

## Introduction

The Cellar Trust is dedicated to providing the best quality service for all our clients. We also want to ensure all our customers, donors and anyone coming into contact with our organisation has a great experience. As part of this commitment we take people's views very seriously and welcome any feedback whether it is positive or whether it is to express dissatisfaction with the service or organisation. We recognise that from time to time there may be occasions when people may feel that the quality or level of service provided falls short of what they could reasonably expect. It follows that everyone has a right to complain if they feel dissatisfied with the service they have received. Everyone should be informed of this right when they first come to The Cellar Trust and the information should be easily accessible via our website.

All complaints shall be treated with regard to the Confidentiality Policy.

## Related Policies

- Code of Conduct
- Confidentiality Policy
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy
- Safeguarding – Vulnerable Adults
- Volunteer Policy and Procedures

## Roles and Responsibilities

These are guidelines and The Cellar Trust reserves the right to change the personnel involved at each level or involve an outside advice where necessary.

<b>Employee</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report any complaints immediately to their line manager.</li> </ul>
<b>Line Manager</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform the Head of Client Services (or Chief Executive Officer if necessary) of complaints received.</li> </ul>
<b>Head of Client Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appoint a Complaints Manager.</li> <li>• Progress any complaints that are escalated to Stage Two.</li> </ul>
<b>Chief Executive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act as Complaints Manager if the complaint involves the Head of Client Services.</li> <li>• Progress any complaints that are escalated to Stage Two where necessary.</li> <li>• The CEO will report to the Board on the issue of complaints at least annually.</li> <li>• Advise and support managers in the application of this policy and procedure.</li> </ul>
<b>Complaints Manager</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress the complaints process and record all details in the correct manner.</li> </ul>
<b>Trustees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chair of the Trustees becomes lead officer at Stage Three (Complaints Panel)</li> <li>• Attend Complaints Panels (minimum of two per panel)</li> </ul>
<b>Appeals Panel</b>	Carried out by a trustee with the CEO in attendance.

## **Complaints Procedure**

### **Stage One**

1. When a complaint is made the person receiving the complaint must inform their line manager who must then inform the Head of Client Services (or CEO if necessary) who will appoint a Complaints Manager. The Complaints Manager will be the lead person dealing with the complaint. If the CEO or Head of Client Services is the subject of the complaint, the procedure should start at Stage Three.
2. The Complaints Manager will attempt to resolve the matter informally at this stage if possible and seek a resolution with the complainant that is satisfactory to all parties. This will be logged on the Complaints Monitoring database by either a Service Lead or member of the leadership team. All complaints are logged on the Complaints Monitoring database whether they are escalated or resolved at an early stage.
3. Where a resolution is not possible, or in the case of formal complaints, the complainant will be asked to put their complaint in writing using the Complaints Form (Appendix 1) and send it to the Complaints Manager marked 'Private and Confidential'. They will have the complaint acknowledged and be sent a copy of this complaints procedure within ten working days of the complaint being received. This procedure includes details of what they can expect with a timescale (see Complaints Procedure Timescales - Appendix 2).
4. In all cases, when notified of any meeting in the complaints procedure, the complainant should be advised that they may bring a representative of their choice, who will be supplied with the relevant papers.
5. The first stage of the formal process is an informal meeting between the complainant and the Complaints Manager. This should be offered within ten working days of the complaint being received.
6. If the complaint involves an individual either a member of staff, volunteer or client then they may also be interviewed separately by the Complaints Manager.
7. If the outcome is satisfactory, the Complaints Manager should record the meeting, give the complainant a record of the outcome, inform the Head of Client Services or CEO and take any actions agreed as an outcome of the meeting. This should be logged on the Complaints Monitoring database by a Service Lead or member of the leadership team.

### **Stage Two**

1. If the outcome of the informal meeting is unsatisfactory, the Complaints Manager must advise the complainant about the next stage of the process.
2. The complainant must lodge a formal appeal within four weeks of the informal meeting.
3. The complainant must be offered a meeting within four weeks of lodging the appeal. The Head of Client Services or CEO becomes the lead officer at the formal meeting stage.
4. If the complaint involves other individuals - either a member of staff, volunteer or client then they may also be interviewed separately by the Head of Client Services / CEO.
5. If the complainant is satisfied at this stage, the meeting should be recorded and the complainant given a record of the outcome and any actions agreed. This should be logged on the Complaints Monitoring database by a Service Lead or member of the leadership team.

6. If the complainant is not satisfied, they should be advised of the next stage.

### **Stage Three**

1. The Chair of the Trustees is the lead officer at this stage.
2. A Complaints Panel should be convened from the trustees with a minimum of two appointed. An external member may join the Complaints Panel at the discretion of the trustees.
3. The complainant should be offered a meeting within eight weeks of the formal meeting.
4. Following the meeting, the complainant should be given a record of the outcome and the CEO informed. Any actions agreed within the meeting should be taken and recorded. This should be logged on the Complaints Monitoring database by a Service Lead or member of the leadership team. No further appeal is possible.

### **Operational Matters**

- The CEO will keep the Board of Trustees informed of the number and nature of complaints and the outcomes. The CEO will report to the Board on this issue at least annually.
- Appeals - the Board of Trustees will not discuss any complaint which has not been progressed through the proper procedures set out in this policy.
- When the situation is resolved, the complaint must be recorded on the Complaints Monitoring database.
- Only Service Leads and members of the leadership team have access to the Complaints Monitoring database which is kept on the server and is password protected.
- All data recorded is kept in line with the Cellar Trust's data protection procedures and in line with the General Data Protection regulation.
- It is a condition of some funding contracts that records shall be available for inspection by the funding partners.
- The CEO is responsible for implementing and reviewing the policy.

**APPENDIX 1 - Complaints Procedure Timescales**

<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Stage</b>	<b>Actions</b>
	<b>Complaint made</b>	
Within one week of complaint being received	Stage One	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inform line manager / Head of Client Services</li> <li>2. Appoint Complaints Manager</li> <li>3. Seek informal resolution</li> <li>4. Resolution not possible - client asked to put their complaint in writing</li> <li>5. Client given copy of complaints procedure with details of what they can expect with a timetable</li> <li>6. Client informed they may bring a representative of their choice to any future meetings</li> </ol>
Within two weeks of complaint being received	Stage One	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hold informal meeting with complainant</li> <li>2. Interview other parties involved</li> <li>3. Complainant informed of next stage</li> <li>4. Record all details and actions taken</li> </ol>
Within four weeks of informal meeting	Stage Two	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If complaint unresolved complaint must appeal within four weeks of informal meeting</li> </ol>
Within four weeks of lodging an appeal	Stage Two	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complainant must be offered a formal meeting within four weeks of their appeal</li> <li>2. Head of Client Services or CEO becomes Complaints Manager</li> <li>3. Formal meeting held with complainant and separate interviews with any other parties</li> <li>4. Complaint resolved - record all details and actions taken</li> <li>5. Complaint unresolved – complainant advised of next stage</li> </ol>
Within eight weeks of formal meeting	Stage Three	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complainant must be offered a further meeting within eight weeks of the formal meeting</li> <li>2. Chair of Trustees is appointed the Complaints Manager and a Complaints Panel is convened</li> <li>3. Outcome and actions of meeting recorded and complainant informed. No further appeal is possible</li> </ol>

## APPENDIX 2 – Complaints Form

**Available to download from the website / or on request**

The Cellar Trust aims to provide service of a standard acceptable to all our clients and customers. If we fail to do this, we want to know about it. This will enable us not only to deal with the specific problem but also to avoid it happening again. If you wish to complain about any aspect of The Cellar Trust please fill in the following and return the form to us. If you need more space to write, add extra sheets.

Please tell us the details of your complaint
Please tell us what you feel should / should not have happened
Please tell us what you would like us to do now
Your name _____ Your tel no. _____ Your email _____ Your address _____ _____
How would you prefer to be contacted? Tel <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Post <input type="checkbox"/>
Thank you for completing this form. You will receive a response within two weeks of us receiving your written complaint.

Please return this form to The Cellar Trust, Farfield Road, Shipley BD18 4QP addressed to the Complaints Manager and marked Private and Confidential.

You can also email your complaint to [complaints@thecellartrust.org](mailto:complaints@thecellartrust.org)

## **APPENDIX 3 – HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT**

### **To be given to all clients / available to download from the website**

At The Cellar Trust we aim to provide a quality service to everyone who uses our services. If you have a concern about any aspect of our service or organisation, we would be grateful if you could bring this to our attention so that we may investigate and hopefully improve the service we offer and rectify any mistakes.

The Cellar Trust has a complaints procedure designed to deal with your complaint quickly and efficiently. We hope to deal with most queries at the time they arise and with the person concerned. We will sometimes have to investigate a complaint and will try to deal with your complaint within stated guidelines from The Cellar Trust Complaints Procedure. This is available on our website or on request from any member of staff or by phoning 01274 586474.

### **What to do if you wish to make a complaint**

There are a number of options open to you depending on the nature of those concerns. In the first instance you should speak directly to your worker (if applicable) or any other member of staff to let them know your concerns and what you would like to see changed. They will then advise you of the next stage. Please refer to the Complaints Policy for further details.

If you are worried about talking to a worker, or have already spoken to them and you are still unhappy with the situation, you should talk to a manager or different member of staff.

If you feel that the situation remains unresolved then we invite you to submit a formal complaint in writing, using our Complaints Form. Please ask any member of staff for a copy of our Complaints Policy and form or you can download these from our website:

<https://www.thecellartrust.org/complaints-policy/>

You can return your Complaints Form to a member of staff in person or by post to The Complaints Manager, The Cellar Trust, Farfield Road, Shipley BD18 4PQ, marked Private and Confidential. We have a dedicated complaints email address which you can use to submit your complaint if you wish to: [complaints@thecellartrust.org](mailto:complaints@thecellartrust.org)

### **Our commitment to you**

- The Cellar Trust takes all complaints very seriously
- We will deal with them effectively and efficiently
- We will keep you informed about what is happening to your complaint
- We will take action where we think it is necessary

Please note that this practice adheres strictly to the rules of confidentiality and we cannot provide confidential information if you are making a complaint on behalf of someone else. We would need written permission from the client concerned.