

# Grievance Policy

## Overview

At 3CV we aspire to have a positive culture where we love Jesus, aim to be like Jesus and do what Jesus did. Our aim is to have an environment in church and outside of church where we love God, develop authentic relationships and impact our community. Therefore, our policies are underpinned by Christian values which is to resolve problems quickly and informally wherever possible, raised by both employees, volunteers and any other individual. Very occasionally a situation may arise which necessitates a more formal approach. The aim of this grievance policy is to provide a clear framework in which grievances and complaints may be dealt with effectively and positively.

## General principles

It is our policy to ensure that all employees and volunteers have access to a procedure to help resolve any grievances relating to their employment quickly and fairly. Details of this can be found in separate documents:

- 3CV Employee Grievance Procedure (*For use by Employees, Leadership Team & Trustees*)
- 3CV Service Users Grievance Procedure (*for use by members of the public / congregation, volunteers and service users*)

This grievance policy is for guidance and information only and does not form part of a contract of employment. It applies to all employees and volunteers regardless of length of service or time in role. Any steps taken under these procedures should be taken promptly unless there is a good reason for delay. The time limits may be extended if it is reasonable to do so and agreed to by all parties. Timeframes are contained in the employee and service users procedures documents named above.

This policy covers grievances and complaints about:

- how you or others have been treated at 3CV
- the conduct of someone in leadership at 3CV, a Trustee or paid member of staff.
- the conduct of someone in a volunteer role at 3CV

A grievance is defined as a real or imagined cause for complaint, especially unfair treatment:

- an official statement of complaint over something believed to be wrong or unfair:
- a feeling of resentment over something believed to be wrong or unfair:

Procedures may be discontinued if it becomes impracticable for either party to continue. In all cases individual complainants will be informed in writing of the final outcome of their grievance. For paid staff at 3CV written grievances will be placed on their personnel file along with a record

## Grievance Policy

of any decisions taken; any appeal notice; the outcome of any appeal; and any notes or other documents compiled during the grievance process. These will be processed in accordance with our Data Protection Policy. If any complainant has difficulty at any stage of the grievance procedure because of a disability, they should make their manager or the Operations Manager at 3CV aware and ask for assistance if necessary.

3 Counties Vineyard Church will treat any expression of dissatisfaction about our conduct as a complaint. However, we ask you to contact us in writing so that we can consider the matter properly.


It may be the case that we receive correspondence that in our view does not fall under our definition of a complaint or does not raise any issue that calls for in depth investigation. This may apply, for instance, to:

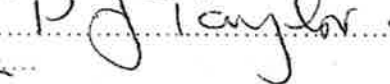
- objections to certain steps, recommendations or decisions we have taken in compliance with a legal requirement;
- The performing of our statutory functions in line with our legal duties.

It is expected that any complainant will endeavour to solve a problem or concern informally but if they remain dissatisfied, they can make a formal grievance in writing. The procedure for raising grievances and or complainant is set out in 3CV Employee grievance procedure and the 3CV Service Users grievance procedure documents referred to above which can be found on our website [3 Counties Vineyard Church - 3 Counties Vineyard](#)

### Reporting illegal or improper conduct

Any reported illegal activities, wrongdoing or malpractice would be dealt with separately depending on the nature of the allegation / situation. However, where people are directly affected, they can be dealt with as a grievance. Individuals should use the grievance procedure as appropriate. The grievance procedure should not usually be used to complain about disciplinary action that may have been taken against employees.

Signature Senior Leader.....   
Date..... 7.10.24.....

Signature Chair of Trustees.....   
Date..... 1.10.24.....

## Service Users Grievance Procedure

(For use by members of the public / congregation, volunteers and service users)

### Overview

A grievance is defined as a real or imagined cause for complaint, especially unfair treatment:

- an official statement of complaint over something believed to be wrong or unfair;
- a feeling of resentment over something believed to be wrong or unfair:

If you're a member of the public, congregation, volunteer or service user at 3CV and you've tried resolving a problem or concern informally by talking to a Trustee or someone in the leadership team at 3CV but you're not satisfied, you can make a formal grievance in writing. This document sets out the process to use.

### Procedure

Grievances should be raised as soon as possible following the event giving rise for concern, but in all cases, within **3 months** of an incident occurring.

The procedure includes three stages set out below:

- how to set out the details of your grievance in writing
- who to send your letter to
- who to write to if the normal contact person is involved in the grievance
- a meeting with a Trustee / Leader to discuss the issue
- how to appeal a Trustee / Leaders decision
- how long each stage should take

If you do not agree with a Trustee / Leaders decision or the outcomes of the procedures you can lodge an appeal to the Chair of Trustees.

You can use mediation to resolve a problem. This can take place at any time during the dispute.

For more information, see [Acas's step-by-step guide to formal grievance procedures](#).

Before holding a hearing, a representative of 3CV will:

- give you notice of the hearing date and time so that you can prepare your case;
- establish the facts as far as possible and take statements from any witnesses if appropriate
- inform you that you can bring a "**McKenzie friend**", if you want to;
- arrange for a note taker

NB: A McKenzie friend is an individual who assists a person during formal procedures offering support and guidance without being formally involved or qualified. They can prompt, take notes, and provide quiet advice.

### Stage 1 Informal Process

## **Service Users Grievance Procedure**

**(For use by members of the public / congregation, volunteers and service users)**

If you have a grievance or complaint about anything relating to 3 Counties Vineyard Church in the first instance where possible, start by discussing it informally with the person involved. If your grievance is about a different matter or you feel unable to approach the person involved, you should talk to a Trustee or someone in the leadership team at 3CV. In most instances, one of these people may be able to resolve the issue informally and bring the matter to a close.

After the meeting, the Trustee / Leader will write to you setting out their decision along with:

- details of any action they intend to take
- information about how to appeal

### **Stage 2 Formal Process**

If you do not feel that the matter has been resolved to your satisfaction you may wish to raise the matter formally. You should set out the grievance in writing using **Appendix A** below.

#### **Grievance meetings**

The Trustee / Leader will arrange for a formal meeting to take place (normally within five working days) to establish the facts as far as possible and find a way to resolve the problem. They will go through the grievance and give you an opportunity to comment. You can be accompanied by a McKenzie friend at this meeting if you request it.

#### **After the meeting**

After the meeting, the Trustee / Leader will give you a decision in writing, normally within 24 hours.

### **Stage 3 Appeal**

If you are unhappy with the decision you can appeal to the Chair of Trustees using **Appendix B** who will review the process and notify you of their decision in writing. The Chair of Trustee's decision is final.

#### **Delays**

If either party cannot attend the hearing an alternative date and time will be offered.

If the complainant cannot, or chooses not to attend a face-to-face meeting a virtual meeting can be arranged. If this is not acceptable the meeting will go ahead in their absence and a decision made on the submitted written evidence.

## **APPENDIX A**

**To: (Trustee / Leader or representative)**

## **Service Users Grievance Procedure**

**(For use by members of the public / congregation, volunteers and service users)**

***From: (Complainants name in full)***

***Role: (e.g. Volunteers role or service providers role)***

***Date:***

I wish to take a formal grievance about.....

in line with 3 Counties Vineyard's Grievance Procedure. The details of my grievance are.....

*(Set out in full your reasons for raising a grievance including dates and names of other involved. Give as much detail as possible).*

**Yours sincerely,**

(Trustee / Leader should respond to this formal written grievance within 2 working days unless an extended period for a response is mutually agreed)

## **Appendix B**

***To: (The Chair of Trustees)***

***From: (Complainants name in full)***

***Role: (e.g. Volunteers role or service providers role)***

## **Service Users Grievance Procedure**

**(For use by members of the public / congregation, volunteers and service users)**

***Date:***

On (within 10 days of the response to the second stage of the formal grievance) I appealed against the decision made at my initial grievance against *(insert full name of the person or persons your grievance was raised against)*

I remain dissatisfied with the outcome of this meeting and would like to appeal to you for a review of my grievance, in line with 3 Counties Vineyard's Grievance Procedure.

I enclose a copy of the original letter regarding this matter and other correspondence and information related to it.

Yours sincerely

(The Chair of Trustees should give their final decision in writing within 7 days unless an extended period for response is mutually agreed)