Florence Park Community Association
COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Date Ratified:	October 2025
Next Review Date:	June 2027
Organisation Name:	Florence Park Community Association, Charity No. 1159506

1 Introduction

The Florence Park Community Association aims to provide its service users with a fair and high-quality service, within its stated aims and priorities and welcomes feedback from service users, members, other individuals and organisations we work with on all aspects of our services. Such feedback is invaluable in helping us to improve our work.

The purpose of this complaints policy and procedure is to:

- Provide a formal means for complaints to be dealt with
- Ensure that everyone knows how to make a complaint
- Ensure that complaints are dealt with consistently, fairly and quickly
- Ensure that complaints are monitored and contribute to changes to improve our services.

The Florence Park Community Association will:

- Listen carefully to complaints
- Wherever possible treat complaints as confidential
- Ensure that wherever possible, and except for reasons of legality or confidentiality, its management of complaints is open and transparent
- Record and store all information in accordance with the Data Protection Act and GDPR
- Fully investigate the complaint quickly, Including complaints concerning third parties
- Normally appoint two trustees to lead the investigation.(There may be circumstances involving trustees where an external adjudicator is necessary.)
- Write to the complainant with the results of the investigation, inform them of any actions implemented to prevent a re-occurrence and to tell them of any right of appeal.
- Report outcomes to the Trustees.

This Policy and Procedure does not replace any legal rights an individual or organisation may wish to explore.

2 Definitions

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about actions taken by anyone using or affected by our services, including those provided by third parties, whether justified or not. A complaint may be about action taken or not taken. An individual or other organisation may make a complaint if they feel that the Florence Park Community Association has:

- Failed to provide a service or an acceptable standard of service
- Delayed in providing a service
- Made a mistake in the way it has provided a service

- Provided an unfair service
- Failed to act in a proper way

A concern may be defined as an expression of worry or doubt over an issue considered to be important for which reassurances are sought. The Association will attempt to address concerns brought to us informally but if preferred the complaints procedure may be used to express concerns.

3 Legal issues

There may be occasions when the Association is required by law to refer a complaint to law enforcement or statutory agencies, or the Association is informed about a complaint by a law enforcement agency, solicitors or bodies with statutory powers of investigation. At all times legal, statutory or professional investigations will take primacy over the Complaints Policy and Procedure and the Association will not undertake any actions that may compromise any external investigations.

In such cases:

- The Complaints Policy and Procedure will be initiated and the governing body may take such action to protect clients, users, or the Association through suspension of a member or other volunteer until such a time as any legal procedures or investigations are completed to the satisfaction of the external agencies concerned. If the complaint involves a paid member of staff then the Disciplinary Procedure will be used.
- Once immediate actions have been taken the Complaints policy will be suspended until such a time as any legal procedures or investigations are completed to the satisfaction of the external agencies concerned.
- The Association will keep full and accurate records of its actions in respect of such a complaint.

4 Data Protection

To process a complaint the Florence Park Community Association will hold personal data about a complainant, which the individual provides and which other people give when investigating the complaint. The Florence Park Community Association will hold this data securely and only use it to help to address the complaint. The identity of the person making the complaint will only be made known to those needing to consider the complaint and will not be revealed to other people or made public by the Florence Park Community Association. However it may not be possible to preserve confidentiality in all circumstances, for example, where relevant legislation applies or allegations are made which involve the conduct of third parties.

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, individuals have a right to obtain a copy of their personal data. However, there are exceptions to this right. The Florence Park Community Association will normally destroy its complaints files in a secure manner 3 years after the complaint has been closed.

5 Monitoring

Complaints are an important tool, which alongside other user feedback and evaluations will allow Florence Park Community Association to learn about the services we provide. They provide a useful source of information about how individuals see our services and how we are serving them. To ensure that we learn from complaints the following information will be collected:

Complaints

- Name and address of complainant
- Date complaint received

- Name of person dealing with the complaint
- Date of response to the complaint
- Nature of the complaint
- Action(s) taken/recommendations made in response to the complaint (where appropriate)
- Lessons learnt

Complaints information will be considered on a regular basis and reported quarterly to the Management Committee. Wherever possible the information will be used to improve and develop services.
If the Association receives a complaint about another member of the Association the formal complaints procedure will be used and the Association will also carry out any actions in accordance with our constitution.

6 Procedure

There are two stages to the complaints procedure:

6.1 Stage 1: The Complaint

a) What you need to do
Write to the Florence Park Community Association explaining your complaint as fully as possible. Your letter should be addressed to the Chair at the above address and marked "Private and Confidential". Please include your name, a contact address and telephone number and the name of the organisation you represent, if appropriate. We cannot respond to anonymous complaints. The Association can help you to put your complaint in writing, or signpost you to someone who can support you to do this. Complaints should be submitted within a month of the event complained about as it may not be possible to investigate fully if further time has elapsed.

b) What the Association will do
If an individual prefers to make a verbal complaint then the person dealing with it **must** record the details on the Complaints Form. If an individual asks for a copy of the Complaints Policy and Procedure including a Complaints Form the Association will send these out where possible on the same day or within a week of the request. On receiving a complaint the Association will ensure that it is logged.

The Chair will contact you within 10 days with written confirmation that your complaint has been received and that an investigation has begun. If the Chair is not available, the Secretary will deal with the matter. If both are unavailable another trustee or committee member will deputise.

Complaints concerning third parties, such as hirers of the premises or those putting on events e.g. music or drama will be investigated and dealt with on a case by case basis.

The Chair (or deputy) may be able to resolve the complaint quickly and informally without need to use the formal stages of the complaints procedure. This could be, for example, by way of an apology, by providing or amending the service concerned or by providing an explanation acceptable to the complainant. . The Chair will complete a 'Complaints Investigation Report' (see appendices) and send a copy of this to you.

If it is not possible to resolve the complaint quickly and informally then the Chair (or deputy) will fully investigate the complaint by interviewing any relevant staff or others The Chair may seek advice from our insurers and/or from external advisers. Notes will be taken of any interviews and the interviewees will receive a copy. The Chair will list any evidence seen (e.g. files, E-mails etc.).

All parties involved in the investigation will be required to keep the matter private and confidential, except that staff may seek the advice of trades unions or other advisers if they consider that the FPCA Grievance Procedure will need to be invoked

Following an investigation the Association may:

- Uphold the complaint in full or in part
- Dismiss the complaint in full or in part

You will receive a copy of our "Complaint Investigation Report" within 14 days of completion of the investigation. This will be in writing, unless you have requested that we use another medium. It will include a summary of what has been done to investigate the complaint and any proposed action to remedy the situation. Having received the report you then need to respond within 7 days of receipt of the report as to whether you are satisfied with the outcome of the investigation or not.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome your reply should provide the Association with details of your reasons for rejecting it and your intention to move to Stage 2

6.2 Stage 2: Appeal against the Chair's decision

a) What you need to do

If you are dissatisfied with the decision that has been made you can appeal. This must be done within 10 working days of having received the Complaints Investigation Report. You make your appeal by completing the return slip indicating that you are not satisfied and wish to move to Stage 2 of the complaints procedure.

b) What the Association will do

You will be invited to make your appeal in person to an 'Appeals Panel' consisting of 3 Association Members not previously involved in the investigation. They will have been given a copy of the Complaints Investigation Report, but will not have discussed the matter with the investigator or the staff involved.

The role of the Appeals Panel is to see if your complaint has been dealt with properly and fairly and whether an appropriate decision has been reached, not to re-investigate the complaint. Where the complaint is against a member of staff, that person will be given the opportunity to submit a written statement to the Appeals Panel. This will be considered alongside the original complaint, the investigation report and any action suggested to remedy the situation.

You will be given at least 7 days' notice of the date, time and venue of the Appeals Panel meeting and all reasonable efforts will be made to hold the meeting at a time convenient to you. You may bring someone to assist you, or to witness the procedure.

The Appeals Panel may:

- Uphold the complaint in full or in part
- Dismiss the complaint in full or in part

and will write to you within 7 days to notify you of its decision and any actions to be taken to address the complaint. The Appeals Panel's decision will be final and no further correspondence will be entered into.

Appendix

Florence Park Community Association (FPCA) Complaints Form

Name of Complainant:

Name of Organisation:

Address:

Tel Number:

E-Mail :

Describe your complaint:

Date Complaint Made:

Signature of Complainant:

For Office Use:

Date Complaint received:

Date complainant notified of its receipt:

Name of person dealing with the complaint:

Name and signature of person receiving the complaint:

FPCA Complaints Investigation Report

Name of person(s) investigating the complaint:

Position in the Association:

Outline of complaint:

Details of investigation :(Paper work looked at, interviews held etc.)

Complaint Upheld: Yes No

Reasons for decision:

Actions to be taken:

Date result with report sent to complainant:

Signature of investigator: