

Complaints Procedure

Introduction

As a subscriber to the Code of Fundraising practice Ellel Ministries, and its parent body The Christian Trust as a charity registered with the Fundraising Regulator, has set out this policy for the purposes of enabling members of the public to complain, or express any genuine concern they may have about any fundraising activities undertaken by us or by individuals purporting to be operating 'in aid of us'.

Our complaints procedure is intended to be simple, clear and easy to use.

Definition of a Complaint

A complaint may be generally defined as an expression of dissatisfaction, about actions taken or a lack of action.

How to Complain

Whilst we can often resolve matters informally by phone, in order to investigate properly we ask that anyone who wishes to make a complaint sets out the full details in writing either by email or in a letter. This will help us to properly consider any matters requiring attention since we view these as a valuable opportunity for learning and improvement. It would also help us if you could tell us the outcome you are seeking.

Complaints should be addressed to The Trust Secretary, The Christian Trust, Ellel Grange, Bay Horse, Lancaster, LA2 0HN. Alternatively, you may email to: tct@ellel.org. Any complaint must normally be received by us within three months of the incident being complained about, otherwise we may not be able to investigate effectively.

We will endeavour to acknowledge receipt of any complaint we receive within five working days of receiving it and to provide a full written response within 30 days. Where a complaint relates to the handling of personal data or rights of access under the Data Protection Act 2018, then it may be more appropriate for us to consider these aspects under our subject access request and objections to data processing procedures.

If the matter(s) raised are particularly complex or require further investigation and we cannot provide a full response within the above timescales we will write to let you know and will regularly seek to update you on progress until a resolution is achieved. Where necessary we will explain our reasons for doing this.

When considering complaints, we will normally seek to investigate the substantive issues raised with a view to identifying an appropriate resolution. However, we cannot consider complaints solely about the actions of third parties unless they are employed or contracted by us to perform a service on our behalf.

What we do with your Complaint

We seek to investigate all complaints we receive thoroughly and fairly to establish the facts of the case. This includes reviewing all relevant evidence and might include speaking to any individuals complained about as well as the complainant and any third parties involved.

Where appropriate any members of staff identified in your complaint will be informed where this relates to them or actions for which they were responsible in order that they may have an opportunity to respond to any allegation(s) made. This will be done sensitively by those tasked with any internal investigations. As a result, should we find any evidence of serious wrongdoing we will consider appropriate further action against such individuals.

Reaching our Decision

We will endeavour to reach a clear, evidence-based reason(s) for the decision(s) we reach and ensure that these are proportionate, appropriate and fair. Therefore, we will seek to respond openly to all the substantive points raised by a complainant and explain why we consider those points are justified or not.

We will seek to be respectful and acknowledge the experience of the complainant, whether the complaint is justified or not and take responsibility for the actions of our staff and those acting on our behalf.

When responding we will acknowledge if things have gone wrong and take proportionate action to put things right, including apologising where appropriate. We will also inform you about the lessons learnt and any changes we have made as a result of your complaint.

Role of the Regulator

If you are dissatisfied with our response you may refer your complaint to the Fundraising Regulator or the Scottish Fundraising Standards Panel. You will normally need to do this within two months of receiving any final response from us.

The Fundraising Regulator can be contacted at: 2nd Floor CAN Mezzanine Building 49-51 East Road, London N1 6AH, or by telephoning 0300 999 3407.

The Role of our Trustees

The trustees will review all formal complaints to consider what lessons can be learnt and how they can improve their service and the experience of our donors.

The Trust Secretary as lead investigator will report to the Board of Trustees on any complaint correspondence received and the outcome, including whether these have led to a change in services, policies or procedures.