

East Sussex Community Voice

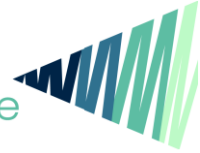
Complaints Policy

Policy Schedule

Version	Date of next review by ESCV Board	Date of adoption by ESCV Board
1	n/a	July 2021
2	August 2025	August 2025
3	August 2027	
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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Individuals and organisations have the right to express their views about the performance of East Sussex Community Voice (ESCV) CIC [including Healthwatch East Sussex] and the way in which it conducts its business.
- 1.2 We have a Complaints Policy so that anyone using or trying to use ESCV services can tell us if they are unhappy about the standard of our service or the fact that we have not provided a service.
- 1.3 Anyone who is dissatisfied with any aspect of the service received by ESCV can make a complaint under this policy.
- 1.4 We will treat both concerns and complaints in the same way, and we will review this policy on a regular basis.
- 1.5 It is the policy of ESCV to:
 - listen carefully to your concern;
 - try to find a resolution;
 - be polite, helpful and deal with your complaint fairly and efficiently;
 - let you know how we are getting on with your complaint, admitting any mistakes made and putting matters right wherever possible;
 - give the right of appeal against a decision made by the Chief Executive through escalation to the ESCV Board of non-Executive Directors;



- provide reasonable adjustments to the procedure set out below to empower those who need support in making a complaint, such as the right to be accompanied to any necessary meetings and provide accessible information in appropriate formats; and
- use your feedback to improve our service for all who need it.

1.6 Complaints we cannot deal with:

1. Complaints or concerns about the NHS, which should be dealt with through the [NHS complaints procedure](#) or via [complaints advocacy](#).
2. Complaints about the provision of social care services which should be dealt with by [East Sussex County Council's complaints procedure](#).

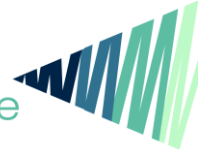
Our team can signpost you to the correct organisation that is best placed to handle your complaint.

2 Equality, diversity and inclusion

- 2.1 ESCV is committed to ensuring all complaints are handled free from any form of discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 2.2 ESCV will monitor this policy in order to identify whether it is having an adverse impact on any group of individuals and act accordingly.

3 Data protection

- 3.1 To help us handle your complaint we will keep a record of all the information we gather.
- 3.2 All information held and processed shall be treated in confidence. Such information will be shared with representatives of ESCV [including Healthwatch East Sussex] only to the extent required to resolve the complaint in accordance with this policy and procedure.
- 3.3 If the details of a complaint are to be used for quality improvement or training purposes, express permission will be sought from the complainant and personal details will be anonymised from all information prior to it being used.



- 3.4 All personal information collected by ESCV shall be handled in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as detailed in our Data Protection Policy.

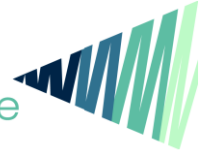
4 How to raise a concern or make a complaint about ESCV

4.1 Step by step guide below:

1. Let us know if you need our complaints procedure in a different format such as Easy Read, large print, another language or any other format and we will make reasonable adjustments to support you in sharing your concern or complaint with us.
2. In the first instance we would encourage you to tell us as soon as possible if you are unhappy with our service so that we can understand your concerns and quickly try to put things right for you.
3. Providing information or discussing misunderstandings and misconceptions at this early stage may enable your concern to be successfully resolved. Wherever possible we encourage people to share their concerns with us so we can act promptly.
4. You can discuss with any member of the team or contact us via telephone, email or letter (see our [contact details](#): ring 01323 403590 or email info@escv.org.uk).
5. If your concern cannot be resolved informally by speaking to the person or persons concerned, or is not resolved to your satisfaction, then you are able to submit a complaint to the Chief Executive of ESCV to enable an investigation to take place:

This should be in writing via email or letter. Please mark your correspondence as 'Private and Confidential' in the subject line of the email or on the envelope.

- **Email:** veronica.kirwan@escv.org.uk
 - **Letter:** Chief Executive Officer, East Sussex Community Voice, Unit 31, The Old Printworks, 1 Commercial Rd, Eastbourne BN21 3XQ
6. If your complaint relates to the Chief Executive Officer, then you can notify the Chair of the ESCV Board.



This should be in writing via email or letter. Please mark your correspondence as 'Private and Confidential' in the subject line of the email or on the envelope.

- **Email:** complaints@escv.org.uk
- **Letter:** The Chair, East Sussex Community Voice, Freepost RUGY-JESR-EEBG, Unit 31, The Old Printworks, 1 Commercial Rd, Eastbourne BN21 3XQ

7. The Chief Executive Officer or Chair will acknowledge your concern or complaint in writing (or in your preferred method of communication) within 5 working days.

They will contact you to acquire as much information as possible and explain how your concern or complaint will be handled.

8. The Chief Executive Officer or Chair will review and arrange the investigation of all concerns and complaints. They will gather relevant information and carefully evaluate it to decide on your complaint.

They will act to resolve your complaint within 10 working days of the submission of your complaint, and will advise you of the outcome in writing, explaining the decision and how it has been reached.

If more than 10 working days are needed, you will be contacted and updated with progress and a new timescale agreed.

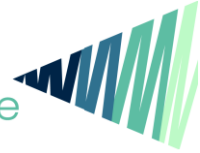
9. If you are not happy with the outcome at this stage, you will be able to appeal.

Please contact us within 10 working days of receiving your written reply from us, and your concern(s) will be passed to a member of the ESCV Board who has not previously been involved with your complaint.

They will review the facts and consider all the evidence to decide if your appeal is upheld. They will share their findings and confirm their decision to you in writing within a further 10 working days.

The decision of any appeal will be considered final. The concern or complaint will then be closed.

- 4.2 Please note - If the concern or complaint relates to a service commissioned by another organisation, or is undertaken under contract, you may be able or advised to use their complaints procedure. You will be informed if this is the case in the initial response to your correspondence.



5 Learning from concerns and complaints

- 5.1 Following the raising of any concerns or complaints, ESCV will review the service or procedure concerned, and discuss any recommendations for change arising from it and the subsequent investigation.
- 5.2 The outcome of the concern or complaint, including any corresponding learning or changes to services, will be reported to the next meeting of the ESCV Board.

6 Monitoring and review

- 6.1 The Board of East Sussex Community Voice has the ultimate responsibility for implementing and reviewing this policy. The Board will scrutinise our work on disclosure to ensure that we meet our legal, ethical and operational commitments.
- 6.2 The East Sussex Community Voice Chief Executive holds the day-to-day responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented.
- 6.3 This policy will be reviewed and updated on a two-year rolling basis by the East Sussex Community Voice Board.
- 6.4 This policy may be revised sooner if there is a change in working premises, conditions or laws directly affecting disclosure or any other aspect embedded in the document.

7 Related Policies

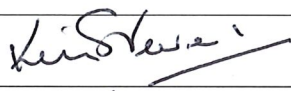
- 7.1 The following policies and procedures that are related to this policy include:
 - Volunteer Problem Solving Procedure
 - Data Protection Policy



7.2 Approval and Adoption

Author/Reviewer	Bethia Murray
Sponsor	Bethia Murray
Date of approval and adoption	August 2025
Date of next scheduled review	August 2027

Signature of East Sussex Community Voice CIC Board Chair

Name	Keith Stevens
Signature	
Date	21/08/25