

# Volunteer Complaints Procedure



Lagan Valley Regional Park considers it important that problems or complaints are dealt with fairly, openly and consistently. To help with this we have put in place the following procedures.

**If a volunteer has a complaint about the organisation or a member of staff:**

## **Informal Complaints**

1. We hope that most problems or complaints can be solved informally by raising the matter with a staff member.
2. If the complaint is against the staff member, then the volunteer should raise the matter with the Park Manager.
3. If the issue is not resolved then it should be put in writing to the Park Manager. The matter should be dealt with within 14 days.

## **Formal Complaints**

1. Please raise your complaint in writing to the Park Manager. The matter should be dealt with within 14 days. The Park Manager will contact you to discuss the case and seek a resolution.
2. If the complaint is against the Park Manager, then the volunteer should forward a written complaint to the Director of Parks and Leisure at Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council. The matter should be dealt with within 6 weeks.

**The treatment of complaints made about staff members will be consistent with their terms of employment.**

**If there is a problem or complaint about a volunteer's behaviour:**

## **Informal Procedure**

1. Again, hopefully this can be resolved informally. Many 'problems' are simply due to misunderstandings, training needs, a lack of support, inappropriate roles and so on. The Volunteer Coordinator will discuss the matter with the volunteer, and if it is felt necessary an informal warning may be issued, with steps agreed to amend conduct.

## **Formal Procedure**

1. Formal procedures will be followed where it is believed that a volunteer's behaviour has not been in keeping with the organisation's aims, policies, procedures or Code of Practice. The Volunteer Coordinator will raise the issue in a formal meeting with the volunteer, and if it is felt necessary, a formal written warning may be issued with steps agreed to amend conduct.

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2. If the issue is still not resolved, a meeting involving the volunteer, Volunteer Coordinator and the appropriate senior manager will be called. This may result in the volunteer being asked to leave.
3. At any time where a volunteer is believed to have behaved in a manner that has or could have seriously affected the organisation, its reputation, its staff, volunteers, service users or members of the public using the organization's services – for example theft, bullying, or violence – they will be asked to stop volunteering while the matter is investigated by the Volunteer Coordinator and the Park Manager. A decision will normally be made within 14 days. If the complaint is upheld against the volunteer, they will be excluded from volunteering.

**Volunteers can appeal decisions by writing to the Park Manager. A final decision will normally be given within 14 days.**

**It is Lagan Valley Regional Park's policy to report, to the PSNI and/or any other relevant authorities, a suspected criminal offence.**

**At all stages volunteers have the right to put their case forward, and be accompanied at meetings on these issues by a volunteer, member of staff or a friend.**

**All formal complaints will be responded to in writing, recorded and confidentially stored for a period of two years.**