



Boddington Village Hall Complaints Policy

1. Policy Statement and Purpose

Boddington Village Hall is committed to operating in an open, accountable, and transparent way. We welcome feedback and take complaints seriously as an opportunity to improve our services, governance, and management of the Hall.

This policy sets out how complaints can be made and how they will be handled fairly, consistently, and in a timely manner, in line with Charity Commission good practice.

This policy applies to complaints about:

- The management or operation of the Village Hall
- The conduct of Trustees, Committee members, volunteers, or contractors acting on behalf of the Hall
- The facilities, services, or booking arrangements of the Hall
- The way a matter has been handled by the Committee

This policy does **not** cover:

- Safeguarding concerns (these will be dealt with under the Hall's Safeguarding Policy)
- Employment matters (if applicable)
- Matters that are already subject to legal proceedings

2. Guiding Principles

In handling complaints, the Village Hall Committee will:

- Act **fairly and impartially**
- Treat all complainants with **respect and courtesy**
- Handle complaints **confidentially wherever possible**
- Deal with complaints **promptly and proportionately**
- Keep appropriate **written records**
- Learn from complaints to improve governance and services

3. Stage 1 Informal Resolution

In the first instance, complaints should be made to the **Chairman of the Village Hall Committee**, either verbally or in writing.

If the complaint is **about the Chairman**, it should instead be made to the **Vice-Chairman**.

At this stage, the Chairman (or Vice-Chairman) will seek to resolve the matter informally through discussion, clarification, or mediation where appropriate.

The complainant should, where possible, explain:

- What the issue is
- When and where it occurred
- What outcome they are seeking

Many issues can be resolved at this stage without the need for a formal process.

4. Stage 2 – Formal Written Complaint

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, or if the complainant prefers, a **formal complaint must be made in writing** (by email or letter) to the Chairman (or Vice-Chairman where applicable).

The written complaint should include:

- The complainant's name and contact details
- A clear description of the complaint
- Relevant dates, details, and any supporting evidence
- Any steps already taken to resolve the matter

5. Acknowledgement of Complaint

The Chairman (or Vice-Chairman) will acknowledge receipt of the formal complaint **within 7 days**, confirming:

- That the complaint has been received
- Who will be dealing with it
- The expected timescale for a response

6. Investigation of the Complaint

The complaint will be brought to the Village Hall Committee for consideration.

The Committee may:

- Request further information from the complainant
- Speak to any relevant individuals
- Review relevant documents, policies, or records

- Seek independent advice if necessary

If appropriate, the complainant may be invited to attend a meeting to explain their complaint. They may bring a friend or representative if they wish.

If the complaint relates to a specific Committee member, that person will not take part in decisions about the complaint.

7. Decision and Response

A written response will normally be provided **within 28 days** of receiving the formal complaint.

The response will include:

- A summary of the complaint
- What was considered in reaching a decision
- The Committee's conclusions
- Any actions that will be taken as a result

If the investigation will take longer than 28 days, the complainant will be informed of the delay and given a revised timescale.

8. Stage 3 – Review / Appeal

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, they may request a review **in writing within 14 days** of receiving the response.

The Committee will then reconsider the complaint. Where appropriate, an **independent person** (e.g., another local charity trustee, parish council representative, or neutral community member) may be asked to review the handling of the complaint.

The decision following this review will be final.

9. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All complaints will be handled confidentially as far as reasonably possible. Personal data will be processed in line with data protection law and the Hall's Data Protection Policy. Information will only be shared with those who need to be involved in resolving the complaint.

10. Record Keeping and Learning

The Committee will keep a secure record of:

- All formal complaints received
- Actions taken
- Outcomes and any lessons learned

The Committee will review complaints periodically to identify any patterns or areas for improvement in how the Hall is run.

Approved 4th February

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Sheers', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Signed Caroline Sheers

Chairman Boddington Village Hall Committee