

BANKSIDE OPEN SPACES TRUST



Complaints Policy and Procedure

Document Control

Author: Nicola Desmond
Approved by: Charlotte Gilsean
Date: September 2024
Review Date: September 2025

POLICY

Our Commitment to Volunteers, Partners, and Staff

Bankside Open Spaces Trust (BOST) is committed to providing a positive and worthwhile experience to everyone who engages with us. We strive for high standards in all our activities and interactions with individuals and organisations. However, we recognise that there may be occasions when we fall short of these expectations. When this happens, we welcome feedback, including complaints, as they help us improve our services and operations.

BOST ensures that all complaints are logged, actioned, and monitored to ensure they receive full attention and consideration.

1. What is a Complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about:

- Our policies
- The quality of our work or services
- The standards or delivery of our services
- The attitude or conduct of our staff
- Access to our services
- Our contractors or third-party providers
- Any form of discrimination or unfair treatment

It is NOT:

- A first request for action or service
- A first request for information or explanation

This policy applies to anyone using BOST's services, including contractors, volunteers, and trustees. For complaints related to staff employment, the Grievance Policy should be referred to instead.

2. Making a Complaint

BOST values all feedback, including complaints, and commits to handling them positively and promptly. If you are unhappy with a service or experience, it is often easiest to address this directly with the person providing the service, whether by telephone, email, letter, or in person.

If you are unsure who to contact, you may submit your complaint via email to [**info@bost.org.uk**](mailto:info@bost.org.uk). Upon receipt, the complaint will be formally recorded and assigned to the appropriate person for investigation.

You will receive an acknowledgment within 5 working days, including the name of the person handling your complaint.

3. Complaints Procedure

Stage I: Initial Response

- The complaint will be handled by the staff member best suited to address the issue, based on their understanding of the matter.
- A response will be provided within 5 working days. If the complaint cannot be resolved within this timeframe, you will be informed and provided with a revised deadline.

Stage II: Review by the CEO

- If you are not satisfied with the response at Stage I, you can request that the CEO reviews the complaint.
- The CEO will normally respond within 10 working days. If more time is needed, you will be informed of the delay and provided with a new deadline.

Stage III: Review by the Board of Trustees

- If the response at Stage II is still unsatisfactory, you may ask for the complaint to be reviewed by the Board of Trustees.
- The Board will arrange for the complaint to be investigated by a Trustee or an independent external individual.
- A response will typically be provided within 10 working days of the request. If further time is required, you will be informed and given a new deadline.

Timescales for Response

- **Stage I:** 5 working days
- **Stage II:** 10 working days
- **Stage III:** 10 working days

If the issue cannot be resolved within the standard timescales, you will be contacted with a new deadline, not exceeding 20 working days from the date of the complaint.

4. Vexatious Complaints

A complaint may be deemed vexatious if it has been fully considered and found to be unjustified, yet the complainant persists in making the same or a substantially similar complaint. In such cases, the CEO

may decide not to pursue the complaint further, and the complainant will be informed of this decision in writing.

5. Acting on Results

BOST is committed to addressing issues raised in complaints and will review and revise procedures as necessary to prevent recurrence. Feedback from complaints is used to improve the quality of our services.

6. Your Voice

We hope you find that BOST provides a worthwhile experience and good service. We value all feedback, including positive comments, and welcome your suggestions on what we do well.

7. Record Keeping

BOST maintains detailed records of all complaints and the actions taken in response. These records are used to monitor, analyse, and learn from complaints to continually improve our services.

8. Anonymous Complaints

While BOST encourages complaints to be made openly to allow for effective resolution, anonymous complaints will be considered at the discretion of the CEO. Any such complaints will be recorded in the complaints register.

9. Data Protection

In line with the Data Protection Act 2018, BOST will inform complainants that their personal information, such as name and contact details, is collected to process the complaint. This information will be used solely for this purpose and will be handled in accordance with our data protection policies.