



Complaints Policy and Procedure

The Hanover Choir (THC) is committed to operating in an open and accountable way that builds trust and respect. We believe that dealing appropriately with complaints is an important part of maintaining good relationships and an opportunity to learn and improve for the future.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that complaints about any aspect of the Hanover Choir's activities are addressed promptly, fairly and consistently, and that where applicable, steps are taken to remedy underlying problems and prevent similar issues arising in future.

This policy applies to complaints raised by members of the choir, individuals and organisations who have been engaged or contracted by the choir, and complaints brought by any member of the public who has attended or been affected negatively by our concerts or other events.

Intended outcomes of this policy are:

- There is a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for all.
- There is available and accessible information about how to make a complaint.
- Complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired and maintained.
- The choir will learn from complaints and use them to improve and develop.
- The choir will regularly review this complaints policy, procedures, and any complaints that have been received.

Definition of a Complaint

For the purpose of this policy, a complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction about any aspect of THC and its operations.

Complaints Procedure

All complaints will be handled in accordance with the complaints procedure attached to this policy. Both the policy and the procedure are available on the Choir website: <https://hanoverchoir.org.uk/>.

New members are informed about the policy and procedure and any information, updates, or changes to it are communicated via the website and at the Annual General Meeting of the Choir.

The implementation of the procedure is the responsibility of the Hanover Choir Committee and any complaints received will be reviewed regularly and the policy and procedures updated as required.

Confidentiality

All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements.

However, the circumstances may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality, in which case the reasons will be explained to the complainant.

Adopted on **29th September 2026**

Last reviewed: _____

Complaints Policy and Procedure

Complaints Procedure

The implementation of the Complaints Procedure is the responsibility of the Committee. The Committee is not able to respond to anonymous complaints and cannot deal with matters for which it is not directly responsible. In such instances we will make every effort to refer complainants to the appropriate person or organisation.

The process has been organised into a number of steps or levels and is designed to make every effort to resolve the issues as quickly and informally as possible.

1. How to make a Complaint to the Committee:

The Hanover Choir Committee has three (3) officers as per our constitution, and complaints should be addressed to the Chair, the Secretary or the Treasurer, either through the Website or in the case of complaints from members using the choir's email: info@hanoverchoir.org.uk.

Please explain or set out the details of your complaint as clearly and fully as you can, the consequences or impact for you as a result, and the remedy you are seeking.

If you are a member of the choir and you need support or are unsure whom to approach, you can ask any committee member to advise you on the process. If the complaint is a personal matter regarding another individual in the choir, every effort will be made for you to resolve the issue between you, with support if required, but without needing to go to Step 2.

You will receive an acknowledgement of your complaint within 7 days during term time or 14 days if it is received over the three main holidays.

If you have difficulty accessing the written word we will ensure you have support in making your complaint.

2. Responding to Complaints

1. Once a complaint has been received by an elected officer of the committee, they will send an acknowledgement of receipt or communicate with the complainant directly within 7 days during term time and 14 days if it is during the choir's termly breaks, explaining what the next steps will be and an indicative timeline in terms of a response.
2. The officer who has received the complaint will share the details with one (1) other officer initially to identify if the complaint is covered by this policy and agree who will act as the lead officer (LO) with the complaint. They will identify the most appropriate way to address the issues raised and which, if any, other committee members need to be informed at this stage.
3. If the complaint is against the 3 officers directly, it is likely that it will be addressed by 2 other members of the committee who are not involved. If it concerns the whole committee, other choir members who are not involved with the complainant may be asked to take the lead but will be given support in how to proceed.
4. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they will be informed by the LO and given a fair opportunity to respond.

Stage 1

The committee's aim is to resolve all matters as quickly and informally as possible at stage 1.

The LO will invite the complainant to a meeting or arrange to speak to them at a mutually convenient time and venue as soon as is practicable and within 14 days of receipt of the complaint. The purpose of the meeting/conversation is to make sure that the LO has understood the complaint and to clarify what the complainant is requesting as an outcome. This meeting/conversation is an opportunity to explore what the complainant has done or would be prepared to do to address the issues themselves.

Complaints Policy and Procedure

The LO will prepare a written summary of the meeting to be agreed with the complainant, outlining the matters discussed and agreed actions.

If the initial face-to-face meeting and subsequent informal actions do not resolve the complaint, the complaint will be referred to Stage 2.

However, there may be some complaints received that are more complex or serious and will need to be investigated to fully understand the background or the nature of the issues. If this is the case, then all parties in the complaint will be informed and Stage 2 will apply.

Stage 2

At Stage 2 the Chair of the committee will ensure that there is a definitive and written response to the complainant.

This will contain how the complaint has been addressed, the findings of any investigations carried out by the LO or others appointed to carry them out, and any conclusions made regarding the complaint itself. This response will also recommend any actions that should be taken to resolve the problems and identify who is going to carry them out.

The final section of the response will inform the complainant how to submit an appeal if they feel that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved.

The format and timing of any investigations into the complaint will be explained to all parties. These could include interviews and taking witness statements.

If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage 2, they can submit an appeal to the Chair, or to the LO.

Stage 3

Two (2) committee members who have not been involved in the complaint at Step 1 or 2 will consider the reason for appeal. They will consider the facts of the original complaint, review the documentation and actions taken at Stage 2 to resolve the complaint, and speak with the complainant and the LO who investigated the complaint.

A report at Stage 3 will be produced that outlines the action taken to consider the appeal and review the actions at Stage 2. It will either support the decisions of the Chair at Stage 2 and reject the appeal, or it will uphold the appeal and make recommendations for further actions to be taken to resolve the issue.

Final Stage

If the complainant remains unsatisfied with the committee's response, they can refer the matter to one of the following regulators:

- The Fundraising Regulator – for complaints about fundraising methods.
- The Advertising Standards Authority – for complaints about misleading or offensive advertising.
- The Charity Commission – for complaints about harming people, using funds for personal profit or being involved in potentially illegal activity.