**Churches Together in England (CTE)**

**Complaints Policy and Procedure**

**Introduction**

Churches Together in England is committed to providing an excellent service to its members and other stakeholders, working in an open and accountable way that builds trust and respect.

**COMPLAINTS POLICY**

**Our Aim**

Churches Together in England aims to resolve complaints quickly, fairly, and effectively. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve is by listening and responding to the views of our members, partners, and stakeholders and, in particular, responding positively to complaints by putting mistakes right, ensuring, wherever possible, that this is done to the complainant’s satisfaction.

Churches Together in England recognises that many concerns raised will be informal. If concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the Complaints Procedure below sets out the path to follow.

**Monitoring and Reporting**

The Trustee Board of Churches Together in England will receive anonymised reports of complaints made and a summary of their resolution.

**Principles of the Complaints Policy**

The Churches Together in England Policy is based on the principle of a three-stage process (as detailed in the Complaints Procedure below).

Where a complaint is made against a member of staff, they should be informed of relevant support services available to them.

Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and Churches Together in England maintain confidentiality. However, the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality. Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

**COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

**1. Stage 1: Informal**

* 1. Churches Together in England recognises that many concerns raised will be informal, and it aims to deal with these quickly. In the first instance you should raise any complaint directly with the member of staff concerned.
  2. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

1. **Stage 2: Formal**
   1. To make a formal complaint, you should write to or email the General Secretary of Churches Together in England.

If your complaint is against the General Secretary, you should write to the Chair of Trustees of Churches Together in England.

In your complaint, you should set out the details of your complaint, the consequences for you (or others) as a result, and the remedy you are seeking.

* 1. The complaint will be acknowledged normally within 5 working days to inform you of the action which will be taken to investigate the complaint, and the expected timescale of the investigation.
     1. We would normally expect a complaint to be investigated and responded to within 30 days. However, this may not always be possible. If this is the case, we will inform the complainant at this point, and endeavour to provide a revised expected timescale.
     2. During an investigation, it may become apparent that it will not be possible to complete the investigation within the previously stated timescale. In this circumstance, this will be communicated to the complainant along with reasons, and a revised timescale will be provided.
  2. The outcome of the investigation will be communicated to the complainant in writing with details of any action taken and a timescale for implementation (if applicable and appropriate). All appropriate members of staff will also receive a copy of this report, which will also be presented to the Board of Trustees.

1. **Stage 3: Appeal**
   1. If you are not satisfied with the response from Stage 2, you have the option of asking for a review of your complaint in writing to the Chair of the Trustees of Churches Together in England.

If your complaint is against the General Secretary, and you deem the chair of Trustees has not resolved the complaint to your satisfaction, you should write to the vice-chair of CTE, who will review the complaint and its outcome as appropriate.

* 1. The Chair of the Board of Trustees (or the vice-chair if the need arises, see 3.1) will respond normally within 10 working days to inform you of the action which will be taken to investigate the complaint, and the expected timescale of the investigation.
  2. The outcome of the appeal investigation, either to uphold the Stage 2 decision or to make changes to the Stage 2 recommendations, will be communicated to the complainant in writing. The decision reached about this complaint will then be final. All appropriate members of staff will also receive a copy of the appeal outcome, which will also be presented to the Board of Trustees.

**Support to Complain**

If you feel you need support to make a complaint to CTE for accessibility or other similar reasons, please contact the CTE Head of Operations or Operations Manager, who will be happy to explore the most appropriate methods to enable this.

Approved by Board of Trustees of Churches Together in England

Signed

Dated

Reference Minute