

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Complaints Policy Information		
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Policy update prepared by:	Diane Hicks (Operations & Resources Manager)	
Policy reviewed by:	Operations & Resources Committee	
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Signature and Date	Name: NEIL PERRY	Signed: <i>Neil Perry</i> Date: 05/02/25
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This Policy aims to provide an easy process for all users and partnership bodies etc to put forward any issues they may have about our service or incidents they may have encountered. This should then in turn enable us to prevent future problems and to improve all our services as well as a chance to put things right.

Our Policy is:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
- To make sure everyone at Romsey Mill knows what to do if a complaint is received
- To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
- To gather information which helps us to improve what we do

Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of Romsey Mill's procedures or individual.

Where Complaints Come From

Complaints may come from any person or organisation that has a legitimate interest in Romsey Mill. A complaint can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing.

Confidentiality

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

Responsibility

Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the board of Trustees.

PROCEDURES

For the complainant

Will I achieve anything if I complain?

It is important that you feel able to make a complaint without worrying about how we will respond. We want to stress that we will not be offended or upset if you complain. We will not treat you differently in the future just because you have complained. We have a Complaints Policy which is based on the following values:

- Respect – We treat everyone with fairness, respect and dignity
- Approach – We put as much emphasis on the way we do things as on what we do
- Partnership – We develop open communication and equal relationships with our programme participants (service users), staff and partners which value their contributions and enable us to work together effectively
- Openness – We are open, positive and flexible towards new ideas and encourage innovation and creativity that improves the outcomes from our services
- Delivery – We do what we say we will do and are accountable for our actions

1. How to contact us:

- In writing as the preferred method, giving as much detail as possible. You can ask for a complaints form to complete which are available upon request by telephone to our main reception or by email request via our website. A form will be emailed or posted back to you.
- In person to any member of staff. If the complaint is of a serious nature, then you should request the assistance of a senior member of staff.
- By telephone after which an acknowledgement and response will be sent out in writing.

Contact:

Operations & Resources Manager
Romsey Mill Centre
Hemingford Road
Cambridge
CB1 3 BZ

www.romseymill.org

admin@romseymill.org

Tel: 01223 213162

2. You should complain if:

- You are unhappy with how an enquiry has been dealt with
- If you are unhappy with how a member of staff has treated you
- You are unhappy with any aspect of our service
- You have not received the service or facilities that were promised to you

3. What happens next?

- Where possible we will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days
- Your complaint will be passed to the appropriate line manager, senior manager or CEO and a written reply sent out within 10 working days
- If your complaint will require further investigation and will not be completed within the ten days you will receive notification of the progress
- You will receive an apology if we are to be found at fault
- If the fault is ours every effort will be made to instigate measures to put things right

4. The Process:

Stage one

- Where possible we aim to resolve all complaints at the initial stage of reporting. For reasons outside our control, such as legal implications or the involvement of other organisations, this may not be possible. In this case the situation will be explained and referred on or a timescale for the satisfactory completion agreed.

Stage two

- If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you may refer it to a higher level of management or it will be referred to the Board of Trustees.

Stage three

- If you require further assistance and are still not satisfied with the outcome, then you may get free independent advice from your local Citizens Advice Bureau see www.adviceguide.org.uk. You can also contact the Charity Commission for further advice where information about the kind of complaints the Commission can involve itself in are detailed: www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc47.aspx

5. Anonymous complaints:

We deal with anonymous complaints under the same procedure; however it is better if you can provide contact details so we can tell you the outcome of our investigation.

Appendix 1

Practical Guidance for Handling Verbal Complaints

- Remain calm and respectful throughout the conversation
- Listen - allow the person to talk about the complaint in their own words.
Sometimes a person just wants to "let off steam"
- Don't debate the facts in the first instance, especially if the person is angry
- Show an interest in what is being said
- Obtain details about the complaint before any personal details
- Ask for clarification wherever necessary
- Show that you have understood the complaint by reflecting back what you have noted down
- Acknowledge the person's feelings (even if you feel that they are being unreasonable) - you can do this without making a comment on the complaint itself or making any admission of fault on behalf of the organisation
e.g "I understand that this situation is frustrating for you"
- If you feel that an apology is deserved for something that was the responsibility of your organisation, then apologise
- Ask the person what they would like done to resolve the issue
- Be clear about what you can do, how long it will take and what it will involve
- Don't promise things you can't deliver
- Give clear and valid reasons why requests cannot be met
- Make sure that the person understands what they have been told
- Wherever appropriate, inform the person about the available avenues of review or appeal

From the 'Code of Good Governance for Smaller Organisations'.

