

Norwood Community Group Services



EXTERNAL COMPLAINTS POLICY

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1. Introduction

It is Norwood Community Group Services (NCGS) policy to strive to achieve the highest possible standard in our charitable and business work, but we also have to realise that, on occasions, things may go wrong. If this happens, we would prefer to hear about it sooner rather than later in order that we may take steps to rectify the situation. Making a complaint is time consuming and can seem daunting; so if you complain, we undertake to examine your case quickly and improve our service to you if this is feasible.

This policy provides a mechanism to deal with external formal complaints and is not designed to cover internal grievances and complaints for which there are separate procedures.

2. About the Complaints Policy

NCGS has a duty to act legally, fairly, responsibly and reasonably. We must be able to demonstrate as a charity receiving public money, fees from our customers and other donations from supporters, that we follow these principles in our activities. This complaints policy is a part of demonstrating our intent by having an open and public procedure to deal with complaints from individuals or organisations.

3. How we define a complaint

An external complaint in this context can be defined as a formal expression of dissatisfaction with either the behaviour of NCGS personnel, the enactment of NCGS policies or the delivery of services to customers. (If you complain about an issue that we have no direct control over; we will endeavour to help you find a channel through which to direct your complaint.

4. Making a complaint - stage 1

It is our policy to resolve complaints in as short a time as we can. In the event that you wish to make a complaint we would ask that you contact the NCGS member of staff that you normally liaise with as soon as possible. This can also be by telephone, e-mail or letter. We would like to know what the problem is, why or how it occurred and what you would like us to do to rectify it. We will then attempt, if practicable, to find a solution which is mutually agreeable to both parties.

5. Making a complaint – Stage 2

If you are unsatisfied with the answer that you receive at local level, please ask to have your complaint referred to the NCGS HQ. If your original complaint was verbal you will need at this stage to make a formal written complaint to the Complaints Manager whose address can be found at the end of this document. This will be passed to the Charities Director within whose area of responsibility your complaint falls for investigation. We will write to you acknowledging your complaint within 14 days of receipt and telling you who is dealing with it. We will let you know the outcome of any investigation into your complaint within 30 days or inform you of the reason why it is taking longer.

6. Making a complaint – Stage 3

If you are still dissatisfied with our response, you can ask for your complaint to be reviewed by the Chief Executive of Norwood Community Group Services. The Chief Executive (or his deputy if he is away) will examine all the facts that you have submitted and the response that you have received to date. He will endeavour to write to you with his answer within 7 days of receipt of your request

or to explain why the process is taking longer. The Chief Executive's response will normally signal the end of the complaints process. If the complaint is not, at this stage, concluded to your satisfaction, the Chief Executive may refer the matter to appeal with the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

7. If the nature of your complaint means that you are unwilling to take the issue up locally, and you wish to make a complaint direct to NCG HQ, please send correspondence to:

The Norwood Community Group Services

The Old Library Centre
14-16 Knights Hill
West Norwood
London
SE27 0HY