

NODA strives for high standards in all aspects of its work, and through the policies and procedures in place, aims to be fair at all times and provide satisfaction to anyone using the services it provides. The staff and volunteers who represent the organisation are committed to high standards of conduct and service at all times.

Should complaints arise it is NODA's policy to deal with these complaints quickly and efficiently.

Complaints may be made verbally or in writing, and the procedures are as follows: -

### **Verbal Complaint**

The complainant should ask to speak to the most senior member of staff available. The member of staff will take details of the complaint, identifying both the nature of the complaint and, if appropriate, the individual against whom the complaint is being made. Any complaint against an individual will be dealt with in a confidential manner.

Should the complainant not want to speak to the staff member available, he/she can leave their contact details and they will be contacted by the Chief Operating Officer on the next available working day. In the absence of a senior member of the staff team, the Chairman of the Association will respond.

### **Written Complaint**

The complainant should write to the Chief Operating Officer giving full details of their complaint and, if appropriate, who their complaint relates to.

### **Procedure**

All complaints, written or verbal, are logged and the Chief Operating Officer or Association's Chairman will formally acknowledge receipt of the complaint, and provide a written response to the complainant within a 10 working days, detailing where necessary the further course of action to be taken. Where it is not possible to provide a full response within this time frame, a letter will be sent to the complainant outlining progress and indicating when a response is likely to be forthcoming.

If the complainant is satisfied with the response, the matter will be considered to have been closed. If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the explanation, or course of action, he/she can appeal to NODA's Chairman and the Board of Trustees.

The Chairman will review the complaint and either decides that the action proposed is adequate or that a different course of action should be adopted. The outcome of this review will normally be communicated in writing to the complainant within 15 working days of the appeal being lodged.

If the matter remains unresolved, he/she/they has the right to consult a third-party arbitrator and an agreed process will be put in place. This complaints procedure does not supersede the provisions outlined in Rule 27 of the Association's Constitution where that is a more appropriate route to follow.

This complaints procedure is reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees or at a shorter interval, should legislation or good practice require it.