

## Holmfirth Musical Festival Association Complaints and Grievance Policy

### **1. Policy Statement**

Holmfirth musical Festival is committed to delivering and maintaining high standards across all areas of our work. We believe it is important to work in an open and accountable way that builds trust and respect. We value all comments and feedback from our stakeholders including complaints. We learn important lessons from all the feedback we receive, and this helps us continuously improve our services. We have developed this complaints policy and procedure to explain our approach to complaints. Our aim is to make it easy for stakeholders to complain about what we do and to be clear about all the stages in the process.

We will:

- provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint;
- publicise the existence of our complaints policy and procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint;
- make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely manner;
- make sure that, wherever possible, complaints are resolved and relationships repaired;
- learn from complaints and use them to improve our services.

2. **What is a complaint?** A complaint is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction; however it is expressed. This would include complaints expressed face-to-face, via a phone call, in writing, via email or any other method.

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

### **3. Responsibilities Our responsibility is to:**

- deal with the complaint in a reasonable, sensitive and timely manner; and
- act where appropriate. The complainant's responsibility is to:
  - bring their complaint, in writing, to our attention within 8 weeks of the issue arising;
  - explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action they have taken to date;
  - allow us reasonable time to deal with the matter, and
  - recognise that some circumstances may be beyond BIFF's control. Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Board of Trustees.

#### **4. Confidentiality**

We handle all complaint information sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements. Our Board of Trustees will be made aware of any formal complaints that require referral to the Complaints Panel. In exceptional circumstances, it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (with each complaint judged on its own facts). Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

#### **5. Complaints Procedure**

How to make a complaint You can make a complaint or provide feedback in the following ways. •

By phone –

Call us on 07734052764 and speak to the Festival Administrator

• By e-mail – Email your concerns to our Festival using the following email address: [info@hmf.org.uk](mailto:info@hmf.org.uk)

•1 By post – Write to the Administrator at the following address: 22 Ingdale Drive Holmfirth HD9 1AT

or The British and International Federation of Festivals for Music, Dance and Speech, Festivals House, 198 Park Lane, Macclesfield, East Cheshire, SK11 6UD

**5.2 Stage One – Informal Complaint** An informal approach may be appropriate depending on the nature of the concerns raised. If the concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed at 5.3 below.

**5.3 Stage Two – Formal Complaint** If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, a formal complaint may be made, and the following procedure should be followed:

a) A formal complaint can be made verbally or in writing and should be made to the Festival Administrator. If the complaint is regarding the Administrator, then the complaint should be addressed to the Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees.

b) The Administrator will acknowledge the complaint in writing within 3 working days of receiving it.

c) The Administrator will refer the complaint to our Complaints Panel for consideration. Our Complaints Panel comprises members of the Board of Trustees, If appropriate, another person external to those already mentioned may also be included. This diversity of panel membership ensures professionalism, a wide range of expertise and experience. It also maintains transparency in the process.

d) The Complaints Panel will be chaired by a member of the Board of Trustees who will be responsible for selecting the appropriate panel to consider the complaint.

e) Your complaint will be dealt with as soon as the relevant members of the panel can be brought together to consider the complaint. Our aim is to have an outcome/decision within 4 weeks. If the complaint is complex or additional

information is needed, the timescale may need to be increased. We will keep you updated if this is the case.

f) If your complaint is about one of our Adjudicator or Festival Members, the complaint will be considered alongside the current Code of Practice for Adjudicators and Festivals to assess whether there are any breaches.

3 g) You should be aware that the complaint will be discussed with the respondent, who will have the opportunity to present a written response to the complaint. This will also be provided to the Complaints Panel. As stated above at Point 4, confidentiality will be maintained when doing this unless it is not reasonably practicable to do so.

h) Once the issue has been considered by the Complaints Panel, you will receive a written response within 5 working days of the Panel reaching a decision.

### **5.3 Stage Three – Referral to the Board of Trustees**

We hope that our Complaints Panel can resolve your complaint in an open and satisfactory way. If, after receiving a written response from us, you still feel that your complaint is unresolved, you can ask for the matter to be referred to the Board of Trustees for their consideration.

You should:

- Address your letter to the Chair of the Board of Trustees (Complaint Appeal) and send to the administrator at the address at 5.1 above.

Alternatively, you can email this to [info@hmf.org.uk](mailto:info@hmf.org.uk) and they will ensure this is passed to the Chair of the Board of Trustees or appropriate persons.

- Explain clearly where you feel that your complaint remains unresolved following the decision of the Complaints Panel. Your complaint will then be further considered by the Board of Trustees and if appropriate, an independent additional person. This sub-group will examine the complaint and may wish to carry out further interviews, examine files / notes. They will respond within four weeks in writing. Their decision will be final.

**6. Review** This policy will be regularly reviewed by the Board of Trustees. Last Reviewed: May 2026