



Complaints Policy

Introduction:

We have very few instances of people complaining but when we do, it is important that we deal with the matter quickly and capture any learning points to improve our processes.

Definition of a Complaint:

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of Houghton Village Hall, encompassing the maintenance and rental of the hall, or about an individual acting on behalf of Houghton Village Hall.

If a complaint relates to safeguarding, the Safeguarding Policy will be used alongside this policy.

Everyone involved in running Houghton Village Hall is a volunteer. We pride ourselves on striving to always do our best for the community. Although we do not take responsibility for the hirers' actions, we care about the provision and facilities that are provided. When a concern is first raised, we will listen carefully and show an appreciation of the views and feelings of the person raising the concern. The concern will be dealt with by the Trustees as quickly, sympathetically, and effectively as possible. It is in everyone's interest that concerns or complaints are resolved at the earliest possible stage.

Procedure for making a formal complaint:

If you have a formal complaint to make, you should email the Chair at chair@houghtonvillagehall.org.uk or send a letter to the Chair (letter box outside the front door) which will be checked regularly.

If the complaint is about the Chair, the Chair will forward any email or letter to the Vice Chair.

The following information should be included:

- Name
- Contact details
- Date of the incident
- Details of the incident

The Chair will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within a maximum of 10 working days of receipt. The Chair will then decide how to proceed.

A written response will then be issued to the complainant within 20 working days of the day the receipt is acknowledged.

Whilst we will make every effort to reach a resolution when a complaint is made, we reserve the right not to engage with repeat or vexatious complainants.

Procedure for handling the complaint to be followed by the Trustees:

If there is a worry or concern raised by a hall user or hirer or member of the public, the Trustees will endeavor to address this as quickly as possible. Most matters can be resolved informally.

If the person feels that the issue is still not resolved and feels that they wish to make a formal complaint, then the above procedure is followed.

This includes comments made on social media platforms.

The Trustees will ask the complainant to put their complaint in writing to include the information as set out above and send to the Chair by email or post.

The Chair and Vice Chair monitor the inbox and letter box and will ensure that the complaint is acknowledged within 10 working days of receipt. Any letter will be date stamped on the day of receipt by the Chair or Vice Chair.

The Chair and Vice Chair will then consider the next steps.

There will be a written response within 20 working days of acknowledgement of the receipt of the complaint. The response will detail any actions taken to investigate the complaint and provide a full explanation of the decision made and the reason(s) for it. Where appropriate, it will include details of actions the Trustees will take to resolve the complaint.

The complaint will be shared at the next committee meeting which will include the following:

- What the issue was
- When it occurred
- Who raised it and when
- How it was resolved
- Were there any learning points?

We will adhere to the Confidentiality and Data Protection guidance.

If the complainant is still not satisfied, then the Chair will consider next steps in order to resolve the matter as effectively as possible for all parties concerned.

Peter Pollard (Chair of the Trustees)

Approved by the Trustee Board: 11 September 2025

Review Date: September 2028 (3 years)