



Down's Syndrome Support Group

Policy and Procedure for resolving complaints

DownSouth views complaints as an important opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person who has made the complaint.

All complaints will be dealt with promptly and in a friendly, confidential and professional manner.

Policy

The purpose of this policy:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
- To make sure everyone at DownSouth knows what to do if a complaint is received
- To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a friendly and timely way
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
- To gather information which helps us to improve what we do

Resolution of Complaints:

- A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of Downsouth
- Complaints may come from any person or organisation who has a legitimate interest in Downsouth.
- A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing.
- All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.
- Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the board of trustees.

We are committed to reviewing our policy, procedures and good practice annually.

This policy was last reviewed on:

DownSouth Procedure for Resolving Complaints

We are always happy to receive your suggestions about how to improve and develop our service. We recognise that we sometimes get things wrong or make mistakes. We do not look on comments or complaints as unwanted: in fact, they may help us to see where our services or procedures might be improved. So do let us know where you feel we have made a mistake or done something which you found unsatisfactory or unacceptable. Even if you do not think your particular concern amounts to a 'complaint' we would still like to know about it. You may help us to deal with something we would otherwise overlook. If you have a complaint, please follow the procedure given below to ensure that it is dealt with swiftly and in the correct manner.

Procedure

Written complaints may be sent to Downsouth by e-mail at downsouthcharity@msn.com
Verbal complaints may be made by phone to 07972 789095 or in person to any of Downsouth's staff, volunteers, management committee members or trustees at any of our events or activities.

1. Anyone who is uneasy about any aspect of Downsouth should first of all talk over any worries with the person responsible for the issue or activity/event being complained about, any of Downsouth's staff, volunteers, management committee members or trustees. The person listening to or receiving the complaint will:
 - write down the facts of the complaint and record the person's contact details and pass these to the Chair of the Management Committee for review.Most complaints should be resolved informally at this initial stage.
2. If the person with the concern does not feel that it has been addressed to their satisfaction, or if the problem recurs, they should request a meeting with the Chair of the Management committee to discuss their concerns. The Chair will:
 - outline our complaints procedure and explain what will happen next and how long it will take
 - make an agreed written record of the discussion
 - where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.
3. DownSouth is a registered charity and is governed by a Board of Trustees. If the matter is still not sorted out to the satisfaction of the person with the concern, they should forward their complaint in writing to the Chair of Trustees along with a request that all materials relating to their complaint also be sent to the Chair of Trustees (contact details will be provided for you) for a final decision. The Chair of Trustees will:
 - acknowledge the complaint in writing within five working days of receiving it and the letter will say who will deal with the complaint and when a full response can be

expected. The Chair may investigate the facts of the case themselves or delegate a suitably senior person to do so.

- review the paperwork of the case and speak with the person/people who dealt with the complaint at previous stages
- if the complaint relates to a specific person, they will be informed and given a further opportunity to respond.
- whether the complaint is upheld or not, the response will describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

The decision taken at this stage is final.

Anyone with a concern about Downsouth can complain to the Charity Commission at any stage. Information about the kind of complaints the Commission can involve itself in can be found on their website at: www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc47.aspx

