

## **Complaints Policy and Procedure**

### **Complaints policy**

The purpose of this complaints policy is to ensure that our associates, supporters and users all feel they are listened to and we take action if things do not go as we expected or intended. We will

- provide a fair procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint;
- publicise the existence of our complaints policy and procedure on our website so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint;
- to make sure that trustees and volunteers at The Wollstonecraft Society (WS) know what to do if a complaint is received;
- make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way;
- make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired; and
- use complaints constructively 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 work of the Charity.

### **Where complaints come from**

Complaints may come from associates, volunteers, users, beneficiaries, supporters, commissioned persons, or any person or organisation who has a legitimate interest in The Wollstonecraft Society . A complaint can be received by email or in writing. We do not have a staffed office to enable us to offer complaints via the phone. If a person makes a verbal complaint on meeting a member of The Wollstonecraft Society they will be asked to put this in writing. If they are unable to do so they will be offered assistance.

Email: [wstrustees@gmail.com](mailto:wstrustees@gmail.com)

If you wish to complain by letter use the address listed for the WS on the Charity Commission website.

### **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 Trustee Board. Any complaints should be directed to a single member of the board to be investigated by that board member. If the complainant is not satisfied by the outcome of that investigation, then the complaint should be referred to the chair of the board or another board member for review.

However we expect that most if not all complaints can be resolved informally. In the first instance a complainant is encouraged to speak with the person from WS whom they are working with. At this informal level every person providing service in the name of WS should take the complaint they receive seriously. Only if it is not resolved or if it is not appropriate to discuss it with the person the complainant is working with, should the complainant feel it necessary to escalate the matter.

### **How we will deal with your complaint**

The Wollstonecraft Society aims to manage complaints quickly and effectively at, or close to, the first point of contact. All complainants will be listened to and treated with respect.

- Our aim is to acknowledge any complaint within five working days of the complaint being received.
- You will be contacted to make sure that we understand your complaint correctly.
- You may be interviewed by the person investigating the complaint so please provide your contact details and preferred mode of communication.
- if we cannot resolve your complaint immediately, then we will investigate your complaint and issue you with a further response/outcome within 15 working days of receiving your initial complaint;
- Whenever possible we will deal with it more quickly, if we think it will take longer we will let you know.
- if you are dissatisfied with the initial response to your complaint, then you must inform us, and your complaint will be escalated as set out above;
- if you are still dissatisfied with the response you have received, then we will advise you to take up your complaint with one of the following external regulatory bodies:

The Charity Commission (England & Wales)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>

Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for breaches of Data Protection- also covered in our data protection policy

<https://ico.org.uk/>