



## COMPLAINTS POLICY

This policy, along with its procedures and associated documents, has been reviewed and will continue to be reviewed every 3 years. Should any major incident, significant organisational changes or updates in legislation arise, the review process will be accelerated to ensure ongoing relevance and compliance.

**Latest review:** March 2025

**Date of next review:** March 2028

Reviewed and approved by:

John Relish – Chair of Trustees

Date: [17/03/2025]

Haydn Ames – Trustee

Date: [18/03/2025]

Norman Parselle – Chief Executive Officer

Date: [18/03/2025]

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## 1. Introduction

The policy sets out the steps County in the Community (CitC) will take when we receive a complaint from participants, an organisation or member of the public. It does not address complaints made by staff or volunteers (dealt with through grievance and disciplinary procedures) nor job applicants (recruitment procedure).

The Trustees exist to ensure that CitC is accountable to its participants. Therefore, the Trustees investigate all complaints and, if the complaint is upheld, redress will be made.

## 2. Complaints

CitC, whilst treating all complaints seriously, expects complainants to provide specific details of their complaint in all cases and in writing where this is possible.

### 2.1 Exclusions

Complaints from staff, that is those who are employed full time, part time or as volunteers are not to be dealt with in this policy. They should be dealt with under the CitC Grievance Procedure (CitC - Employee Handbook).

### 2.2 Complaints about the behaviours of CitC Staff, Volunteers and Partners

These will be sent to the Chief Executive Officer of CitC for investigation, who may conduct any enquiries or delegate them to an appropriate person. The purpose of an enquiry will be first to make a determination as to the seriousness of the complaint; secondly to determine the veracity of complaint; and thirdly to make recommendations with regard to the resolution of any issues that gave rise to the complaint and if necessary, refer it to the Charity Commission.

The aim of seeking resolution of the issue is to facilitate continued good working relationships. This process may, in exceptional cases, result in the commencement of disciplinary actions or actions to terminate a contract.

In the event that the complaint relates to the Chief Executive Officer of CitC, the matter will be dealt with in the manner outlined above by the Chair of CitC Board of Trustees.

The complainant can expect a written response from CitC outlining the basic findings of the investigation and the actions to be taken. We undertake to make a response within 10 working days. Where it does not prove possible to do this within this time period, we will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and set out timescales for provision of a full and complete response

### 2.3 Complaints about Racism and Discrimination

As recommended by the [MacPherson report](#), CitC considers a racist incident to be "any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person". The effect of racial attacks,

harassment, abuse and discrimination can be particularly stressful and frightening and CitC takes complaints about these extremely seriously. We will therefore make sure:

- a) That such complaints are resolved quickly and transparently. This will be at least within the timescales contained within this policy for other complaints and every effort will be made to deal with them more quickly, in recognition of their inherently distressing nature.
- b) The complainant experiences continuity of service as their complaint is dealt with. The Chief Executive Officer is the nominated officer responsible for coordinating and providing a response to all complaints about racist incidents. The CEO can be contacted by a complainant at any time during the investigation period to monitor the progress of their complaint.

#### **2.4 Complaints about delivery of services by CitC**

Complaints about the delivery of CitC programmes will be subject to the Complaints Policy and Procedures.

#### **2.5 Complaints about the behaviour of Trustees**

These will be sent to the Chair of the CitC Board of Trustees for investigation, who may conduct any enquiries or delegate them to an appropriate person or body. The purpose of an enquiry will be first to make a determination as to the seriousness of the complaint; secondly to determine the veracity of complaint; and thirdly to make recommendations with regard to the resolution of any issues that gave rise to the complaint and if necessary, refer it to the Charity Commission.

The aim of seeking resolution of the issue is to facilitate continued good working relationships. This process may, in exceptional cases, result in the commencement of disciplinary actions or actions to terminate a trusteeship.

In the event that the complaint relates to the Chair the matter will be dealt with in the manner outlined above by a Vice-Chair.

The complainant can expect a written response from CitC outlining the basic findings of the investigation and the actions to be taken.

### **3. Right to Appeal**

Right to appeal if a complainant does not feel that their complaint has been dealt with in a satisfactory manner.

For all appeals in relation to sections 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 above the complainant should address their appeal to the Chief Executive Officer in the first instance. If the appeal relates to a complaint about the Chief Executive Officer, then it will be considered by the Chair of the CitC Board of Trustees.

For all appeals in relation to section 2.5 above the complainant should address their appeal to the Chair in the first instance.

The decision of the Chair/Vice Chair of the CitC Board of Trustees will be deemed to be final in the case of any appeal. Where the complaint does not relate to the Chief Executive Officer or a Trustee then the Chair of the Board may delegate this power of final decision to the Chief Executive Officer. If the Chair of CitC Board of Trustees responds to a complaint in the first instance and the complainant wishes to appeal the decision of the Chair, then an appeals panel consisting of 3 trustees and led by the Vice Chair shall be convened at the earliest opportunity and no later than 10 days from receiving the appeal. The decision of the appeals panel will be final.

#### 4. Recording and Monitoring Complaints

All complaints will be recorded and kept on a secure server, with documents only visible to select members of staff and Trustees. Complaints regarding Safeguarding and Health & Safety concerns will be recorded on the ‘My Concern’ Reporting Platform.

The Chief Executive Officer will make a report once a year to the Senior Management Team summarising the nature of complaints received and how they were resolved.

#### 5. Contact Details

Please send your complaints/concerns in writing to the following person(s);

Phone and Email Contacts	
John Relish Chair of Trustees	Primary Contact Number: (01633) 251246 Email: <a href="mailto:trustees@countyinthecommunity.co.uk">trustees@countyinthecommunity.co.uk</a>
David Greenhaf Vice Chair of Trustees	Primary Contact Number: (01633) 251246 Email: <a href="mailto:trustees@countyinthecommunity.co.uk">trustees@countyinthecommunity.co.uk</a>
Norman Parselle Chief Executive Officer	Primary Contact Number: (01633) 251246 Emergency Contact Number: 07722 147695 Email: <a href="mailto:community@newport-county.co.uk">community@newport-county.co.uk</a>

Postal Address
County in the Community 273a Corporation Road, Newport, NP19 0FD

The [trustees@countyinthecommunity.co.uk](mailto:trustees@countyinthecommunity.co.uk) mailbox and postal mail are monitored by CitC’s Administrative Officer. Any concerns received will be reviewed and forwarded to the appropriate person(s) for further action.