



Houria CIC

## Complaints Policy

### Introduction

We aim to maintain high standards in all that we do. However, we recognise that we can sometimes get things wrong, despite our best intentions.

Houria CIC views a complaint as an opportunity to put things right for the person making the complaint, and to improve the services, activities and products that Houria CIC offers. We would not be able to learn for the future if we did not receive feedback when things go wrong. Therefore, we value and take seriously any feedback we receive.

Generally, the purpose of this Complaints Policy is to resolve disputes informally without resorting to formal investigation or legal proceedings. We endeavour to explore every reasonable option to resolve complaints by working with the person making the complaint to agree on an outcome which is satisfactory to the complainants and Houria CIC.

Whether your complaint is justified or not, our reply to you will describe the action we have taken to investigate the complaint, conclusions we have reached as a result of the investigation, and any action we have taken or are taking as a result of your complaint.

We will ensure that all information received and produced in connection with a complaint is treated as confidential and handled sensitively, that only those who need to know have access to that information, and that relevant data protection requirements are all met.

All complaint information is passed promptly to our leadership team within 28 days.

The information below sets out our Complaints Policy.

## **Complaint**

A 'complaint' in this policy means any expression of dissatisfaction in relation to Houria CIC that requires a response from us.

### **Where complaints may come from**

Complaints may come from those involved in Houria CIC's activities, clients, customers, beneficiaries, members, donors, fundraisers, supporters, members of the local community or any other person or organisation who has a legitimate interest in Houria CIC.

### **Complaints which cannot be dealt with under this policy**

This policy is only for the above type of external complaint, not for complaints or grievances from staff, volunteers or trustees.

Whilst complainants are generally entitled to receive responses to a complaint and to challenge any responses received from Houria CIC, it will not deal with complaints or challenges where in the reasonable opinion of the leadership team they amount to persistent, habitual or vexatious complaints or challenges.

Houria CIC expects any complainant to be polite and courteous. We will not tolerate aggressive, abusive or unreasonable behaviour or demands.

### **How to make a complaint**

If you have a complaint you can contact us in person or by phone, email, or letter.

To help us investigate and address all complaints, we ask you to provide us with as much information as possible. This should cover:

- The reason for your complaint.
- Where and when what you are complaining about happened.
- The name(s) of anyone involved (if known).
- What outcome you are hoping for (but we are not obliged to resolve the complaint in that way).
- Your contact details (name, address, daytime telephone number and/or email address).

Who you should contact within Houria CIC will depend on how you decide to make contact, and on who you wish to make a complaint about. We have indicated below who you can contact.

## **Verbal complaints**

You can make a complaint by telephone or by speaking to us in person in any of the following ways, during office hours.

If your complaint is about any member of staff, volunteer or trustee, you can phone us on 07377059699 and ask to speak to our P.A to the Chief Executive. They will either speak to you about the complaint or, if they are not the appropriate person to do so, they will arrange for the appropriate person to speak to you on the phone. Alternatively, you can speak (or arrange to speak) in person to the appropriate person about your complaint.

If you do not feel that you can approach any of the above verbally for any reason, you can instead write to us as follows.

## **Complaints in writing**

If you would prefer to write to us, please send your complaint to us as follows:

Either by letter addressed as follows:

The Chief Executive, Houria CIC, 12 Berwick Road, Easton, BS5 6NG

or by email to the same person at [complaints@houria.co.uk](mailto:complaints@houria.co.uk)

Once that person has initially received your complaint, we will normally deal with it as follows:

- Who the complaint is about
- Who will investigate, deal with, and respond to you about it.

## **Timescales for all complaints made by phone, in person or in writing**

We will try to resolve the problem as quickly as possible but if we cannot do this (for example, if we need to investigate further), we will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within the following timescale:

- By phone or in person, either immediately or on the same day if you phone us or contact us in person
- By email, within 24 hours if you contact us by email
- By letter, within five working days if you contact us by letter

Our acknowledgement will inform you of when we will next contact you either with a proposed resolution or update. It will also inform you of the name of the person dealing with your complaint. That person will then investigate and deal with it and then respond to you with their definitive reply.

You should receive that definitive reply within four weeks. If this is not possible because, for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report will be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

## **Follow up**

In order for us to make improvements to Houria CIC and its services, activities, we may wish to contact you within a month of your complaint being dealt with in order to check that you were satisfied with our resolution. Any information you give will only be used to make improvements to Houria CIC and its services activities.

## **The Fundraising Standards Board**

If your complaint is about our fundraising work or activities and you are not satisfied with our response, you are entitled to take it to the Fundraising Standards Board. This is the self-regulatory scheme that works to ensure that organisations raising money from the public do so honestly and properly. As a member of the Fundraising Standards Board, we are committed to abiding by any decision they reach on complaints that are escalated to them. Their contact details are:

Fundraising Standards Board, 65 Brushfield Street, London, E1 6AA

Tel: 0333 321 8803

Email: [info@frsb.org.uk](mailto:info@frsb.org.uk)

Website: [www.frsb.org.uk/complaints/make-a-complaint](http://www.frsb.org.uk/complaints/make-a-complaint) ]

## **Charity Commission**

If your complaint is about any other aspect of our charitable work other than our fundraising work or activities, you may wish to contact the Charity Commission. However, we suggest that, before you do so, you consider whether it is appropriate to contact the Commission in the first instance rather than ourselves. The Commission has guidance on its website as to when to direct complaints to a charity and not to the Commission. Their contact details are:

Charity Commission Direct, PO Box 1227, Liverpool, L69 3UG

Tel: 0845 300 0218

Website: [www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc47.aspx](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc47.aspx)