



**West Somerset Railway Heritage
Trust
Registered Charity No. 265564**



Complaints Procedure

Introduction.

- 1) The following procedure has been adopted for dealing with complaints about the Trust, its volunteers, its administration process, or its procedures.
- 2) Complaints about a policy decision made by the Trust will be referred to the Trust, or the Trust Board may delegate the investigation to one or more Trustees, as considered appropriate.
- 3) Complaints that are not related to the Trust, but may be another WSR organisation or group, the Trust will take responsibility for passing the complaint on and for notifying the complainant that that action has been taken.

Complaints Procedure.

- 1) If a complaint is about the Trust or its volunteers or any aspect of the activities of the Trust it will be notified to the Trust's Chairman, or to the Trust's Company Secretary, a written record of the complaint will be made, noting the name and contact details of the complainant and the nature of the complaint.
- 2) However, there may be circumstances where it is necessary for another Trustee, in the absence of either the Chairman or Company Secretary to take action.
- 3) The complainant will be asked to put the complaint in writing (letter/e-mail/standard form - See Appendix 1) to the Company Secretary to the Trust at the Trust's Registered Office. The complainant will receive an acknowledgement and confirmation that the investigation is underway.

Refusal to put the complaint in writing does not necessarily mean that the complaint cannot be investigated, but it is easier to deal with if it is in writing.

- 4) When a complaint is made, the Trust should acknowledge the complaint, ideally within five working days, this may take longer as the Trust is a volunteer led organisation. A meeting is to be organized where the Trust will hear all the evidence to make a final decision.
- 5) If the complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Company Secretary of the Trust (for example, because the matter relates to the Company Secretary) he/she or they should be advised to write to the Chairman.
- 6) On receipt of a written complaint, the Company Secretary/Chairman to the Trust will seek to settle the complaint directly with the complainant. This will not be done without first notifying any person(s) complained about and giving him/her or they an opportunity to comment.

Efforts should be made to resolve the complaint at this stage.

- 7) The Company Secretary/Chairman to the Trust will report any complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant to the next meeting of the Trust.
- 8) The Company Secretary/Chairman to the Trust will report any complaint that has not been resolved to the next meeting of the Trust’s Directors. The Company Secretary will notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered, and the complainant will be offered an opportunity to explain the complaint to the Board orally.

If the matter cannot be settled to the Complainants satisfaction a request is to be passed onto a Mediation Service.

See also Appendix 2 – Request for Mediation Services.

- 9) Matters relating to Grievance or Disciplinary proceedings that are taking, or are likely to take place, should be dealt with in accordance with the West Somerset Railway PLC Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures.
- 10) The Trust may consider in the circumstances of any complaint whether to make any, without liability, payment or provide other reasonable benefit to any person who has suffered loss because of the Trust’s maladministration. Any payment may only be authorised by the Trust’s Directors after obtaining legal advice from the Trust’s Solicitor on the propriety of such a payment.
- 11) As soon as possible after the decision has been made (and in any event not later than 10 days after the meeting) the complainant will be notified in writing of the decision and any action to be taken.
- 12) The Trust may defer dealing with any complaint if it is of the opinion that issues arise on which further advice is necessary. The advice will be considered, and the complaint dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

THIS DOCUMENT IS NOT CONTROLLED ONCE PRINTED

Version No	Date Approved	Revision
0.1	April 2017	First Issue of document. Review Date: April 2020
0.2	June 2022	Policy Reviewed. Appendix 1 and 2 added. Draft for Approval
0.3	July 2022	WSRHT Board Approved. Next Revision due July 2025
0.4	July 2023	Revised July 2023; Next Revision due July 2026

APPENDIX 1

Grievance Form

Name WSRHT Membership Number

Volunteer Member Only

Reason for Complaint

What is your grievance?

What action has been taken so far, who has considered it and what was the result?

What is the outcome that you require to resolve your grievance?

Signed Date

**Please retain a copy and forward the completed copy onto the appropriate
Trustee/Person in charge.**

APPENDIX 2

Request for Mediation Services

Name and contact details of Member/Volunteer.
Brief details of mediation request.
Name and contact details of HR Adviser.
Name and contact details of Member/Volunteer supporting the request.

NOTE – The mediator will refer to the Trustee/Person in Charge directly for the service provided.

Return this form to the Chairman of the Trust.