

# Ashby u3a Complaints Procedure

## Complaints Procedures

It is unfortunate but true, that in any organisation, problems and grievances will occur from time to time. Ashby u3a has a Code of Conduct which all members are expected to follow

It is in everyone's interest that:

- Problems and grievances are dealt with quickly and fairly
- Every effort is made to settle the issue without having to resort to formal disciplinary action
- Confidentiality is maintained by all concerned.

Our advice is that you should always try to sort out any problem by talking and resolving it informally and amicably with the person/ people if possible, if this fails then please refer to the procedures set out below.

## Problems for a Group Leader within an Interest Group

Problems that could arise within a group may be, but are not limited to:

- Disruptive and/or unsocial behaviour
- Unsuitability
- Failure to pay Group fees
- Disagreement between members

In most cases, the Group Leader should be able to sort it out by talking to the member/members in question and resolve it informally and amicably. If this fails and the problem persists the Group Leader should refer the matter to the Group Co-ordinator on the committee.

The Group Leader should not allow a situation to continue which impacts on other members of the group.

## Problems with the Group Leader

Initially the member/members should try to resolve the problem by discussing it with the group leader. However, if this is unsuccessful or if the member/members involved feel unable to do so, the matter should be referred to the Group Co-ordinator:

Email: [interestg@ashbyu3a.co.uk](mailto:interestg@ashbyu3a.co.uk)

## Problems within Ashby u3a as a whole

- Between members
- Between a member and the committee
- Between a member and an individual trustee/committee member
- A member who brings the u3a into disrepute or acts in a way, which is prejudicial to the u3a
- A member who causes damage to property and/or equipment through misuse/negligence etc.

The above should all be referred to the Chairman in the first instance unless that person is personally involved, in which case, the Secretary or other senior committee member should take over. They will then deal with the case themselves or appoint a designated committee member to follow the procedures set out below.

## Procedure for a referred problem or grievance

The Designated committee member will endeavour to

- Establish the facts quickly, consulting as many people as possible
- Have an informal discussion with all concerned to summarise the problem, hear everybody's views and clear the air
- If they feel there is a case to answer but that it is a relatively minor issue, they will make it clear to all present that there must be no repeat of the sort of actions/behaviour that led to this problem
- If they feel that the situation warrants a more formal approach or a particular course of action e.g. exclusion from an interest group, they should refer the matter to an appointed complaints sub-committee of no less than 3 people which will agree a course of action.

## Procedures for formal complaints

- The relevant people will be invited to a meeting of the above sub-committee, accompanied by a friend if required.
- The matter will be fully discussed with the individual/individuals concerned who shall be given the opportunity to state their case.
- Written records will be kept.
- The sub-committee will take into account any mitigating circumstances and make its decision, which should be communicated in writing to all appropriate parties.

## Right of appeal

Before a member is excluded from an interest group or has his/her membership terminated, a right of appeal will be offered. An appeal, providing it is lodged within a 7 day period, can take the form of written representation for the committee to consider, or a request for a right of reply. If it is the latter, a meeting will be called of the whole committee (at least 75% of the committee must attend to form a quorum) and the member(s) in question will be asked to attend. They may bring a friend/friends who may also speak. The whole issue will be summarised and then the member(s) given the opportunity to speak, along with the supporter(s) if so desired. Whether the appeal is made in writing or in person, the committee will review its decision, taking into account any mitigating circumstances, and then make a final decision within 7 days, which must be communicated in writing.

If it proves impossible to solve the problem at local level then you can contact the National Office for advice.

National Office: <http://www.u3a.org.uk/home.html> or telephone 020 8466 6139

This policy was implemented on	9th October 2018
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Reviewed and revised	13 February 2024
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Next review date	February 2027
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