



Kent Community Foundation

Complaints policy

1. Introduction

This Policy relates to any aspect of the operation of the Foundation. It can be used by any person or body who feels dissatisfied with the way they have been treated, or their case has been dealt with. This applies whether the concerns or complaint is about any actions by a member of staff of the Foundation, by a Trustee, a Committee or Panel of the Foundation, or a volunteer who is representing or acting on behalf of the Foundation in some other capacity. It applies whether the concerns relate to an application for grant assistance from the Foundation's own funds or any of the other Funds which are administered by the Foundation.

2. General advice about complaining

- 2.1 Kent Community Foundation is committed to providing a high standard of customer service. The Foundation – staff and trustees - welcomes constructive comments and recommendations about our services and will respond openly to complaints about the organisation.
- 2.2 If you are dissatisfied with the service you have received from Kent Community Foundation we hope that in the first instance you would feel it appropriate to speak about the problem with the member of staff of the Foundation who is involved with the particular matter, or with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). It is hoped that this would lead to a resolution of the issues in an informal way. If that is not successful, however, or if you are not prepared to follow that course of action for whatever reason, then the following information is provided to guide you on how you can take the matter forward in other more formal ways.
- 2.3 However, we hope that most complaints can be settled quickly and as close to the source of the problem as possible. It is for that reason that we ask that all initial complaints are made within 2 weeks of any problem arising if possible.

3. How to make a more formal complaint

- 3.1 Please put formal complaints in writing to the CEO. We ask formal complaints to be in writing to reduce any misunderstandings about what the actual details of the complaint are. If you would require some help in doing that, please do not hesitate to ask for such help. Every effort will be made to provide assistance in an appropriate way.
- 3.2 Should the complaint involve the CEO, and a complainant feels unable to address it to them in the first instance, the complainant may write to the Chairman of the Board of

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Trustees of Kent Community Foundation (referred to below as “the Chairman”). The Chairman’s contact details are given below.

- 3.3 Should the complaint be about the Chairman or any of his or her actions it should be addressed to the CEO who will convene a meeting of other Trustees of the Foundation.
- 3.4 Letters will be acknowledged by the CEO, normally within 5 working days of receipt.
- 3.5 The CEO, or Chairman if he/she is responsible for responding, will investigate the circumstances outlined in the complaint, and will reach a decision regarding it. A response in writing will be sent to the complainant – normally within 28 working days of first receiving the letter of complaint. A record of the complaint will be prepared and maintained at the Foundation Office.
- 3.6 If a complainant is not satisfied with the response and decision, the complainant may write to the Chairman outlining their grounds for appealing the decision. If the original complaint involved the Chairman, please write to the Board of Trustees.
- 3.7 The Chairman (or the other Trustee) will acknowledge receipt of the letter in writing and within 8 working days where possible.
- 3.8 Where the complainant has appealed for a review of the response to the complaint, an investigation will be carried out by the Chairman or another Member of the Board of Trustees acting on the Board’s behalf.
- 3.9 The aim will be to produce a decision and response, which is final, and to notify the complainant of that decision within 28 working days of receiving the letter of appeal, together with a clear explanation of the decision and the reason(s) for reaching it.
- 3.10 Where a complaint relates to a decision regarding the award (or non-award) of a grant, the decision may be initially reviewed by the relevant fund advisory panel, and may need to be further reviewed by a Complaints Panel consisting of the Chairman of the relevant Advisory Panel. (if appropriate), the Chairman of the Foundation’s Board of Trustees and an independent person.
- 3.11 All formal complaints received, together with a copy of the response to the complainant, will be notified to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees in any event.
- 3.12 Complaints will be monitored, the significance of any lessons to be learnt from them carefully considered, and information from this will be fed in to the planning process as appropriate.

4. Contact information

- 4.1 If you wish to pursue your complaint formally, it may help to know the following details of the key people at the Foundation.

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- **Chief Executive:** Josephine McCartney, Kent Community Foundation, Evegate Park Barn, Smeeth, Ashford Kent TN25 6SX.
- **Chairman:** Tim Bull, Address as above
- **Telephone:** 01303 814500
- **Web site address:** www.kentcf.org.uk **Email:** admin@kentcf.org.uk

5. Review

The effectiveness of this policy and associated arrangements will be reviewed annually under the direct supervision of the Chief Executive Officer.