



Hesketh Bank Poor Marsh Allotments – Complaints Policy

This Policy has been introduced to protect the interest of all members and the Committee.

The Committee believes:

- All members have a right to complain, complaints should be taken seriously, and no complainant should be bullied or put at a disadvantage because of making a complaint.
- Complaints should be dealt with fairly and openly with due regard to confidentiality.
- All individuals are responsible for their own behaviour and wellbeing whilst on the site.

Where disputes occur between members or between a member and a Committee member or members, the Committee recognises their responsibility to resolve the dispute, if it cannot be mutually resolved between the different parties.

1. Verbal complaints will be classed as informal and therefore will not be investigated by the Committee.
2. Formal complaints should be made in writing by email to the Secretary at poormarshpalssec2@gmail.com.
 - 2.1 Written complaints should have the full name of the complainant, plot number (if applicable) and current contact details.
 - 2.2 All complaints will be recorded. An acknowledgement of the complaint will be sent within one week.
 - 2.3 The complaint will be considered at the first committee meeting after receipt where a decision will be taken if the complaint should be investigated or if more evidence is needed.
 - 2.4 If it appears that an investigation is not warranted, the reasons for this will be communicated to the complainant in writing.
 - 2.5 If the complaint indicates a criminal offence may have been committed, the complainant will be referred to the police. The complaint will be deferred until any police investigation is concluded. The complainant will be informed of this.
 - 2.6 In the case of an unresolved complaint leading to a dispute between two members, the Chair will refer this to the Parish Council for consideration, sharing all the relevant facts.
 - 2.7 In the case where the complaint is from an external organisation or individual the complaint will be referred to the Parish Council.

2.8 All complaint investigations will focus on obtaining relevant facts. These could include:

- Interviews with relevant individuals
- Review of any correspondence
- Written statements of incident from all involved
- Inspections of plots or equipment
- CCTV, video or photographic evidence.

Records of interviews and any action taken will be clearly documented.

2.9 On completion of the investigation, recommendations of action will be provided within 14 days in a written report, this should be dated and signed and sent to the Chair or in the instance of a complaint against the Chair, to the Vice Chair.

2.10 The Chair or Vice Chair will inform the Committee of the receipt of the report and recommendations made. The complainant and those indicated in the complaint will be informed of the investigation outcome in writing within 7 days of Committee approval.

3. If the complainant or those involved believes the outcome/recommendations are unfair they may appeal against the decision to the Parish Council, within 14 days stating the reasons why. Appeals will only be considered on the basis of additional significant evidence or incorrect procedure during the investigation or decision process.