

## **Complaints Policy and Procedure**

All members should aim to be supportive of other members of CEFC. CEFC is an organisation that exists to make music and it draws together many very different people with diverse backgrounds, viewpoints and needs. All of them should be treated with respect and fairness regardless of the circumstances. We should also bear in mind that CEFC is run by unpaid volunteers. We should be careful not to make unreasonable demands on their time and skills, and should remember to show appreciation for the work that is done by so many of CEFC's members.

### **Policy Statement**

This policy outlines how we deal with feedback, complaints and compliments to ensure that any lessons learnt are taken on board and communicated effectively across the organisation.

Crouch End Festival Chorus (CEFC) believes complaints, both formal and informal, can be valued feedback that can help us improve. The organisation is run entirely by volunteers who will aim to listen and learn from mistakes, just as we listen and value all feedback.

Members, artistes, audiences and visitors may complain if they are not satisfied with the way they have been treated by CEFC, its members, or organisations and individuals engaged by CEFC, or if they consider actions of these organisations and individuals to have been inappropriate. Information on how to complain is available at the end of this policy.

We are mindful that people may find it difficult and challenging to speak out or voice their concerns so we aim to raise and resolve complaints in a swift and responsive manner that does not create undue formality or create a barrier to people.

### **Feedback**

We encourage feedback, suggestions and compliments about CEFC. We will try to resolve any complaints in a direct and immediate way and to learn from any mistakes made. We will maintain confidentiality for complainants.

If a resolution cannot be found informally (or the matter is too serious to be dealt with informally) CEFC will assist the complainant to use the formal procedure. Complainants will be kept informed about the progress of any investigation, and will receive a response within the agreed time limits, usually in writing.

Where a complaint concerns a chorus member it will be dealt with by a member of the committee. Where a complaint concerns a committee member or a trustee, it will be dealt with by a non-conflicted trustee.

### **Complaints Procedure**

#### **Informal complaints**

CEFC welcomes the opportunity to resolve any problems at the time they occur. If someone experiences an issue they should notify a member of the committee or voice rep as soon as possible. If the complainant is not a member of CEFC they should ask any member of the choir to be directed to a member of the committee or trustees. The complaint and any action taken should be recorded by the person dealing with the complaint, noting the date and who is aware.

#### **Formal complaints**

## *CEFC Complaints Policy and Procedure 2025*

Complaints that need more time to investigate or which are more serious in nature will follow our formal complaints procedure. We will acknowledge the issue promptly and will keep the complainant up to date with progress. The process for a formal complaint is set out overleaf.

Formal complaints should be addressed to [feedback@cefc.org.uk](mailto:feedback@cefc.org.uk) and the most appropriate officer will respond and seek to resolve the issue.

### **CEFC Formal complaints process**

A formal complaint is one which cannot be resolved informally or which is too serious to resolve informally. Relevant policies include EDI Policy, Rules of Membership, Harassment and Bullying Policy and Disciplinary Policy.

#### **Stage 1**

If someone wants to make a *formal* complaint then they should explain their complaint to a member of the committee (or if it concerns a member of the committee they should talk to a trustee). If not a member please email [feedback@cefc.org.uk](mailto:feedback@cefc.org.uk) or approach a member of the choir to find an officer. A formal complaint should be written down, either by the complainant or by the person to whom the complaint is brought.

The Chair of Committee (or Chair of Trustees if the complaint is about a committee member) will appoint a person to investigate the complaint; normally a committee member. The person appointed to investigate the complaint will seek to resolve the complaint honestly, fairly and quickly. CEFC will provide the complainant with a reply within 20 working days, hoping to resolve any concerns at this stage. If the complaint is complex and likely to take longer to resolve then this should be communicated to the complainant with the reasons and a timescale clearly stated. If CEFC or a member of the chorus is wrong we will apologise and, if possible, put the matter right.

At completion of Stage 1 the investigator will send a record of the complaint and any action taken to the Trustees. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, s/he has the option to ask for the complaint to be investigated further (Stage 2).

#### **Stage 2**

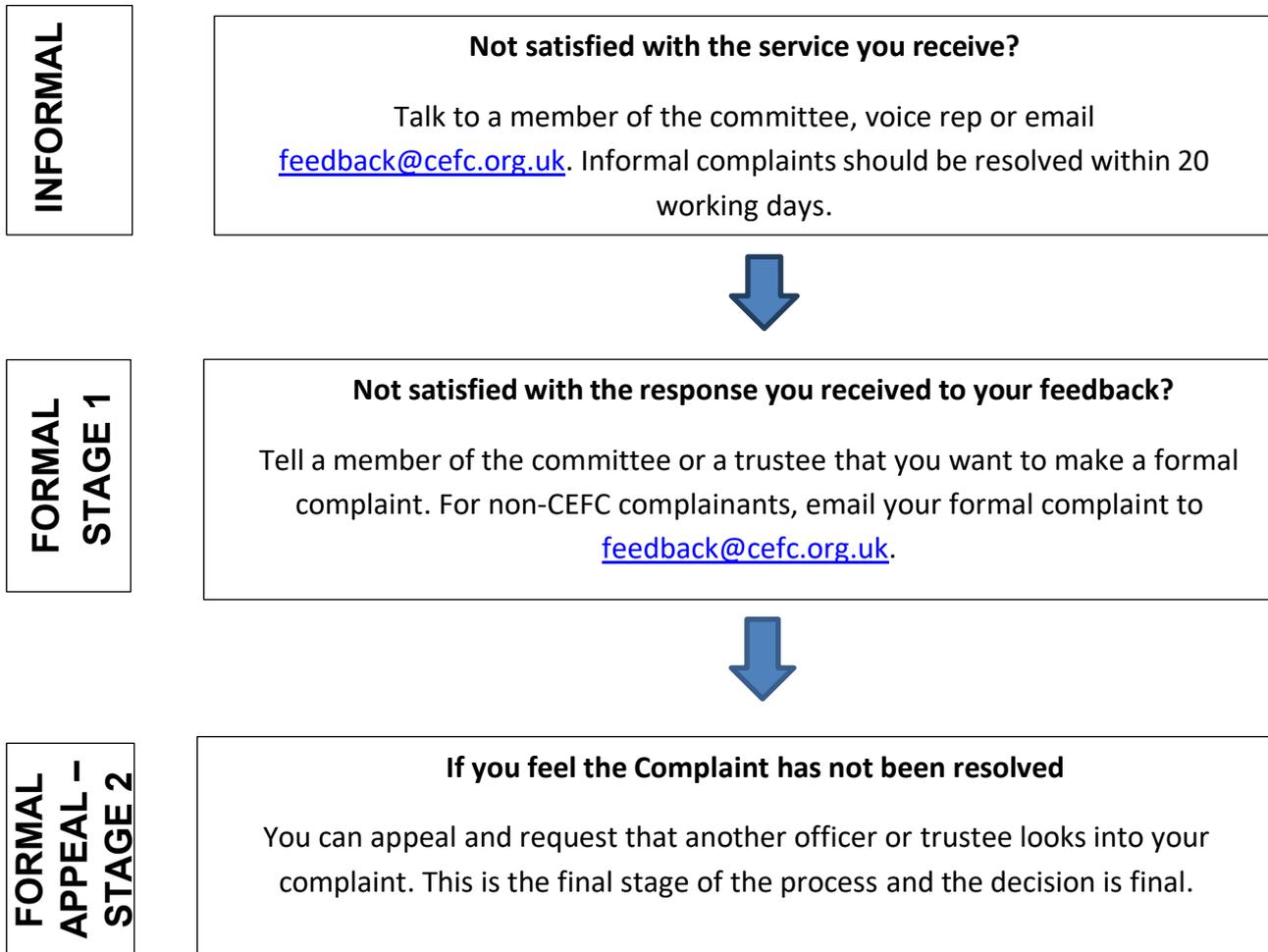
If a complainant is not satisfied with the response at Stage 1, s/he should explain why and ask for a further review. The review process (or stage 2) will be conducted by the Chair of Trustees or another trustee appointed to do so. The complaint and processes completed to date will be provided to the next most appropriate officer or trustee. The decision of the person investigating and handling the complaint will be informed by the nature of the complaint and in consultation with the trustees. The person receiving and responding to the complaint at this stage will review the information provided in Stage 1. They will keep the complainant informed about the progress of the investigation.

The response to the complainant should be made within 20 working days unless this is not possible due to the nature of the complaint. Once the Stage 2 review has taken place, and CEFC has provided a written response to the complainant, it should be made clear that CEFC's procedure has been exhausted and the organisation is unable to enter into further correspondence about the matter in question.

Responses to complaints should be made in writing for all formal stages of the process. The following should be included:

- a summary of the complaint
- a summary of the outcome of the internal investigation
- whether CEFC acknowledges that it has been at fault in some way
- an apology or, if an apology would not be appropriate, an expression of regret that a complaint was necessary to raise an issue, whether the complaint was justified or not
- any next steps to resolve or settle the complaint and the timescale for this; and
- in the case of a Stage 2 letter a clear statement that the letter is a final response.

## The Complaints Procedure at a Glance



## *CEFC Complaints Policy and Procedure 2025*

### *Policy review*

This policy is reviewed every three years by the CEFC trustees, to inform three-year planning and budgeting work, and additionally if the trustees agree that circumstances require it.

<b>Policy title</b>	<b>Complaints Policy</b>
Date adopted	February 2025
Frequency of review	3 years
Last reviewed	February 2025
Last approved by trustees	February 2025
Next review due by or before	February 2028

*Crouch End Festival Chorus is a registered charity number 1110790, limited by guarantee and registered in England number 05052052.*

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