Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure

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Campaign for Real Ale

Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure

This document is to set out the procedure for all complaints and/or disciplinary matters against volunteers in CAMRA. These can be raised by staff, volunteers or members of the public. It is expected that all volunteers abide by these procedures. These procedures have been updated after the AGM 2020 where Special Resolutions to change article 16 of the Articles of Association were carried.

Version	Author	Date	Purpose / changes
0-5	Abigail Newton	May 2020	Disc committee review
1-0	Abigail Newton	May 2020	To publish on website and by memo
1-1	Abigail Newton	May 2020	With typos corrected
1-2	Abigail Newton	June 2020	With typos and links corrected
1-3	Abigail Newton	May 2021	Changes to 'Stage one – investigation'
1-4	Abigail Newton	May 2021	Further changes after review by NE

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When to raise a complaint or disciplinary matter

Small scale issues don't normally warrant a formal complaint, these can often be resolved by the parties concerned directly. Types of issues are typically of, offensive behaviour, either in person, or online from one member to another or to a third party.

What is a complaint?

Any expression of dissatisfaction with the behaviour of a CAMRA member, whether justified or not, that calls for a response.

These may include incidents of theft, assault, intimidation, bullying, racism or other discriminatory behaviour, sexual misconduct and inappropriate use of social media (which could include defamatory remarks against persons, institutions or CAMRA). It needs to be pointed out that once shared, a message on social media shared by a third party is deemed in the public domain and is therefore subject to the law of the land. If an issue is regarding theft or assault the local police should be contacted and a complaint **must** be made within CAMRA.

Issues regarding a volunteer's performance or work are not deemed to be a complaint.

What is a disciplinary matter?

- Complaints that have been escalated
- Contraventions of CAMRA's Code of Conduct
- Incidents or events that are perceived to cause reputational damage to CAMRA
- Incidents or events that could result in litigation against CAMRA

How to raise a complaint or disciplinary matter

Where possible it is best practice to resolve the situation directly with the person concerned. However, if a complaint needs to be raised please use the table in appendix one to establish who to raise the issue with.

If a disciplinary matter needs to be raised details should be sent to the National Vice Chairman who is the Chairman of the Disciplinary Committee in writing

All complaints and disciplinary matters should be in writing to the relevant contact where possible. If this is not possible a verbal record can be taken but will be transferred into the written word.

Standards

- All complaints and disciplinary matters will be taken seriously
- All complaints and disciplinary matters will be investigated fully
- All complaints and disciplinary matters will be responded to in writing
- All complaints and disciplinary matters will be treated confidentially

- All complaints and disciplinary matters will be dealt with in a timely manner
- All disciplinary matters involving suspension shall abide by article 16 of our Articles of Association

Complaints procedure

Any matters, that are raised as complaints, could be dealt with by a number of different people across the campaign therefore there is not a standard procedure to follow. However, guidance is being written on this matter in the Guidance for Dealing with Complaints document. It is expected that all complaints should be in writing and that all complaints will be responded to in writing.

Disciplinary procedure

All disciplinary matters shall be given a unique reference number prior to commencement that shall be referred to in all correspondence. Any additional matters once this has been allocated that falls out of the scope of the original matter shall have their own unique reference. This would include matters that are counter complaints and shall be treated separately.

Stage one - Investigation

All disciplinary matters shall be fully investigated before any action is taken by the disciplinary committee or its representatives. This may involve statements from people not directly involved in the matter.

At the outset of the investigation, the subjects of the disciplinary case shall be advised that they are under investigation and informed of the nature of the allegation against them, unless the disciplinary committee determine that doing so would materially compromise the investigation. They may also be required to provide a statement.
Any requests made to aid the investigation process shall be clearly made in writing to people concerned including timescales for an expectation to respond. It may be that a face to face meeting or a phone call is required, in which case they shall be backed up with a summary in writing. All members are expected to respond to such requests, failure to respond will assume non-compliance with the procedure and the situation will be discussed by the disciplinary committee in lieu of any response.

Stage two - Decision

No decision shall be made without a full investigation into any situation. The Disciplinary committee shall read all the investigation material provided alongside CAMRA's Code of Conduct and Volunteer Charter. From there, they shall discuss the matter and make a decision for further action.

The National Executive will be informed of any decisions taken. The Disciplinary Committee is made of a quorum of four National Executive members who have delegated authority for making such decisions.

Decisions for each matter shall be dealt with independently of any other disciplinary matters whether they have already concluded or are 'in flight'.

Refer to Powers of the Disciplinary Committee below
Refer to article 16 in Articles of Association

Stage three – Conclusion

All decisions, made by the disciplinary committee, be it to suspend, expel or issue a warning, shall be made in writing, to the member/s concerned. The disciplinary committee may provide written advice to the member on expectations of their future behaviour.

For suspension or expulsion please refer to article 16 in our Articles of Association.

Stage four - Appeal

For matters of suspension of expulsion please refer to article 16 in our Articles of Association.

In the event of an appeal, by the suspended/expelled member, the appeal will be heard by the remaining members of the National Executive chaired by the National Chairman. Members of the disciplinary committee are not part of the appeal process as they were involved in the initial investigation.

Stage five - Afterwards

CAMRA maintains a list of persons who have been suspended or expelled from CAMRA and are therefore not allowed to work at CAMRA events. Festival organisers are provided with an updated version of this list for each festival. The maintenance of this list is the responsibility of HQ staff on instruction from the Disciplinary Committee.

Records of all disciplinary matters shall be stored securely on file.

Powers of the Disciplinary Committee

The Disciplinary Committee has the authority to implement formal warnings, suspend or expel members and these shall be reported to the National Executive as a summary.

Every effort will be made to reach an amicable conclusion where possible. A decision to suspend or expel a member will only be taken in situations where the disciplinary committee feel it is warranted.

For situations that required suspension or expulsion please refer to article 16 in our Articles of Association

Disciplinary Communication

All disciplinary matters will be expected to be raised in writing by the complainant.

Complainant(s)

- Acknowledgement shall be made to complainant(s) in writing
- Every incident/matter shall be given a unique reference number that shall be used in all further correspondence on the matter.
- Updates on key stages of the procedure shall be provided.
- Details and contents of outcomes and correspondence with the complainee(s) shall not be communicated.
- Communication shall be made to the complainant(s) when the matter has concluded.

Complainee(s)

- All correspondence shall be
    - In writing, or
    - By phone and backed up in writing, or
    - Face to face and backed up in writing
- Details of the matter shall be clearly explained
- Details of the next steps of the procedure shall be clearly explained

Appendix one - Who to complain to

Note, there is a separate route of complaint for social media, where the branch of the individual may be unknown, at the bottom of the table.

Complaint about...	**Raise issue with... (see note 1)**	**Also inform...**	**If not satisfied refer to …(see note 2)**
Member of HQ staff	Staff member's line manager (see note 3)	Chief Executive	National Chairman
Members of the National Executive	National Chairman	n/a	n/a
National Chairman	National Vice Chairman	n/a	n/a
Regional Director	Chairman of Branches Committee	n/a	National Chairman
Regional Finance Officer	Regional Director	n/a	Finance Director
Other Regional Officers	Regional Director	n/a	Chairman of Branches Committee
Branch Chairman	Regional Director	n/a	Chairman of Branches Committee
Branch Committee Member	Branch Chairman	n/a	Regional Director
Beer Festival Volunteer	Beer Festival Organiser	Chairman of Events Committee	National Chairman
Beer Festival Organiser	Chairman of Events Committee	Regional Director	National Chairman
National Beer Festival (GBBF, GWBF or GBBF -W) Volunteer	Beer Festival Organiser	n/a	Chairman of Events Committee
National Beer Festival (GBBF, GWBF or GBBF -W) Organiser	Chairman of Events Committee	n/a	National Chairman

Brewery Liaison Officer	Brewery Liaison coordinator	Regional Director	Chair of Brewery Liaison
Tasting Panel Chairman	Regional Tasting Panel Chairman	Regional Director	National Tasting Panel Chairman
Tasting panel volunteer	Tasting Panel Chairman	Regional Director	Regional Tasting Panel Chairman
Pub Company liaison officers	National Pub Company Liaison	Regional Director	National Chairman
Member of a national committee	Chairman of the committee	n/a	National Chairman
Chairman of the National committee	National Chairman	n/a	
Members on Discourse	Discourse Moderators	Chairman of Disciplinary committee is a moderator	Chairman of Disciplinary committee
Members on Social Media	Appropriate Social Media administrators	Chairman of Disciplinary committee	Chairman of Disciplinary committee
Members - branch unknown	Chairman of Disciplinary committee		
	(note 1). Everyone in this column has the authority to make the final decision or if they see fit refer the matter to the disciplinary committee		*(note 2).Is referring to a second level please ensure that the person with whom the original complaint was made is kept informed*

Notes 1 and 2 are in the table above.

Note 3 - The staffing director can help identify the staff member's line manager.

If you are uncertain who to contact please contact the Volunteer Head of Disciplinary

Appendix two - Who are the members of the Disciplinary Committee?

The Disciplinary Committee comprises of four members of the National Executive, one Regional Director and the Chief Executive. The Vice Chairman of the Campaign is the Chairman of the committee.

Appendix three - Related documents

All the documents below can be found in the Important Documents area of CAMRA's website

Articles of Association
Internal Policy Document
Policy Document
Members' Handbook
Head Office Structure
CAMRA National Committee and Advisory Group Structure
Volunteers' Charter
Guidance for dealing with complaints