



Complaints Procedure

Open Door - Colchester exists to provide help and support to anyone who is in need in Colchester. This support is provided through the drop-in, Sunday@One service and other associated activities. We aim to provide the best possible advice, support and care. We recognise however that, from time to time, an individual may have cause for complaint against the organisation or an individual representing the organisation. We will do our best to resolve any complaints and to put them right. Open Door is committed to dealing with complaints seriously, fairly, confidentially and in a timely manner.

All employed staff, trustees, and volunteers represent Open Door and are expected to conduct themselves in a way that is consistent with biblical teaching and in accordance with the Open Door Code of Conduct and other relevant policies.

This procedure will describe how complaints can be made, how they will be handled and what the person making the complaint or receiving the complaint can expect.

1. Making a complaint

Anyone can make a complaint about the Open Door organisation or an individual representing the organisation. This includes those who are themselves already representing the charity.

Complaints should be made to the Director of Open Door - director@opendoorcolchester.co.uk, preferably in writing. You should take care to ensure that you share specific facts regarding the complaint rather than opinions.

The Director will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 7 days and may ask to meet with you to understand the grounds for the complaint and seek clarification.

2. Assessment of complaint

On receipt of the complaint, the Director will assess the complaint and decide what action to take. You will be notified of this decision.

If the complaint is very serious or involves a serious safeguarding risk then the individual involved will be suspended from all duties at Open Door. However, a suspension does not imply any assumption of guilt.

3. Formal meeting

If the Director decides that a complaint needs to be investigated, then they will arrange to have a formal meeting with the individual in question. A Trustee of Open Door should also be present at this meeting, having been apprised of the complaint that has been made.

During this formal meeting, the individual should be made aware of the complaint and be given the opportunity to respond.

Following this meeting, the Director and the Trustee will decide on the appropriate course of action. It may be necessary to conduct further investigations or talk to other persons connected with Open Door.

If there is a safeguarding issue then the appropriate action should be taken as detailed in the Open Door Safeguarding Policy.

If the complaint is against the organisation then the Director will bring it to the attention of the Trustees at the next Trustees meeting. These are only held quarterly, so in this instance resolution and response can be expected to be slower.

4. Response

Following the initial acknowledgement of the complaint, you can expect to receive a response in writing within 28 days. This response should include the outcome of the investigation in to the complaint. If the investigations are ongoing then you will be notified.

5. Appeals

If you are unhappy with how your complaint has been handled by the Director then you should contact the Chair of Trustees¹, who with another Trustee will assess, investigate if appropriate, and respond in writing within 28 days.

If you are still unhappy with the response that you have received then you can contact the Charity Commission (www.charity-commission.gov.uk).

6. Complaints regarding the Director

If your complaint is regarding the Director then it should be sent to the Chair of Trustees who will assess, investigate if appropriate and respond in writing within 28 days in the same manner as detailed above.

7. Records

The Director (or Chair of Trustees when appropriate) is responsible for keeping accurate records of all complaints made and actions taken.

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