

Cymorth Cymru Complaints Procedure

As a membership organisation, Cymorth Cymru places great value on the positive relationships we have with our members. If you have any feedback at all about how we work, we warmly encourage you to let us know. If you are concerned about actions we have taken or have other comments that you would like to be addressed, please contact our Director for an informal conversation. We welcome feedback – both positive and negative – and will always do our best to listen and learn from it to make sure that we improve our members' experience of our services.

If you have tried the informal route and are not satisfied with the response you have received, or if your concern is a serious one and you would like to make a more formal complaint, please use the process below.

Thank you.

What is the complaints process there to achieve?

- To make it as easy as possible for you to raise your complaint
- To listen to your complaint and consider how we can resolve it
- To deal with complaints fairly, effectively and in a timely way
- To use your complaints constructively to improve our organisation and services

What am I able to complain about?

Cymorth Cymru is a membership umbrella organisation. Complaints can be made about any elements of our services and activities, staff members and specific conditions of membership. We cannot accept complaints about our member organisations, and if any exist they should be sent directly to the relevant contact at that organisation.

Can I raise the issue informally first?

Yes. Cymorth Cymru is committed to listening to and responding to its members. If any of our members are unhappy with what we have done, we would welcome the opportunity to receive feedback or comments informally, which might negate the need for a formal complaints process.

Please note, raising the issue informally does not affect your right to complain in the future.

Who should I raise my complaint with?

Please email your complaint in writing to cymorthmatters@cymorthcymru.org.uk, marked **Private and Confidential FAO Director: COMPLAINT**.

Alternatively, please send it directly to us at:

COMPLAINTS
Cymorth Cymru
Norbury House
Norbury Road
Fairwater
Cardiff
CF5 3AS

This letter should include:

- The nature of your complaint.
- The name of the individual or event if applicable.
- As much information as you can give that would enable our investigation to proceed smoothly (including dates, times, location, etc).

We will aim to reply to your initial contact within five working days.

Please note that whilst we welcome feedback of all kinds on Twitter, through blogs and other digital media, we will always recommend complaints are sent to us officially, so that they can be individually investigated and addressed.

What happens from there?

- We aim to assess your complaint and get an initial response to you within fourteen working days.
- We will take seriously all complaints received and will always seek to find a solution.
- If we cannot resolve the complaint informally with you, we will seek to investigate.
- The Director will have overall responsibility for the investigation and will delegate this as necessary. S/he will consider the nature of the complaint, and will identify appropriate staff members or Board Members to conduct the investigation (or will conduct the investigation themselves if more appropriate), as well as overseeing the process and timeliness of the investigation.
- Where relevant, the Chair of the Board or another Board member can fulfil this organising and oversight role.
- The investigation (see above) will generally be conducted by staff members and / or Board members of Cymorth Cymru, as appointed by the Director. You might be contacted to help with this process, as will the person against whom the complaint was made, or relevant manager if the complaint concerns a service.
- If your complaint relates to the Director, please address your correspondence to the Chair of the Board of Cymorth Cymru. If you do not feel comfortable addressing your complaint to the Chair, contacting any other Board Member is also acceptable.
- If relating to the Chair or a Board Member, the Director remains the appropriate first point of contact.
- This investigation should last no longer than fourteen working days. If it is not possible to conclude within fourteen working days, we will be in touch with you to explain why.
- Once we have completed our investigation and drawn our conclusions, we will contact you in writing to share any outcomes and further actions.
- **We are firmly committed to learning from any complaint. With any complaint we will assess what can be improved as a result, so that similar issues do not arise again in the future.**
- **Complaints and outcomes will always be circulated to our full Board to ensure effective oversight.**

How can I appeal a decision?

- If you are unhappy with the outcome of our investigation, you can appeal to the Director or the Chair of the Board of Cymorth Cymru within 28 working days of the investigation's conclusion.
- The Director or Chair of the Board may convene a complaints and/or appeal panel. If the complaint is against the Board of Cymorth, this panel will be independent.
They will:
 - Act as final arbiter and decision-maker for complaints with respect to services and activities, including those carried out by Cymorth members in Cymorth's name
 - Act as final level appeal for Cymorth members in dispute with Cymorth (for example, over non-payment of membership fees)

Complaints and Appeal Panel

A panel of three board members will be formed when requested by the Director / Chair of the Board

The panel will aim to reflect Cymorth's range of membership, as well as aiming for a diverse membership and gender balance

The panel will elect its own Chair

The panel will meet to consider the complaint within 14 working days of the receipt of appeal.

The panel Chair will be responsible for the process of the panel, including communication with all relevant persons and the gathering of evidence

The Director will ensure that the panel is provided with appropriate administrative support and advice as requested

The panel will aim to reach decision by consensus, will gather what evidence it needs, and will communicate its decision to the relevant parties

The panel may also make recommendations, which will be communicated to relevant parties, as well as to the Director / Chair of Board.

The Chair of the Panel will report its decision to the Director / Chair of the Board together with any recommendations for future policy or procedures resulting from the hearing.

There is no further stage of appeal.