

The Rights of Staff, Volunteers and Trustees

When dealing with questions, queries and complaints staff, volunteers or trustees will thoroughly address them with courtesy, respect, and fairness.

However, The Charity's employees, volunteers, and trustees have the right to work free from abuse, threats or vexatious and repetitive complaints and be treated with courtesy and respect.

The Charity has a duty to protect their welfare and safety and considers violence, threats, or abuse towards them unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

If an employee, volunteer or trustee considers behaviour abusive or unreasonable, they are advised in the first instance to refer it to their manager / chair before determining future contact with the complainant, be that by telephone, in person, or electronically.

Threats or acts of violence, and where complainants are known to have recorded meetings or telephone conversations without consent will cause direct contact with the complainant to be discontinued.

A complaint may be judged unreasonable, abusive or vexatious if

- the complaint contains inflammatory and unsubstantiated allegations, causing distress and / or negative effect on the health / well-being of employees, volunteers, or trustees and /or families
- the complaint includes derogatory / obscene remarks, harassment based on personal characteristics, repeatedly demanding disciplinary action be taken against staff
- the complaint places substantial / disproportionate financial and administrative burdens on the Charity
- the complainant requests information already available and its purpose is to argue and not to obtain information
- the complaint, viewed as a whole, appears to be intended simply to re-open issues which have been disputed several times before, and is, in effect, the pursuit of a complaint by alternative means

Where complaints are deemed so, the complainant will be notified in writing that no further correspondence will be entered into on the matter in question and this will apply to all Charity employees, volunteers and trustees. A copy of this policy will be included and, if and where appropriate, a no-contact period specified. A decision to restrict contact will be reconsidered if the complainant subsequently demonstrates more reasonable behaviour.

If you disagree with a decision made by the Board in regard your behaviour as unreasonable, you can appeal. Please refer to our Complaints Policy (see above).

All incidents of harassment or aggression will be documented and referred to the General Secretary. In appropriate circumstances these matters may be referred to the police and the Board may consider taking appropriate legal advice.