

## **Appendix 8 – Complaints procedure**

### **We will deal with your complaint**

We do not look on complaints as unwanted. In fact, they may help us to see where things might be improved. So do let us know where you feel we have made a mistake or done something which you found unsatisfactory or unacceptable. Even if you do not think your particular concern amounts to a 'complaint' we would still like to know about it. You may help us to deal with something we would otherwise overlook.

### **How to complain**

#### *Step 1: Contacting us*

The first step is to talk to a member of the committee. This can be done quite informally, either directly or by email or phone.

Usually, the best committee member to talk to will be the person who dealt with the matter you are concerned about, as they will be in the best position to help you quickly and to put things right. If the issue relates to child protection, please speak to one of our Child Protection Policy Coordinators, Marnie Rose or Leonie Johnson.

We will try to resolve the problem on the spot if we can. If we can't do this, for example, because information we need is not to hand, then we will take a record of your concern and arrange the best way and time for getting back to you. This will normally be within seven working days or we will make some other arrangement acceptable to you.

#### *Step 2: Taking your complaint further*

We hope you will only feel the need to make a formal complaint as a last resort and that you will complain to the person dealing with the matter first to give them a chance to put things right. However, if you are still unhappy, the next step is to put your complaint in writing to the Chair of the committee, setting out the details, explaining what you think went wrong and what you feel would put things right.

Once the Chair receives a written complaint, he/she will arrange for it to be fully investigated. Your complaint will be acknowledged in writing within seven working days of receiving it and the letter will say when you can expect a full response. This should normally be within three weeks unless the matter is very complicated. Where this is the case, we will still let you know what action is being taken and tell you when we expect to provide you with a full response.

#### *Step 3: The next stage*

If you are not satisfied with the Chair's investigation you can always seek advice from a mutually agreed third party outside the organisation, such as an advice agency or other organisation. We will provide you with details of any local services if we can.