

# Complaints Policy and Procedure



**Policy written: February 2022**

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**Date of next review: February 2023**

Signed off by: Charlie Sackey

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Date: 20.03.22

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Role: Trustee

## 1. Introduction

- a. Carney's Community is a charity working with disadvantaged and disengaged young people to support them to be the best they can be, engaging them through boxing and other activities, mentoring support is then provided, with the aim to reduce offending, re-offending, and anti-social behaviour, whilst improving social mobility and community cohesion.
- b. We have developed a Complaints Policy and Procedure that explains our approach to receiving complaints.
- c. A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction with our approach or outputs; whether justified or not; with the charity, with a member of the team, or with a trustee, that relates to Carney's Community's work and that requires a formal response.

## 2. Policy aims and objectives

- a. Carney's Community aims to resolve complaints quickly, fairly and effectively. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve what we do, is by listening and responding to the views of our participants, their families, professionals who we work alongside, and our supporters and in particular responding positively to complaints, and by putting mistakes right.
- b. We aim to ensure that:
  - making a complaint is as easy as possible;
  - complaints are dealt with fairly and in a timely manner;
  - we treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction which calls for a prompt response;
  - we deal with it promptly, politely and when appropriate confidentially;
  - we will respond in the correct way – for example, with an explanation, or an apology or information on any action taken;
  - and we will learn from complaints and use them to improve how we work together.
- c. Carney's Community recognises that many concerns raised will be informal, and we aim to deal with these quickly. In the first instance we would expect any complaint to be raised directly with the member of staff concerned. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure will be followed.

### Purpose

- d. The Carney's Community complaint procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.
- e. Our responsibility will be to:
  - acknowledge the formal complaint in writing;
  - respond within a stated period of time;
  - deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint;
  - and take appropriate action if required;
- f. The complainant's responsibility is to:
  - raise their concerns promptly, and at the latest within six months of the query or incident the concern relates to;
  - raise issues directly with the person concerned and if their concerns cannot be resolved satisfactorily informally, then to follow the formal complaints procedure as detailed;
  - explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date;
  - allow Carney's Community a reasonable amount of time to deal with the matter as detailed in the formal complaints procedure;

- and recognise that some circumstances may be beyond our control.

### 3. Confidentiality

- a. All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements. The circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality. Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

### 4. Principles of the Complaints Policy

- a. The Carney's Community Complaints policy is based on the principle of a three stage process (as detailed in the Complaints Procedure).
- b. The Complaints Policy will apply to everything we do, including sessions in our centre and at other venues, outreach and fundraising.
- c. If at any time during the investigation of a complaint matters arise that warrant investigation under disciplinary proceedings, or through a criminal investigation, the complaints procedure will be suspended until those investigations are concluded.
- d. Carney's Community may, at any stage of the formal complaints procedure, review a complaint and give a decision, without a formal investigation, where the Chair or trustees deem the complaint to be deliberately repetitive or vexatious. Examples of such complaints are unsubstantiated or repetitive complaints against an individual or area of work, or where a complaint has previously been investigated and appropriate action taken.
- e. When appealing against a previous decision, the complainant will be asked to state why they are dissatisfied with how their complaint was handled.

### 5. Formal Complaints Procedure

#### 1. Stage 1

1.1. If you are unable to resolve the issue informally and wish to make a formal complaint you should write a formal letter or email of complaint to the manager concerned. In your letter or email you should set out the details of your complaint, the consequences for you as a result, and the remedy you are seeking.

1.2. You can expect the complaint to be acknowledged within 7 days of receipt. You should get a response and an explanation within 14 days.

1.3. The written response will also notify the complainant that they have 28 days to ask for a review of the complaint and response (stage 2) if they're dissatisfied with the response they receive.

1.4. If you're unsure which manager to write to, your complaint should be addressed to the CEO, marked "private and confidential" to the following email address: [George@carneyscommunity.org](mailto:George@carneyscommunity.org).

#### 2. Stage 2

2.1. If you are dissatisfied with the stage 1 response to your complaint then you can write to the CEO stating the reason for your dissatisfaction with the outcome and ask for your complaint and the response to be given further consideration. You can expect your request to be acknowledged within 7 days of receipt, describing the process the complaint investigation will follow.

2.2. A stage 2 complaint will be co-ordinated by the CEO, or another manager, who will respond within 14 days with a full written response giving details of any right of appeal.

2.3 If a definitive reply can't be supplied in this time, for example if an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report will be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

2.4. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage 1. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they will be informed and given another opportunity to respond.

2.5. Our aim is to resolve all matters as quickly as possible. However, if a matter requires more detailed investigation, you will receive an interim response describing what is being done to deal with the matter, and when a full reply can be expected and from whom.

### 3. Stage 3

3.1. If you are not satisfied with the response from stage 2, you then have the option of asking for a review of your complaint in writing to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, via the email address below, stating the reason why you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your complaint. You should do this within 10 days of receiving the written response from stage 2. Email:

[CGibsonQC@hendersonchambers.co.uk](mailto:CGibsonQC@hendersonchambers.co.uk).

3.2. The Chair of the Board of Trustees will respond normally within 14 days to let you know what action will be taken to investigate the complaint, and the expected timescale of the investigation.

3.3. The relevant history of the complaint will be made available to the Trustee Chair so that a full investigation can be carried out. That investigation may include interviews with the complainant, any staff involved, and any witnesses and will also include documentation evidence where appropriate.

3.4. The outcome of the investigation will be communicated to the complainant in writing with details of any action taken and a time-scale for implementation (if applicable and appropriate). All appropriate team members will also receive a copy of the report, as will the Trustees.

3.5. Should a complainant still be dissatisfied with the outcome, they should be informed of their right to seek legal redress or to make representation to any appropriate statutory body.

3.6. Team members concerned should report back to the Chair within 7 days of their receipt of the outcome of the Stage 3 complaint, explaining how they have implemented any recommendations.

## 6. Monitoring and review

- a. This policy will be reviewed annually to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law or good practice. Any questions about the policy should be directed to the COO, Ali Milton-Doyle.