

POLICY FOR REPORTING SERIOUS INCIDENTS

Purpose: to ensure that serious incidents are properly dealt with and reported fully and promptly to the Charity Commission and to any other relevant parties.

1. The Charity Commission defines a 'serious incident' as an adverse event, actual or alleged, which results in or risks significant: harm to the charity's beneficiaries, staff, volunteers or others who come into contact with the charity through its work; loss of the charity's money or assets; damage to the charity's property; harm to the charity's work or reputation. A list of the main categories of reportable incident is below.¹
2. The Trustees are responsible for reporting serious incidents. The Secretary, as the Society's account-holder with the Charity Commission, will be responsible for providing the report to the Charity Commission, using the online reporting form. and will do so in consultation with the Chair and Treasurer. The report will be provided as soon as is reasonably possible.
3. In the event of an actual or alleged serious incident becoming known, the Chair will urgently convene an actual or virtual meeting of the Trustees to determine whether this should be treated as a serious incident, ensure that the facts are understood, undertake any further investigations which may be needed, and decide on appropriate action or mitigation. This will include action to prevent any recurrence. The meeting will also decide what communication is required with members and stakeholders. The meeting will be minuted. The Trustees will work to the detailed guidance and procedures provided by the Charity Commission <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>
4. As appropriate, a serious incident will be reported without delay to any relevant agency and to the Society's accountants. In addition the Director of Penlee House gallery and Museum will be informed in view of the potential reputational damage to the Gallery and Museum, and her assistance sought in taking appropriate action or mitigating risk.
5. A serious incident will also be reported in the Trustees' Annual Report and the annual return to the Charity Commission

- protecting people and safeguarding incidents – incidents that have resulted in or risk significant harm to beneficiaries and other people who come into contact with the charity through its work
- financial crimes – fraud, theft, cyber-crime and money laundering
- large donations from an unknown or unverifiable source, or suspicious financial activity using the charity’s funds
- other significant financial loss
- links to terrorism or extremism, including ‘proscribed’ (or banned) organisations, individuals subject to an asset freeze, or kidnapping of staff
- other significant incidents, such as – insolvency, forced withdrawal of banking services without an alternative, significant data breaches/losses or incidents involving partners that materially affect the charity.