



## COMPLAINTS

The Community Foundation serving Tyne & Wear and Northumberland aims to provide a consistently high level of service. A complaint arises when an applicant, grantee, donor, other person or organisation is dissatisfied with the service they have received from us or is concerned about our fundraising practices.

We hope that in the first instance any concerns can be dealt with informally with the member of staff concerned, or with a member of the executive staff. But, if an issue cannot be resolved informally, the process for making a formal complaint is below.

Please note, decisions made by the Community Foundation's Board on grant awards are final and not subject to any appeal. However, concerns may be raised, or complaints made, if someone believes the Foundation has not properly followed its grant-making policy.

### How to make a complaint

1. We encourage anyone who has a concern or complaint about any aspect of our service to raise this in the first instance informally with the member of staff concerned or with a member of the Executive. [www.communityfoundation.org.uk/our-people/](http://www.communityfoundation.org.uk/our-people/)
2. If your complaint cannot be dealt with informally, you can raise a formal complaint. Formal complaints should be put in writing and addressed to: Chief Executive, Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland, Philanthropy House, Woodbine Road, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1DD. Or you can email to [complaints@communityfoundation.org.uk](mailto:complaints@communityfoundation.org.uk) . If you need help with submitting a complaint, you can ask someone external to help you with this or, if necessary, we will make someone available to help you. To do this, call our office on 0191 222 0945 and say that you require help to prepare a written formal complaint.
3. To help us deal with your complaint appropriately please state in your letter/email:
  - what the complaint is about;
  - the member(s) of staff or any other people involved;
  - when the issue you are complaining about occurred and whether it is still happening;
  - whether you have spoken to anyone at the Community Foundation informally about your concerns before making a complaint.
4. The Chief Executive will acknowledge the complaint normally within 5 working days of receiving it (though this may be longer if they are away on leave). The acknowledgement will set out who is dealing with your complaint and when you should expect a fuller response.

5. The person responsible will investigate the complaint and may contact you for more supporting information or evidence.
6. We will usually respond within 28 days of receiving the complaint. We will inform you of any action taken or recommendations for further action. If it is not possible to provide a full response within this time, for example if we need more time to gather information, we will tell you and give an interim response, including details of action still to take.
7. In exceptional circumstances, if you are not satisfied with the response, you may write to appeal to the Chair of the Board of Trustees. If your complaint involves the Chief Executive, you should write to the Chair of the Board in the first instance.
8. The Chair will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 10 working days where possible.
9. In the case of an appeal to the Chair for a review of the response from the Chief Executive, or where the complaint involves the Chief Executive, an investigation will be carried out by the Chair or another member of the Board acting on their behalf.
10. The Chair will aim to notify you of their decision, which is final, and the reasons for it within 28 days of receiving your complaint.
11. The Foundation will take complaints seriously and deal with them in line with this policy. However, some complaints may be considered vexatious because they are unreasonable and getting in the way of our considering genuine concerns because of the frequency or nature of the contact from the person complaining. If we decide that a complaint is vexatious, the Chief Executive or the Chair will refer it to the full Board. The Board will decide the best course of action to protect our staff, trustees and other connected parties, and this will be communicated to the complainant in writing.
12. If you are not satisfied with our decision on your complaint, we are regulated by the Charity Commission for England and Wales and further information about how you can complain can be found at [www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity](http://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity) . Any complaints about fundraising can be reported to the Fundraising Regulator at [www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/complaints](http://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/complaints).
13. Foundation trustees, staff and volunteers may also raise concerns under the Foundation's separate Whistle-blowing policy.

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