

Complaints

Date approved	07/05/2026
Review due by	07/05/2028 <i>(every two years)</i>

Policy Statement

Hope into Action: Coventry (HiA:C) is committed to providing high quality services in an efficient, effective and economic way, and within approved budgets.

Complaints are a valuable source of feedback, helping to understand how and why things go wrong and enabling the charity to prevent reoccurrence. Where mistakes have been made, Hope into Action will ensure that appropriate action is taken to rectify them.

The objectives of the Complaints Policy are as follows:

- resolve complaints at the first point of contact wherever possible, without recourse to the formal procedures;
- make it easy to complain and to ensure that all those HiA:C work with know how to do so;
- ensure that the complainant (or the person acting on their behalf) has prompt and regular feedback on the progress of the complaint;
- ensure that the complainant is dealt with confidentially, effectively and fairly.
- record all complaints, identify any negative trends in service delivery and take action to maintain and improve service quality and effectiveness,
- deal effectively with vexatious or unreasonable complaints.

Reasonable Adjustments

The aim is to make this policy easy to use and accessible for everyone. HiA:C will take steps to make any reasonable adjustments needed to access this policy, or any requests to provide responses in other formats.

If you are unable to contact HiA:C in writing because of a disability and need a reasonable adjustment, please call us on 07490510443

Confidentiality and Data Protection

All complaint information will be handled sensitively. HiA:C will only inform those who need to know and will record complaints confidentially.

HiA:C will process any personal data collected in accordance with the Charity's Data Protection Policy. Any personal data collected will be held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of dealing with the complaint.

Any personal data collected will be retained in accordance with the Charity's GDPR Policy and in line with legislation.

For information about what HiA:C do with personal data, see the privacy notice.

Formal and Informal Complaints

All complaints are usually dealt with at the first point of contact with a member of staff (usually the person handling the enquiry), and the aim is to resolve the issue 'there and then'. If it cannot be resolved at that point of contact then the complaint will need to be escalated to the formal process. Staff should offer help for complaints to be made or support complainants to get advice from Citizens Advice Bureau.

HiA:C would hope to deal with the majority of complaints at a local and informal level. However, there will be occasions when senior members of staff are involved in resolving difficult or more complex issues.

Formal complaints may arise if the informal complaint process is not resolved satisfactorily, or if the complainant wishes to formally complain about a matter. In such cases the staged procedure will be followed.

All formal and informal complaints will be recorded to identify trends and make improvements to service delivery.

Procedure

Contents

1. How to make a complaint.....	3
2. Complaint Levels	3
3. Time Frames, Recording and Reporting	4
4. Unreasonable, persistent, and vexatious complaints.....	5

1. How to make a complaint

A person making a complaint can contact HiA:C by:

	In Person	Any person can freely request to speak to any member of staff to raise a complaint.
	Letter	Send to: Hope into Action: Coventry, Halo Centre, Progress Way, Coventry, CV3 2NT
	Email	coventry@hopeintoaction.org.uk
	Telephone	07940510443
07 	Website	https://coventry.hopeintoaction.org.uk

2. Complaint Levels

2.1 Level One Complaints

These are complaints which can be resolved by the Empowerment Worker or Franchise Manager. Complaints may be received verbally or in writing, but all are recorded by HIA:C with the resolution or outcome. The Franchise Manager should notify the Chair of Trustees of any serious formal complaints.

2.2 Level Two Complaints

These are complaints which either cannot be resolved by the Empowerment Worker or Franchise Manager, or the complainant does not feel that the situation has been resolved satisfactorily and is asking for a review by the Board of Trustees.

3. Time Frames, Recording and Reporting

- Once have received a complaint, receipt will be acknowledged as soon as is practically possible and within three working days.
- The staff member dealing with the complaint will review the complainant's comments and respond within twenty-one days, offering an explanation and resolution.
- If the Empowerment Worker and Franchise Manager are unable to deal with the complaint, it will be elevated to Level Two and passed to The Board of Trustees.
- If the response from the Empowerment Worker and Franchise Manager is unsatisfactory, the complainant can ask for a review of the complaint, and this will elevate it to Level Two, and it will be passed to the Board of Trustees. Upon receipt of the elevated complaint, the Board of Trustees also have twenty-one days to respond.

STAGE	PROCESS	TIMESCALE
1.	<p>Acknowledgement</p> <p>Once HiA:C have received a complaint, receipt will be acknowledged as soon as is practically possible.</p>	Within 3 working days
2.	<p>Review</p> <p>A staff member will review the complaint and offer an explanation and/or resolution where possible.</p>	Written response within 21 days.
3.	<p>Elevation / Appeal</p> <p>If the Empowerment Worker and Franchise Manager are unable to deal with a complaint, it will be elevated to Level Two and passed to the.</p> <p>If the response from the Empowerment Worker and Franchise Manager is unsatisfactory, the complainant can ask for a review of the complaint; this will elevate it to Level Two, and it will be passed to the. Upon receipt of the elevated complaint, the Board of Trustees also have twenty-one days to respond.</p>	<p>The will have 21 days to respond to a Level Two complaint.</p> <p>In the event of an appeal, the Board of Trustees will have a further 21 days to review the complaint.</p>
5.	<p>FOR TENANCY RELATED ISSUES</p> <p>Referral to the Housing Ombudsman Service 81 Aldwych, London, WC2B 4HN. Tel: 0300 111 3000</p>	The Ombudsman, or successor organisation, will advise of the timescales.

Recording and Reporting

HIA:C are required to handle and record all complaints they receive at all levels. Hope into Action UK will only step in if the local Board fails to, or is unable to, address them adequately.

- There is no requirement for HIA:C to inform HIA UK about Level 1 complaints unless they are elevated to Level 2.
- Hope into Action UK require HIA:C to notify them within 24 hours of any serious complaint made to them relating to Hope into Action work, using the email complaints@hopeintoaction.org.uk.

4. Unreasonable, persistent, and vexatious complaints

Examples of complaints which Hope into Action: Coventry would consider unreasonable, persistent or vexatious could include those in which the complainant:

- has previously made the same or a similar complaint which has been investigated but not upheld, and there is no further information in support of a new complaint;
- is aggressive or abusive to staff, contractors or others working on behalf of Hope Into Action;
- fails to engage in the complaints process or uses it as a form of protest.

In such cases the Franchise Manager shall review each such complaint separately. *It will not be assumed that someone who has been unreasonable or vexatious in the past might be so with the current complaint.* The Franchise Manager will decide whether the complaint falls under this definition and write to the complainant advising him/her of this decision.

Information about the procedure and the right to take the complaint to the Ombudsman will be provided. The following courses of action may be taken:

- termination of the complaint;
- restricting all communications to writing;
- declining further communication about a specific issue;
- dealing with the complaint in a different way to that outlined in the policy and guidelines.

Such complaints shall be recorded and analysed in the same way as all other complaints.