



## CO-MISSION CHURCHES TRUST

### COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

*As a Christian organisation, we consider this to be a highly important procedure. However, we also hope it will seldom be required. Before raising a formal concern through this procedure, we would expect and encourage you to seek resolution informally. Therefore, in the first instance, please contact the member of church staff involved and provide them with the opportunity to resolve your concerns. You may also address any concerns with the church's senior pastor, whose leadership responsibilities include managing the church's staff. If your concerns relate to the senior pastor, you may prefer to contact one of the other church elders before making a formal complaint.*

#### 1. ABOUT THIS PROCEDURE

1.1 The Co-Mission Churches Trust ("CMCT") is the charity which seeks to advance the Christian faith throughout London and beyond by resourcing and operating the following churches: Christ Church at All Saints Wandsworth, Christ Church Balham, Cornerstone Church Kingston, Dundonald Church, Grace Church Worcester Park, Hope Church Sutton, Kings Church Walton and The Boathouse Church, Putney.

1.2 CMCT is committed to conducting Christian ministry with honesty and integrity. We are therefore careful in our recruitment and in our training and we expect all staff to maintain high standards. On very rare occasions, the conduct of CMCT staff may fall short of this expectation.

- (a) In the first instance, and for less serious matters of misconduct, we would expect and encourage those affected, to speak directly with the member of staff involved and to provide them with the opportunity to resolve any concerns on an informal basis. Unresolved concerns should then be taken to the church's senior pastor and/or the other church elders as required.

We hope that, in the vast majority of situations, concerns will be fully resolved at this stage, perhaps by staff providing further clarification or explanation, or by apologising and making amends. Where concerns are satisfactorily dealt with by the staff involved, the following procedure will not usually be required.

- (b) Where concerns are not dealt with satisfactorily by the local church, or are of such a serious nature that further contact with the staff involved would be inappropriate or potentially harmful, the following procedure should be followed.

1.3 This procedure may be used by anyone (whether or not a member of a CMCT church) who wishes to complain about the conduct of any CMCT staff. In this procedure, "staff" means any employee, worker, trustee, elder or consultant of CMCT.

1.4 This procedure should not be used by CMCT employees. If any employee of CMCT wishes to complain about the conduct of another employee, they should use the Grievance Procedure as set out in the CMCT Staff Handbook.

1.5 This procedure should not be used where there is a safeguarding concern about CMCT staff. In such instances, the concerns should be reported in accordance with the CMCT Safeguarding Policy. If there is uncertainty as to whether something constitutes



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a safeguarding concern, Stephen Hatherall should be contacted in the first instance (see contact details below).

- 1.6 Concerns should be reported as soon as possible so that they can be investigated promptly. We will always investigate such reports.
- 1.7 If you have any questions about this process please contact Stephen Hatherall by email: [stephen.hatherall@co-mission.org](mailto:stephen.hatherall@co-mission.org) or by phone 020 8181 5299.

### **2. HOW TO RAISE A CONCERN**

- 2.1 This procedure should be used to report complaints about any of our staff. We take all complaints extremely seriously. Examples (not exhaustive) of where it would be appropriate to use this procedure are: bullying behaviour, coercion, manipulation, dishonesty, inappropriate sexual behaviour, criminal activity, and bribery.
- 2.2 Any complaint should be submitted in writing (by post or email) to Stephen Hatherall (Co-Mission Churches Trust, The Church Hall, St. Andrew's Church, Herbert Road, London SW19 3SH or [stephen.hatherall@co-mission.org](mailto:stephen.hatherall@co-mission.org)) and you should clearly state that you want your complaint to be handled under the Complaints Procedure.
- 2.3 The complaint should set out:
  - (a) Your contact details;
  - (b) Whether or not you are a current or former member of a CMCT church;
  - (c) A brief description of the nature of your complaint, including any relevant facts, dates, and names of individuals involved.

In some situations we may ask you to provide further information.

- 2.4 We will aim to acknowledge receipt of your written complaint within 14 days of receipt.
- 2.5 All reports will be processed in accordance with our Privacy Policy.

### **3. CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 3.1 All complaints submitted under this procedure will be handled sensitively. We hope that you will feel able to voice concerns openly under this policy. Completely anonymous disclosures are difficult to investigate. If you want to raise your concern confidentially, we will make every effort to keep your identity secret and only reveal it where necessary to those involved in investigating your concern. Please notify us if you wish your concerns to be investigated confidentially in this way.

### **4. INVESTIGATIONS**

- 4.1 All complaints and concerns raised under this procedure are taken seriously and they will all be investigated, as long as you provide us with your contact details so that we can request further information from you (where necessary) and so that we can send you the outcome of the investigation. The amount of any investigation required will depend on the nature of the allegations and will vary from case to case. You will usually be invited to a meeting to discuss the nature of your complaint and the person



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being complained against will be excluded from that meeting unless all parties consent to their attendance.

- 4.2 You will be expected to co-operate fully and promptly in any investigation. This may include informing us of the names of any relevant witnesses, disclosing any relevant documents to us and attending interviews, as part of our investigation.
- 4.3 Following an assessment of the facts, a decision will be taken as to whether the matter can be dealt with internally or whether it is necessary to refer the matter to a third party for investigation, such as to an independent Christian organisation, the local authority or the police.

### **5. THE OUTCOME**

- 5.1 We will endeavour to resolve your complaint as promptly as we can, but if it gives rise to serious issues we may need to take time in order to conduct a thorough investigation.
- 5.2 You will be notified in writing of the outcome of the investigation as soon as possible.

### **6. REVIEW**

- 6.1 If the complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction you may request a review of the decision.
- 6.2 Requests for a review should be submitted in writing to Stephen Hatherall (see contact details above) within 14 days of the date on which the outcome of the investigation was sent or given to you.
- 6.3 The review will be dealt with impartially by a member of the CMCT staff (usually a senior employee, church elder or trustee) not involved in the previous investigation where possible (although they may ask anyone previously involved to contribute to their review of the previous decision).
- 6.4 We will confirm our final decision in writing, usually within four weeks of your submission of your request for a review. This is the end of the procedure and there is no further right of review.

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*(policy ends after section 6.4)*