

Complaints Policy

Purpose

This policy explains how to make complaints about 2nd Acomb (St. Stephen's) Scout Group, and how the Group will deal with them.

Applies to

All Leaders including Trustee Board Members, Young Leaders, Volunteers, Suppliers, Contractors and members of the Public who are involved with 2nd Acomb (St. Stephen's) Scout Group.

Summary

The Scout Association has a procedure in place to ensure that complaints are taken seriously and dealt with appropriately. This document describes how to make a complaint and how any complaint will be dealt with. It is the policy of The Scout Association and of 2nd Acomb (St. Stephen's) Scouts to have a fair and open process for dealing with concerns and complaints raised by members and non-members that directly affect them or their children in Scouting.

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Version control

Version	Author	Role	Release date
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1.0	Becky Lincoln	Group Scout Lead Volunteer	01 March 2022
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How do I complain?

In the first instance, you should try an informal approach to resolve your complaint and to see what action will be taken. We hope that many complaints can be dealt with quickly and informally.

If the informal approach proves to be unsatisfactory, then you may wish to register a formal complaint.

Formal complaints should be made in writing to one of the people detailed below. It is helpful when registering a formal complaint if you can provide us with concise details about the problem and your preferred outcome to rectify the issue.

We accept 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
- Complaints regarding Redmire Station House

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

- Complaints must be raised within three months of you knowing the facts (we do not deal with complaints that are older)
- Complaints must be about how you or your children have been treated in Scouting (except for parents/carers of children in Scouting we do not accept complaints that are raised on behalf of or regarding other people)
- We do not accept complaints that are broadly or substantively the same as a previous complaint or that we believe to be vexatious or malicious
- We do not generally investigate anonymous complaints

Who deals with complaints about volunteers?

For the purpose of this policy a volunteer is any adult helping at a Group activity event or meeting. If your complaint is about a volunteer, it will be dealt with by the local volunteer manager in Scouting or by someone asked by them to investigate the complaint. If your complaint is about the local volunteer manager, it will be dealt with by the next senior volunteer manager or by someone asked by them to investigate the complaint. If your complaint is about Squirrels, a Beaver Scout Colony, a Cub Scout Pack, a Scout Troop, an Explorers Scout Troop or some other aspect of your local Scout Group then it will be dealt with by the Group Scout Lead Volunteer who can be contacted at gsl@2ndacombscoutgroup.co.uk

If your complaint is about some other aspect of Scouting in the District then it will be dealt with by the District Commissioner who can be contacted at dc@eborscouts.org.uk

In all cases, if you are not sure then ask the Group Scout Lead Volunteer or the District Commissioner or contact the Scout Information Centre (0845 300 1818) who will help you to find the right person.

Who deals with complaints about Redmire Station House?

If your complaint is about Redmire Station House, it will be dealt with by the Redmire sub-committee in the first instance, who can be contacted at bookings@redmirestationhouse.co.uk

Alternatively, it will be dealt with by the Group Scout Lead Volunteer of 2nd Acomb St Stephen's Scout Group, who can be contacted at gsl@2ndacombscoutgroup.co.uk

How will my 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 multiple other people to fully understand your complaint and the circumstances surrounding it.

The manager will decide 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?

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 28 days of being given the outcome of your complaint.

Your appeal must be formally lodged with the next level of volunteer manager in Scouting.

If you are not sure who this is, then the manager 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.

Your appeal will consider the process undertaken to handle the original complaint and the outcome of the original complaint. You will be kept informed of the progress of your appeal with an acknowledgement of your appeal within seven days and regular updates (typically at least every four weeks).

Your appeal will be investigated by the next senior volunteer manager or by someone asked to do this on the next senior manager's behalf.

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

The next senior manager will decide 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.

Whistleblowing and the Charity Regulatory Bodies

As a charity, Scouting is regulated by the relevant regulatory body in each area of the United Kingdom. In very serious matters, which may include whistleblowing, the regulatory body may consider acting on a complaint made to it directly.

The regulatory body will not generally become involved with a dispute between members of the charity or where a concern is about policies followed or actions taken by the trustees within the law and the provisions of the charity's governing document (in Scouting this is "Policy, Organisation and Rules" found at www.scouts.org.uk/por).

The Scout complaint process should deal properly with your complaint; however, you have the right to raise a serious issue directly with the Charity Commission at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission> but should you wish to make a complaint, you should raise your concerns in the first instance with the Group Scout Leader by email to gsl@2ndacombscoutgroup.co.uk