



CAVERNOMA ALLIANCE UK
COMPLAINTS POLICY

Created

Date developed	By whom	Method of consultation and recommendations	Date agreed
14/04/2016	FilbyMoore		14/04/2016
Schedule for revision		This policy should be reviewed every three years or sooner if needed.	

History of revisions

Review date	By whom	Summary of changes made	Date implemented
27/06/2019	TB	Approved in same form	27/06/2019
05/05/2021	TB	Small revisions	18/5/2021

The purpose of this policy is to let you know of our commitment to listen to your complaints and concerns and of our process. We take complaints very seriously and we treat them as an opportunity to develop. This is why we are always very grateful to hear from people who are willing to take the time to help us improve.

We believe that the best way to resolve a problem quickly is directly and thereby hopefully remove the need for a ‘formal complaint’ to be made. This way we can make sure that we fully understand the issue and can gather all of the information that we need to resolve the problem in a fast and effective way. However, should a formal complaint be made, a simple, staged process will be followed as provided below.

We are a charity with limited resources and we must use these in the best way possible. As such, wherever possible we will deal with the complaint made as quickly as possible, if we think it will take longer than the time measures set out below, we will let you know.

We will work to ensure all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible, resolved to the complainants satisfaction. Please feel free when contacting us about a complaint, to let us know how you think it could be resolved.

- There may be occasions when we cannot respond to a complaint. These include:
- When a complaint is about something that the Cavernoma Alliance UK has no direct connection to. We may choose to reply to clear our name but we are not obliged to.
- When a complainant unreasonably pursues a complaint that we have already responded to they will be given escalation points but we may choose not to reply again; we will always inform you of our decision to do this.
- When a complainant is being obviously abusive, prejudiced or offensive in their manner.
- When a complainant is harassing a member of the Cavernoma Alliance UK administration (any person who is working for or on behalf of the Cavernoma Alliance UK as approved by the Trustees).
- When a complaint is incoherent or illegible.

- When a complaint has clearly been sent to us and numerous other organisations as part of a bulk mailing or email. In this instance we can choose whether it is necessary for us to reply or not.
- Cavernoma Alliance UK cannot respond to complaints made anonymously. However, we will investigate the complaint and use the information to improve in any way that we can.
- Any complaints received over social media will be handled on a case by case basis and done so in a way to ensure that any private information is not shared publicly.

If you want to tell us of a complaint or of a compliment, you can:-

- Send an email to info@cavernoma.org.uk
- Send a letter in the post to Unit 601 (CAUK), 20, The Grove Industrial Estate, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1ST

Complaints Process

Stage 1

Once a complaint has been received by a member of the Cavernoma Alliance UK administration, efforts should be made to informally resolve the matter with the complainant. If the matter cannot be informally resolved, it will be referred to the Trustees of Cavernoma Alliance UK.

The Trustees will then agree a member of the Trustee Board to investigate the matter. The 'investigator' should be a suitably experienced in handling complaints to take on this role; what experience is deemed suitable will be decided by the Trustees when agreeing the investigator. The basis for this decision will be shared with the complainant.

Should the matter be outside the responsibility of our Complaints Policy (as above), the Trustees will let the complainant know.

Stage 2

The complaint will then be investigated by the investigator. The investigator will write to the complainant advising them of their appointment and that the complaint has been received. The investigator will invite the complainant to share what has happened with them, why they feel the need to complain, and what resolution they feel would be appropriate.

The investigator, as part of the investigation, may also look into other lines of enquiry relevant to the complaint, for example questioning other parties who may have been involved or obtaining other relevant evidence.

The investigator will then conclude their investigation and inform the Trustees of the outcome and any resultant recommendations or findings. The Trustees will review the investigation and decide whether they support the findings:

- Should the Trustees feel the investigation is unsatisfactory or incomplete, the investigator will be asked to re-investigate or complete the investigation.
- Should the **Trustees** feel the investigation findings are inappropriate, they may request a re-investigation by the investigator or appoint another investigator to consider the matter, or suggest a different outcome, to be agreed by the Trustees.
- Should the Trustees feel the investigation findings are appropriate, the complainant and interested parties will be informed and advised of the outcome.

We will try to ensure that the investigation is concluded within 28 days of the Trustees receiving the complaint. Wherever possible we will deal with it more quickly; if we think it will take longer we will let the complainant know and give you a new date for our response.

Delays out of the control of the investigator

If at any point during the investigation, a delay in responding to/providing correspondence is encountered by the investigator, the complainant should be notified of the delay and be given details of when a response will be provided. If the complainant's lack of response is the cause

of the delay, the investigator may apply to the Trustees for the investigation to be discontinued due to a lack of engagement. If there is sufficient information for the investigator to conclude their investigation despite a delay from any party involved, the investigator should continue with the investigation to its conclusion.

Conflicts of Interest

Should the complaint relate to a Trustee, that Trustee will not be permitted to be involved in the appointment of the investigator or in consideration of the appropriateness of the investigation or its findings. This will therefore ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that the investigation remains fair, confidential and impartial.

Appeals

Should the complainant not be happy with the findings of the investigation, in the first instance, they should try to resolve the matter with their investigator.

Should they remain unhappy, they should write to the Trustees advising them of their concerns and why they find the investigation or recommended outcome(s) to be inappropriate.

The Trustees will then consider their representations and either:

- Uphold the appeal and state what further steps should be taken to address the concerns
- Refuse the appeal, stating their reasons for doing so.

Charities Commission

Should the complainant remain unhappy after the appeals process has been exhausted, they should contact the Charities Commission using the information at:

<https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>