

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Purpose: to ensure that comments and complaints from members, the public and stakeholders are appropriately dealt with and lessons learned.

1. Feedback from members, the public and stakeholders will always be welcomed as an opportunity for improving the work of the Society. Feedback may include informal comments or suggestions or more formal complaints about the actions of the Society.
2. The Trustees will designate one of their membership who is not an Officer to be responsible for dealing with comments and complaints.
3. Comments and complaints may be emailed to info@penleehouse.org.uk or made in writing to the Friends c/o Penlee House Gallery and Museum. Every attempt will be made to acknowledge receipt within ten working days.
4. The Trustee dealing with the matter will investigate the circumstances and may ask the complainant for further information. The name of the complainant will only be disclosed to other Trustees or to persons employed on the Society's business if it is necessary for dealing with the complaint (for example, if it is about a member's subscription). A reply will be sent to the complainant within ten working days of acknowledgement of receipt.
5. The reply will
 - provide an explanation of what has been found or why the action concerned was taken
 - if the Society is fault, offer an apology and explain what will be done to rectify the matter and who will be responsible for this
 - explain what will be done to ensure that the error or fault does not recur.
6. Some comments or complaints may be concerned with the Gallery and Museum rather than with the Friends. If so the complaint will be passed to the Gallery Director and the complainant informed accordingly.
7. Comments and complaints dealt with according to the above procedure will be reported to the next meeting of the Trustees.

8. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, they may request that it should be reconsidered by all the Trustees. This will be done electronically and a response made within ten working days.
9. If for any reason the timescales above cannot be met, the complainant will be informed to that effect and given a date by which a response will be made.
10. If the Trustee dealing with the complaint considers that it is sufficiently grave or complex, it will be referred immediately to all the Trustees and the complainant will be informed accordingly.
11. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the consideration by all the Trustees, the matter may be referred by mutual agreement to an independent arbitrator, the choice to be proposed by the Trustees.
12. There is normally no recourse to the Charities Commission, which cannot be involved if the Trustees are acting in accordance with the law and their governing document. The Charity Commission may be involved if it decides there is some grave general risk to the charity's interests. (Please consult the Charity Commission website for further details.)
13. In the rare instance of a complaint being vexatious (that is, when repeated communications are made after the avenues above have been exhausted) The Chair of Trustees will review correspondence and may inform the complainant that no further replies will be sent.
14. A record will be kept of all comments and complaints and their outcomes and a summary included in the Trustees' Annual Report.

Approved by the Trustees: 4 October 2023