

COMBE MILL SOCIETY

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Issue History

Issue N ^o	Date of Adoption	Reference in Minute Book	Comments
Issue 2	14/10/21	Minute ***	This version replaces Issue 1 issued in November 2015. Approved by the Board on the date of adoption.

Background

- 1 The Combe Mill Society is formally incorporated as a Charitable Company limited by guarantee. The Charity (hereinafter referred to as The Society) is managed by a Board of Directors (hereinafter referred to as the Board). The Directors are either appointed by the Charity's members in a general meeting or co-opted by the Board. (Articles 35 to 38 in the Society's Articles as amended on 30th July 2021 refer.)
- 2 This document describes the procedure that will be adopted for dealing with complaints about the Charity's procedures, administration or the actions of any of the Society's members or by volunteers working on behalf of the Society and with the board's consent. It does not cover complaints about the conduct of individual Members or volunteers* except insofar as the alleged conduct concern the business of the Charity.
- 3 Complaints about a policy decision made by the Board will be referred back to the Board for consideration.
- 4 If a complaint is notified orally to a Member, or to the Charity Secretary, a written record of the complaint will be made and kept by the Charity Secretary. The entry records the name and contact details of the complainant and the nature of the complaint.

Procedure

- 1 The complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Charity Secretary using either a letter or an e mail[†]. The complaint will be dealt with within 21 days of receipt.
 - Refusal to put the complaint in writing does not necessarily mean that the complaint cannot be investigated, but it is easier to deal with if it is in writing.
- 2 If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Charity Secretary (because the matter relates to the Charity Secretary, for example); he or she should be advised to write to the Chairman of the Board (hereinafter referred to as the Chairman).
 - a. On receipt of a written complaint, the Charity Secretary (except where the complaint is about his or her own actions) or the Chairman (if the complaint relates to the Charity Secretary), will seek to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. This will not be done without first notifying any person complained about and giving him or her an opportunity to comment. Efforts will be made to resolve the complaint at this stage.

* Members working at the Mill are assisted by volunteers. These volunteers are persons working at the Mill voluntarily, with the approval of the Board, but who are not members of the Society.

† The present Company Secretary's address is *** and his e-mail address is ***.

- b. Where the Charity Secretary or a member receives a written complaint about the Charity Secretary's actions, he/she shall refer the complaint to the Chairman. The Charity Secretary will be formally advised of the matter and given an opportunity to comment.
- 3 The Charity Secretary (or Chairman where appropriate) will report any complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant to the next meeting of the Board. The outcome of the complaint will be recorded in the Board's minutes.
- 4 The Charity Secretary (or Chairman where appropriate) will report any complaint that has not been resolved to the next meeting of the Board. The Charity Secretary will notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered and the complainant will be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint to the Charity orally.
- 5 Matters relating to Grievance or Disciplinary proceedings that are taking, or are likely to take place, will be dealt with in accordance with the Charity's Grievance or Disciplinary procedures as appropriate.
- 6 The Board may consider whether the circumstances of any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of members other than Directors, but any decision on the complaint will be recorded in the Board's minutes.
- 7 As soon as possible after the decision has been made (and in any event not later than 10 days after the meeting) the complainant will be notified in writing of the decision and any action to be taken.
- 8 The Charity may defer dealing with any complaint if it is of the opinion that issues arise on which further advice is necessary. If the decision is to be deferred the complainant will be notified of the delay and the reasons for it. The advice will be considered and the complaint dealt with at the next Board meeting after the advice has been received.