

COMBE MILL SOCIETY

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Issue History

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

Introduction

- 1 The Combe Mill Society is formally incorporated as a Charitable Company limited by guarantee. The Company (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 The Society takes all grievances seriously and believes that the aim should be to resolve all grievances as expeditiously as possible and at the lowest practicable managerial level. To that end all Members are encouraged to first seek resolution via the informal procedure. If it is not possible to resolve a grievance informally Members should follow the formal procedure.
- 3 It is the policy of the Board to give Members the opportunity to air and seek redress for any individual grievance which they may have in regard to their work at the Mill. Grievances may be any concerns, problems or complaints Members wish to raise with the Society.
- 4 This document describes the procedure which aims to facilitate a speedy, fair and consistent solution to an individual Member's grievance. This procedure has been designed to be consistent with the guidance (insofar as it applies to voluntary activities) in an ACAS document entitled "Discipline and Grievances at Work – the ACAS Guide"*.
- 5 It is not practicable to address some grievances via the present approach and the following topics are outside the scope of this procedure:
 - Disciplinary actions
 - Matters over which the Society has no control.
- 6 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. These volunteers are not covered by this procedure since the Society is not their employer.
- 7 To enable those working voluntarily to maximise their contribution during their period with the Mill the Society will adopt and apply to all volunteers the principles set out in the section entitled 'Voluntary Work by Non-members'.

Procedures

Dealing with grievances informally

- 1 Wherever possible, any grievance should be raised informally with either the Charity Secretary or the appropriate Head of Technical Area or his/her equivalent. In the case of the Charity

* Current edition as of 2021.

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Secretary raising a grievance this should be directed to the Chairman of the Board (hereinafter referred to as the Chairman). If the Charity Secretary's complaint is about the Chairman another Board Member can be identified to handle the Charity Secretary's concerns. The recipient of a grievance from the Charity Secretary should share the grievance with the Appointed Director and the issues should be treated with discretion and confidentiality at all times. The role of this director is defined in the section entitled 'Role of the Appointed Director'.

- 2 If the line manager dealing with the case or an aggrieved person believes that it is not suitable for resolution via the Informal route he/ she may request that a formal response is provided by the Appointed Director or, if the Appointed Director is already involved by another director nominated by the chairman.
- 3 The Appointed Director or his/her alternate will consider the evidence submitted by the aggrieved person and may discuss the concern with the aggrieved person and/or the appropriate line manager prior to issuing the Society's response.

Role of the Appointed Director

- 1 The Board shall appoint a director to be the Appointed Director to act on its behalf as the adjudicator in the first formal stage of a Disciplinary or Grievance issue. The Chairman and the Charity Secretary are ineligible to serve as the Appointed Director.

Formal Procedure

- 1 If the Member does not consider it appropriate to raise the grievance informally, or if requested by the person the Member spoke to informally, then the Member should submit a formal grievance in writing to the Charity Secretary or, if this is inappropriate, to the Chairman.
- 2 In all cases the written statement will be remitted to the Appointed Director.
- 3 Within a reasonable period of time the Appointed Director will arrange a meeting with the aggrieved Member. The Appointed Director will endeavour to make the meeting arrangements mutually convenient and will arrange a confidential location, free from interruptions.
 - a. The aggrieved person must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting.
 - b. Grievance meetings will normally be convened with 14 days of the Society receiving the Statement of Grievance.
 - c. The Member has the right to be accompanied to a grievance meeting by a fellow Member or by a friend.
 - d. If the meeting is inconvenient for either the Member or his or her companion, the Member has the right to postpone the meeting by up to 7 days.
- 4 The Appointed Director will investigate the substance of the complaint and hear submissions from the Member concerned, together with such other submissions or evidence as the Appointed Director shall consider appropriate, and will take such steps as he/she shall consider necessary to resolve the issue raised. Careful consideration of the evidence and the necessary steps required to resolve the problems will be given to the matters in the statement of grievance.
- 5 The Appointed Director may invite a Member to attend the meeting to assist in the preparation of a written record of the proceedings. Any such assistant may not participate in the meeting other than to seek clarification of a point for the record.
- 6 During the meeting:
 - a. The aggrieved Member may call witnesses by prior arrangement with the Appointed Director.

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- b. There is no right for a Member or volunteer implicated in a Member's grievance to cross examine the aggrieved during a grievance hearing but the Appointed Director may wish to make his/her own investigations through interviewing these individuals and/or other witnesses separately.
 - c. The Appointed Director may ask the Member what (s)he would like to happen as a result of raising the grievance and bear this in mind when preparing the response.
- 7 A grievance meeting may be adjourned to allow matters raised during the course of the meeting to be investigated, or to afford the Appointed Director time to consider his/her decision.
 - 8 After the meeting the Member will be informed of the Appointed Director's decision within 7 days. The decision will be confirmed to the Member in writing.
 - 9 If the Member wishes to appeal against the Appointed Director's decision, he/she must inform the Charity Secretary within 7 days of receiving the decision.
 - 10 Appeals can only be made on the following grounds:
 - The Member thinks the finding or any required actions are unfair
 - New evidence has come to light
 - The Member thinks that the procedure was not applied properly
 - 11 If the Member notifies the Charity Secretary that he/she wishes to appeal, the Member will be invited to attend a grievance appeal meeting with the Board. The Member must take all reasonable steps to attend that meeting. The Member has the right to be accompanied to a grievance appeal meeting by a fellow Member or by a friend.
 - 12 A grievance appeal meeting will normally be convened within 7 days of the Society receiving notice that the Member wishes to appeal pursuant to paragraph 11 above. If the meeting time is inconvenient for the Member or his or her companion, the Member may ask to postpone the meeting by up to 7 days.
 - 13 After the grievance appeal meeting the Member will be informed of the Board's final decision within 7 days. The Board's conclusion will be confirmed to the Member in writing.

Voluntary Work by Non-members

What follows is a statement of the principles that the Society will apply if a volunteer working at the Mill makes a Grievance complaint.

- The Society will apply the principles set out in the section entitled 'Dealing with grievances informally'; with the exception that the route to formal proceedings will not be available.