

Complaints Policy

Policy and Procedure

Clegwell & Hartleyburn (CIO) is committed to working in an open and accountable way that builds the trust and respect of all our stakeholders. We also want to ensure the highest standards of activities across all departments and services across our organisation.

One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our stakeholders, and in particular by responding positively to complaints regarding employees or services and finding suitable resolutions.

We take complaints very seriously and we treat them as an opportunity to develop. This is why we are always very grateful to hear from people who are willing to take the time to help us improve. We always thank people who contact us about their problems, concerns, or worries.

People and Responsibilities

The Charity has a nominated Complaints officer, who also acts as a main point of contact with the Charity Commission as necessary. The Complaints officer will work with the person who made a complaint and the staff member involved with the aim of ensuring that the situation is resolved promptly and to the satisfaction of all parties. On occasion this may require involvement from the line manager of person involved or the manager responsible for the area.

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring that complaints about employees and services are handled appropriately. They are supported in this role by the Chair of Trustees.

Process overview

Our complaints process supports a quick and satisfactory solution. To ensure this, the Charity aims to:

- make making a complaint an easy process, taking into consideration different ways of preferred communication.
- treat complainants promptly, politely, and, where appropriate, confidentially.
- investigate the complaint fully and impartially; respond to the complainant within a reasonable timescale.
- provide clear information and support both to the complainant and to any staff member that is the subject of a complaint; and
- provide details on escalating the process should the complaint not be resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

Complaints Procedure

1. Making a complaint

Making a complaint is simple and you can contact us in whichever way is more convenient for you:

- **By phone:** please call on **0191 4897575 (option 1)**, Monday to Friday from 9am to 8pm. Outside of these hours you can always leave us a message and a contact number, and someone will return your call.
- **By email:** please e-mail customer.service@clegwellandhartleyburnch.org.uk
- **By post:** Clegwell & Hartleyburn (CIO), Mountbatten Avenue. Hebburn. Tyne and Wear. NE31 2QP.

Please include your name, address, and contact telephone number in your email or letter so that we can get back in touch with you easily.

2. Complaint details

To ensure we deal with your complaint promptly and accurately we need to know:

- Exactly what the problem is and how it has occurred – give as much information as possible
- How it has affected you
- What you consider should be done to put the matter right
-

3. Procedure

Stage One – Complaint

We will acknowledge your complaint within five working days of receipt. We will record your complaint and between us we can agree on the best way and time to get back in contact with you.

Stage Two – Investigation

We endeavour to respond fully and conclusively to all complaints within 10 working days of our acknowledgement; if we think it will take longer, we will let you know. The Complaints officer will lead the investigation and ensure that all complaints are dealt with impartially and promptly. If the complaint is about the Complaints officer, the investigation will be led by the Facilities Manager.

Stage Three – Appeal

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation you may seek an appeal to the Chief Executive. Letters/emails of appeal must be received within 10 working days from the date on the letter/email notifying you of the outcome of the investigation (these will always be sent by first class post or email).

Escalation

We aim to resolve your complaint in an honest, open, and satisfactory way. However, if after going through all the stages of our Complaints Procedure above you do not feel completely satisfied by our response then you can contact the following agencies:

Fundraising Regulator

Fundraising Regulator, 2nd floor, CAN Mezzanine Building, 49-51 East Road, London, N1 6AH

fundraisingregulator.org.uk

0300 999 3407

enquiries@fundraisingregulator.org.uk

Information Commissioner's Office

Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF

Tel: 0303 123 1113

<https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>

The Charity Commission

The Charity Commission, PO Box 1227, Liverpool L69 3UG

Tel: 0845 3000 218

Situations where we may not respond to a complaint

On very rare occasions we may choose not to respond to a complaint. These include:

- When a complaint is about something that Clegwell & Hartleyburn (CIO) has no direct connection to. We may choose to reply to clear our name, but we are not obliged to.
- When someone unreasonably pursues a complaint that we have already responded to. They will be given escalation points, but we may choose not to reply again – we will always inform the complainant of our decision to do this.
- When a complainant is being obviously abusive, prejudiced, or offensive in their manner.
- When a complainant is harassing a staff member.
- When a complaint is incoherent or illegible.
- When a complaint has clearly been sent to us and numerous other organisations as part of a bulk mailing or email. In this instance we can choose whether it is necessary for us to reply or not.

When a complaint is made anonymously, we cannot respond to the complainant, but we will investigate the complaint and use the information to improve in any way that we can.

Record keeping

The Charity will keep a record of each complaint and outcomes for two years from the date of the complaint.

April 2022