

PARKINSON'S^{UK}
CHANGE ATTITUDES.
FIND A CURE.
JOIN US.

Volunteering

Solving Problems Policy & Process

1. Purpose and Scope

Volunteers are vital to Parkinson's UK and we are committed to supporting them and recognising the contribution they make. The charity works with over 3,000 volunteers. As part of becoming a Parkinson's UK volunteer, all volunteers are expected to be representatives of the charity and champions of our values and behaviours, as set out in the volunteering policy.

As representatives of Parkinson's UK, all volunteers have an important role to:

- Demonstrate inclusive behaviours that are in line with the values of the charity, including language that ensures our services are welcoming to all
- Be courteous and helpful to others
- Follow the Parkinson's UK policies, procedures, values and rules
- Carry out reasonable volunteering activities, as requested by the volunteer's staff contact, or expected as part of their role.

From time to time, issues and challenges ('problems') can arise during the course of volunteering. In the vast majority of cases, these issues are resolved informally between volunteers, or between volunteers and local staff. This will always be our preferred option. However, in some rare cases we do need to move to more formal processes.

It is important that the charity has a transparent process in place to support staff and volunteers to resolve any such issues or challenges, if informal approaches have not worked or are not appropriate. This problem solving policy provides staff and volunteers with a consistent, transparent process to address issues that may have arisen relating to volunteers' actions, inactions or behaviours. Any issues that arise informally or formally between volunteers, or between volunteers and local staff will be dealt with discretion and will be confidential to all, but those parties involved. This policy can be used to address concerns and complaints about any individual volunteer, including trustees and independent committee members.

Volunteers, staff, charity supporters or anyone who comes into contact with the charity can raise concerns through this policy. Issues raised under this policy may also require other policies to be used. An example might be where an issue raised relates to the harm of a vulnerable/protected adult or child, so the relevant Safeguarding Policy and Procedure would also be applied.

If a volunteer wishes to raise other issues about our functions, services, policies or a member of staff, this may be more appropriately done through our feedback policy and procedure. If there are serious concerns about the activities of the charity, our assets or reputation, it may be appropriate to alert the Company Secretary by whistleblowing.

Our People Strategy is one of the foundations of this policy, which embeds the following principles to our problem solving approach:

Volunteers will:

- work in line with our Volunteering Agreement, a **co-produced set of charity and volunteer expectations**
- Raise concerns as soon as possible with their staff contact, where issues arise.

The relevant volunteer staff contact will:

- Aim to fully look into the issue with the objective of **resolving concerns quickly and**

informally, where possible

- Ensure that volunteers are **treated fairly**
- Consider **volunteer wellbeing** throughout, and **offer support** to those going through the process
- Offer volunteers the **opportunity to explain the situation** from their perspective
- Demonstrate that we **respect volunteers** and are committed to **good practice**
- Make every effort to **resolve issues informally**
- Consider any **reputational aspects to Parkinson's UK** relating to the problem
- **Minimise any disruption** to the charity's work and the people involved

The policy operates in the context of Parkinson's UK values:

- **People-first:** We're a strong movement for change, informed, shaped and powered by people affected by Parkinson's. We value and support each other.
- **Uniting:** We're scientists and supporters, fundraisers and families, carers and clinicians. We're working, side by side, to improve the lives of everyone affected by Parkinson's.
- **Pioneering:** We innovate across everything we do. Creative, courageous and with pioneering spirit, we strive to continually improve.
- **Driven:** We live and breathe our purpose. We set clear goals and strive to deliver the greatest impact for everyone affected by Parkinson's.

This policy is underpinned by, and should be read in conjunction with, the problem solving guidance for staff (relevant for staff) and the problem solving guidance for volunteers (relevant for volunteers).

2. Process

Initial Problem Solving Process

Issue raised with staff contact

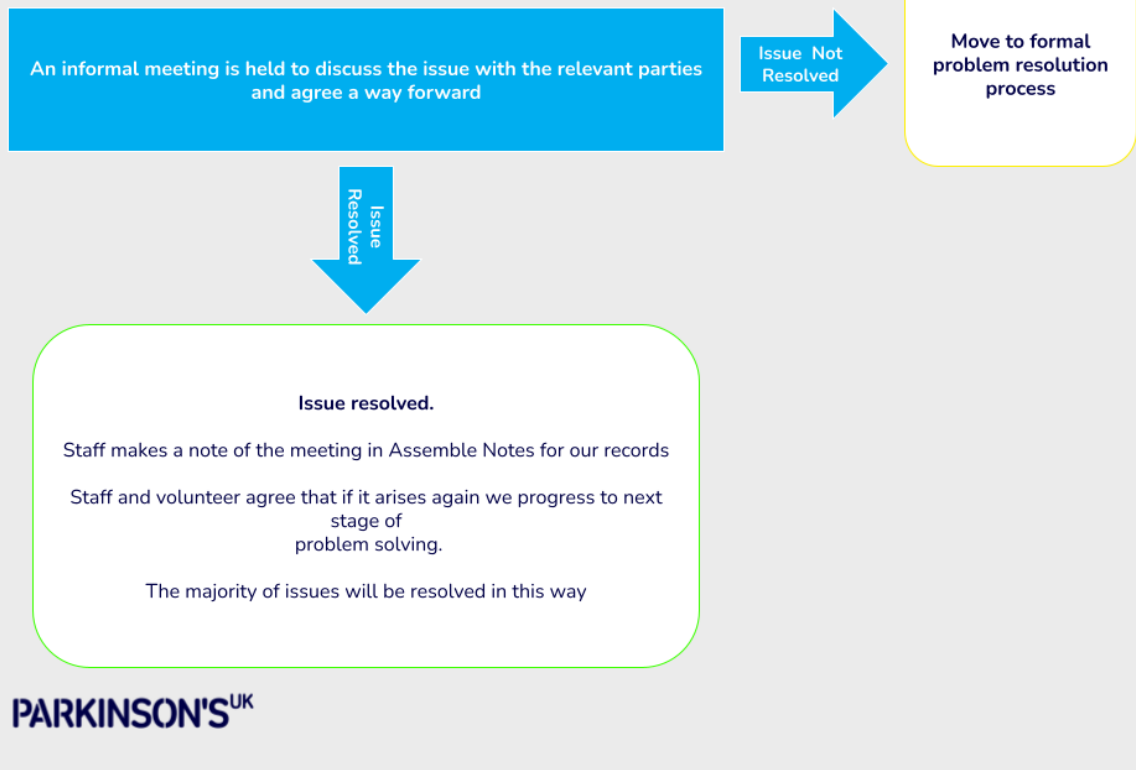


Staff contact explores the issue speaking with volunteers and reviewing any related documentation.



Using Guidance and in discussion with Volunteering Team Staff Contact decides if the issue something that could be resolved informally or needs to move straight to a formal investigation

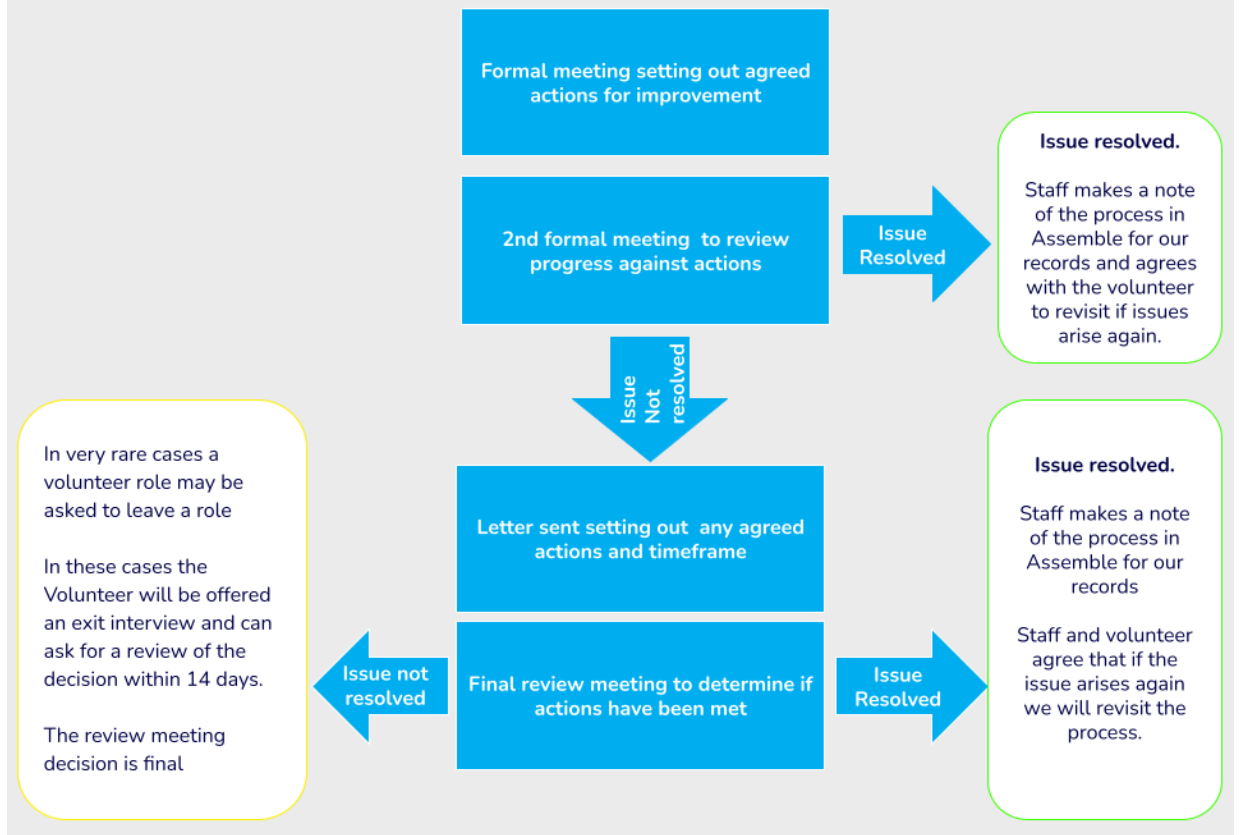
Informal problem solving



Note that even during the informal process, a staff contact may make confidential notes about the discussions and outcome. These will be logged on Assemble (our volunteering system).

If the informal process does not resolve an issue then we will move to the formal problem solving process (overleaf). This process is not time bound, but we would anticipate that volunteers are given a reasonable opportunity to meet any actions for improvement, as agreed at each stage. That said, we would not expect the full process to last any longer than 3 months.

Formal problem solving process



In the rare case that a volunteer is asked to leave a volunteer role, they can appeal the decision within 14 days. Depending on the circumstances, the appeal process might involve a trustee on an appeal panel. In an extreme case of unacceptable behaviour, membership of Parkinson's UK may also be removed by the board.

3. Behaviours during the process

We appreciate that it may be upsetting for a volunteer to be part of the problem solving process and that this will need to be handled sensitively by our staff contact. Language should be inclusive and supportive and our preferred outcome is always that the situation is resolved and the volunteer continues to work positively as part of Parkinson's UK. If required, the affected volunteer is welcome to bring a 'volunteer buddy' along to meetings and discussions to help support them through the process.

In return, during the process we expect volunteers to continue to uphold the values and behaviours of Parkinson's UK. Any unacceptable behaviours during the problem solving process, either towards another volunteer or a staff contact, will be taken seriously and may inform the decision making process.

4. Responsibilities

The following responsibilities apply in relation to this policy:

- The **Head of Volunteering and Local Groups** owns this policy on behalf of the People Committee and the Board and is responsible for approving changes and updates before submission to the People Committee for review and approval.

5. Documenting the process

Any problem solving conversations will be written as notes on our volunteering management system - Assemble - by the staff contact who is involved in the case. A member of our volunteering team will monitor this via Assemble to make sure that we are documenting any cases that reach the formal development meeting stage. This is to make sure that we are being fair and consistent in our approach and to assure confidentiality and the compliance with all data protection requirements.

6. Guidance notes

The guidance notes give a definition of key terms, detail on each stage of the process and the support available to staff and volunteers.

- Other relevant policies include:
- Volunteering Agreement
- Feedback policy and procedure
- Data Protection Policy
- Safeguarding Adults Policies and Procedures (England and Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland)
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Policies (England, Northern Ireland and Wales, Scotland)
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Code of conduct and engagement: trustee and committee members

Document information

Approved by: People Committee	Date: Scheduled for 12 July 2023
Frequency of review: Every 3 years	Next review date: April 2026
ELT owner: Director of Community and Participation	Policy lead: Head of Volunteering