



THE HONOURABLE SOCIETY OF CYMMRODORION

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the complaint.

Complaints Policy

The Society's policy, which is made publicly available via its website, 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 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 the Society's activities.

Where Complaints Come From

Complaints may come from any person or organisation who has a legitimate interest in the activities of the Society.

A complaint can be received orally (in person) or in writing (by email, by letter or *via* the Contact page on the Society's website – www.cymmrodorion.org).

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 Society's Council.

Complaints Procedure

Published Contact Details for Complaints:

Written complaints may be sent to the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion at 157-163 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8UE, by e-mail at secretary@cymmrodorion.org, or *via* the Contact page on the Society's website – www.cymmrodorion.org). Oral complaints may be made in person to any of the Society's Officers or other Trustees during any of its events or activities.

Receiving Complaints

Complaints may arrive through channels publicised for that purpose or through any other contact details or opportunities the complainant may have.

Complaints received in person will to be recorded in writing.

The person who receives an in person complaint will:

- write down the facts of the complaint
- take the complainant's name, address and telephone number
- note down the relationship of the complainant to the Society
- tell the complainant that the Society has a complaints procedure
- tell the complainant what will happen next and how long it will take
- where appropriate, ask the complainant to send a written account by post or by email so that the complaint is recorded in the complainant's own words.

Resolving Complaints

Stage One

In many cases, a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, s/he may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate.

Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to the Honorary Secretary within one week of being received.

On receiving the complaint, the Honorary Secretary (or, if the complaint relates to the Honorary Secretary, the Chair of Council will record it in the complaints log. If it has not already been resolved, they should delegate an appropriate person to investigate it and to take appropriate action.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, s/he should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.

Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within one week. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaints procedure should be attached.

Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within twelve weeks. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

Stage Two

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage One, they can request that the complaint is reviewed at Council level. At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the Chair of Council (or, if the complaint relates to the Chair of Council, to the Honorary Secretary).

The request for Council level review should be acknowledged within a week of its being received. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply.

The Officer who receives a Stage Two complaint may investigate the facts of the case her/himself delegate a suitably senior person to do so. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage One.

If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond.

The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage One should be kept informed of what is happening.

Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within twelve weeks. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.

The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the Council decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

External Stage

The complainant can complain to the Charity Commission at any stage. Information about the kind of complaints the Commission can involve itself in can be found on their website at: www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc47.aspx

Variation of the Complaints Procedure

The Council may vary the procedure for good reason.

Monitoring and Learning from Complaints

Complaints will be reviewed annually to identify any trends which may indicate a need to take further action.

Review

This policy is reviewed regularly and updated as required.

First adopted on 24 February 2016

Last reviewed on 24 February 2016

To be reviewed next in February 2019