



Advocacy Action

Developing Advocacy in Wakefield District

Policy and Approach to Complaints

1. Advocacy Action takes a positive approach to complaints. If anyone is unhappy about our services, we would like them to talk to us about it so we can do something about it. We accept that we will not be able to provide a perfect service all the time, and complaints are one effective form of feedback to help us to monitor and improve our work.
2. We will try to deal with complaints directly, informally and quickly wherever possible. We will ensure there is training and support for our staff to be able to deal with complaints sympathetically.
3. We understand that complaints can arise from a wide variety of circumstances and that they involve different people in different ways. We aim to provide a good service in a positive environment for everyone, including our staff and volunteers. Complaints will thus be dealt with as complaints about Advocacy Action, and not as complaints about individual workers. Specific issues arising from complaints that invoke other procedures will be dealt with according to those procedures (e.g. the staff disciplinary procedure).
4. We have a full complaints procedure that can be used if informal responses are unable to resolve a complaint. This is described in the document '*How to Complain about Advocacy Action*'. We will ensure that all the people we work with are aware of and able to use this full procedure.
5. We will appoint an appropriate individual to take responsibility within our organisation for ensuring that we maintain this policy and the accompanying procedure. This named individual will:
 - ensure staff and volunteers are adequately trained and supported to handle complaints;
 - be available to people who wish to make a complaint but don't feel able to approach the staff directly involved;
 - keep records of all complaints made within the organisation, together with details of the procedure that was followed and the outcome;
 - co-ordinate all complaints that go through the full procedure, ensuring appropriate people are involved, that people making complaints are kept informed, and liaising with other appropriate organisations.
6. We recognise that it can be hard for people to make a complaint and that they may need additional independent support. We will always ask anyone making a complaint if they would like this extra support, and we will act promptly to assist them to obtain it and ensure our procedure takes account of the needs of the person complaining and their supporter(s).