

# Cornerstone Comments, Concerns and Complaints (CCC) Procedure (May 2022)

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## Introduction

- Cornerstone is committed to listen to all comments, concerns and complaints (CCCs) from all sources, to ensure handling of them in a timely and appropriate manner and to ensure lessons are drawn.
- Members of Cornerstone are mindful that all people are fallible and that a formal complaint should be a last resort. Our desire is that those with concerns relating to any aspect of Cornerstone's work will do all that they can to resolve their concerns informally, rather than escalating them into a formal complaint. We would ask and advise everyone to follow Scriptural principles (specifically St Matthew's Gospel Chapter 18) of reconciling differences with our brothers and sisters in Christ wherever possible, before resorting to this formal process.
- Accordingly, the formal Complaints process should only be instigated when either: attempts to resolve the issue informally have failed  
or:  
where, due to the nature of the complaint, it is not appropriate to address it informally.
- The Procedure envisages the Ecumenical Council will appoint a Complaints Moderator (CM) and Deputy (DCM) both of whom may be drawn from Cornerstone Members, Ministers or Staff. They will oversee the Procedure and be supported by a small group notified to the Ecumenical Council.
- At various stages, Panels will be used. The panel members will not have been involved in the particular issue, complaint or appeals and will be chosen, with regard to the nature of the complaint, from a Standing Group of 6 to 8 Cornerstone members approved annually by the Ecumenical Council and Trading Company. Any Panel's conclusions must be unanimous. If all standing group members are connected with a case, or are not available for other reasons, the Complaints Moderator can approach other longstanding church members to be on panels.
- Confidentiality will be maintained at all times to the maximum possible level consistent with the CCC under review.

## Procedure

### Receipt

- Comments, Concerns or Complaints (CCCs) may be passed to the CM/DCM directly or via ministers, Ecumenical Council Chair, members of the Ecumenical Council, Cornerstone staff, receptionists, or Trading Company Directors or entered in an Observations Log in Reception. All CCCs will be noted and passed to the relevant people.

#### **Note: THE REST OF THIS PROCEDURE REFERS TO COMPLAINTS**

- If there is a complaint, the CM/DCM will contact the complainant within seven days, acknowledge receipt, decide if the complaint can be resolved informally or not, and advise the complainant of the process and timescale to be followed.
- Complainants will be asked/helped to complete the CCC form (Attachment 1) and summary details entered into the log.
- If the CM/DCM believes the complaint has merit it will be accepted by the CM/DCM or referred, where appropriate, to other officers for investigation and resolution (See Attachment 2).
- **If the complaint concerns disagreement with a properly arrived at decision of the Ecumenical Council, Congregation or Trading Company Directors, it will not be considered under this Complaints procedure.**
- Should the CM/DCM consider the complaint does not have merit the complainant will be given the reasons in writing.
- Unless bound by Statute, complaints will not normally be considered if they are made later than 60 days after the issue arose.
- Any complaints about the CM or DCM should be given to the Ecumenical Council Chair who will act as Interim Complaints Moderator and follow this Procedure.

### Resolution

- The CM/DCM will consider the complaint and decide if informal resolution between the parties involved is possible. If this cannot be achieved the CM/DCM will refer it to a Referred Body, if appropriate (see Attachment 2), or convene a panel of three people to consider the issue (which can include the CM/DCM) and meet with affected parties. At any meeting, parties involved may bring a friend. Referred Bodies will follow their own procedures. Complainants will be kept informed at all stages.
- The CM/DCM will report the Panel's conclusions to the complainant. Ideally this stage will be completed in 30 days. If it is necessary to take longer the complainant will be informed of progress.

### Review

- Should the complainant or other involved parties not be satisfied with the results of the CM/DCM's consideration and report, the Ecumenical Council Chair will, if requested by the complainant or respondent, convene and chair a Review Panel

involving two other Standing Panel members not previously involved in the issue. Referred Bodies will follow their own procedures if any.

- The Ecumenical Council Chair will advise the complainant of the conclusions of the panel. Ideally this stage will be completed in 30 days. If it is necessary to take longer the complainant will be informed of progress.
- If the complainant or respondent is not satisfied with this review they may approach the Ecumenical Oversight Group for an independent view.

### **Reporting**

- All complaints notified to the CM/DCM will be logged in brief with the dates of all relevant stages and events including action by Referred Bodies.
- Progress on outcomes or recommendations for action from the CM/DCM or Referred Bodies will be monitored by the CM/DCM.
- A summary of activity will be reported to the Ecumenical Council 3 times per year.

### **Records Retention**

- All records of closed issues will be held only by the CM/DCM and destroyed after three years. Involved panel members will be asked to affirm they have destroyed any records immediately issues are closed. Referred bodies will use their own procedures.
- Access to any record of resolved Complaints may be granted if approved by a Minister and the Ecumenical Council Chair.

### **Date of Next Review**

May 2023

# Appendix 1

## Information if you are thinking of making a Complaint

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Cornerstone appreciates feedback because it is used to improve how it serves its mission. You have the right to make a complaint about any aspect of Cornerstone activities. The information on this page will guide you through the complaints arrangements.

### Considering making a complaint but need help?

Many issues can be resolved quickly by speaking directly to the people involved. However, Cornerstone has a Complaints Moderator (CM) and Deputy Complaints Moderator (DCM) who can advise you on how you may proceed with a formal complaint and can help complete the attached form.

The Complaints Moderator will guide you through and facilitate the complaints progress but is not able to act as a mediator or go-between, act as adjudicator or ensure any specific outcome.

The contact details for the CM and DCM and outline of the Procedure are available at Reception or on the Cornerstone Website.

### Making a complaint

- Complaints should normally be made within 4 weeks of an incident or of the matter coming to your attention.
- You can make a complaint verbally, in writing, by email or by completing the attached Form. If you make your complaint verbally, a record of your complaint will be made on the Form and you'll be provided with a copy. If you use a letter or email, the information you provide will be transferred to the Form.

### What to expect

- You should expect an acknowledgement and the offer of a discussion about the nature and handling of your complaint within 7 working days of your complaint being received. If you accept a discussion it will be scheduled depending on the nature of your complaint
- Your complaint will be considered by the CM/DCM and, if necessary, an independent panel and you'll receive a written response. The response will set out the findings and, where appropriate, provide information about what is being done as a result of your complaint. It may also include information about how the complaint has been handled and details of your right to take your complaint to other relevant bodies.
- If you make a complaint but don't receive a final response or decision within 30 days, you will be told the reason for the delay.

## **Complaints about a Safeguarding Issue**

Complaints about safeguarding issues must be treated as highly confidential and will be addressed in accordance with the Cornerstone Safeguarding Policy. The CCC Procedure and all associated attachments must operate in accordance with the Cornerstone Safeguarding Policy. The process is outlined more fully in Attachment 2 of this Policy, *Issues referred to Other Competent Bodies*.

### **Please note:**

**If your complaint concerns disagreement with a properly arrived at decision of the Ecumenical Council, Congregation or Trading Company Directors, it will not be considered under this Complaints procedure.**

# Complaints Form

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You may use this form to register a complaint about any aspect of the Church of Christ the Cornerstone. Please send it to the Complaints Moderator or Deputy whose details are available at Reception or on the Website. Your Details will be kept confidential but you may, if you wish, include only your name and preferred method of contact.

If you wish, the Complaints Moderator could help you complete this form

**About you:**

Title:

Name:

Your address:

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Postcode:.....

**Your contact details: Please indicate your preferred method (X)**

Preferred Method

Home tel: .....

Mobile: .....

Email: .....

**About your complaint:**

Please give a brief overview of your complaint (Attach additional sheets if necessary)

(overview continued)

Please state the specific questions/issues which you would like Cornerstone to investigate and respond to:

Please include here the outcomes you are looking for.

**How we will respond to the concerns you have raised:**

Upon receipt of your completed complaint form the CM/DCM will contact you. This will be to discuss your complaint in greater detail for clarity. Within this discussion you will be asked what outcome you are looking for and the process and timescales will be discussed with you. You will also be asked to consider during this conversation how you would like to receive the response to your complaint e.g. verbally, in writing or in a meeting with affected parties.

**Your Agreement:**

I confirm that I am happy to be contacted to discuss my complaint and for the details to be shared with Panel members as necessary:

Signed.....

Print name.....

Date.....

Please either email this complaint form to the Complaints Moderator (email address) or mail it to Cornerstone marked CONFIDENTIAL and for the attention of the CM/DCM, or hand it into Reception in a sealed CONFIDENTIAL envelope

**THANK YOU**