

# BOUNTIFUL BRIDGES COMPLAINTS POLICY

**Policy Version:** 2.0

**Effective Date:** 05-AUGUST-2025

**Review Date:** 01-JANUARY-2026

**Approved By:** Bountiful Bridges Leadership Team

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## 1. Policy Statement

Bountiful Bridges is committed to providing high-quality services, programmes, activities, and support to individuals, families, volunteers, partners, and the wider community.

We welcome feedback, comments, compliments, concerns, and complaints as valuable opportunities to improve our services and strengthen our organisation.

We are committed to:

- Listening to concerns respectfully.
- Treating complainants fairly and without prejudice.
- Investigating complaints appropriately.
- Responding in a timely manner.
- Learning from complaints to improve our services.
- Maintaining confidentiality wherever possible.

No individual will be disadvantaged for raising a genuine concern or complaint in good faith.

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## 2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide a clear process for raising concerns and complaints.
- Ensure complaints are handled consistently and fairly.
- Promote accountability and transparency.
- Improve organisational performance and service quality.
- Protect the rights of service users, volunteers, staff, and stakeholders.

- Support a culture of openness and continuous improvement.
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### 3. Scope

This policy applies to complaints relating to:

- Community programmes and activities.
- Youth engagement programmes.
- Food bank services.
- Educational initiatives.
- Wellbeing services.
- Events and workshops.
- Volunteers and volunteer activities.
- Organisational conduct.
- Service delivery.
- Communications.
- Website-related concerns.

This policy applies to complaints raised by:

- Service users.
  - Parents and guardians.
  - Volunteers.
  - Community members.
  - Partner organisations.
  - Donors.
  - Members of the public.
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### 4. Guiding Principles

When handling complaints, Bountiful Bridges will ensure that the process is:

#### Accessible

The complaints process will be easy to understand and access.

#### Fair

All complaints will be considered impartially.

## Respectful

All parties will be treated with dignity and respect.

## Confidential

Information will only be shared with those who need to know.

## Timely

Complaints will be addressed without unnecessary delay.

## Transparent

Complainants will be informed about the progress and outcome of their complaint.

## Learning-Focused

We will use complaints as opportunities to improve our services and practices.

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## 5. What Is a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about:

- A service provided by Bountiful Bridges.
- The conduct of a volunteer, staff member, or representative.
- A decision made by the organisation.
- The quality of service received.
- A failure to meet expected standards.
- Organisational practices or procedures.

Complaints may be made verbally or in writing.

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## 6. What Is Not Covered by This Policy?

This policy does not apply to:

### Safeguarding Concerns

Safeguarding concerns involving children, young people, or vulnerable adults must be handled through the Safeguarding Policy and reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## Criminal Matters

Allegations involving criminal activity should be referred to the police or relevant authorities.

## Employment Matters

Complaints from employees relating to employment issues will be handled under the appropriate staff grievance procedures.

## Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous complaints may be considered where sufficient information is available, but investigation may be limited.

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# 7. Informal Resolution

Where appropriate, concerns should first be raised informally.

Many issues can be resolved quickly through discussion and clarification.

Individuals are encouraged to speak with:

- The relevant programme leader.
- Event organiser.
- Volunteer coordinator.
- Organisational representative involved.

Where informal resolution is unsuccessful, a formal complaint may be submitted.

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# 8. Formal Complaints Procedure

## Stage 1 – Submission of Complaint

Complaints should be submitted as soon as possible after the issue arises.

Complaints may be submitted:

### By Email

[hello@bountifulbridges.org](mailto:hello@bountifulbridges.org)

## By Post

Bountiful Bridges Mountjoy Street Newport NP20 2FA United Kingdom

## In Person

Through an authorised representative of Bountiful Bridges.

The complaint should include:

- Name and contact details.
  - Description of the issue.
  - Relevant dates and locations.
  - Individuals involved (if known).
  - Desired outcome.
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## Stage 2 – Acknowledgement

We will normally acknowledge receipt of a complaint within:

### **Five (5) working days**

The acknowledgement will confirm:

- Receipt of the complaint.
  - Who is handling the matter.
  - Expected timescales.
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## Stage 3 – Investigation

An appropriate individual will investigate the complaint.

The investigation may include:

- Reviewing documentation.
- Interviewing relevant individuals.
- Gathering evidence.
- Seeking clarification from the complainant.

All investigations will be conducted fairly and objectively.

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## Stage 4 – Outcome

A written response will normally be provided within:

### **Twenty (20) working days**

Where additional time is required, the complainant will be informed.

Possible outcomes may include:

- Explanation.
  - Apology.
  - Corrective action.
  - Service improvement.
  - Mediation or resolution measures.
  - Referral to another process where appropriate.
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## 9. Appeals

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may request a review.

An appeal should normally be submitted within:

### **Fourteen (14) days**

of receiving the outcome.

The review will be conducted by an individual not directly involved in the original investigation wherever possible.

The decision following the review will normally be considered final.

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## 10. Complaints Involving Volunteers

Where a complaint involves a volunteer:

- The complaint will be assessed fairly.
- The volunteer will have an opportunity to respond.
- Appropriate action may be taken where necessary.

Actions may include:

- Additional training.

- Supervision.
  - Informal guidance.
  - Suspension from activities.
  - Termination of volunteer involvement.
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## 11. Complaints Involving Leadership

Where a complaint concerns a member of organisational leadership, the complaint will be handled by an independent member of the leadership structure or an appropriately appointed representative.

Every effort will be made to ensure impartiality.

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## 12. Vexatious or Malicious Complaints

Bountiful Bridges recognises the right of individuals to raise genuine concerns.

However, complaints that are:

- Deliberately false,
- Malicious,
- Repetitive without new evidence,
- Abusive,
- Harassing,

may be restricted or closed following appropriate review.

This will not prevent legitimate concerns from being investigated.

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## 13. Confidentiality

Information relating to complaints will be handled confidentially.

Information will only be shared with individuals involved in investigating or resolving the complaint.

Confidentiality may be overridden where:

- Safeguarding concerns arise.

- There is a legal obligation to disclose information.
  - There is a risk of serious harm.
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## 14. Record Keeping

A record of complaints will be maintained.

Records may include:

- Date received.
- Nature of complaint.
- Investigation actions.
- Outcome.
- Lessons learned.

Complaint records will be stored securely and handled in accordance with the organisation's Data Protection Policy.

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## 15. Learning and Improvement

Bountiful Bridges is committed to learning from complaints.

We will use complaint information to:

- Improve services.
- Strengthen policies and procedures.
- Identify training needs.
- Improve communication.
- Enhance participant experiences.

Trends may be reviewed periodically to identify recurring issues.

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## 16. Protection Against Victimisation

Individuals who raise complaints in good faith will not suffer discrimination, retaliation, harassment, or disadvantage as a result of doing so.

Retaliation against complainants will not be tolerated.

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## 17. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding Policy
  - Data Protection Policy
  - Privacy Policy
  - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
  - Volunteer Policy
  - Code of Conduct
  - Whistleblowing Policy
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## 18. Monitoring and Review

The leadership team will periodically review:

- Complaint volumes.
- Resolution times.
- Outcomes.
- Trends.
- Lessons learned.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required.

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## 19. Contact Information

For complaints, feedback, or concerns, please contact:

**Bountiful Bridges** Mountjoy Street Newport NP20 2FA United Kingdom

Email: [hello@bountifulbridges.org](mailto:hello@bountifulbridges.org)

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## 20. Approval

This Complaints Policy has been approved by the leadership of Bountiful Bridges and applies to all organisational programmes, services, activities, volunteers, representatives, and stakeholders.

Bountiful Bridges is committed to handling concerns fairly, transparently, and respectfully while continuously improving the services we provide to our communities.