



CIO No: 1205090

# Complaints Policy

## Policy Statement

Cockermouth Emergency Response Group views concerns and complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person that has raised the concern or complaint in the first instance.

The aim of this policy is to:

- Provide a fair procedure which is clear and easy to use
- Ensure everyone in the Group knows what the procedures are
- To make sure all concerns and complaints are dealt with fairly, consistently and in a timely manner
- To make sure that concerns and complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that strong relationships are maintained
- To gather information which helps us to improve what we do

## Definition of a Concern or Complaint

A **concern** is when someone is worried, troubled or unhappy about a decision or a situation, or has something that they would like to raise, informally, with us.

A **complaint** is a more formal expression of dissatisfaction or discontent.

They may come from volunteers, partner organisations or individuals from the local community. They can be received verbally (in person or by phone), by email or in writing. Further details as to the process are set out below.

## Confidentiality

All information received during a concern or a complaint will be handled sensitively, telling only those people who need to know and following any relevant data protection

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requirements. Please see our general data protection and confidentiality policy for further details.

### **Responsibility**

Overall responsibility for adherence to this policy and its implementation lies with the CERG Board of Trustees.

### **Concerns Procedure**

If someone has something, they would like to raise with us informally, this should be done by phone or email. A concern raised in this way is not treated as part of our formal complaints' procedure. Accordingly, it will not be formally logged or monitored but we will take whatever appropriate action we deem necessary to try to alleviate the concern(s). If a concern needs to be escalated into a formal complaint, then this will be discussed with the person or organisation that has raised the concern, and we will then follow the procedures detailed below.

### **Complaints Procedure**

This relates to a complaint raised about any aspect of our service. You are encouraged to raise this informally, in the first instance, with a member of the Board of Trustees - ideally the Chairman. If a complaint is about this officer, then it should be sent in writing to [admin@cerg.org.uk](mailto:admin@cerg.org.uk) for the administrator to escalate to an appropriate person who would normally be another officer of the Board of Trustees.

If you are not sure about whom to contact, please ring the administrator on 07852 599794 or email [admin@cerg.org.uk](mailto:admin@cerg.org.uk). If the matter is not resolved informally, complaints should be set out in writing (letter or email) and addressed to the Board of Trustees using the contact details above.

To help us deal with your complaint appropriately, your letter or email should include:

- What the complaint is about
- Member(s) of organisation or any other people involved
- When the issue you are complaining about occurred and if it is still happening
- Whether you have tried to resolve your complaint informally by speaking to anyone before making a formal complaint
- What you would ideally like to see happen as a result of your complaint
- Any suggestions you may have on how we could improve our methods that would help overcome the problem(s) you have identified

### **How a complaint will be dealt with**

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- Your letter or email will be acknowledged by a member of our Board of Trustees within 14 days
- The person responsible will investigate the complaint. This will normally be our Chair or another officer of the Board. During this process we may contact you for more supporting information or evidence
- We will respond, in writing, within 28 days of first receiving the complaint. We will inform you of any action taken or recommendations for further action
- All written complaints received, together with a copy of the response to the person or organisation who complained, will be notified to the Committee
- Complaints will be recorded and monitored (in accordance with data protection regulations), and information from this will be used by us to improve our systems and processes

<b>REVIEWED BY</b>		
Name	Position	Date
Paul Mogford	Operations director	03 June 2024
Jo Crozier	Administrator	03 June 2024

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