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| **Policy Name: Compliments, Comments and Complaints** | |
| Version | 1 |
| Date when last reviewed | August 2024 |
| Date when next review due | October 2027 |
| Author | Jon Gladstone, based on Mind template and MQM policy checklist |
| This policy is for: | People who use our services, supporters, members of the public |
| Date ratified by the Board | November 2024 |
| Policy implementation (Explains how relevant parties will be made aware of and have access to the policy. For example, induction, training (and refresh), shared drive (Sharepoint/Drop Box/etc). | Staff Induction, Available on SharePoint and on the Cornwall Mind website. |
| Related policies and procedures | Influence and Participation, Data Protection, Volunteer, Whistleblowing, Equality and Diversity |

**Change History**

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| **Version** | **Changed by** | **Change Summary** | **Date** |
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| **Equality Impact Assessment** | | | | | | |
| Who does the policy affect? | People who use our services, supporters, members of the public | | | | |  |
|  | | | **Positive or Yes** | | **Negative or No** | |
| Will the policy have a positive or negative impact on discrimination, equality of opportunity or relations between groups? | | | Positive | |  |  |
| Is the communication of the policy accessible to all groups? | | | Yes | |  |  |
| Do the procedures and behaviours outlined in this policy proactively address the inclusion of marginalised or excluded groups? | | | Yes | |  |  |
| Will there be a positive benefit to the users or workforce as a result of the proposed policy? | | | Yes | |  |  |
| Were the relevant groups (i.e. staff, volunteers, those with lived experience) involved in the development and review of the policy? | | Staff and Trustees through the Policy Sub Group | | |  |  |
| Detail any other consideration specific to this policy | | |  |  | | |

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| **Environmental Impact Assessment** | | | | |
| Who does the policy affect? | People who use our services, supporters and members of the public | | | |
|  | | **Yes** | **N/A** | **No** |
| Does the policy encourage use of climate friendly travel i.e. public transport, car sharing? | |  | n/a |  |
| Does the policy consider the environmental impact where considering suppliers, products, digital footprint, printing documents linked to the implementation of this policy? | | Yes |  |  |
| Does the policy recommend monitoring and measuring the activities to understand the environmental impact where appropriate i.e. carbon footprint | |  |  | no |
| Should the policy make specific reference to the Environmental Policy? | | Yes |  |  |
| Does the policy require a more detailed Environmental Impact Assessment? | |  | No | |

**Managers and staff will be encouraged to review and complete the paperwork digitally. The success of this will be monitored in line with the Environmental Policy.**

1. **Purpose**

**Introduction**

Cornwall Mind is committed to providing high quality services to everyone who accesses

support. We will maintain the highest possible standards of openness, transparency, and accountability.

We recognise that one of the ways in which the organisation can continue to improve services is by listening and responding to the feedback from service users, supporters, and stakeholders. We will encourage people to use this policy to provide feedback.

We recognise that effective communication is a vital part of dealing with comments, compliments and complaints to ensure people feel listened to and respected.

We know that sometimes we will be able to put things right and make improvements. On occasion we may only be able to explain our actions, apologise and learn from feedback.

**Scope**

This policy can be used by Cornwall Mind’s service users, supporters and the

general public.

This policy does not apply to employees or volunteers. Employees should use Cornwall Mind’s grievance or whistleblowing policies where appropriate. Volunteers should use the Volunteer Compliments and Grievance Policy.

**Aims**

To provide a framework for raising and addressing comments, compliments and

complaints that is fair, easy and as transparent as possible.

To explain what steps Cornwall Mind will take if it receives a comment, compliment or

complaint.

To ensure consistent, equitable and fair treatment in line with Cornwall Mind’s values in

accordance with adherence with Cornwall Mind’s **Equality and Diversity** policy.

Making a complaint will not harm or prejudice the service that is given to the person raising it, and Cornwall Mind will ensure that they are treated with respect and courtesy, receiving appropriate support throughout the handling of the complaint.

Learning from complaints will be used to improve Cornwall Mind’s work and drive forward a culture of continuous improvement.

1. **Roles & responsibilities**

The following section details the responsibilities of specific individuals and groups involved in compliance with this document.

The **Board of Trustees** is responsible for:

* reviewing and approving this policy, as well as ensuring that Cornwall Mind is properly resourced to fulfil its obligations
* ensuring all aspects of this policy are fairly, equitably, consistently and sensitively applied in line with Cornwall Mind’s values and in accordance with the organisation’s **Equality and Diversity** policy
* regularly monitoring comments, compliments and complaints for any trends to inform ways to improve practice and maintain high quality services

The **CEO** and **senior management team** is responsible for:

* ensuring all employees are aware of this policy and procedure
* ensuring all aspects of this policy are fairly, equitably consistently and sensitively applied, in line with Cornwall Mind’s values and in accordance with the organisation’s **Equality and Diversity** policy
* treating any concerns seriously and dealing with them in a timely manner
* offering reasonable adjustments and wellbeing support to the person raising any concerns where the process is causing them distress or affecting their mental health
* offering reasonable adjustments or extra support to employees who need it, including to individuals named in a complaint, where the process is causing distress or affecting the mental health of anyone involved
* regularly monitoring comments, compliments and complaints for any trends to inform ways to improve practice and maintain high quality services

**Staff** are responsible for:

* reading and understanding this policy
* listening to anyone raising a comment, compliment or complaint and making them feel listened to and supported
* escalating any comment, compliment or complaints to the Operations Manager
* treating any person who complains fairly in accordance with the **Equality and Diversity** policy, and with compassion and respect
* communicating openly and honestly during complaints investigation meetings

1. **Comments, Compliments and Complaints**

**Comments and Compliments**

Cornwall Mind welcomes compliments about its services. Any written compliments received will be shared with the member of staff, volunteer, and/or relevant department.

Compliments allow Cornwall Mind to know when something is working well and to continue to deliver suitable services.

Cornwall Mind recognises that comments are helpful for reviewing the services on offer, and welcomes suggestions of solutions.

Cornwall Mind will advise of any changes made as a result of a comment.

**Complaints**

Cornwall Mind will make sure that making a complaint is as easy as possible.

All complaints will be taken seriously as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with a service or individual which calls for an immediate response.

Any person making a complaint will always be treated with courtesy and fairness in accordance with Cornwall Mind’s **Equality and Diversity** policy.

Complaints will be responded to in the right way – for example, with an explanation or an apology where things have gone wrong, and information on any action taken etc.

Learning from complaints will be shared and will be used to improve services.

Concerns raised informally will be dealt with as quickly and efficiently as formal complaints.

Persistent/vexatious complaints will be managed sensitively in order to support the person making the complaint whilst ensuring that other service users, staff and volunteers do not suffer detriment.

1. **Monitoring**

A log of all compliments, comments and complaints is kept and a quarterly report is prepared for the Senior Management Team, the Board of Trustees and the Quality Working Group.

Complaints are monitored to identify any trends which will inform ways to improve practice and maintain high quality services.

Support and training is offered to staff to enable them to conduct investigations.

Complaint information will be retained for a period of three years in accordance with the Data Retention Schedule.

1. **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality will bemaintained where possible as outlined in Cornwall Mind’s Confidentiality Policy.

Where a complaint concerns an individual, requires an investigation or raises safeguarding implications, confidentiality may need to be breached. This will be explained to the person making the complaint before being acted upon.

1. **Implementation**

Staff are be required to read and understand this policy as part of induction and refresher training.

1. **Procedural guidelines**

**Submitting a complaint - Stage One – Informal**

To make an initial complaint (Stage 1), please speak to or email the individual(s) concerned or their line manager and we will endeavour to satisfy your complaint. We will let you know of any remedial action that is to be taken.

If you don’t know who to contact or do not wish to contact the individual involved, please email [info@cornwallmind.org](mailto:info@cornwallmind.org) or send your complaint **in writing** to Complaints, Cornwall Mind, 2A Hamley Court, Dennison Road, Bodmin, PL31 2LL, **by** **telephone** on 01208 892855 or come to the office and ask to talk to one of the senior managers.

In the event that your complaint involves the Chief Executive, please address your complaint for the attention of the Board of Trustees. Otherwise one of the senior managers will investigate the complaint.

You will be sent an acknowledgement of receipt of your complaint within 5 working days from the date it is received, and we will respond to informal complaints within 5 working days from the date of acknowledgement.

In order for us to resolve your issue to the best of our ability, please include as much detail as possible regarding your complaint, including any relevant communications or documentation.

Service users can choose to make a complaint via an advocate, relative or friend. If this is the case, it should be made clear that it is the person making the complaint supported by the third party, rather than the third person making the complaint. All communication will be sent to the person making a complaint, and if they request it, copies can be sent to the third party.

**Submitting a complaint - Stage Two - Formal**

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive at Stage 1, or you would prefer your complaint to be formally investigated from the beginning, you can request your complaint to be escalated to Stage 2, either through your contact at Stage 1, **by emailing** [**paul@cornwallmind.org**](mailto:paul@cornwallmind.org) **or by letter** to Paul Reeve, Cornwall Mind, 2A Hamley Court, Dennison Road, Bodmin, PL31 2LL, **by** **telephone** on 01208 892855 or **in person**.

You will be sent an acknowledgement of receipt of your complaint within 5 working days from the date it is received.

An appropriate manager will be assigned to investigate your complaint based on the gravity of the concern and you will receive a full written response within 15 working days from the date of the acknowledgement.

In the event that your complaint involves the Chief Executive, please address your complaint for the attention of the Board of Trustees

If you are not satisfied with the response to your complaint, you will be given the opportunity to speak to the Chief Executive and given the option to appeal (Stage 3).

**Appealing against the decision - Stage Three**

If you are not happy with the outcome of the investigation and wish to appeal against the decision made, you must put this in writing and email it to [paul@cornwallmind.org](mailto:paul@cornwallmind.org) or send it in writing to Paul Reeve, Cornwall Mind, 2A Hamley Court, Dennison Road, Bodmin, PL31 2LL within 15 working days of receiving the decision.

The appeal review and further investigation will be carried out by someone at a senior level to the original investigator – for example, if the complaint was against a manager and thereby investigated by the Chief Executive, a member of the Board of Trustees will review the complaint and make further investigation if necessary.

You will be informed of the outcome of your appeal within 28 working days.

The response of the appeal will be final and no further internal investigations will take place. If the person making the complaint is still dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they can contact external agencies dependant on the complaint:

* General - Charity Commission - <http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/>
* Data protection - The ICO <https://ico.org.uk/>
* Fundraising - Fundraising regulator <https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/>

# Appendix A – COMPLAINTS FORM

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| Your name |  |
| Telephone number |  |
| Address |  |
| Postcode |  |
| Name of person filling out this form (if differs to the person making the complaint) |  |
| Details of your complaint  *Please include any dates, places or other information relevant to this complaint, including any people involved in this complaint if applicable. Please give as much information as possible in order for us to investigate your complaint effectively.* |  |