



Abergele Community Action

Complaints Policy and Procedure

Abergele District Foodbank
Abergele Community Money Advice
Abergele Youth Shed

**Platform 2
Abergele and Pensarn Station
Station Approach
Pensarn
Conwy
LL22 7PQ**

Reviewed: October 2023

Next review date: October 2025

COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURE

Policy

ABERGELE COMMUNITY ACTION (ACA) views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the complaint. Every ACA client will be given an opportunity to compliment, comment or complain about the service they receive from ACA

Our policy is:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure that is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint.
- To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint. ACA knows what to do if a complaint is received.
- To act in a responsive, friendly and sensitive manner.
- To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired as quickly as possible.
- To gather information which helps us to improve what we do.

Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of the service received from ACA

Where Complaints Come From

- Complaints may come from any person or organisation that has had dealings with ACA
A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in a durable format.

Confidentiality

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know, and following any relevant data protection requirements.

Responsibility

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Trustees/management team of ACA.

Review

This policy is reviewed regularly and updated to ensure it remains compliant as required.

Procedure

Contact Details for Complaints:

Written complaints may be sent to ACA's office at Platform 2, Abergele and Pensarn Station, Station Approach, Pensarn, Conwy LL22 7PQ or by e-mail to Linda Tavernor

info@abergeleaction.co.uk Verbal complaints may be made by phone to 07709 552336 or in person to any of ACA's staff, Trustees/Management team.

Receiving Complaints

Complaints can be made by any reasonable means. Complaints received by telephone or in person will be recorded.

The individual that receives a phone or 'in person' complaint should:

- Write down the facts of the complaint.
- Take the complainant's name, address and telephone number.
- Note down the relationship of the complainant to ACA
- Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure.
- Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take. The complainant will be given the appropriate contact details for the contact in ACA in relation to the complaint.
- Where appropriate, ask the complainant to give an account of their complaint in their own words.
- Once a complaint has been received ACA will acknowledge receipt within 3 working days.
- All complaints will be fully and fairly investigated with remedial action taken where needed.

Resolving Complaints Procedure

- In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate. The Centre Manager will usually be sighted on complaints and escalate to Board level and Trustees/Management team where deemed appropriate to ensure satisfactory impartial timely and adequate consideration is given.
- If the Complaint is about the Centre Manager the complaint will be overseen by a Trustee/a member of the Board of Trustees.
- On receiving the complaint, Centre Manager/Trustee will record it in the complaints log
- If it has not already been resolved, he/she will delegate an appropriate impartial person to investigate it and to take appropriate action. If the complaint relates to a specific person, that person will be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.

- Complaints will be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within 3 working days in a durable format. The acknowledgement will say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaint's procedure will be attached. The response will summarise the complaint
- The investigation will be thorough and impartial, and will include an examination of appropriate records, and the interviewing of any persons implicated.
- The complainant will be kept informed of progress throughout the investigation.
- Where ACA believes that another organisation is solely or jointly responsible for the matter raised in the complaint, then the complaint will be forwarded as appropriate, and the complainant will be advised accordingly.
- ▲ Ideally complainants should receive a final response within four weeks and no later than eight weeks (56 days) determining if we accept or reject the complaint. If ACA is unable to finish reviewing the complaint within this period, the complainant will receive a letter explaining why, and stating when a final response will be provided.
- ACA will consider and undertake action where necessary to correct any mistakes.
- ▲ In the event of any delays ACA will ensure that the complainant is kept up to date in a durable format.
- The reply to the complainant will describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint. Draft letter attached as a guide.
- A complaint may be resolved quickly where neither the response or acceptance had to be in writing. In these circumstances, where the complaint is resolved by the end of the 3rd working day after receipt being acknowledged ACA will provide a letter referring to the complaint, and that it is now considered to be resolved, and advising that if the complainant decides they are not satisfied they may be able to refer the complaint to the Financial Ombudsman Service within 6 months of this communication.

If the complainant has not received a final response from ACA within 8 weeks (56 days) from receipt of the complaint, or has received a response and doesn't feel it has resolved the complaint then the complainant can contact the Financial Ombudsman Service within 6 months.

Financial Ombudsman Service
Exchange Tower
London
E14 9SR

website: www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk email: complaint.info@financial-ombudsman.org.uk
phone: [0800 023 4567](tel:08000234567) or [0300 123 9123](tel:03001239123)

For further information around complaints then refer to the link below

<https://www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk/businesses/resolving-complaint/ordering-leaflet/leaflet>

ACA will cooperate fully with the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS) and will comply promptly with any settlements or awards made by it. The complainant will be made aware that the FOS cannot consider a complaint referred more than 6 months after the summary or final response was sent, or more than 6 years after the event complained of, or (if later) 3 years from the date on which the complainant became aware that they had a cause for complaint. These time limits apply to any complaints made to {Name of centre}.

Monitoring and Learning from Complaints

Complaints are reviewed annually to identify any trends that may indicate a need to take further action by ACA Trustees/Senior Management Team.