



Bury St. Edmunds Literature Festival
Celebrating books and writing in the heart of East Anglia

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Bury St Edmunds Literature Festival aims to provide a high-quality experience for everyone involved with the festival, but we know that sometimes things go wrong. We are sorry if this has happened and will do our best to address your concerns fairly and as quickly as we can and put things right for you. We will also try and learn and improve from the points you raise.

If you want to complain

If you are unhappy with any aspect of the festival, please raise this as soon as you can with one of our committee members. During the festival you will be able to identify us through our LitFest lanyards and we will try to resolve the problem there and then if possible. If you feel this is difficult or inappropriate then please contact us through our email hello@burylitfest.co.uk or write to us c/o 15 Northgate Avenue Bury St Edmunds IP32 6BB

What happens next?

Step One

All complaints made in person or by phone (whether resolved or not) will be recorded in the Incident Book. This is kept at the main festival venue, the Unitarian Meeting House Churchgate Street Bury St Edmunds IP33 1RH during the festival and by the Chair, Julia Wakelam, outside the festival period. We will record your name and address and contact details and note your relationship to the festival (eg: audience member, volunteer, author) and the nature of your complaint.

Whether or not your complaint was resolved immediately, it will be reported at the next committee meeting. If the complaint is not resolved, and where appropriate, we will ask you to follow up with a written account by email or post so that the complaint is conveyed in your own

words. We will acknowledge this in writing with a copy of this Complaints Policy usually within two weeks. An appropriate person will be delegated to review and resolve your issue. This is normally a member of the committee not involved with the incident. If the complaint involves a specific person they will be informed and given a fair chance to respond.

We aim to provide a definitive reply within four weeks informing you of the actions taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions and any action proposed or taken. If it's not possible to resolve the issue within four weeks, we will write to you with a progress report and an indication of when you will receive a full reply.

Step Two

If you feel the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved then you can ask for the matter to be reviewed by the Chair. The Chair will review the investigation and conclusions and may re-investigate themselves or delegate to another member of the committee who was not involved with the incident or the original investigation. We aim to provide a definitive reply within four weeks, describing the action taken to further investigate the complaint, the conclusions and any action taken as a result. If this is not possible, we will provide a progress report and an indication of when you will receive a full reply.

The Chair will report the outcome to the trustees and committee. The decision at this stage is final unless the Board decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance to resolve the issue, in which case we will explain what will happen next and why.

Variation of the procedure

Exceptionally, this procedure may be varied if, for example if there is a conflict of interest or for another valid reason, If this happens we will explain why the change has been made and what will happen. It is also possible that we cannot deal directly with your complaint if there is an issue within a venue we are using or related to an organisation or person not directly

managed by LitFest. In these cases, we will try to learn from your experience and adjust our approach to external organisations as appropriate.

PLEASE NOTE We will be unable to deal with a complaint if it is made anonymously.

Confidentiality

All complaints will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and in accordance with our Privacy Policy. The Committee's annual review of complaints and any learnings from them will be aggregated (when possible) and anonymised.

Our overarching aim is to resolve your issue as quickly and fairly as we can and to repair any relationships that may have been damaged. We also want to learn from what happened and improve in the future.

We have designed this policy to provide a fair approach that is clear and easy to use. We will publicise the existence of this procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint.

We will make sure everyone involved with LitFest knows what to do if a complaint is received. •

We review this procedure and any complaints received annually .

Policy last reviewed April 2026