

1. Introduction

- 1.1 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 to concerns or complaints about any action by a member of staff of the Foundation, a Trustee, a donor, a Panel Member of the Foundation, or a volunteer who is representing or acting on behalf of the Foundation in some other capacity. It also applies to concerns relating to an application for grant assistance from the Foundation.
- 1.2 Complaints by members of staff will go through the Staff Grievance Procedure.

2. General advice about complaining

- 2.1 The 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 the 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. It is hoped that this would lead to a resolution of the issues in the most 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 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.

3. How to make a more formal complaint

- 3.1 In the first instance, a complaint should be made to the Chief Executive of the Foundation in person or by email or telephone. However, we do expect all 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 Every endeavour will be made to reach a satisfactory outcome within 7 working days. A confidential record of the complaint will be prepared and maintained at the Foundation's office.
- 3.3 If at the stage of the initial contact, the nature of the concern turns out clearly to be a complaint and it cannot be resolved informally at that time, or the complaint is believed to be serious or complex, it should be sent in writing and addressed to the Chief Executive.
- 3.4 Letters will be acknowledged by the Chief Executive, normally within 5 working days of receipt.
- 3.5 The Chief Executive 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.
- 3.6 If a complainant is not satisfied with the response and decision (or, because the complaint involves the Chief Executive, 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 the Foundation (referred to below as “the Chairman”). The Chairman's contact details are given below.
- 3.7 Should the complaint be about the Chairman or any of his or her actions a complaint should be addressed to the Chief Executive who will convene a committee of other Trustees of the Foundation.
- 3.8 The Chairman (or the other Trustees) will acknowledge receipt of the letter in writing and within 8 working days where possible.
- 3.9 Where the complainant has appealed to the Chairman for a review of the response to the complaint (or where the complaint involves the Chairman himself or herself) an investigation will be carried out by the Chairman or another Trustee acting on the Board's behalf.
- 3.10 The aim will be to produce a decision and response, which is final, and to notify the complainant of that decision within 15 working days of receiving the letter of complaint, together with a clear explanation of the decision and the reason(s) for reaching it.
- 3.11 Where a complaint relates to a decision regarding the award (or non-award) of a grant, the decision may need to be reviewed by a Complaints Panel consisting of the Chairman of the Foundation's Board, the Lead Trustee (Grants) and an independent person.
- 3.12 All complaints received, together with a copy of the response to the complainant, will be notified to the Chairman of the Board in any event.
- 3.13 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.

- **Chairman:** Mr Steve Hindley CBE, Devon Community Foundation, The Factory, Leat Street, Tiverton EX16 5LL.
- **Chief Executive:** Martha Wilkinson, Devon Community Foundation, The Factory, Leat Street, Tiverton EX16 5LL
- **Telephone:** 01884 235887
- **Web site address:** www.devoncf.com
- **Email:** martha@devoncf.com

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