Decreasing Social Isolation – a potential repair item provides an opportunity for members to collaborate “side by side” with others, and
2. Contributing to “Re-Use, Recycle and Repurpose” – i.e. helping with the Green Agenda

We are not experts but will do our best to fix items. We do not charge for our help but will let you know **in advance** of any significant costs of replacement items deemed necessary before work commences. Obviously, if happy with the repair, we welcome any donation over and above any replacement item cost. Donations help us to keep going.

Whilst our intent is good, there may be instances where we fail to fix things or the particular item may inadvertently be further damaged or ~~mis-laid~~. Please be aware that we are not covered for any such liability and as such, you accept that responsibility.