



Complaints Policy

Lowestoft Community Church [LCC] values complaints, comments and suggestions and will treat with respect and sympathy all people who make them.

Complaints, comments and suggestions are valued because:

- They provide us with an opportunity to put things right.
- Listening is a key part of 'relational' organisation. Users in this sense can include staff, Elders, Church Leaders and any other organisation or individual interacting with LCC.
- They give valuable insights for setting service standards and monitoring quality.
- Providing users with a way to complain reduces the likelihood of people seeking other ways to express dissatisfaction.

Lowestoft Community Church will deal with all complaints, comments and suggestions within a month, and will deal with them openly as far as is compatible with our duty of confidentiality to those interacting with Lowestoft Community Church.

At all stages of the complaints procedure (outlined on the next page) complaints will be responded to in writing, even if this is simply to confirm and record what has been said by the complainant and by Lowestoft Community Church.

Anonymous complaints will not normally be accepted or acted upon unless there is significant evidence available to back up the complaint.

All Stage 2 and 3 complaints, and as many Stage 1 complaints as possible, will be logged by the appropriate Trustees. Complaints will be regularly reviewed at Trustee meetings.

Procedure

There are three stages to the complaints procedure:

Stage 1: Informal Problem Solving

The matter will be handled by the staff / consultants most directly involved or who are known to the complainant, with the guidance and support of the Lowestoft Community Church Lead Elder where appropriate.

The purpose is to understand the complaint and to resolve the matter to the complainant's satisfaction as quickly as possible. The outcome of the complaint will be recorded in a letter to the complainant.

If the outcome has not satisfied the complainant, he or she will be requested to make a formal complaint (Stage 2).



Stage 2: Formal Complaint

Stage 2 complaints will be handled by a Trustee. The complaint should be acknowledged within five days of receipt. If the complaint has not been received in writing, the acknowledgement shall state for confirmation the details of the complaint. The acknowledgement and copies of all correspondence will be kept on file.

The Trustee will investigate the complaint and decide what action if any should be taken, in liaison with the Lowestoft Community Church Eldership Team where appropriate. Every attempt should be made to ensure that the complainant understands and, if possible, accepts the Trustee’s decision.

The decision shall be communicated in writing to the complainant within 28 days of receiving the complaint.

This should also inform the complainant of the right to appeal if not satisfied.

Stage 3: Appeal

Appeal must be made in writing to the Trustee, and will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees. The Trustee will acknowledge receiving the appeal within seven days, will arrange a meeting of the Board of Trustees within a further fourteen days, unless a later date is requested by the complainant.

The review panel will consider the documents from Stages 1 and 2 and anything further the complainant may have submitted. They will then hear what the complainant has to say and will interview any staff whom they require. They will then consider their recommendation, which shall be communicated to the complainant at the time (if at all practicable) and confirmed in writing within five days.

The Trustee will write to the Complainant within 28 Days of the Appeal review panel meeting to say what action is being taken as a result of the panel’s recommendation.

Approved & adopted by L.C.C. Trustees;

	Approved	Reviewed	Reviewed	Reviewed
Date	July 2018	July 2020		
Signed				