

Additional Curates Society

Complaints Policy

15 May 2025

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy outlines the Additional Curates Society (the ACS) procedure for handling complaints.
- 1.2 Complaints can be brought under this policy by current or former volunteers and trustees, beneficiaries and others working with the ACS, as well as by members of the public.
- 1.3 This policy does not apply to employees of the ACS, who should be directed to the Grievance Policy should they wish to raise a grievance regarding their employment.
- 1.4 The ACS encourages complainants wishing to use this procedure to submit their complaint promptly, so that we can support the resolution of the issues in a timely manner.

2. General principles

- 2.1 The ACS takes complaints seriously so that we can try to resolve concerns, rebuild relationships and endeavour to learn from our mistakes. We aim to deal with complaints which are made in good faith fairly and without unreasonable delay. The ACS is committed to treating complainants with respect and consideration, listening to their concerns, investigating their complaints with due care and providing them with a written response.
- 2.2 Where it is not practicable to meet the timescales below, we will let complainants know and keep them updated about the progress of their complaint and the likely timescales for our response.
- 2.3 The ACS will handle personal data in accordance with data protection law. Information relating to complaints will be treated confidentially but there will be circumstances where it is necessary to share information about complaints with others, for example in order to carry out an investigation.

- 2.4 As far as possible, complaints will be dealt with by someone who is not implicated in the complaint and who has not been involved at an earlier stage of the complaint.
- 2.5 Where meetings are arranged in connection with this procedure, these may take place either remotely or in person. Reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate complainants with a disability.
- 2.6 Complaints received anonymously will be recorded and any learning points considered, but the ACS will not respond to anonymous complaints.
- 2.7 Malicious, false, persistent or repeated complaints brought without new information being provided will be recorded, but the ACS may exercise discretion in deciding not to respond to such complaints.

3. How to make a complaint

- 3.1 If you are unhappy with an aspect of our work, we would encourage you to raise your complaint informally with the person concerned. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your initial complaint or you consider an informal complaint is not appropriate in the circumstances, you may make a formal complaint under the procedure outlined below.
- 3.2 Complainants can submit their formal complaints in writing via email or letter addressed to the Chair of Trustees, Bishop Stephen Race or, if the complaint concerns the Chair, to the Vice-Chair of Trustees Mrs Mary Speight to:
- Email:
Vice-Chair: speightelizabeth@gmail.com,
 - Postal address:
Formal complaints – Additional Curates Society
The Rt Rev'd Stephen Race
The Vicarage, Church Street, Woolley, WF4 2JU

3.3 The complaint should:

- Be marked private and confidential;
- Include the details of the formal complaint, including relevant dates, events, places and the names of people involved;
- State the steps taken to date and why you have not been satisfied with any initial response;
- Explain what you would like the ACS to do to resolve your complaint; and
- Include your name, address and preferred contact details (telephone and/or email).

4. Complaints process

4.1 Upon receiving a complaint, the following steps will be taken:

- 4.1.1 Acknowledgement of complaint: The complaint will be acknowledged within five] working days of receipt.
- 4.1.2 Complaint officer nominated: The ACS will nominate an appropriate person or persons to investigate and come to a decision about the complaint (the complaint officer). In most cases, this will be an employee or trustee of the ACS. Where the complaint is against the Chair of Trustees, a panel of at least two trustees will be nominated to consider the complaint. The complainant will be informed of the name of the relevant complaint officer.
- 4.1.3 Initial Assessment: The investigator / complaint officer will review the facts of the complaint. If a complaint is unclear, the complainant may be asked to clarify their complaint with additional information.
- 4.1.4 Investigation: The complaint will usually be investigated by the complaint officer. Where the Board of Trustees considers it appropriate, it may commission an external person to investigate the complaint (the investigator) and to provide an investigation report to the complaint officer.
- 4.1.5 Meeting: In some cases, the complainant will be invited to attend a meeting with the investigator / complaint officer and asked to give further information to explain their complaint and their desired outcome. Where appropriate, further investigations may follow.

4.1.6 Written outcome: The outcome of the complaint will be communicated to the complainant in writing by the complaint officer within [twenty] working days or within a further reasonable timeframe.

4.2 Where a complaint leads to separate processes or investigations, these will be confidential to the people concerned and the complainant will have no right to be informed of such processes or their outcomes.

5. Appeal process

5.1 If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint, they may appeal within five working days.

5.2 The complainant must submit their appeal in writing by post or e mail to the Chair of Trustees at the addresses given at 3.2 above

5.3 The appeal should:

- Be marked private and confidential;
- State that the complainant is appealing the decision;
- State the grounds for appeal; and
- Include the original complaint and complaint outcome with your appeal.

5.4 If your complaint concerns the Chair of Trustees, you may submit your appeal alternatively to the Vice Chair of Trustees at the e mail address given at 3.2 above.

5.5 The appeal will be considered as appropriate by the Chair of Trustees or by a panel of at least two trustees designated by the Board of Trustees who have had no previous involvement in the complaint (the appeal panel).

5.6 Where the Board of Trustees considers it appropriate, it may commission an external person or persons to consider the appeal, carry out any further investigations and make recommendations to the appeal panel before they decide whether to uphold or dismiss the appeal.

5.7 In some cases, the complainant will be invited to attend an appeal meeting. Where appropriate, further investigations may follow.

- 5.8 The outcome of the appeal will be communicated to the complainant in writing within ten working days of the appeal meeting or within a further reasonable timeframe.
- 5.9 There is no further right of appeal.

6. Charity Commission

- 6.1 The ACS aims to resolve complaints as far as possible informally, or formally using this complaints procedure.
- 6.2 Complainants may wish to contact the Charity Commission to raise a serious complaint or to complain about the way your complaint has been handled. You can find more information at <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>.