

COMPLAINTS POLICY
Southgate Mosque and Community Centre (SMCC)

We encourage our users to give us regular feedback on our services and their experiences. We consider receiving complaints from our users as a form of feedback and we appreciate this. Our policy is to welcome all complaints, to investigate them fully and resolve them wherever possible.

1. What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about Southgate Mosques' policies or actions. A complaint can be received verbally or in writing. Verbally including a face to face conversation or by a phone call, and in writing including via an email, WhatsApp or text message or in handwritten or printed format. It can be from anyone inside or outside the mosque, an individual, a group, member the management or a trustee.

Complaints arrangements do not cover:

- 1.1 Requests for information or explanation of policy and practice
- 1.2 Matters for which there is a separate procedure
- 1.3 Personal disputes/clashes between people that have no bearing on the mosque unless it brings the mosque cause into disrepute

2. Why we have a complaints procedure?

Complaints, if handled properly, can lead to better working relationships with all parties. To help achieve this, our complaints procedure lets people know that they can complain; that we will consider their concerns fairly and objectively; and that, where possible, we will resolve them.

Complaints are also a form of market research. They can tell us where we are meeting our objectives whether our objectives are appropriate, whether there are areas where we have no objectives but where it might be appropriate to have some, or where we need to change the way, we work more generally. Furthermore, complaints are also type of feedback enables us to grow, evaluate our work and improve our services.

3. Monitoring and learning from complaints

All complaints are:

- 3.1 We log all complaints in our complaints register file.
- 3.2 At the end of each year, this information is analysed, summarised and presented to the board along with recommendations.

With the volume of complaints being low this annual audit of complaints and reporting is considered adequate. If the frequency and volume of complaints increase, we will increase the audit and reporting too.

We would like to improve our services by listening to our users. When we receive a complain we wish to draw lessons from it. The board is looking for trends in the types of complaints received. The questions we are always exploring include: Are we having difficulties with individuals or groups? Is there a need for us to change the way communicate and relate to our uses? Is there a need for us to change the we identify needs, develop programmes and offer services? And if the answer to any of these questions is 'Yes', are we taking the necessary actions?

4. Who handles complaints?

Our complaints procedure has four steps – three internal and one external. The intention is that most complaints will be resolved at Stage One and the rest at Stage Two.

4.1 **Stage One** In most cases the complaint should be resolved by the individual responsible for the area of work being complained about.

4.2 **Stage Two** If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved, they can contact a Trustee or the Chair. The complaint must be in writing sent by an email or delivered in printed format to the Chair. This will trigger a complaints investigation procedure. Please refer to section 5 and 6 of this document.

4.3 **Stage Three** If the complainant is still unhappy with Southgate Mosque's response, they can ask for the complaint to be discussed at the next trustees' meeting.

4.4 **External Stage** The complainant can complain to the Charity Commission at any stage.

5. Complaints made against a management member, trustee, project lead or volunteer

Any complaints should always be raised in accordance with our policies:

5.1 Must be in written format

5.2 Any relevant evidence (evidence means two reliable witnesses, video or audio recording or photographs, or screen shots of text/whatsapp messages) should be included where possible.

5.3 It should be sent to the chair of the board and marked as "Complaint - Private & Confidential", stating the full name of the "complainant" and "complainee", and the written complaint must be signed.

- 5.4 The complainant must include correspondence address and communication telephone number or email address.
- 5.5 If you have emailed your complaint, it is highly recommended that you follow it up by a phone call referring to the email that you have sent. Sometimes emails can land in spam or junk box and or lost.
- 5.6 All complaints received in written format will be investigated.
- 5.7 A team of three members of the management including the chair will convene the investigation and will respond with initial findings within 14 days.
- 5.8 All parties to the process will be required to observe privacy and confidentially regarding all matters of the complaint and any breach of privacy and confidentiality will be robustly dealt with.

6. Investigation

A formal complaint will trigger an investigation, and it will follow the following steps:

- 6.1 After receiving the written complaint an invitation to both the “complainant” and “complainee” for a one-to-one meeting, either in person or on telephone or video conference will be sent.
- 6.2 Both parties will be invited to submit any relevant evidence within 14 days of the initial meeting.
- 6.3 Once all parties have been spoken to and evidence reviewed, the investigating team will conclude its finding, and the chair will communicate with a proposed resolution to all parties involved.

6.4 A follow up meeting with the Complainant and Complainee may be arranged individually or collectively, depending on the circumstances.

6.5 The outcome of the investigation will be kept private and confidential to the concerned parties unless making the outcome known to the public becomes necessary for the best interest of the mosque. If this becomes a necessity, the investigating team will choose how and when this is made public.