



# Bookmark

## Volunteer Problem-Solving Procedure

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### Overview

We believe in clear, open and fair procedures for solving problems, for our volunteers and the Charity. We hope that you will be able to raise any concerns with the Charity, so we can agree a way of resolving your concern quickly and effectively. Should that not be possible, the following procedures can be used to ensure that matters are dealt with fairly and transparently.

This procedure:

- aims to address complaints, problems, issues or concerns (either raised by or about a volunteer) in a fair, consistent and equitable way; and
- gives volunteers the opportunity to appeal to higher levels of management, if necessary.

### Concerns raised by a volunteer

#### Discussion

If a volunteer wishes to formally raise a problem about an employee, the Charity or another volunteer, they should do so at the earliest opportunity.

The issue should be raised with one of the team either by email [info@bookmarkreading.org](mailto:info@bookmarkreading.org) or by calling 0203 995 7960. Volunteers may also message our Volunteer Services team directly on Guild. By directly messaging us on Guild, we will be able to respond quickly and privately – please do not post complaints in the public forums.

Our team will take the details of the issue and let you know who from Bookmark will be responsible for responding to you. It is hoped that most concerns will be resolved at this stage.

#### Written complaint

If the issue cannot be resolved through discussions, the volunteer can make a formal complaint in writing to the Volunteers Team.

The person managing your complaint at that time will explain to you who to escalate your complaint to and how to get in touch. In most cases, this will be a person directly senior to the Bookmark contact who was supporting you in your initial complaint. Volunteers can request this information directly from our team at any time by calling 0203 995 7960.

Bookmark will acknowledge the written complaint within five working days of receipt, and we will inform the volunteer who will be dealing with the matter and when they can expect a full response. Bookmark



# Bookmark

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tries to respond fully and conclusively to all complaints within fourteen days; if we believe it will take longer, we will inform the volunteer.

### **If you are not satisfied**

If the volunteer is not satisfied with the outcome of the written complaint, they should inform the Charity in writing within five working days of receiving a response to their written complaint.

This appeal should be made to the Head of Volunteering or Chief Executive Officer if the original complaint was with the Head of Volunteering. The appeal will be reviewed by the Head of Volunteering (or CEO, or a nominated deputy) and another suitable person. Following the appeal, the decision of be communicated in writing.

That decision is final.

### **Concerns raised about a volunteer**

Bookmark aims to support our volunteers so that they can enjoy their volunteering and meet the standards required. If a volunteer finds they are struggling with the role, they should get in touch directly or join one of our regular drop-in sessions.

If problems arise and the role is not deemed suitable for a volunteer, and Bookmark does not consider that additional support and training will overcome the issues, then the volunteer role can be ended at any stage. This should not be regarded as a failure for the volunteer.

If discussion has not resolved a problem, or if a complaint is made about a volunteer, any of the following measures may be used, depending on the severity of the problem. Bookmark reserves the right to make the decision on the severity of a problem.

#### **Discussion**

The Volunteers Team will discuss the issue with the volunteer, try to identify its possible causes, and try to find a way to resolve the situation. If appropriate, Bookmark will provide extra support, guidance, and/or training.

#### **Written stage**

If the issue hasn't been resolved through discussion, or if a serious problem has arisen, the volunteer will be contacted in writing, outlining the problem and any action that might be taken to resolve it, with deadlines as appropriate. If at this stage, Bookmark does not believe that it will be possible to find a solution, this will be made clear.



# Bookmark

## Volunteer Problem-Solving Procedure

### Ceasing volunteering

Bookmark reserves the right to require the volunteer to stop volunteering, if necessary, with immediate effect. In this case, the volunteer will receive an explanation of why this decision has been reached and whether it would be possible to apply again in the future.

The decision of Bookmark is final.