**Complaints Policy for Gerrards Cross Community Association GXCA**

Effective Date: 11 February 2025

**1. Introduction**

At Gerrards Cross Community Association GXCA ("the Charity", "we", "our"), we are committed to providing high-quality services and ensuring that everyone who interacts with us feels respected and valued. We understand that, from time to time, issues may arise, and we are committed to addressing complaints promptly and fairly.

This Complaints Policy outlines how we handle complaints to ensure that they are dealt with in a transparent, fair, and consistent manner. It is important to us that all complaints are resolved in a way that helps improve our services and builds trust with our community.

**2. Aims of the Policy**

Our primary aims in handling complaints are:

* To ensure that all complaints are treated seriously and addressed in a fair, timely, and consistent manner.
* To learn from complaints to improve our services and processes.
* To provide individuals with an accessible and effective process to voice their concerns.
* To maintain a culture of transparency and accountability.

**3. What is a Complaint?**

A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction or concern about the services, activities, or conduct of the Charity, its staff, volunteers, or trustees. Complaints may relate to:

* A service or activity not meeting expectations.
* A breakdown in communication.
* Staff, Trustee or volunteer behaviour.
* An issue with the way the Charity is being run or managed.
* A perceived breach of the Charity’s policies or procedures.

If you are unsure whether something is a complaint, please reach out to us, and we can help clarify the issue.

**4. Who Can Make a Complaint?**

We accept complaints from anyone who is:

* A member of the Gerrards Cross Community Association.
* A participant in our services, activities, or events.
* A staff member, volunteer, or trustee.
* A member of the local community or anyone affected by our work.

Complaints can be made by individuals or organisations, and we will handle all complaints with the same level of seriousness and attention.

**5. How to Make a Complaint**

If you wish to make a complaint, please follow these steps:

1. **Initial Informal Resolution**:
   * We encourage you to first try to resolve the issue informally by speaking to the staff member, volunteer, or trustee involved, if you feel comfortable doing so. Many issues can be resolved through open and honest communication.
2. **Formal Complaint**:
   * If you are unable to resolve the issue informally, or if you prefer to proceed directly with a formal complaint, please submit your complaint in writing (email or letter) to the **Complaints Officer** at:
     + **Email**: [office@gxca.org.uk](mailto:office@gxca.org.uk) or president@gxca.org.uk
     + **Post**: GXCA, The Memorial Centre, 8, East Common, Gerrards Cross, BUCKS SL9 7AD

In your complaint, please include the following:

* Your name and contact details.
* A description of the issue, including relevant dates, events, and the individuals involved.
* What you would like to see happen to resolve the complaint.

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within **5 working days** of receiving it.

**6. Stages of the Complaint Procedure**

We aim to resolve all complaints in a fair and timely manner. The complaint process consists of the following stages:

* **Stage 1: Acknowledgement and Investigation**
  + Once your complaint is received, we will acknowledge it within 5 working days.
  + The Complaints Officer will investigate the matter and gather any necessary information. This may involve speaking to the individual(s) involved, reviewing relevant documents, or seeking additional input from other parties.
  + We aim to complete the investigation within **10 working days**. If we are unable to complete the investigation within this time frame, we will inform you and provide an updated timeline.
* **Stage 2: Response**
  + After completing the investigation, we will provide you with a written response, detailing:
    - The outcome of the investigation.
    - Any actions that have been taken or will be taken to address the complaint.
    - Any changes to policies or practices as a result of the complaint (if applicable).
  + This response will be sent to you within **15 working days** of acknowledging your complaint.
* **Stage 3: Escalation (if necessary)**
  + If you are dissatisfied with the response or the outcome of the investigation, you can request a further review. This should be done in writing, outlining why you are unhappy with the initial response.
  + The request will be reviewed by a senior trustee or an independent party who was not involved in the original investigation. A final decision will be made, and we will respond to you within **10 working days** of receiving your request for escalation.

If the matter cannot be resolved within the Charity, you may also choose to contact external bodies, such as the **Charity Commission** or relevant regulatory bodies.

**7. Confidentiality**

All complaints will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. We will only share information about the complaint with individuals directly involved in investigating and resolving it.

However, in some cases, the details of the complaint may need to be shared with external parties, such as authorities or legal advisors, if required by law or if there are safeguarding concerns.

**8. Non-Retaliation**

We are committed to ensuring that individuals who make complaints in good faith will not face any form of retaliation or discrimination as a result. Everyone involved in the complaint process will be treated with respect and dignity. Retaliation against a complainant or anyone involved in the complaint process will be considered a serious breach of our policies and will be addressed accordingly.

**9. Learning from Complaints**

We view complaints as an opportunity to improve. As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, we will:

* Regularly review the nature of complaints to identify trends or recurring issues.
* Use complaints to inform the development of our services, policies, and procedures.
* Provide feedback to staff and volunteers to help prevent similar issues in the future.

**10. Review and Updates to the Policy**

This Complaints Policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required by changes in law or best practice. We will update the policy to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of our community and remains effective in resolving complaints.

**11. Contact Information**

If you have any questions about this Complaints Policy or would like to discuss an issue informally, please contact:

**Complaints Officer**: President, GXCA Executive Committee

**Email**: president@gxca.org.uk

Gerrards Cross Community Association (GXCA)  
The Memorial Centre, 8 East Common, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire SL9 7AD  
Email: [Office@gxca.org.uk](mailto:Office@gxca.org.uk)  
Phone: [01753 883759](https://www.google.com/search?q=gxca&rlz=1C1ONGR_enGB1029GB1029&oq=gxca++&gs_lcrp=EgZjaHJvbWUyBggAEEUYOTIGCAEQRRg7MgYIAhBFGEEyBggDEEUYPDIGCAQQRRg8MgYIBRBFGEHSAQgxNjI5ajBqNKgCALACAQ&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8)

Thank you for helping us improve the services and activities we provide to the community. We value your feedback and are committed to resolving any issues you may encounter in a fair and transparent manner.

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