

Feedback and Complaints Handling Framework

Ratified by the ACF Board 18.6.18

Introduction:

The ACF aims to ensure that the Abbotsford Convent's community, visitors, customers and tenants can provide feedback and raise formal complaints through a structured process.

The ACF views feedback and complaints as a valuable source of information that can help to improve and develop the Convent and its services.

This document is presented in the following sections:

1. Framework Overview
2. Feedback and Complaints Handling Policy
3. Feedback and Complaints Handling Process

Appendices

- i. Sample Feedback/Complaint Form
- ii. Tenant Community Consultative Forum Terms of Reference
- iii. Tenants Complaint Info/ Fact Sheet

1. Framework Overview

What is the Feedback and Complaints Handling Framework?

The Feedback and Complaints Handling Framework (the 'Framework') is an organisational approach for processing feedback and complaints about the Abbotsford Convent and its services in a timely, transparent and coordinated manner.

The ACF wants to know what is working and what can be improved. The Framework will ensure that the Convent community, visitors, customers and tenants can provide feedback and have access to an effective complaints resolution system for addressing formal complaints.

What makes up the Framework?

The Framework consists of three components: a feedback mechanism; a handling process for formal complaints; and a tenants' community consultative forum (TCCF) to provide input on general matters and directions of the ACF.

Why is the Framework important?

The ACF wants to make sure that it provides its stakeholders with a structured and timely process for raising and resolving complaints. The ACF welcomes input via the Framework's various processes and sees it as a contribution to the continual improvement and development of its services.

What Types of Feedback and Complaints can be considered?

The intended scope of the Framework are matters regarding the ACF's services and the Convent's amenity, including venue hire, public spaces, partnered/programmed events, and neighborhood impact.

For complaints about tenants or venue hirer services/events/activities, the ACF will receive and acknowledge the complaint, and ensure that it is forwarded to the relevant party. The ACF cannot take responsibility for issues related to services/events/activities delivered by tenants or venue hirers.

Issues related to tenant leases are outside the scope of this Framework. All leases contain a dispute resolution clause that applies to disputes arising under the lease, and generally makes provision for mediation of these disputes.

What is the ACF's approach to handling complaints?

The ACF will handle complaints on the basis of the following key complaint handling principles.

1. Commitment
2. Fairness
3. Transparency and access
4. Responsiveness
5. Privacy and confidentiality
6. Accountability

Timely feedback and complaints help the ACF respond to stakeholders' evolving needs and expectations. It is important to lodge complaints as soon as practical because as time passes it can affect the availability and quality of information and can make it difficult or unnecessary to pursue and resolve an issue.

In order to guarantee a meaningful response, feedback and complaints should be made within three months of an interaction or incident. The ACF is committed to enabling feedback and complaints and may accept them outside these timeframes where there are good reasons to do so. This can include extenuating or exceptional circumstances

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2. Feedback and Complaints Handling Policy

Background:

The Feedback and Complaints Handling Process has three components. Firstly it provides the broad Convent community with an opportunity to give input and feedback to the ACF. Secondly, for formal complaints, it sets out a process to manage complaints from the time of lodgement to the point of resolution. And finally, it provides additional information for tenants.

Specifically for Convent tenants, it provides access to a consultative forum on a regular basis. Rather than dealing with individual complaints, these forums will create an opportunity for tenants to provide input on general matters relating to the ACF.

Feedback

The ACF encourages people to provide feedback, which may be either positive or negative, so that the ACF can continue to improve its services. Not all views and feedback are complaints. People often want to express a view but are not making a complaint that needs a formal response.

The ACF will accept feedback via email, mail or telephone. In order for it to receive a formal ACF response, it needs to be written. The ACF will provide guided forms for people to express their views about the Convent. These include the ability to:

- fill in a feedback card during their visit (*located at Convent Building Information Desk*)
- fill in the feedback form available on the Convent's website at:
<http://abbotsfordconvent.com.au/contact#feedback>

Complaints

The ACF understands that people may wish to make a complaint that requires a response and resolution. The Feedback and Complaints Handling Process documents the steps in handling and resolving complaints in a timely, transparent and coordinated manner.

The Convent is a multi-faceted business. It provides some services directly whereas other services are provided by tenants of the ACF. Many people will not know which services are provided by the ACF and which are provided by tenants. This means that complaints made to the ACF may be about services provided by tenants. In these situations the ACF will receive and acknowledge the complaint, and also ensure that it is forwarded to the relevant service provider. Contact details will be provided by the ACF to the person making the complaint.

The ACF also recognises that not every complaint is equally serious. As a not for profit organisation which relies on public grants and philanthropic donations, the ACF must use its resources wisely. This means that it must aim to both address each complaint properly and, at the same time, ensure that resourcing of an individual complaint is proportionate to the nature of that complaint.

The ACF will use feedback and complaints to analyse trends and identify and address any problem areas. The ACF's Board will be provided with regular reports on feedback issues and trends. These reports will not identify individuals who have provided feedback.

The ACF has a clear process for dealing with complaints as set out in the following section, based on principles that demonstrate commitment, fairness, transparency and access, responsiveness, accountability in managing complaints and respect for privacy and confidentiality.

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3. Feedback and Complaints Handling Process

STEP 1: LODGING

All complaints and suggestions for improvement need to be made in writing, if a formal response is expected. This can be done by emailing the relevant ACF staff member, filling in a Complaint Form on the ACF website, or in hard copy delivered by mail or in person. The Complaint Form asks for all relevant details about the complaint and clarification about the outcome being sought.

In order to guarantee a meaningful response, feedback and complaints should be made within three months of the interaction or incident. The ACF is committed to enabling feedback and complaints and may accept them outside these timeframes where there are good reasons to do so. This can include extenuating or exceptional circumstances, such as serious ill health or a natural disaster.

STEP 2: ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT

The ACF will acknowledge receipt of a complaint within 7 days via a phone call, email or in writing.

STEP 3: CONSIDERATION

All complaints will be considered in the first instance by the Governance and Operations Officer who has primary responsibility for ensuring that complaints are acknowledged or forwarded to the relevant ACF team member. Where appropriate, matters will be referred to senior management for attention. All complaints will be considered by a person not involved in the matter.

STEP 4: ACF RESPONSE

The ACF aims to consider and respond to most complaints within 21 days of receipt. Once the ACF has concluded its consideration of the complaint, it will write to the complainant setting out the proposed response to the complaint and explaining the reasons and the grounds for its decision. Where appropriate, and relevant, this letter will also set out a proposed remedy for the complainant's consideration or propose dispute resolution steps that it considers may be beneficial.

EXTENDED COMPLAINTS

Some serious or complex complaints may require more extensive investigation. In these situations, the ACF will communicate the progress of the complaint within the 21 days and provide expected timelines whilst continuing to resolve the complaint. Where appropriate, investigations will be carried out by the ACF CEO or COO.

STEP 5: REVIEW

Complainants are not always satisfied with the outcome of their complaints. If a person wishes to have a complaint re-considered, they should write to the ACF Governance and Operations Officer and provide reasons for the request. The ACF will respond to this request within 21 days with either an outcome of the request or a progress report. Any review will be conducted by a senior manager who has not been involved in either the matter or the original consideration of the complaint.

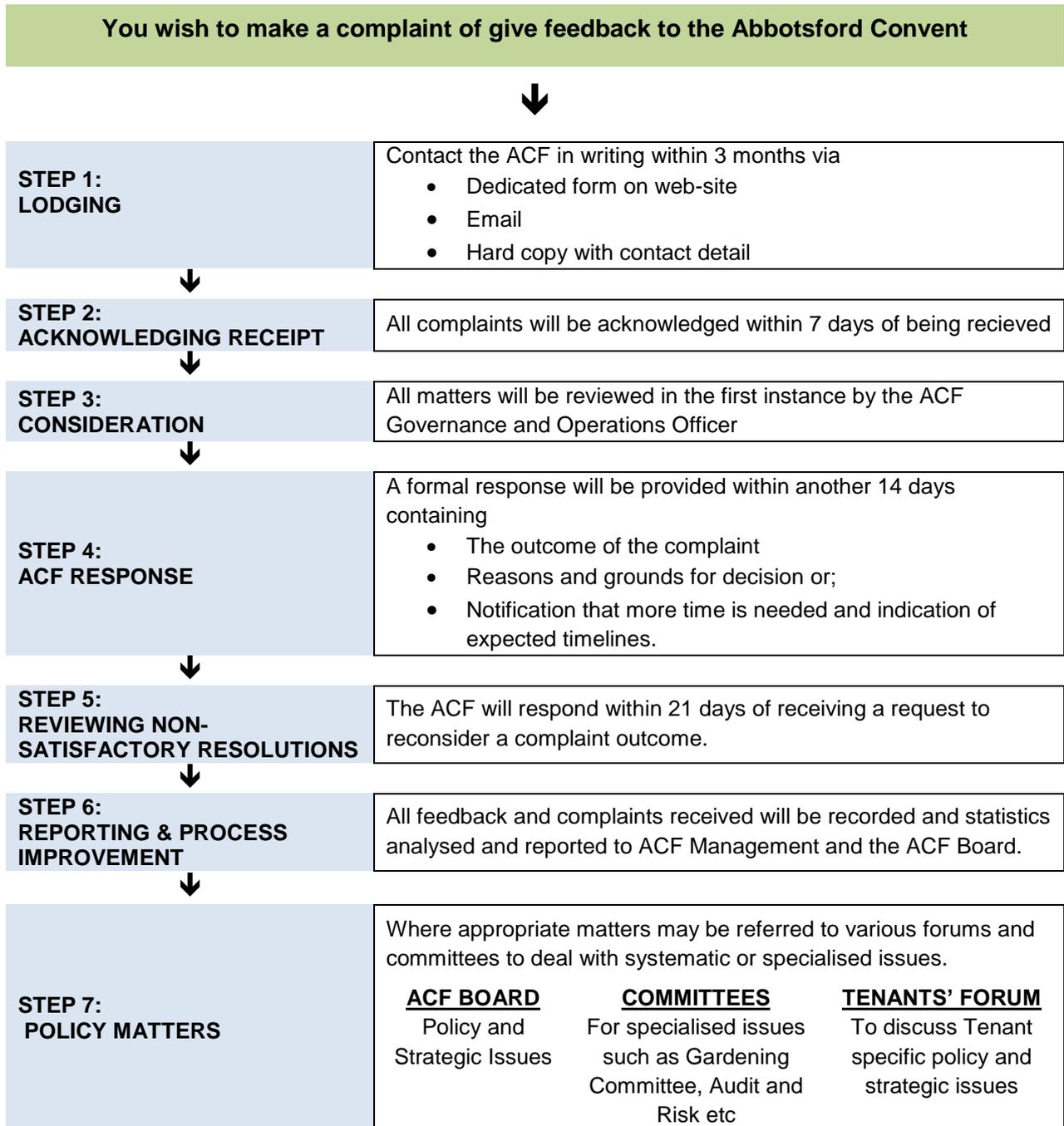
STEP 6: REPORTING & PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

The ACF will keep a register of all complaints received. This information will be summarised and reviewed for any possible process improvements. The summary will be presented to the ACF Board on a regular basis.

STEP 7: SYSTEMIC & POLICY MATTERS

The information gathered from this process will be reviewed and analysed by the Governance and Operations Officer and referred to appropriate Convent business units to improve service, policies and procedures and/or systemic issues.

Complaints Handling Process Diagram



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SAMPLE FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINT FORM

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Summary of issue:

Proposed outcomes:

Signed: _____
Complainant:

Note: The ACF will acknowledge receipt of this form within 7 days and provide its response within 21 days. Any delays to this process will be communicated to you.

ABBOTSFORD CONVENT FOUNDATION TENANT COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE FORUM

Purpose

The ACF has established the Tenant Community Consultative Forum (the TCCF) to provide a means for ideas and issues to be considered and addressed collaboratively between the tenant community and the ACF.

The operations of the TCCF

The ACF will hold a TCCF at least three times a year to consult upon:

- Ideas that our community have in regard to enhancing the Convent for all stakeholders
- Issues or developments which may be of concern or impact upon the tenant community

Information dissemination strategies to enhance tenant and ACF communications Projects the ACF is undertaking to enhance the Convent community.

The TCCF will be chaired by the ACF's Governance and Operations Officer and all tenants are invited to attend. At least one ACF Board Director will attend each meeting and will present the record of the meeting to the next full meeting of the Board.

Tenants are invited by the ACF to propose, within reasonable time, items for inclusion on the agenda.

After each TCCF, the ACF provides all tenants, via our e news, a link to the minutes for their reference. In addition, minutes from all TCCF meetings are available via the tenancy team.

The TCCF is not the Forum for raising matters relating to individual tenants, or individual complaints.

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Appendix iii.

Tenants Feedback and Complaint Info/ Fact Sheet

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide information to tenants about the Feedback and Complaints Handling Process.

As tenants, you probably interact with the ACF in a number of ways. You have a relationship with the ACF as a tenant, but you probably also use other facilities at the Convent, spend time in the gardens and purchase food and beverages from various outlets at the site. This fact sheet provides information about how the Complaints Handling Process applies to these different situations.

As tenants

As a tenant, your relationship with the ACF is covered by your lease. The lease contains a dispute resolution clause and it is applicable to most disputes arising under the lease. It also, generally, makes provision for mediation of these disputes. The existence of the Feedback and Complaints Handling Process does not displace the mechanism for dispute resolution set out in their lease. Rather, it provides a method for tenants to provide feedback and raise complaints about matters that are outside of their individual leases.

The Tenant Community Consultative Forum (TCCF) is a part of the Feedback and Complaints Framework and a key way tenants will engage in providing feedback and engaging in resolutions. The ACF established the TCCF to allow ideas and issues to be considered and addressed collaboratively with the tenant community.

As users

In addition to being a tenant of the ACF, you are probably also a user of its facilities and services, or the services of its other tenants. In this respect you are just like any other member of the community visiting the Convent. Any complaint which relates to your experience as a user of the Convent's services or facilities, or the services of other tenants, can be made using the Complaints Handling Process.

As a service provider

You may be a tenant who provides services to clients or visitors to the Convent site. A complaint might be made to the ACF via the Complaints Handling Process about your services. If this occurs the ACF will acknowledge receipt of the complaint, will advise the complainant that it has referred the complaint to you as the correct service provider and will forward the complaint to you for your attention.

If you require further information about either dispute resolution procedures under the lease of the Complaints Handling Process, please contact the ACF Chief Operating Officer.