

Document Control

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1. Purpose

This policy provides a clear and structured process for handling complaints within the OMV. It ensures complaints are addressed in a fair, transparent, and timely manner, offering resolution pathways that uphold the dignity and rights of all parties involved.

2. Definitions

Complaint: An expression of dissatisfaction regarding OMV activities, decisions, or conduct of OMV representatives, made in writing to the OMV Chairman or Chair of Trustees as set out in section 5.2 below.

Complainant: The individual raising a complaint under this policy.

Appeal: A formal request to review a decision made under this policy.

Safeguarding: Measures to protect individuals, especially young people and vulnerable adults, from harm, in line with OMV's Safeguarding Policy.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals involved in OMV activities, including guests and volunteers. Complaints may relate to:

- Decisions made regarding participation in OMV activities
- Conduct of OMV representatives (e.g., volunteers or leadership)
- Organisational policies and their implementation

Exclusions:

Safeguarding concerns are outside the scope of this policy and will be addressed under the OMV Safeguarding Policy.

Where external partners (such as transport providers or other organisations) are involved in OMV activities, complaints about their services should be directed to their respective complaints procedures.

4. Principles

- **Fairness:** All complaints will be handled impartially and with respect.
- **Transparency:** Clear communication about the process, expected timelines, and potential outcomes.
- **Timeliness:** Complaints will be addressed promptly to avoid unnecessary distress.
- **Accessibility:** The complaints process should be easy to understand and navigate.
- **Accountability:** Decisions will be based on established guidelines rather than subjective judgment wherever possible.

5. Complaints Procedure

5.1 Informal Resolution (Stage 1)

Wherever possible, concerns should be addressed informally with the relevant OMV activity representative or Chairman of the OMV.

If a resolution is not reached within **10 working days**, the complainant may escalate the issue formally.

5.2 Formal Complaint (Stage 2)

Submission: Complaints must be submitted in writing to the OMV Chairman. If the complaint relates to the OMV Chairman, it should be submitted to the Chair of Trustees. If a complaint is made by an individual under the age of 18 (defined as a child in line with OMV's Safeguarding Policy), the written complaint must be counter-signed by a person with parental responsibility for that child. This applies to any volunteer or guest under 18, including those attending without a parent or guardian.

Acknowledgment: Acknowledgment of receipt will be provided within **5 working days**.

Investigation: The OMV Chairman will manage the investigation, except that if the Complaint relates to the OMV Chairman or any trustee, the Chair of Trustees will manage the investigation. If the Complaint relates to the Chair of Trustees, another trustee not already involved in the Complaint will manage the investigation. The person managing the investigation will review the complaint, gather relevant information, and consult with necessary parties, including Trustees if governance decisions are required or safeguarding leads if the complaint involves children.

Resolution Proposal: A written response outlining the findings and proposed resolution will be provided within **20 working days** of receipt. Complainants may request a meeting to clarify any points arising from the findings and proposed resolution.

5.3 Appeals Process (Stage 3)

If the complainant is unsatisfied with the outcome, they may appeal within **10 working days** of receiving the Stage 2 response.

The appeal will be considered by the Chair of Trustees, except that if the Chair of Trustees managed the investigation or was the subject of the Complaint, the appeal will be considered by the most senior available trustee (by longevity of tenure) not already involved in the Complaint.

We will endeavour to communicate a final decision within **20 working days** of an appeal being lodged. If we are unable to do so within that timeframe, we will communicate that fact and provide a revised time estimate.

6. Confidentiality

We will, so far as possible, treat all Complaints as confidential and in accordance with our Confidentiality Policy. It may, however, be necessary for us to make disclosures of information to third parties in order to investigate a Complaint.

7. Monitoring and Review

OMV will periodically review Complaints data to identify trends, improve policies, and ensure fairness in decision-making. This will include:

- **Annual Reports:** A summary of Complaints handled, and their outcomes will be compiled annually by the OMV Chairman (or delegated Committee member). This will be shared with the Trustees for review.
- **Policy Adjustments:** Regular updates based on identified issues and feedback from Complainants.
- **Independent Oversight:** Where necessary, OMV may seek external advice or independent review (for example, from a safeguarding consultant or legal advisor) to ensure accountability and fairness in handling complaints.
- **Safeguarding Compliance:** Ensuring any safeguarding-related complaints are reported and monitored appropriately.

8. Accessibility Support

The OMV is committed to ensuring that the complaints process is accessible to all. If a guest or volunteer is unable to submit a Complaint in writing due to a disability, communication need, or literacy challenge, alternative arrangements will be made. This may include the support of an advocate, use of verbal or assisted communication methods, or the provision of a trusted adult to help convey the Complaint. Young people will be supported in line with OMV's safeguarding procedures, and reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure everyone has the opportunity to raise concerns and be heard.

9. Contact Information

For further inquiries or to submit a Complaint, please contact the **OMV Chairman** at: **chairman@omv.org.uk**

If the Complaint relates to the OMV Chairman, please direct it to the **Chair of Trustees** at: **trusteechair@omv.org.uk**