

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Healthwatch Bristol's policy is to:

- Provide a fair complaints procedure which is accessible, clear and easy to use
- Make sure that all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not about any aspect of Healthwatch Bristol.

In many cases, problems can be resolved easily and quickly, often at the time they arise and with the person concerned. If the problem cannot be resolved in this way and you wish to make a formal complaint, please follow the procedures below.

Complaints Procedure for Volunteers or Members:

If a member or volunteer has a complaint or concern about the organisation, a member of staff, a volunteer or another member they must in the first instance, seek to speak with the Chief Officer in confidence.

If it has not been possible to resolve the problem, a formal complaint must be put in writing to the Chief Officer. We will acknowledge the complaint in writing within 5 working days and aim to investigate and respond with conclusions to the complaint within 30 working days of receipt.

If the complainant feels the Chief Officer has not satisfactorily resolved the problem, the complainant can ask the Board of Directors to review the complaint. The request for a Board review will be acknowledged within 5 working days and the Board will aim to reply with a conclusion within 30 working days. The decision at this stage is final unless the Board decides to seek external assistance with resolution (eg North Somerset Council).

The complainant can complain to the Charity Commission at any stage. Information about the kinds of complaints the Commission can involve itself in can be found on their website.

Complaints Procedure for Staff:

If a member of staff has a complaint about the organisation or another member of staff, in the first instance, speak to the Chief Officer in confidence (or the Chair of the Board of Directors if it is about the Chief Officer) who will seek to resolve the problem.

If the member of staff is not satisfied with the verbal response, the complaint must be made in writing to The Chief Officer (or the Chair of the Board of Directors if it is about the Chief Officer). The Complaint will be acknowledged in writing within 5 working days and aim to investigate and respond with conclusions to the complaint within 30 working days of receipt

If the member of staff feels the Chief Officer has not satisfactorily resolved the problem, the member of staff can ask the Board of Directors to review the complaint. The request for a Board review will be acknowledged within 5 working days and the Board will aim to reply within 30 working days. The decision at this stage is final unless the Board decides to seek external assistance with resolution (eg Bristol City Council).

All complaints will be logged with the date of receipt, details of the complaint, the process of investigation and the outcome in the Complaints Log.

Verbal complaints should be made to the Chief Officer on 01275 857442.

Written complaints should be addressed to the Chief Officer and sent to Healthwatch Bristol, 3rd Floor, The Sion, Crown Glass Place, Nailsea, BS48 1RB, or via email to: vicky@healthwatchnorthsomerset.co.uk.

Variation of the Complaints Procedure

The Board may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest.

Confidentiality

All complaints will be handled confidentially and sensitively, on a need to know basis and following any relevant data protection requirements.

If you are unable to put your complaint in writing due to a disability or you require support then we will organise support for you to record your complaint.

If you are still not satisfied and your complaint relates to a service commissioned by Bristol City Council then you make take the matter further via their complaints procedure.