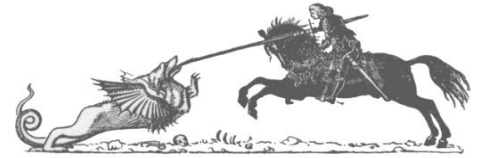


# GUILD of St GEORGE



## Complaints Policy

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the process for making a complaint about activities, services, people or procedures for which the Guild of St George is responsible. The Guild of St George (hereafter 'the Guild') places a very high value on supporting all those involved in or affected by its work. The Guild works in an open and accountable way, in a spirit of mutual trust and respect. Complaints will be dealt with accordingly.

### 2. Our Aim

The Guild aims to resolve complaints quickly, fairly and effectively. We seek continually to improve the quality of the activities or services we are responsible for, by listening to, and responding to, the views of those involved. These include tenants of properties owned by the Guild, Companions of the Guild, associates, partners, staff, artists, craftspeople, consultants and contractors. We will respond positively and quickly to complaints and put right any mistakes identified.

We will ensure that:

- making a complaint is straightforward to do;
- any complaint is taken as a clear expression of dissatisfaction which calls for a quick response;
- we deal with the complaint promptly, politely and confidentially;
- we respond appropriately – for example, with an explanation and/or an apology and information about any action taken or changes made;
- we learn from complaints and use that knowledge to improve the quality of our work.

The Guild appreciates that many concerns raised will be informal in nature, and these will be dealt with quickly by the member of staff or Guild representative concerned. If concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure will be followed.

### 3. Formal Complaints

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction with the Guild's activities, services or representatives (whether justified or not) which requires a formal response.

#### **4. Purpose**

The Guild's complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly and consistently and, wherever possible, resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

The Guild's responsibility will be to:

- acknowledge the formal complaint in writing;
- respond within a stated period;
- deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint;
- take appropriate action, if required.

The complainant's responsibility is to:

- raise their concerns promptly and directly with the person responsible and, if their concerns cannot be resolved satisfactorily informally, then to follow the formal complaints procedure outlined below;
- explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date;
- allow the Guild a reasonable amount of time to deal with the matter as detailed in the formal complaints procedure;
- recognise that some circumstances may be beyond the Guild's control.

#### **5. Monitoring and Reporting**

The Guild's Board of Directors will receive reports of all complaints made and will be notified of their resolution.

#### **6. Confidentiality**

Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that complaints are dealt with confidentially. However, the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it is not possible to maintain full confidentiality. Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

#### **7. Principles of the Complaints Policy**

1. The Guild's Complaints Policy has two formal stages.
2. The Complaints Policy applies to all activities and services organised or sponsored by the Guild including areas where it has a duty or a responsibility.
3. If at any time during the investigation of a complaint, matters arise that warrant investigation under disciplinary proceedings or a criminal investigation, the complaints procedure will be suspended until those investigations are concluded.

Similarly, the complaints procedure will be suspended if a complainant is actively seeking legal redress.

4. Where a complaint is made against a member of staff, the individual concerned should receive support from the Director responsible for that member of staff's area of activity.
5. The Master of the Guild will be informed of the receipt of a Stage 1 formal complaint. A complete record of the entire process will be kept. A copy of all reports, transcripts of interviews and other relevant information will be held by the Administrator for immediate review, reporting and filing.
6. The Guild may, at any stage of the formal complaints procedure, review a complaint and give a decision, without a formal investigation, where a member of the Board of Directors deems the complaint to be deliberately repetitive or vexatious. Examples of such complaints include unsubstantiated or repeated complaints against an individual or activity or repeated complaints that have already been previously investigated and appropriate action has been taken.
7. When appealing against a decision, the complainant will be asked to state why they are dissatisfied with how their complaint was handled.

## **8. Formal Complaints Procedure**

[The procedure described below is intended to facilitate complainants to make their complaint: 'you' is therefore taken to mean the complainant.]

### **Stage 1**

1. If you are unable to resolve the issue informally and wish to make a formal complaint, you should request a copy of the Guild's Complaints Policy and Procedure from the member of staff or Guild representative with whom you have had contact.
2. This will be sent to you on the day of request. If we hear nothing further from you within 28 calendar days of this date we will regard the matter as closed.
3. Upon receipt of the Guild's Complaints Policy and Procedure, you should write a letter of complaint to the Administrator of the Guild at the registered office (see 2. Below).
4. In your letter (or email), you should set out the details of your complaint and the remedy you are seeking.
5. You can expect the complaint to be acknowledged within 4 working days of receipt. You should receive a response and an explanation within 10 working days.
6. You will be notified in writing that you have 28 days in which to ask for the complaint and any response to be reviewed (Stage 2) if you are dissatisfied with the response(s) you have received.

## **(Final) Stage 2**

1. If you are dissatisfied with the Stage 1 response to your complaint then you can write to the Board of Directors via the Guild's registered office stating the reason you are dissatisfied with the outcome, and request that your complaint and the response to it be given further consideration. You can expect your request to be acknowledged within four working days of receipt, and the complaint investigation process will be explained.
2. The registered office of the Guild is - Meersbrook Hall, Brook Rd, Sheffield S8 9FL ([admin@guildofstgeorge.org.uk](mailto:admin@guildofstgeorge.org.uk) – tel. 07936 192794)
3. A (Final) Stage 2 complaint will be the responsibility of a Director of the Board, who will respond within twenty working days with a full written response giving details of any right of appeal.
4. The Guild's aim is to resolve all matters as quickly as possible. However, if a complaint requires more detailed investigation, you will receive an interim response describing what is being done to deal with the matter, and outlining when a full reply can be expected.

## **9. Review**

This policy will be subject to review and revision in March 2025.

**March 2023**