

HAWICK COMMON RIDING COMMITTEE SCIO

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Hawick Common Riding Committee (HCRC) is committed to meeting our objects, contained within our Constitution, and to carrying out our duties to the highest standards.

If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with something we have done, please tell us. This procedure describes how to make a complaint and how we propose dealing with it.

What is a complaint?

We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action or that of any of our Committee Members, in fulfilling our Constitutional objects of upholding and continuing the heritage, customs and traditions of the Common Riding for the benefit of the people of Hawick, and to annually accept responsibility to ensure the proper conduct of the ceremonies.

What can I complain about?

Your complaint may involve one of our activities or services or be about the conduct of a Committee Member or someone working on the Committee's behalf.

What can't I complain about?

There are some things we can't deal with through our complaints procedure. These include: a first-time request for the Committee to consider; a claim for compensation; issues that are in court or have already been heard by a court or a tribunal; an attempt to reopen a previously concluded complaint or to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our final decision, or something outwith our jurisdiction and over which we have no control.

Complaints regarding the conduct of a Committee Member will normally be dealt with in terms of our Breach of Code of Conduct procedure.

How do I complain?

Complaints should be in writing (letter or email) addressed to The Secretary, C/o Common Riding Office, 11 O'Connell Street, HAWICK TD9 9HT Email: commonriding@btinternet.com

When complaining, tell us: your full name and address and a contact number, as much as you can about the complaint and what has gone wrong and how you want us to resolve the matter (your desired outcome).

We may not always be able to find in your favour, however, we will provide our reasoning behind our response. We will respond to your complaint within the timescales detailed below.

How long do I have to make a complaint?

Normally, you must make your complaint within six months of the event you want to complain about, or finding out that you have a reason to complain, but no longer than 12 months after the event itself. It is however much easier to resolve complaints the earlier the complaint is received to the actual event which caused you to be dissatisfied. Delays in reporting may affect the outcome.

In exceptional circumstances, we may be able to accept a complaint after the time limit. If you feel that the time limit should not apply to your complaint, please tell us why.

What happens when I have complained?

Our complaints procedure has two stages.

Stage One – These complaints will be dealt with by the HCC Office-bearers – Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Master of Ceremonies and Assistant Master of Ceremonies.

We aim to resolve these complaints quickly and we will give you our decision in five working days or less of receipt of all required information from you.

If you remain dissatisfied after our response at Stage 1, you can ask for your complaint to be investigated further through stage 2.

Stage Two – Complaints requiring investigation - these complaints will be dealt with by the Executive Committee – Office-bearers, Conveners of sub-Committees and 2 representatives from Life Members.

Stage 2 deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant and escalated by them from stage 1 and those that are more complex and require detailed investigation and designated by us as a Stage 2 complaint from the outset. Stage 2 complaints will be responded to within 20 working days of receipt of full information.

When using stage 2 we will: acknowledge receipt of your complaint within three working days. We will discuss your complaint with you to understand why you remain dissatisfied and what outcome you are looking for (where we have already responded at Stage 1). Where we have designated any complaint at the outset as a Stage 2, we will discuss your complaint with you and confirm your desired outcome before our response.

If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will tell you. We will advise you of a revised time limit with you and keep you updated on progress.

If any complaint involves any Committee member who is an Office-bearer and/or member of the Executive Committee, they shall play no part in considering that complaint.

What if I'm still dissatisfied?

After we have fully investigated and responded at Stage 2, if you remain dissatisfied, you can request that the matter is referred for independent arbitration. An arbiter will be appointed, as agreed by both parties. The decision of an Arbiter will be final.

Our complaints procedure requires to be exhausted, before any referral for independent arbitration can be considered.

Complaints Monitoring

The Chairman will report to the Full Committee on completed complaints at the next available meeting.

Adopted 16/01/2020