



Complaints Policy and Procedures – CPRE Sussex

CPRE Sussex views complaints as a chance to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the complaint, but also as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future.

CPRE Sussex's policy is:

- to provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint;
- to publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint;
- to make sure everyone at CPRE Sussex knows what to do if a complaint is received;
- to make sure that complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way;
- to make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired and procedures amended;
- to gather information which helps us to improve what we do.

Definition of a complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of CPRE Sussex's administration, a staff member, process or service – resulting from CPRE Sussex's failure to meet the individual's expectations.

This policy does not cover complaints from staff, who should refer to CPRE Sussex's Grievance Procedures.

Confidentiality

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following all relevant data protection requirements.

Complaints Handling Procedure

We want to make it easy for you to contact us and to provide feedback or make a complaint. These are the ways you can get in touch with us:

1. Face to face: if you are dealing with a member of staff or freelancer and you wish to complain, then please speak to them directly. It may be possible to resolve the issue immediately. However, if that is not possible, then he/she will record the details of your complaint and will send it through to CPRE Sussex's Director.
2. You can call us on 01825 890 975 and your complaint will be documented.
3. You can email us on info@cpresussex.org.uk



4. You can write to us at our office at Brownings Farm, Blackboys, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 5HG.

In all instances where a complaint is made using the above means, we will contact you within 48 hours of receiving the complaint. If you provide us with a telephone number and/or email address we will contact you by either of those means to discuss the matter further and to officially record all necessary details. Hopefully we can resolve the matter as soon as possible. However, if the issue is more complex and an investigation is required, we will do the following:

The person who receives a complaint will:

- record full details of your complaint;
- record the complaint in our Complaints Register;
- note down the relationship of the complainant to CPRE Sussex, e.g. donor, sponsor, beneficiary, service user;
- take all necessary steps to investigate the matter;
- contact you again within 15 working days of receiving the complaint to advise you of our findings or to give you an update on progress;
- continue to keep you informed until the matter is resolved to your satisfaction or until all appropriate steps (in the CPRE Sussex's reasonable opinion) to resolve the matter have been taken.

CPRE Sussex's Director will handle all complaints and if necessary will escalate these to the Board of Trustees depending on the complexity or seriousness of the issue

Resolving Complaints

Our commitment to you is to address each complaint in a sensitive, fair, transparent, equitable, professional and unbiased manner through the complaints handling process.

We will operate at all times from the premise that any person is entitled to express his or her views on our services and that those views should be taken seriously where this is warranted. We will not, however, tolerate any abusive or discriminatory language or behaviour towards any of our staff, and may decline to investigate a complaint further in such circumstances.

Stage 1

In many cases a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate. Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to the Director within five working days.

On receiving the complaint, if not already resolved, the Director may if s/he so wishes, delegate an appropriate person to investigate it and to take appropriate action. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.



Complaints should be acknowledged to you by the person handling the complaint within five working days. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaints procedure should be attached. Ideally you should receive a definitive reply within 15 working days. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to you should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and (subject to the terms of CPRE Sussex's Privacy Policy and Staff Privacy Policy) any action taken as a result of the complaint.

Stage 2

If you feel that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage 1, you can request that the complaint is reviewed at Board level.

At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the Board of Trustees. This request for Board level review should be acknowledged within five working days of receiving it. The acknowledgement should say which of the Trustees will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply.

The responsible Trustee will review the paperwork of the case and speak to the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage 1, who will be kept informed of what is happening.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond. Ideally you should receive a definitive reply within a month. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given. Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to you should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint. The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the Board decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

Possible External Stage

As CPRE Sussex is a registered charity, you can complain to the Charity Commission Regulator at any stage. Information about the kind of complaints the Charity Commission can involve itself in can be found on their website at: www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity

If your complaint is about a fundraising matter, you are entitled to take your complaint directly to the Fundraising Regulator at www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk or in writing to: Fundraising Regulator, 2nd floor, CAN Mezzanine Building, 49-51 East Road, London N1 6AH. Telephone: 0300 999 3407 or email: enquiries@fundraisingregulator.org.uk



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Review of this Policy and Complaints Received

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees every 2 years and all complaints received (and compliments) will be brought before the Board for review at its regular Trustee meetings. Through this process of regular review, we aim to improve our services to you and to ensure that any lessons learned are implemented within the organisation.

Variation of the Complaints Procedure

The Board may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about a Chair or Trustee should not also have the Chair and/or Trustee involved as a person leading a Stage 2 review.