

# Official Customer Complaints Policy

## 1. PURPOSE

To set out and detail the KRSC procedures for dealing with and responding to customer complaints. The policy also details the roles and responsibilities of each member of staff in regards to their role within the KRSC.

## 2. SCOPE

Handling customer complaints well:

- a. Demonstrates our commitment to our customers and stakeholders.
- b. Demonstrates our commitment to providing the best possible service.
- c. Helps us to find out about things that have gone wrong so we can address them.
- d. Helps us to prevent things going wrong again in the future.

## 3. POLICY DETAILS

3.1 KRSC views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the complaint. Our policy is:

- 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 the KRSC knows what to do if a complaint is received.
- To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely fashion.
- 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.

**3.2 Definition of a Complaint:** A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of the KRSC and all will be given equal attention and will be all be given equal attention.

**3.3 Where Complaints come from:** any person or organization who has a legitimate interest in the KRSC. This includes, but is not exclusive to gym members, facility hirers, sports clubs, community groups and local businesses.  
A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or social media or in writing. This policy does not include staff, who should use the KRSC's Discipline and Grievance Policy.

#### **4. CONFIDENTIALITY**


All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following relevant data protection requirements.

#### **5. RESPONSIBILITY**

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the KRSC Sports Centre Manager.

#### **6. REVIEW**

This policy is reviewed annually and updated as required.

Policy Adopted by Sports Centre Manager  Date: 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018

Reviewed by Sports Centre Manager;  Date: 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018

# Official Complaints Procedure for King's Rochester Sports Centre

## Publicised Contact Details for Complaints:

Written complaints may be sent to King's Rochester Sports Centre at 601 Maidstone Road, Rochester ME1 3QJ or by e-mail at [enquiries@kingssportscentre.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@kingssportscentre.co.uk)

Verbal complaints may be made by phone to 01634 818 422 or in person to any of KRSC's Duty Managers or Receptionists, however in order to ensure that accuracy prevails, we would prefer and encourage that complaints are made in writing.

## Receiving Complaints

Complaints may arrive through channels publicised for that purpose or through any other contact details or opportunities the complainant may have. Complaints received by telephone or in person need to be recorded. The person who receives, a phone or in person, complaint should:

- Write down the facts of the complaint.
- Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number.
- Note down the relationship of the complainant to the KRSC (for example: event hirer, gym member).
- Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure.
- Preferably, ask the complainant to send a written account by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

For further guidelines about handling verbal complaints, see **Appendix 1 Resolving Complaints**

### *Stage One*

In all cases, a complaint will be passed to the King's Rochester Sports Centre Manager, (KRSCM)

The KRSCM will then record it in the complaints log. If it has not already been resolved, they delegate to one of the Duty Manager Team to investigate and take the appropriate line of action. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.

Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within five working days. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaints procedure should be attached. Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within four weeks. If this is not possible, because for example an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

### ***Stage Two***

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can request that the complaint is reviewed the KRSCM. The request for KRSCM level review should be acknowledged within one week of receiving it. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply.

When the KRSCM receives the Stage Two complaint he/she may investigate the facts of the case him/herself. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage One. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond. The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage One should be kept informed of what is happening.

Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within 5 days. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given. Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should 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, unless the KRSCM decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution. This may involve the National Governing Body of a particular sport.

### **Variation of the Complaints Procedure**

The KRSCM may vary the procedure with good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest; for example, a complaint about a Duty Manager should not also have said Duty Manager as the person leading a Stage Two review.

### **Monitoring and Learning from Complaints**

Complaints are reviewed annually to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further strategic action.

## Appendix 1 - Practical Guidance for Handling Verbal Complaints

- Remain calm and respectful throughout the conversation
- Listen - allow the person to talk about the complaint in their own words.
- Sometimes a person just wants to "let off steam"
- Don't debate the facts in the first instance, especially if the person is angry
- Show an interest in what is being said
- Obtain details about the complaint before any personal details
- Ask for clarification wherever necessary
- Show that you have understood the complaint by reflecting back what you have noted down
- Acknowledge the person's feelings (even if you feel that they are being unreasonable) - you can do this without making a comment on the complaint itself or making any admission of fault on behalf of the organisation e.g. "I understand that this situation is frustrating for you"
- If you feel that an apology is deserved for something that was the responsibility of your organisation, then apologise
- Ask the person what they would like done to resolve the issue
- Be clear about what you can do, how long it will take and what it will involve.
- Don't promise things you can't deliver
- Give clear and valid reasons why requests cannot be met
- Make sure that the person understands what they have been told
- Wherever appropriate, inform the person about the available avenues of review or appeal