

Rising Voices Wessex

Grievance and procedure policy



Introduction:

Rising Voices Wessex is committed to dealing with grievances fairly; consistently and without unreasonable delay. This document sets out the way in which a member, Trustee or volunteer should make a complaint they have related to the choir or the charity. The purpose of this policy and procedure is to ensure that, as far as possible, disputes or the escalation of any dispute may be avoided.

Occasionally a member or group of members or individuals engaged by Rising Voices Wessex may disagree, or feel aggrieved by a decision that has been taken on their behalf by the Trustees or the steering group or by the actions of another choir member.

When a grievance is raised it can often be resolved to the member's satisfaction in its early stages through constructive dialogue.

Informal Discussion:

The charity promotes communication between members and the Trustees and so wherever possible grievances should be discussed. Where a member has a concern, they should in the first instance discuss it with a member of the steering group or Trustee, who may be able to reassure the member, resolve the issue, or get advice and report back to the member within 2 weeks.

Formal Procedure:

The following grievance procedure is therefore in place so that should a dispute arise, it can be properly and fairly dealt with.

Grievances will be dealt with confidentially so far as is reasonably possible.

Stage 1 - Statement of grievance

Where the matter is unresolved or the concern relates to the Steering group collectively or individually or there are reasons for the Steering group not to be the appropriate forum to address the aggrieved individual should bring the grievance to the attention of either the Chair or Vice-chair of the Trustees in writing in a formal letter setting out the facts, avoiding insulting or abusive language and giving specific examples of the complaint, copies of documents and names of witnesses and dates where possible - who will seek to respond in writing within 2 weeks of receipt.

Stage 2 - Grievance meeting

If the matter remains unresolved and the member is not satisfied, they shall have the right to appeal and be heard by the Trustees accompanied by a companion, before a final decision is made. The choice of friend to be agreed and notified to the Trustees at least 24 hours before the meeting, to identify whether they will require any specialist arrangements to be made for their or their companions' attendance.

The companion can take notes during the meeting.

If the member or their companion is unable to attend the meeting at the time, date and place specified, the member must notify the chair of the meeting as soon as possible. Except in case of emergency, this should be at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting. The member should advise the Trustees of a date and time they and their companion are available at within five days of the original meeting.

The Trustees may use discretion and adjourn the meeting to carry out further investigations, after which the meeting should reconvene.

After the meeting the Trustees will contact the member in writing.

Stage 3 - Appeal

If the member is unhappy with the decision and they wish to appeal they should write to the chair of the charity within five days saying that they disagree with the decision and giving their reasons why and providing any new evidence.

The member will then be invited to an appeal meeting. The right to be accompanied to the appeal meeting is the same as that set out in Stage 2.

If the matter remains unresolved after following this process or the member is not satisfied with the outcome final recourse is via the Constitution, which allows members to request an Extraordinary General Meeting.

Stage 4 – Resolution

Where a member or individual ignores or disregards the procedure outlined above this may, depending on the circumstances, be deemed as an example of behaviour which is likely to bring Rising Voices Wessex into disrepute and the member or individual may be requested to terminate their association with Rising Voices Wessex following review of the issue by the Trustees and a majority decision by the Trustees.

The Trustees may unanimously and for good reason terminate the membership of any individual or member organisation (Rising Voices Wessex Constitution Clause 4.5) and this should be confirmed in writing to the individual or organization concerned.