



Withy Arts Complaints Procedure

The functions of the complaints procedure are:

- To help Withy Arts maintain the highest possible standard of practice.
- Help people who come into contact with Withy Arts to feel happy about the work which we do and resolve any difficulties or conflicts which may occur.
- Ensure that everyone feels able to complain and believes that they will be taken seriously even if they feel unsure of themselves.

When Withy Arts undertakes a project they will give the Complaints Leaflet to project participants and explain what it means. They also give a copy of the Complaints Policy, Complaints Procedure and Complaints Leaflet to staff from the partner agency.

If there is a problem, in the first instance, project workers will deal with any complaints made directly to them. They will make a written record of the complaint as soon as it is made and any resolution achieved. If the matter is not resolved to the complainant's satisfaction, the matter will be passed on to the Complaints Officer.

In the event of a complaint being received by the Complaints Officer, s/he will endeavour to respond in the following ways:

- Listen carefully and make sure that the person who is complaining feels fully heard and understood.
- Acknowledge the feelings of the person who is complaining.
- Neither agree nor disagree until s/he has listened to everybody. Sometimes people feel unhappy and may complain because of a misunderstanding or for some other reason. However, complaints which are not valid can still sometimes be helpful.
- Listen to the individual(s) about whom the complaint has been made and again, make sure that they feel fully heard and understood.
- Withy Arts endeavours to operate in ways which are open, honest and transparent. However, the Complaints Officer will be discreet about any complaint which is received if s/he believes that this would be helpful.
- Discuss any ways in which Withy Arts may be able to improve policies, procedures or practices in the light of a complaint should this be possible.
- As soon as possible, and within 28 days, the Complaints Officer will write to the person who has complained in order to explain any changes or ways in which Withy Arts may have improved their policy or practice in response to the complaint.



- Acknowledge the feelings of all parties and check that all parties feel that the matter is resolved.
- If there is conflict or ongoing disagreement the Complaints Officer must take steps to help all parties reach a mutually acceptable resolution by engaging in more discussion with all parties.
- If in the event that the complainant is still not satisfied the Chair of Trustees and the Complaints Officer will resolve the matter together. This process must be completed within 56 days of the complaint being made.
- Should a serious complaint be received where there is a possibility the law has been broken the Complaints Officer must seek advice and ensure that the matter is investigated by the appropriate authority.

Policy date: 28/09/16

Date of ratification by Withy Arts Trustees: 25/10/16

Reviewed 8/1/19

Next review January 2020