

1. Policy Statement

Worthing Music and Arts Festival (WMAAF) is a member of the British and International Federation of Festival for Music, Dance and Speech (BIFF). This Policy has been compiled with reference to and adoption of BIFF's Complaints Policy and Procedure where appropriate (BIFF CP&P).

WMAAF's aim is to deliver and maintain high standards in all sections of its work and to do so in an open and accountable way to build trust and respect with those who are involved in any way with the Festival.

WMAAF welcomes feedback and comments, including complaints and has drawn up this policy and procedure to outline and clarify what will happen if a complaint is received.

WMAAF will:

- Provide a fair, clear and easily accessible procedure.
- Publicise the policy and procedure on the Website so that anyone wishing to complain knows who to contact and what will happen.
- Make sure that any complaint is investigated fairly and in a timely manner.
- Ensure where possible, complaints are resolved and relationships repaired.
- Learn from complaints to improve the running of the Festival.

2. What is a complaint?

"A complaint is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction, however it is expressed. This would include complaints expressed face-to-face, via a phone call, in writing, via email or any other method." (BIFF CP&P)

The following procedure is intended to ensure that any complaint is treated fairly, consistently and where possible, resolved to all parties' satisfaction.

3. Responsibilities

WMAAF's responsibility is to:

- Deal with the complaint in a sensitive, respectful and timely manner and take action where necessary.

It is the complainant's responsibility to:

- Inform WMAAF in writing of their complaint within 4 weeks of the date of the issue.
- Give details of the issue as clearly and fully as possible, including any action taken to date.
- Allow WMAAF reasonable time to deal with the issue and
- Recognise that some matters may be beyond WMAAF's control.

The overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Executive Committee as Trustees of WMAAF.

4. Confidentiality

All complaint information is handled sensitively, on a need-to-know basis and following any relevant data protection requirements.

The Executive Committee is informed of any formal complaint that needs to be referred to its Complaints Sub Committee.

In exceptional circumstances, it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality as each complaint is considered on its own evidence. Should this arise, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

5. Complaints Procedure

5.1 How to make a complaint or provide feedback

- By phone – call us on 01903 506601 and speak to the Secretary. The complaint must subsequently be confirmed in writing.

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

- By post – to the Secretary, WMAAF, Rear of 21C, Goring Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN12 4AR
- By email – email your concerns to the Secretary using the following email address: office@wmaaf.co.uk

5.2 Stage 1 – Informal Complaint

An informal complaint may be made to a Section Head or Committee Member and depending upon the nature of the issue, may be resolved informally. If this is not possible, the formal complaints procedure below should be followed.

5.3 Stage 2 – Formal Complaint

- a) A formal complaint must be made in writing to the Secretary.
- b) The Secretary will acknowledge the complaint in writing within 3 working days of its receipt.
- c) The Secretary will refer the complaint to the Complaints Sub Committee consisting of selected members of the Executive Committee and, where necessary, an independent member of a professional body.
- d) The complaint will be dealt with as soon as possible, the aim being to reach an outcome within 4 weeks. If the matter is complex or needs additional information, more time may be needed. The complainant will be updated if this is the case.
- e) If the complaint is about an Adjudicator, the complaint will be considered alongside the current Code of Practice for Adjudicators and Festivals.
- f) If the complaint is about the Secretary, the letter of complaint should be sent to the Chair of Trustees at the address detailed at 5.1 of these procedures.
- g) If the complaint is about any other member of the Executive Committee that person should be excluded from any decision making process.

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

h) The complainant will be made aware that the issue will be discussed with the respondent, who will be given the opportunity to provide a written response to the complaint. (Confidentiality will be maintained when doing this unless it is impractical to do so. Ref. Point 4 of this Policy.)

i) Once the issue has been considered by the Complaints Committee, the complainant will receive a written response within 5 working days of the Committee reaching its decision.

5.3 Stage Three – Referral to Executive Committee

Should either party be dissatisfied with the determination of the Complaints Committee an appeal can be made to the Executive Committee for consideration. The appeal must be submitted with 4 weeks of the Complaints Committee's notification of its decision.

5.4 Stage Four – Referral to BIFF

If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision reached by the WMAAF Complaints Committee and Executive Committee, then a referral to BIFF can be made by phone, email or post.

- a) By phone - 01625 428297 and ask to speak to the General Manager.
- b) By email – to the General Manager, using the following email address:
Claire@fedreationoffestivals.org.uk
- c) By post to the General Manager at the following address:

The British and International Federation of Festivals for Music,
Dance and Speech
Festivals House, 198 Park Lane, Macclesfield, East Cheshire,
SK11 6UD

- d) The complaint will be referred to BIFF's Complaints Panel and receipt acknowledged within 3 working days and advise the process by which your appeal will be dealt with.