

17th St Albans Scout Group



Complaints Policy

The 17th St Albans Scout Group follows the Scout Association's Complaints policy. An outline of the process is given below but for full information please go to the Scout Associations website.

How do I complain and who do I complain to?

In the first instance, you should try an informal approach to your section volunteers to resolve your complaint and to see what action can be taken.

If the informal approach proves to be unsatisfactory, then make a Formal Complaint to the Group Lead Volunteer (GLV), contactable via gsl@17thstalbansscouts.org.uk

What Formal Complaints are accepted?

We accept Formal Complaints about how you have been treated by Scouting or, if you are a parent or carer of a young person, how that young person has been treated by Scouting.

We have a few basic rules for the acceptance of complaints:

- Formal Complaints must be raised within three months of you knowing the facts (we may not deal with complaints that are older).
- We do not generally investigate anonymous complaints.
- We do not accept complaints that are raised on behalf of or regarding other people (except by parents/carers of children in Scouting).
- We do not reopen old complaint cases that have been ruled upon unless new evidence is substantive.
- We do not progress complaints that we believe to be vexatious or malicious.

How will my Formal Complaint be dealt with?

Your complaint will be dealt with fairly and objectively. We handle complaints in a positive and pro-active manner and expect resolutions and outcomes to contribute to a process of continuous improvement.

Please bear in mind that adults in Scouting are volunteers and have other calls on their time. It may therefore take a little longer to sort out your complaint; however you will be kept informed of the progress of the complaint with an acknowledgement of a formal complaint within seven days and regular updates (typically at least every four weeks).

The investigator may need to speak to you and a number of other people to fully understand your complaint and the circumstances surrounding it.

The GLV will make a decision about the complaint and will inform you whether your complaint is upheld or not and the actions that will be taken as a result.

What if I am not satisfied with the outcome of my Formal Complaint?

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint or the way in which it was handled, then you may appeal. You must appeal within three months of being given the outcome of your complaint.

Your appeal must be formally lodged with the next level of manager in Scouting. If you are not sure who this is, then the GLV who dealt with your complaint will provide the details. In your appeal, you must clearly explain the basis on which you are making the appeal and your preferred outcome to resolve the issue.

The next senior manager will make a decision about the appeal and will inform you whether your appeal is upheld or not and the actions that will be taken as a result.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal, there is no further escalation of the complaint and we will not consider further any action regarding the complaint or the appeal.

For 17th St Albans Scout Group Volunteers managing complaints

Dealing with a complaint is not the nicest job but it is vital that each complaint is handled fairly and in a timely manner according to The Scout Association's complaint procedure. This covers:

- Try to resolve issues informally, locally if possible in the first instance.
- Resolve complaints as early as possible – don't leave people waiting for something to be done.
- Be positive and proactive when dealing with a complaint – don't hide from the issue.
- Identify opportunities for change and improvement – nothing is perfect, if we have made a mistake we should say sorry and put it right.
- If a complainant is unhappy with the outcome of a complaint, they can appeal. The appeal procedure allows for only one appeal and that is to the GLV.

The following resources are available on the Scout Website and can help you with complaint handling:

- Resolving Complaints: The Scout Association's complaints procedure (FS140100) (PDF) – factsheet with guidance notes on our complaints procedure.
- Rules (POR chapter 15) (PDF) – The Scout Association's policy on complaints.
- Dealing with Difficult Situations (PDF) – management tactics and information about dealing with complaints.
- Flowchart to explain the complaints procedure (PDF)
- Flowchart to explain the appeal procedure (PDF)
- Writing response letters to complaints and appeals (PDF) – hints, tips, best practice and examples for writing responses to complaints.
- A document for complainants (PDF) – Information for people considering making a complaint about Scouting
- Guidance on dealing with Subject Access Requests – what to do when someone requests a copy of their personal data