



Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership Complaints Policy and Procedure for complaints

Scope

This document explains the complaints policy and the procedure to be followed to raise and to investigate a complaint. It is to be read in conjunction with the Complaints Checklist (Appendix A). It does not cover allegations of harassment and bullying, whistleblowing, or the raising of safeguarding concerns, which are covered by separate policies.

This policy was adopted from Churches Together in Milton Keynes.

Who it applies to

Anyone with a complaint relating to the behaviour of, or activities and decisions taken by, the Partnership's staff, trustees, or volunteers. It does not apply to complaints against members of the clergy, for whom denominational processes apply.

Date of approval

By SEPC

Date __October 2023__

By Trustees

Date __March 2024_____

Review date _____

Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership (SEP) Complaints Policy and procedure for complaints

Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership (SEP) aims to provide the best pastoral care for its members. Trustees welcome suggestions you may have for how we can improve.

Complaints against members of the clergy are covered by denominational processes.

If you have a complaint, we suggest you start by talking with the person or people concerned. This will often suffice. However, we recognise that from time to time there may be occasions when someone feels the response falls short of what they could reasonably expect. Trustees want to know about these occasions so that we can make good the problem and plan to avoid its repetition.

If you have a complaint, and you would like to tell the Trustees about it, **this is what you should do:**

1. If you have a complaint to make, it should be made to the Chair of Trustees (Chair) who will try to resolve the issue informally.
2. If the issue is serious, or you are not satisfied after raising it with the Chair, you should make a formal complaint.
3. Your complaint should be made in writing, marked "Private & Confidential" and sent to the Chair who will acknowledge it in writing (normally within 7 days of receipt). Remember to keep a copy of your letter.
4. The Chair shall communicate the results of the investigation to you within a reasonable time - normally 21 days.
5. You have the right - if dissatisfied with the results of the inquiry - to put your case in writing or personally to a panel comprising at least three SEP Trustees. If attending personally, you have the right to be accompanied by a friend or advocate to help put your case. (The panel also has the right to have an advisor present).
6. The decision of the panel will be final. Where appropriate, SEP will make a written apology to the complainant and agree any further action necessary to make good the cause of the complaint.
8. All formal complaints and the response made to them will be recorded and filed in a secure place.
9. The Trustees shall be informed by the Chair at the first available meeting, of the number and nature of any formal complaints and their outcome, and consideration will be given to the implications these have for the planning and management of future services annually, as part of SEP self-evaluation.

Complaints checklist

Stantonbury Ecumenical Partnership (SEP)

Use this checklist when investigating a complaint as part of the complaints policy and procedure.

Have you conveyed verbally to the complainant the investigation procedure and timescale?	YES/NO
Have you conducted an interview to establish background to and detail of the complaint?	YES/NO
Have you written a statement about the complaint which you have dated and signed?	YES/NO
Has the complainant countersigned as correct the statement you have taken?	YES/NO
Have you given a copy of the complaint to those associated with its contents?	YES/NO
Have you asked in writing, for a statement from those associated with the complaint within an agreed period of time?	YES/NO
Have you received the statements within the agreed time period?	YES/NO
Have you advised those being interviewed that they can have a union representative or friend with them?	YES/NO
Have you interviewed all those associated with the complain?	YES/NO
Have you written up, signed, and dated your notes from each of these interviews?	YES/NO
Have you reviewed all the evidence placed before you?	YES/NO
Have you assessed whether or not you feel there are grounds for complaint?	YES/NO
If so, have you considered all the options for action that could/should be taken as a result?	YES/NO
Are you clear in your own mind what will be the content of the discussion with the Chair about this investigation and its findings?	YES/NO
Have you discussed fully with the Chair the findings of your investigation and your recommendations for action?	YES/NO
Have you put these formally in writing to the Chair, together with the statements and notes taken during the course of the investigation?	YES/NO

This document is to be used in conjunction with the Complaints policy.