



CEN Complaints Policy

Communities Empowerment Network (**CEN**) is committed to providing a high-quality of service to its clients. However sometimes things may not go as planned or there may be a misunderstanding and therefore, when a client who is using our services is not satisfied with them, this policy and the following procedure shall apply.

If a client has a complaint with CEN, in the first instance they could contact the chief executive officer (**CEO**) of CEN in writing as a matter of priority after the issue has arisen in order for the CEO consider and resolve the issue. CEN will be unable to consider a complaint later than six months after the client becomes aware of the issue.

Complaints procedure

1. On receiving any written complaint by a client, CEN will send a written acknowledgment, and which shall ask for confirmation of some of the details behind the complaint. This correspondence is likely to be made via email and will be sent to the complainant within **five working days** of receipt of the complaint being received by the CEO.
2. Depending on the nature of the complaint the CEO or another member of CEN staff will contact the complainants by email and will organise a telephone conversation where the issues can be discussed, and further details can be recorded by CEN.
3. On receipt of a complaint a file will be opened relating to the complaint, recording details and the issues discussed as referred to in paragraph 2 above. Depending on the issues behind the complaint either the CEO or a nominated member of CEN will consider the complaint further and follow up with a letter setting out CEN's position relating to the complaint – the complainant should receive this **within 14 business days** from the date of receipt by CEN of the complaint.
4. The client will be requested to respond to this letter within a reasonable period but not later than 21 working days following his or her receipt of the detailed reply from CEN.
5. If a resolution is not agreed or appears to be unlikely, the CEO, with the client's written agreement, will ask a member of the governing board of CEN to investigate the complaint and report to the CEO within a reasonable time period or alternatively request an individual experienced in the matter which is the subject of the complaint, to review the file and make suggestions for resolving the complaint or alternatively make a determination. The client will be copied in on all related correspondence between CEN and that alternative individual. Anyone involved with complaint handling with the CEN organization will act at all times with objectivity, integrity, confidentiality, and independence.
6. If at this stage if a client remains dissatisfied, he or she should contact the board of trustees of CEN again in writing, setting out proposals to solve the issue, which shall be carefully considered and responded to within 10 business days by a member of the board of trustees. The client is entitled to request a meeting with a member of the trustees (in person or via zoom whichever is most convenient to both parties). Following the meeting



the trustee shall make their determination relating to the complaint and shall write to the client explaining their reasoning and set out their conclusions.

7. In the event the client's complaint is upheld by the governors they will contact the individuals involved setting out their reasoning, and require, if they so decide, changes to be made within CEN; and provide to the complainant an apology from CEN.
8. In the event the client's complaint is not upheld by the trustees (following the recommendation of the individual trustee who reviewed the matter) , they shall inform the client of any further actions the client may take, such as making a complaint to the Charity Commissioners or equivalent relevant organization.
9. As dealing with complaints is an integral part of CEN's procedures and practices any costs of handling a complaint shall not be charged to its clients.
10. In rare cases where CEN considers at any time during the complaints process that the complainant is behaving in a manner which is manifestly unreasonable, a trustee, at all times acting fairly, objectively and reasonably, will write to the complainant relating to the behaviour and in such cases, in the event the unreasonable behaviour persists, CEN will be entitled to close the complaint file.

