

# External Complaints and Appeals

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<b>Reason for last update</b>	Needing to update
<b>Next review date</b>	January 2028
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<b>Last amended by</b>	Faith Altamura & Maddy Gazzard
<b>Amendments</b>	Review table amended to standardise all policies Complaints – CEO email included
<b>Owner</b>	Board
<b>Job title</b>	Trustees
<b>Approved by Oxfordshire Community Foundation Board of Trustees</b>	April 2026
<b>Related procedures (if applicable)</b>	Grants Policy

This Policy relates to any aspect of the operation of Oxfordshire Community Foundation (OCF). It can be used by any person or any organisation who feels dissatisfied with the way they have been treated or a particular incident has been dealt with. This applies whether the concern or complaint is about any actions by a member of staff of OCF, by a Trustee, a Committee or Panel of OCF, or a volunteer who is acting on behalf of OCF.

OCF takes care to deal with all enquiries and assess all applications in a consistent, professional and fair manner. OCF attempts always to explain clearly and fully in writing why a grant application may have been unsuccessful. If you feel that you have been dealt with unfairly or think we have failed to provide a satisfactory standard of service, then there are complaints and appeals procedures to try to address your issue.

**Making a complaint or an appeal will not affect your future chance of receiving grants and funding.**

## Appeals

An appeal may be made if you have received a decision from the Grants Panel about an application, are dissatisfied with this and are asking for the decision to be reconsidered.

Appeals should be made to OCF's Chief Executive (CEO), in writing, no later than four weeks after the applicant has been informed of the decision.

## Complaints

A complaint refers to any other situation in which you may be dissatisfied with the service you received from OCF.

We hope that in the first instance you would feel it appropriate to speak about the problem with the member of staff of OCF who is involved with the particular matter, or with the CEO. It is hoped that this would lead to a resolution of the issues in an informal way. Thus, we hope that most complaints can be settled quickly and as close to the source of the problem as possible.

If that is not successful, or if you are not prepared to follow that course of action for whatever reason, then you can take the matter forward more formally, as follows.

Any formal complaint or appeal should in the first instance via email and sent to:

The Chief Executive: zoe.sprigings@oxfordshire.org

Or in writing to:

The Chief Executive  
Oxfordshire Community Foundation  
3 Woodin's Way  
Oxford  
OX1 1HD

Or telephone: 01865 798666

When lodging a complaint please clearly state:

- Your name
- Contact details
- The organisation you represent and your role within that organisation
- The problem that you have encountered and the complaint you have

The response (if any) that you have had so far from OCF.

If you are making an appeal concerning a grant application, please state clearly the grant application to which you refer, the intended purpose of the grant together with which aspect of the decision-making process is affected e.g., documents to be submitted, use of referee.

If your complaint relates to the Chief Executive, please address your correspondence to the Chair of Trustees. In this instance, the process below will begin at bullet point six and the Chair of Trustees will launch an investigation before contacting you with an initial response within five working days. The process will then continue as shown below.

All complaints / appeals will be dealt with as swiftly as possible; the process is as follows:

1. You should receive an initial confirmation of receipt within five working days.
2. CEO will determine the nature of the complaint and carry out an investigation.
3. More information may be requested through an interview or in writing.
4. The CEO will then write to you with a formal response within one month of the initial contact. If the complaint is complex and further investigation is needed, then the response may be an initial response. In this situation an indication will be given of how much more time is needed to complete the investigation.
5. If you are not satisfied, your complaint will be passed to Chair of Trustees.
6. The Chair of Trustees will consider your appeal, investigating and requesting further information as necessary, and will notify you of their findings and outcome within one month.
7. If you are still unhappy, then OCF will appoint an independent complaints reviewer who may be a professional adviser such as an auditor or lawyer who does not have a relationship with OCF.

OCF will aim to complete the procedure in no more than three months, if more time is needed then the complainant will be informed in writing as to how long is needed and the reasons why.

## Whistle-Blowing Process

Allegations regarding OCF's Grant Making.

Should an applicant or beneficiary wish to bring matters to the attention of OCF they should:

- Contact OCF's Chief Executive, Chair of Trustees or Chair of Grants Panel.
- OCF will investigate in confidence whether their grant making has contributed to improper conduct by an organisation, in any aspect, not just financially.
- OCF will consider allegations of improper conduct by the organisation with a view to whether this is directly related to our grant making. If this cannot be proved OCF will not pursue this further.

- If OCF is not able to investigate or verify concerns raised about our grant-making, it will consider what alternative action might be appropriate, e.g., by making a report to a statutory authority or the Charity Commission.
- While OCF carries out appropriate due diligence checks prior to making awards of grants, it cannot be held responsible for the conduct of third parties and can only act on complaints in respect of its own grant-making process.
- If an organisation has failed to comply with the terms of our grant, we reserve the right to demand its return in accordance with the terms of the award.
- CEO will report to the OCF board of trustees if there is any concern.
- OCF will only record factual information related to any organisation it has investigated which directly affects its grant making. OCF undertakes a regular review of any records to ensure that information is relevant and up to date.