



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF  
**ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON**  
LOURDES PILGRIMAGE

# COMPLAINTS POLICY

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## POLICY STATEMENT

This Complaints policy sets out how the Arundel & Brighton Lourdes Pilgrimage ("ABLP") will manage all complaints made in relation to any event or activity of the ABLP, and its trading company Arundel & Brighton Lourdes Pilgrimage Limited. The Policy outlines the different stages a complainant and complaint will go through, the timescales suggested and who should be involved in handling the complaint.

The ABLP encourages and supports a culture of transparency and honesty. The aim of this policy is to ensure that any complaint raised is investigated and addressed promptly, in an impartial and effective manner using processes that are timely, and fair.

(Please note that concerns or complaints that fall within the scope of our Child and Vulnerable Adult procedures will be referred for consideration under the guidance of the Safeguarding Policy, the terms of which take precedence over the guidance given here.)

## COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

### Overview

An accessible copy of the complaint's procedure is available to Pilgrims from our UK Pilgrimage office, and in the Lourdes Pilgrimage office and each hotel grey box during our week in Lourdes.

Any Diocesan Trustee, Core Team member, Hotel Leader, doctor or nurse ("responsible person") may take initial details of the complaint and will follow procedures to ensure action is taken without delay.

All written complaints will be logged in the Complaints Register. Each record is allocated a complaint reference number and will be maintained in the Complaints Register by the secretary of the ABLP.

Complaints will be treated in a sensitive and confidential manner, subject to any disclosure that might be necessary to the authorities in France or the UK.

## Stage 1 or Informal Complaint

Where the complaint is expressed as a worry, concern, comment or suggestion, that is not considered a serious or grave complaint by the complainant, and is received verbally, it should be addressed immediately by the responsible person.

An informal complaint does not mean it is any less important, but it is hoped that the vast majority of issues can be resolved informally at this stage of the process. The Complainant will be asked if they are happy with the outcome of this Stage 1 complaint; if they are not then they will be invited to take their complaint to the next level.

## Stage 2 or Formal Complaint

Where a complaint is considered by the complainant as a serious complaint or if the responsible person dealing with the complaint is told that the complainant is not happy with the outcome of the informal complaint (Stage 1), they will ensure the complainant knows how to take their concern to the next level. All formal complaints must be written<sup>1</sup> and sent to the Pilgrimage Director; an Appendix 1 - Formal Complaint Form - Example is attached to this Policy should a complainant want to use it. (For the avoidance of doubt, an individual wishing to make a formal complaint need not raise the issue informally in the first instance, they can send their written complaint directly to the Pilgrimage Director at any point.)

## PROCESS FOR FORMAL COMPLAINTS

All formal complaints received will be acknowledged in writing. It is ABLP policy to try and resolve all formal complaints as soon as possible.

The Pilgrimage Director will respond to all complaints using the following process:-

- Direct communication with the complainant to ensure details of the complaint are understood, to advise of the process to be used and the probable time for response.

- Where appropriate discuss any support the complainant may require throughout the process, e.g. Independent Complaints Advocacy Service.

- Agreeing any immediate action to be taken.

- Full investigation recording – Background to complaint, areas requiring review, methodology to be used as part of the investigation, findings and action required.

- A formal written response will then be produced.

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<sup>1</sup> If this is challenging for the complainant then assistance will be given to take notes of the specific complaint, that can then be passed on to the Pilgrimage Director.

## COMPLAINT OUTCOME

Written responses will be tailored to the nature of the complaint and will include some or all of the following: -

A summary of each element of the complaint - from the written communication and subsequent conversation(s).

A summary of the investigation and its methodology.

Conclusions of the investigation: was there an error, omission, or shortfall by the organisation? If so, did this disadvantage the complainant or any other person, if so, how?

Any action being taken to put things right, with timescales and nomination of the person responsible for implementing the actions.

An apology.

Information on what the complainant should do if they are dissatisfied with the response.

A review of past trends and patterns of complaints overall, if any, will be carried out following the investigation of each and every complaint.

Where required, details of the complaint, investigations and findings may need to be reported to the Trustees of Arundel & Brighton Diocese ("A&BD Trustees") or their advisors, and the ABLP will not see this as a breach of confidentiality.

Any significant issues raised through complaints along with the lessons learned and actions taken will be considered by the ABLP and if practicable used to improve the running of the charitable trust.

## STAGE 3 – REVIEW OF FORMAL COMPLAINT

It is always our hope to resolve issues with a complainant but if the complaint has not been resolved to the complainant's satisfaction a review may be called by the A&BD Trustees, or indeed the complainant may take the matter to an external body.

If a person wants to make a formal complaint, they do not have to go through the ABLP's policy and procedure, although this is the process we would prefer them to adopt.

As an alternative, the complainant may report their concern to any person or outside agency directly, for example the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton, by contacting your Parish Priest or The Vicar General of the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton.

Appendix 1 – Formal Complaint Form – Example

Name:

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Address:

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Tel:

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Email:

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If making the complaint on behalf of a Pilgrim:

Relationship to Pilgrim:

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Name of Pilgrim:

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Nature of complaint:

(someone will contact you to take full details)

What have you already done to try to resolve the concern / issue?

What would you like to see happen as a result of making this complaint?

I require an interpreter / special support:

Yes / No

(if yes, please indicate the support you may require)

I require the support of an advocate:

Yes / No

(if yes, please indicate if you already have an advocate and give their details)

Signature:

Date:

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