



# Bookmark

## Compliments and Complaints Procedure

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#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Bookmark aims to provide the highest standards of service and to get things right. We welcome any compliments regarding our work so that we know what is working well and to provide positive feedback to our staff and volunteers. This feedback will also be used to further enhance our service offering and as part of our impact evaluation. However, there may be times when we do not meet our own high standards. When this happens, we want to hear about it, deal with the situation as quickly as possible, and put measures in place to stop it happening again.
- 1.2 We take all concerns and complaints very seriously as they provide us with opportunities to improve and maintain the high standards we strive to achieve. We value any feedback that will help us to achieve this.

#### 2. Scope of policy

- 2.1 This policy relates only to compliments and complaints received from beneficiaries of our services or other external stakeholders.
- 2.2 This policy does not cover complaints from staff and volunteers, who should refer to Bookmark's internal policies on such matters. Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Board of Trustees of Bookmark. This policy is reviewed regularly and is updated as required.

#### 3. Purpose of policy

- 3.1 to publicise the existence of our compliments and complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to offer a compliment or make a complaint;
- 3.2 to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction;
- 3.3 to make sure all complaints are investigated in a timely and professional manner;
- 3.4 to make sure everyone at Bookmark knows what to do if a compliment or complaint is received;
- 3.5 to make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired; and
- 3.6 to gather information which helps us to improve what we do.

#### 4. Definitions



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- 4.1 A **compliment** is an expression of positive feedback offered to the charity by an external stakeholder.
- 4.2 A **complaint** is a formal statement that something is unsatisfactory or unacceptable that cannot be resolved at the point the issue arises, and about which the complainant would like follow-up action to be taken and a response provided.

### 5. Expressing a compliment

- 5.1 You can send a compliment by email or post to: Compliments, Bookmark Reading Charity, 5-11 Regent Street, SW1Y 4LR or email [info@bookmarkreading.org](mailto:info@bookmarkreading.org) with the subject line "Compliments"
- 5.2 Please include your name, address and contact telephone number in your email or letter so that we can get back in touch with you.
- 5.3 Any compliments we receive will be forwarded to our team, to record as part of our 'good news' register. Any member of staff mentioned within a compliment will be duly notified and, where appropriate, a copy will remain on their employee file.

### 6. Submitting a complaint

- 6.1 A complaint should be made as soon as possible when the issues are still fresh in everyone's minds; the later the complaint is made, the more difficult it will be to investigate.
- 6.2 You can make your complaint by email or post. Please reference in the email subject line or in your correspondence that it is a complaint. Complaints should be sent to: Graihagh Crawshaw, Bookmark Reading, Charles House, 5-11 Regent St SW1Y 4LR or emailed to [graihagh.crawshaw@bookmarkreading.org](mailto:graihagh.crawshaw@bookmarkreading.org)
- 6.3 Please include your name, address and contact telephone number in your email or letter so that we can get back in touch with you regarding your complaint.
- 6.4 We will acknowledge your complaint within five working days of receipt and we will tell you who has been assigned to deal with your complaint with the matter and when you can expect a full response. We try to respond fully and conclusively to all complaints within fifteen working days; if we think it will take longer, we will let you know.



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### 7. The complaint management process

- 7.1 We will investigate your complaint and do our best to put things right in a way that addresses your concerns. Please feel free when contacting us about a complaint, to let us know how you think it could be resolved.
- 7.2 We will always treat you with courtesy and respect, listen to what you say, keep you informed about our progress, provide you with a prompt response and tell you who to go to if you want to escalate your complaint further.
- 7.3 From time to time we receive complaints that do not relate directly to Bookmark or that we are not in a position to comment on. We are a charity with limited resources and we must use these in the best way possible. This can mean not engaging in lengthy debates on issues that are unrelated to Bookmark's work.
- 7.4 There may be rare occasions when we chose not to respond to a complaint at all. These include:
  - 7.4.1 when a complaint is about something that Bookmark has no direct connection to. However, we may reply to clarify that we are not involved in the matter;
  - 7.4.2 when someone unreasonably pursues a complaint that we have already responded to. They will be given escalation points, but we may choose not to reply again, and we will always inform you of our decision to do this;
  - 7.4.3 when a complainant is being obviously abusive, prejudiced or offensive in their manner;
  - 7.4.4 when a complainant is harassing a staff member;
  - 7.4.5 when a complaint has clearly been sent to us and numerous other organisations as part of a bulk mailing or email. In this instance we will choose whether it is necessary for us to reply or not;
  - 7.4.6 when a complaint has been made anonymously (and depending on the nature of the complaint). However, we will investigate the complaint, take any action that may be required in relation to it, and use the information to improve in any way that we can.

### 8. Escalating a complaint

- 8.1 We really hope that the person investigating your complaint will be able to resolve your complaint in an honest, open and satisfactory way. If you do not feel the matter has been resolved, you may ask for further review from our Chief Executive Officer. If you are still unhappy then you can write, either by letter or email, directly to the Chair of our Board of Trustees: Sharon Pindar, Bookmark Reading, Charles House, 5-11 Regent St SW1Y 4LR or [sharon.pindar@bookmarkreading.org](mailto:sharon.pindar@bookmarkreading.org)
  - 8.1.1 Please outline the details of the complaint, why you have not been satisfied with our response up to now and what you would like us to do to put things right.



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- 8.1.2 The Chair of our Board of Trustees will review your complaint and respond to you within 15 working days of receipt. Alternatively, you may be invited to a meeting with the Chair of our Board of Trustees to resolve your complaint. Any decision made by the Chair of our Board of Trustees in relation to your complaint will be final.
- 8.2 Bookmark is committed to the highest standards in fundraising practice. If your complaint is to do with fundraising and you feel that it has been unresolved by us, then the Fundraising Regulator can investigate your complaint. You must contact them within two months of receiving your response from us. You can contact them on 0300 999 3404 or by emailing [complaints@fundraisingregulator.org.uk](mailto:complaints@fundraisingregulator.org.uk).
- 8.3 If your complaint is related to another area of our work and you do not feel completely satisfied by our response then you can contact The Charity Commission via the online complaints form, intended for serious complaints.

## 9. Confidentiality and Data Protection

- 9.1 The Chief Executive Officer will be responsible for collating information about complaints and providing an annual summary to the Board of Trustees with details of complaints received, main reasons for complaints, outcomes and how any underlying problems have been resolved.
- 9.2 Wherever possible, Bookmark will respect your confidentiality and keep your complaint as confidential as far as possible. Any information about the complaint will usually only be shared with those who need to know in order to help resolve it.
- 9.3 There may however be occasions when Bookmark cannot provide absolute confidentiality. This may for example arise in circumstances where a child or young person may be at risk of harm. In these circumstances [Bookmark's Safeguarding Policy](#) will take precedence over this procedure, and any relevant information will be shared, as appropriate, with others concerned in the safety and welfare of beneficiaries.
- 9.4 All data will be processed and retained in accordance with the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 ("Data Protection Law").