

**Reviewed: November 2024**

## **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

### **PURPOSE**

Age UK Cambridgeshire & Peterborough (AUKCAP) are committed to providing an excellent experience. We recognise that sometimes things go wrong, and when they do, we want to know so we can put things right as soon as possible.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure all levels of dissatisfaction or complaints are listened to appropriately investigated and dealt with as quickly as possible, providing an acceptable answer to the complainant.

The policy also ensures all complaints are visible, tracked and fed back to the **Board of Trustees** providing a means of monitoring the performance and level of service achieved by AUKCAP.

### **SCOPE**

This procedure applies to all employees, volunteers and service users of AUKCAP and is the mechanism to register complaints with the charity.

### **PRINCIPLES & PROCEDURES**

#### **KEY PRINCIPLES**

All complaints or adverse comments must be dealt with in a fair, competent and timely manner, to ensure we benefit from the findings. It is important all staff and volunteers feel safe in being open and honest when explaining the part they have played.

It is extremely important to acknowledge and uphold confidentiality at all times whilst reporting, recording and investigating a complaint.

All staff and volunteers are expected to listen carefully to any issues of concern or complaint raised with them. AUKCAP considers

it very important not to dismiss the severity of concerns or ignore complaints and comments.

All staff and volunteers are expected to report these matters to their line manager verbally or in writing and give them any notes or letters received.

## **1) COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

In the first instance, complaints about quality of service or any other activity carried out by representatives of AUKCAP affecting a client should be communicated to the relevant Service Manager at AUKCAP.

This may be done:

- a) By a direct approach to the Service Manager
- b) In writing to the Service Manager
- c) Through a third party acting on the client's behalf and with their permission to do so. The third party should not be a paid employee of AUKCAP.

Any written complaint will be acknowledged by the Service Manager in writing within five working days.

A nominated senior staff member (Service Manager level or Team Leader) will carry out an investigation into the complaint examining all the circumstances relating it. This may require discussion with members of staff, the complainant and/or members of the public as necessary in order to validate the facts relating to the complaint.

The investigating officer will inform the Chief Executive of AUKCAP of any complaint received, the nature of progress of any investigation and the decision reached.

The outcome of the investigation, together with the proposed corrective action to be taken, if appropriate, will be communicated to the complainant by the Service Manager. This will be completed within six weeks of the date of the initial complaint.

## **2) APPEAL**

We aim to resolve any concerns first-time, however where the response is not deemed satisfactory the complainant can appeal in writing to the Chief Executive of AUKCAP.

The Chief Executive will consider and respond within four weeks from the receipt of the request to appeal.

### **3) FURTHER APPEAL**

In the event that the complainant is still unhappy a further appeal may be lodged with the Chair of the AUKCAP Board of Trustees.

The Chair will arrange for a meeting to take place between the complainant and two members of the Board of Trustees, where the complaint and responses will be discussed.

Once the complaint has been discussed, the two members of the Board of Trustees involved with the further appeal will decide what, if any, action is necessary and inform the Chair of AUKCAP.

The complainant will receive an explanation, in writing from the Chair on the outcome of the further appeal.

### **4) RESPONSIBILITIES**

All members of the Board of Trustees, staff and volunteers of AUKCAP, will familiarise themselves with the procedure and be aware of the responsibility it places on them.

The Chief Executive will maintain a log of all complaints received indicating:

- a) Name of complainant;
- b) Date received;
- c) Action taken;
- d) Date result notified to client;
- e) Appeal procedure.

A complaint may be registered by an individual or another person acting on behalf of an individual.

A paid member of AUKCAP should not act on behalf of a complainant.

### **5) OTHER SOURCES OF ADVICE**

When a complainant has used the AUKCAP procedure and is dissatisfied with how the complaint has been dealt with, they can contact Age UK (*see contact details below*).

Alternatively, the complainant can seek legal advice.

## 6) REVIEWING AND MONITORING

Details of complaints received will be summarised and presented at each quarterly Board meeting. The Board of Trustees will review a complaints report annually which will highlight and identify trends and consider action to improve the service.

In the light of the recommendations of the Board, the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive and Service Managers will implement agreed actions.

This policy will be reviewed every 24 months unless more frequent review is required by changes in legislation or as a result of expressions of concern as to its operation.

### CONTACT DETAILS

<b>Chief Executive</b> Age UK Cambridgeshire & Peterborough (AUKCAP)	<b>Registered office:</b> Frans House, Fenton Way, Chatteris, PE16 6UP	<b>Telephone:</b> 01354 691896
<b>Chair</b> <b>Age UK Cambridgeshire &amp; Peterborough</b> c/o Chief Executive (above) marked "Private & Confidential"	As above	
<b>Age UK</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> Floor, 1, America Square 17, Crosswall, London EC3N 2LB	0207 8206770

**Complaints policy approved: February 2025**

**Signed by Chair of Trustees**

