

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Action East Devon (AED) is committed to providing a high-quality service to everyone using any of our projects and services, and any member of the public who has concerns about any of our activities. It is our policy to welcome complaints and look upon them as an opportunity to learn, adapt, improve and provide better services.

We take all complaints seriously and aim to ensure that they are dealt with fully, properly and in a timely manner to resolve them. Underpinning our approach to dealing with complaints is our commitment to treating everyone fairly and in a non-judgmental way. In dealing with complaints our goals are:

- To deal with complaints fairly, efficiently and effectively.
- To ensure that all complaints are handled in a consistent manner.
- To increase customer satisfaction.
- To use complaints constructively in the planning and improvement of all services.

Procedure

The following procedure has been developed to ensure that any complaint is properly heard. You have a right to support from an independent advocate or friend, but not a legal representative, at any point during this process.

Step One

Your continued goodwill is valued by us, and we would expect to resolve any day-to-day difficulties or complaints informally and as quickly as possible. The first stage will be for you to try to resolve the problem informally with a member of staff. If you would prefer not to speak to someone who was involved in the situation, then go straight to step two.

Step Two

If your complaint is not resolved informally, the next step is to inform the Charity Manager of the complaint either in person, by telephone, email or letter. If you have a complaint involving the Charity Manager, please email the Chair of the Board of Trustees - chris.botham@actioneastdevon.org.uk.

Any written communication should be marked 'Private and Confidential'. If you send the complaint by email, please put 'Confidential for attention of Charity Manager' in the subject line. Contact details can be found at the end of this document.

The Charity Manager (or Chair, if your complaint relates to the Charity Manager) will:

- investigate your complaint by talking to you and other people involved in the situation
- provide you with a full written report, copying it to the Chair of Action East Devon.

You will receive an acknowledgment of your communication within 5 working days followed by a response to your complaint within the following 10 working days.

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If you are not satisfied with our response, go to step three.

Step Three

If you are not satisfied that your complaint has been dealt with properly or wish to appeal the outcome, you may put your case to a panel of two Board of Trustee members. The panel will hear your case and that of the internal investigation. The panel will then meet in private to consider all the information presented and decide on the outcome of your appeal. If the appeal is found to be justified, the panel will agree any necessary further action with you. The decision of the appeal panel is final, and no further appeal is possible.

We aim to convene the Appeal Panel within 15 working days of your request and will write to you with the outcome of your appeal within 10 working days of the meeting.

Review

The Charity Manager (or Chair) will keep the Board of Trustees informed of the number and nature of complaints, and the outcomes. They will report to the Board on this at least annually.

Contact details:

If you have a complaint, please:

- Telephone 01404 549045
- Email molly.mayfield@actioneastdevon.org.uk
- Write to The Charity Manager, Action East Devon, The Station, Mill Street, Ottery St Mary, EX11 1AH

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