

## BATTLE SCARS CIO COMPLAINTS / COMPLIMENTS POLICY / PROCEDURE

<b>Introduction</b>	
<b>Organisation</b>	Battle Scars
<b>Scope of policy</b>	Applies to all staff and volunteers and all services, activities, training and general running of the organisation.
<b>Policy operational date (original)</b>	06/02/18
<b>Policy prepared by</b>	Jenny Groves – CEO
<b>Reviewed on</b> <b>Reviewed by</b>	05/01/24 Jenny Groves – CEO
<b>Date approved by Board</b>	15/01/24
<b>Amended</b>	Yes
<b>Policy review date</b>	By 31/01/26 Every 2 years or sooner if required
<b>Distributing</b>	<p>This policy will be available on the Battle Scars website. It will be a requirement for all trustees and staff to read the policy after appointment or after its review.</p> <p>A summary of all relevant policies will be included in the volunteer handbook with clear signposting to the full text. Volunteers will be kept up to date with any changes that might affect their role.</p> <p>A notice about how this policy can be found or who to ask for a hard copy will be displayed in the Battle Scars premises alongside a link/QR code to the feedback page of the website for the option to leave comments (anonymously or not).</p>
<b>If you have a complaint about our organisation, we want to hear about it and we will do our best to put it right.</b>	
<b>Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To deal with complaints fairly, efficiently and effectively</li> <li>• To ensure that all complaints are handled in a consistent manner throughout</li> <li>• To increase service user satisfaction</li> <li>• To use complaints constructively in the planning and improvement of all services</li> </ul>
<b>Who can complain</b>	<p>Anyone who is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• receiving a service from Battle Scars;</li> <li>• caring for someone who has a complaint;</li> <li>• volunteering for Battle Scars;</li> <li>• employed by Battle Scars.</li> </ul>
<b>Deadline for complaints</b>	Battle Scars will only consider complaints within 1 year of the incident.
<b>Complaint procedure</b>	
<b>How to complain</b>	Battle Scars would like to sort out any complaint as soon as possible.

	<p>The complaint must be submitted <b>within 1 year of the date of the incident.</b></p> <p>Many complaints can be solved informally. If you make contact in person at one of the groups, events or training sessions etc. or by phone with a volunteer or member of staff, make a note of the name of the person you speak to. If a solution is offered at this point make a note of this as well. You can contact Battle Scars (details below) and, if you feel able, speak to the CEO or a member of staff who will attempt to resolve the issues to the satisfaction of all concerned. If you are not satisfied or do not wish an informal solution, you may pursue a formal complaint.</p>
<b>Formal complaint</b>	<p>Write down your complaint and send to the CEO to: <a href="mailto:Jenny.Groves@battle-scars.org.uk">Jenny.Groves@battle-scars.org.uk</a> or post to:</p> <p>Battle Scars Onward Mental Health Hub Onward House Millshaw Park Way Leeds LS10 0LS Tel: 07410 380747</p> <p>Please mark both email and letter as 'confidential'. If you have a complaint against the CEO, please submit in writing only addressing your letter to the Chair of the board of trustees. If your complaint is against the Chair please address your correspondence to the Vice-chair using the address above.</p>
<b>Information required</b>	<p>Please include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. your name;</li> <li>2. if you're putting in a complaint on behalf of someone else, their name;</li> <li>3. your date of birth;</li> <li>4. If you're putting in a complaint on behalf of someone else, their date of birth;</li> <li>5. contact details (full address, phone number, email address);</li> <li>6. date and location of the incident if known; if exact date is not known please be as specific as possible e.g. "July group at Lovell Park";</li> <li>7. what you wish to complain about (please provide as many details as possible);</li> <li>8. what resolution you are seeking.</li> </ol>
<b>Retaining data</b>	<p>Please see our Data Protection policy for full details on how we use and retain personal information.</p>
<b>What happens next?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. You will receive acknowledgement of your complaint within 5 working days if submitted by email or within 10 working days if posted. You may be contacted to make sure that we have understood your complaint properly. You may be interviewed by the person investigating the complaint.</li> <li>2. In all cases, a complaint will be given full and fair consideration. However, if as a result of your complaint, disciplinary proceedings are taken against a member of the</li> </ol>

	<p>board, a volunteer or a member of staff, an internal procedure will apply. You will be informed that disciplinary proceedings have taken place, but as these proceedings are confidential, you will only be informed of the details or outcome of matters outside this procedure.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. If a criminal offence is alleged, then the police will be informed.</li> <li>4. You will receive a response to your complaint within 25 working days of its acknowledgement. Any extension to this time limit requires your consent.</li> <li>5. We will state whether or not the complaint is deemed to be fair, giving reasons for the decision. It should be noted that if such an admission could have legal / insurance implications the CEO or Chair of the board of trustees will have taken legal advice or contacted the insurers before writing which may delay the response. You will be notified if such a delay is expected.</li> <li>6. If the complaint is deemed to be fair, Battle Scars will apologise and explain what steps have been taken to avoid it happening again.</li> <li>7. If the complaint is deemed unfair, we will explain why it was considered thus.</li> <li>8. It is possible that your desired resolution may not be reached.</li> <li>9. If you are not happy with our decision, then you must notify the Chair of the board of trustees within 14 days of receiving the reply that you wish to take it further. If the complaint was against the Chair, please notify the Vice-chair.</li> <li>10. If you wish, you can have your complaint heard by the board of trustees. Two members of the board (excluding the Chair) shall hear the complaint. Both you and the person against whom the complaint has been made shall be allowed to have their say and all previous written notes and the Chair's (or Vice-chair's if the complaint was against the Chair) investigations shall be taken into account. A written decision will be sent to all involved.</li> </ol>
<b>Support</b>	You can have someone with you when your complaint is discussed.
<b>Recording</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the complaint is resolved informally then the matter will be reported at the next general meeting of the board of trustees and recorded in the minutes of that meeting.</li> <li>• The written records of all other complaints will be held by the Chair of the board of trustees, including any written legal or insurance responses, and transferred to his/her successor as a strictly confidential file.</li> <li>• If the complaint was against the Chair, the written records of that particular complaint will be held by the Vice-chair of the board of trustees and transferred to the Chair's successor as a strictly confidential file.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An electronic log of complaints will be kept in a password protected computer / server / cloud. Hard copies will be kept in a locked box / cupboard. All recorded information regarding complaints will be kept for 10 years.</li> </ul>
<b>Can you take your complaint elsewhere?</b>	<p>Battle Scars will take every possible action to resolve your complaint acting in accordance to our policies and ethos of the organisation.</p> <p>If you are unhappy with the way your complaint was dealt with you can contact the Charity Commission regulator. Please see <a href="https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity">https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity</a> for routes available depending on the nature of your complaint.</p>
<b>Compliments</b>	
<b>Battle Scars welcomes compliments</b>	<p>We welcome positive comments / feedback from service users, referrers or organisations.</p> <p>Feedback forms will be provided depending on the service used. Due to the nature of certain Battle Scars services obtaining regular feedback is impractical or would inconvenience our service users.</p> <p>A comments book is available for service users. Because such feedback is usually given anonymously, we cannot acknowledge it.</p> <p>Positive comments / feedback will be shared with the board of trustees, the Battle Scars members and any individuals (staff or volunteers) the comments / feedback related to will be made aware of it. Such compliments will be written in the individual's supervision notes.</p>
<b>How will we use compliments</b>	<p>We will learn from compliments to shape practice and develop services.</p> <p>Feedback from training events will be used to shape future training.</p>
<b>Recording</b>	<p>Hard copies of feedback from training will be kept for 3 years. Certain feedback / compliments may be published on our website and similar publications and may remain published for longer than 3 years. Such comments will be published anonymously unless we have permission to use partial, full name or initials.</p>
<b>Retaining data</b>	<p>Please see our Data Protection policy for full details on how we use and retain personal information.</p>
<b>Policy review</b>	
<b>Responsibility</b>	<p>It is the responsibility of the CEO to review this policy unless the task has been delegated to an appropriate volunteer or employee before the policy review date.</p>
<b>Procedure</b>	<p>All volunteers and employees can have input in this policy's review via their supervision.</p>
<b>Timing</b>	<p>The review must be completed within a month of the review date.</p>