

## **Guideline 15**

# **Complaints Procedure**

The Bowls Development Alliance (BDA), working with all the National Governing Bodies are all committed to providing a quality service for its members and working in an open and accountable way that builds the trust and respect of all our stakeholders.

One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our members, customers and stakeholders, and by responding positively to complaints, and by putting mistakes right.

Complaints by children and adults at risk should follow the same procedure with additional support from the Club Safeguarding Officer.

The purpose of a formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

### **Responsibility for Action**

The BDA Manager along with NGB officers with a Safeguarding responsibility are jointly responsible for taking appropriate action.

### **Confidentiality**

Apart from in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and the BDA and NGBs maintain confidentiality. However, the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality and each complaint will be judged on its own merit. Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

### **Monitoring and Reporting**

All complaints will be recorded and quarterly monitoring will take place to ensure procedures are being adhered to.

## **FORMAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

### ***Stage 1***

In the first instance, if your complaint concerns a Bowls Club Safeguarding Officer or a volunteer at the club and you are unable to resolve the issue informally or at a local level, you should write to your relevant NGB so that he/she has a chance to put things right.

In your letter, you should set out the details of your complaint, the consequences for you as a result, and the remedy you are seeking.

You can expect your complaint to be acknowledged within 4 working days of receipt.

You should receive a response and an explanation within 28 working days.

### ***Stage 2***

If you are not satisfied with the initial response to the complaint, then you can ask for your complaint and the response to be reviewed by the relevant NGB Board of Directors. The aim is to resolve all matters as quickly as possible. However, inevitably some issues will be more complex and therefore may require longer to be fully investigated. Consequently, timescales given for handling and responding to complaints are indicative. If a matter requires more detailed investigation, you will receive an interim response describing what is being done to deal with the matter, and when a full reply can be expected and from whom.

### ***Final Stage***

If you are not satisfied with the subsequent reply from the relevant Board of Directors, then you have the option of writing to the Chair of the relevant Board stating the reason why you are dissatisfied with the outcome. You must do this within 10 days of receiving the written response from the relevant Board.

The Chair (or their nominee) will respond normally within 10 working days to inform you of the action which will be taken to investigate your complaint, and when you can expect to hear the outcome of the investigation.

**The decision will be final.**