**Contemplative Fire Comments, Compliments and Complaints procedure**

Contemplative Fire makes every effort to provide a high standard of service and to treat all Companions, Friends and all those who come into contact with the Community equally and fairly. We continuously try to improve our provision and we value any feedback that will help us to do this.

Contemplative Fire will review all comments, feedback and complaints, and our feedback procedures on a regular basis. This helps us to develop our Community in order that you may benefit the most from it, so please let us know what you think.

**Compliments and Comments:**

If you are happy with what we are doing and provide, we would appreciate hearing from you and would value your comments. There are a number of ways you can do this: either speak to one of the Trustees or Hub members or the Community Administrator or email or write to us. Contact details are at the end of the policy.

**Complaints:**

We also want to know if there is anything that you are unhappy with. We take all feedback seriously and we will take action when appropriate to do so. All complaints will be dealt with in a timely and professional manner. Please note that Contemplative Fire may publish the replies given to any queries raised, but will respect the confidentiality of the individuals concerned.

Contemplative Fire views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person that has made the complaint.

Our policy is:-

* To provide a fair complaints procedure which 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
* To make sure everyone in Contemplative Fire knows what to do if a complaint is received
* To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way
* To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and relationships are repaired and reconciliation explored
* 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 Contemplative Fire.

Complaints may come from:

* A person who is dissatisfied with the service that they have received from a member of staff or any authorised persons, either employed, or in a voluntary capacity, by Contemplative Fire.
* Concern relating to policies for running Contemplative Fire or decisions taken by Trustees or the Hub.
* A person who is dissatisfied with the behaviour of a member (Companion or Friend in a specific voluntary or employed role) of Contemplative Fire.

A formal complaint can be received by e-mail or in writing. It is our policy that we will not investigate anonymous complaints. This policy does not cover matters relating to safeguarding which should be referred directly to the Community Administrator who will refer the matter to the Trustee with responsibility for Safeguarding and to the relevant Anglican Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser .

If other complaints processes apply, for example bullying and harassment , the person complaining will be directed and helped to access them.

**Including the following details will help us to effectively and quickly investigate your complaint:**

* The specific person, area, event, service or resource to which the complaint applies.
* Your name and contact details: this is essential as we will not investigate anonymous complaints.
* Outline the nature of your complaint as precisely as possible. This will help us to investigate further and hopefully to resolve the issue. Please include details such as the place and time the incident occurred if these apply.
* Please let us know if you have already reported the complaint, and if any action was taken previously.

Please note that we endeavour at all times to treat everyone with respect, and we expect the same standards of behaviour from all those who are in contact with the Community.

**Contacting Contemplative Fire with a Complaint**

Written complaints may be sent in the first instance by email or letter to the Community Administrator who will forward these to the appropriate Companion for investigation. Contact details are at the end of this policy.

Complaints received by telephone or in person need to be recorded by means of detailed notes. Complaints by telephone or in person should in the first instance be made to the Community Administrator, or to a member of the Board of Trustees, or the Hub. The person who receives a complaint by telephone or in person 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 Contemplative Fire
* Tell the complainant that we have a complaints procedure
* Tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take.
* Where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by e-mail so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant’s own words.

**Resolving Complaints**

***Informal approach***

In many cases a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue which has led to the complaint. 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.

If following the informal process is not satisfactory or not deemed appropriate by either party, then the formal procedure should be followed.

***Formal Stage***

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved, they can escalate the complaint to the formal process. At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the Chair of Trustees.

Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within a week. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaints procedure should be attached.

A suitable Companion may be appointed to investigate the facts of the case. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with anyone who may have been involved with the complaint at the informal stage.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given an opportunity to respond. The person who dealt with the original complaint at the informal stage should be kept informed of what is happening where this is appropriate.

Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within 28days. If this is not possible, because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint. Where disciplinary action of an employee is deemed appropriate, the reply to the complainant will not include details relating to individual staff member’s employment record.

It should be recognised that in some instances people will take positions where the matter cannot be resolved. However, the aim should be to ensure that the process respects those involved and is just in providing an active concern to those who are vulnerable, marginalised or oppressed.

The decision taken at this stage is final, unless Contemplative Fire decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

***External stage***

The complainant can complain to the Charity Commission at any stage. The Commission’s involvement in looking at complaints is limited to issues that pose a serious risk of significant harm to a charity’s beneficiaries, assets, services or reputation. Information about the kind of complaints the Commission can involve itself in can be found on their website at:

[www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc47.aspx](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc47.aspx)

**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 is with the Trustees of Contemplative Fire.

**Variation of the Complaints procedure**

Contemplative Fire may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about the Chair of Trustees should not also have the Chair of Trustees as the person leading the formal process.

**Contact Details:**

Community Administrator

Contemplative Fire

The Circle

33 Rockingham Lane

Sheffield S1 4FW

Email: info@contemplativefire.org

Tel: 07896 342907