

Complaints Policy - Sid Vale Association CIO

Sid Vale Association (SVA) views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve upon its activities for SVA members and volunteers, as well as a chance to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the complaint.

Our policy is:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
- To make sure all SVA Trustees and volunteers know what to do if a complaint is received
- To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
- To gather information which helps us to improve what we do

1. Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of the SVA.

2. Where Complaints Come From

Complaints may come from an SVA member, an SVA volunteer, or any member of the local community or organisation who has a legitimate interest in SVA.

A complaint should be made in writing or by email.

In exceptional circumstances this can be recorded by the person receiving the complaint.

3. Confidentiality

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, involving only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

4. Responsibility

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the SVA Management Committee.

5. Recording/Logging of the Complaint

All Complaints will be recorded/logged by the SVA Secretary. An acknowledgement of receipt of the Complaint will be sent to the person raising the Complaint, and a record kept of the progress and outcome of the Complaint.

6. SVA Management Committee

SVA Management Committee will review and consider all Complaints made, will have Complaints as a Standing Item on its Agenda, and will review Lessons Learnt, as appropriate and beneficial to supporting the aims of the SVA, and at least annually.

7. Review

This policy is reviewed bi-annually and updated as required.

Reviewed June 2024

Next review June 2026

8. Complaints Procedure of SVA CIO

Publicised Contact Details for Complaints:

Written complaints should be sent to SVA at:

SVA Chair,
Sid Vale Association CIO,
12 Church Street
Sidmouth EX10 8LY

or to SVA Chair by e-mail at:

chairman@sidvaleassociation.org.uk

9. Receiving Complaints

Complaints may arrive through channels publicised for that purpose or through other contact details or opportunities the complainant may have.

A complaint should be made in writing or by email.

In exceptional circumstances this can be recorded by the person receiving the complaint.

10. Resolving Complaints

Informal Complaint Procedure

In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate.

Stage One - Formal Complaint Procedure

If a Complaint has not been able to be resolved Informally, the information should be passed to the SVA secretary as soon as possible and acknowledged to the complainant within one week wherever possible with an indication of when they can expect a reply.

On receiving the complaint, the Secretary records it in the complaints log and informs the SVA Chair, or Deputy Chair if the Complaints relates to the SVA Chair.

The SVA Chair or Vice Chair will delegate an appropriate Trustee to investigate the Complaint and to take appropriate action.

To note: The SVA Chair, (and the Vice SVA Chair in relation to a Complaint about the SVA Chair themselves), will not usually be involved at Stage One of the Complaints Process. The SVA Chair (and the SVA Vice Chair in relation to a Complaint about the SVA Chair) would be required to lead the next stage of the Complaints process if the Complaint remains unresolved at Stage One).

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.

Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within four weeks. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

Stage Two - Formal Complaint Procedure

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can request that the complaint is reviewed at Trustee/Management Committee level. At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the SVA Chair.

The request for Trustee/Management Committee level review should be acknowledged within a week of receiving the Complaint stating when the complainant can expect a reply.

The SVA Chair may investigate the facts of the case themselves or delegate another Trustee to do so. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage One.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond.

The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage One should be kept informed of what is happening.

Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within four weeks. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the Trustee/Management Committee decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

External Stage

The complainant can complain to the Charity Commission at any stage.

Variation of the Complaints Procedure

The Trustees may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about the SVA Chair will not also have the SVA Chair as the person leading a Stage Two review.

11. Recording/Logging of the Complaints Process

A full record of the Complaints process, investigation and outcome should be made, and kept securely by the SVA Secretary.

12. Monitoring and Learning from Complaints

Complaints are reviewed annually to identify Lessons Learnt and any trends which may indicate a need to take further action which support the aims of the SVA.

Reviewed and approved June 2024

Next Review June 2026

SID VALE ASSOCIATION

COMPLAINT FORM - CONFIDENTIAL

Complainant's Name:

Address:

Telephone Number:

Email Address:

When you make a complaint to the Sid Vale Association Secretary, your complaint will be acknowledged within one week wherever possible with an indication of when you can expect a reply. You should receive a definitive reply within four weeks. Your reply will describe the action taken to investigate your complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

Please describe the reason for your complaint in as much detail as possible:

Date of incident(s):

Names of any other people involved (if appropriate):

Detail of your complaint: (please use additional paper, if required)

Signature/name of complainant:

Date: