

***the Pavement* Complaints Policy**

Compliments, Comments and Complaints

the Pavement welcomes feedback from its service users, including:

- Compliments on aspects of its service or the behaviour of its team members that have been found to be particularly helpful, useful or exceptional.
- Comments, observations or concerns about some aspect of its service or the behaviour of its team members that should be recorded but is neither a compliment nor a complaint.
- Complaints about some aspect of its service or its team members that have fallen so short of service users' expectations that they feel action should be taken to correct some damage they have suffered or to protect future service users from the same problem.

the Pavement views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve the quality of its service and the contents of its publication or website for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person or organisation that has made the complaint. Our complaints policy and procedure seeks to be clear, convenient and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint (in particular those that are vulnerable or who have disabilities).

Who is covered by this policy?

the Pavement team is constituted of trustees, associates and volunteers, all of whom are covered by this policy.

Regulatory Context

the Pavement is a member of IMPRESS, the independent press monitor and adheres to its Regulatory Scheme. <https://impress.press/>. Consequently, we will uphold and adhere to the Standards Code set out in the IMPRESS Regulatory Scheme in our assessment of all complaints.

Team members are encouraged to contact the IMPRESS confidential Whistleblowing hotline if they are being pressurised to breach the standards set out in the Code or if they have concerns that they are not being adhered to by *the Pavement*.

Purpose

Feedback from beneficiaries, associates and third parties and how we deal with them is invaluable in helping us to continuously improve. Negative feedback and complaints are particularly helpful in pinpointing what we need to do better, and if we deal with complaints effectively, we can often improve our relationships with beneficiaries and associates overall.

Complaints may be received by any *the Pavement* Team member and may arrive in many different ways - by letter, e-mail, social media or in person. They will be assessed against the IMPRESS standards code and *the Pavement* will ensure that individuals are not investigating complaints about themselves. However, the complainant will be advised if for any reason this unavoidable and offered the option of bringing their complaint directly to IMPRESS.

Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about the editorial content, standards of journalism or conduct of team members or contributors involved in production of *the Pavement*.

What is covered by this policy?

This policy covers how to deal with complaints from beneficiaries, associates and third parties, both in terms of the steps that need to be taken and tips for effective complaint handling.

Our Complaint Commitments

the Pavement will:

Publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint.

Ensure all team members know what to do if a complaint is received.

Ensure all complaints are dealt with promptly and fairly, with decisions based on sufficient investigation of the circumstances and (where appropriate) offer a suitable remedy.

Ensure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that trust in our journalism and our publication remains strong.

Submit an annual report to IMPRESS of all complaints received and their outcomes and forward any complaint that is not resolved by us in a timely or satisfactory way to IMPRESS and to comply with directions issued by IMPRESS relating to its Regulatory Scheme.

Confidentiality

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

Process

All complaints should be addressed to the editor, or to the Chair of Trustees if the complaint is about the editor. Whoever receives the complaint must follow the process below:

Stage 1 Record the Complaint

Complete Parts 1 and 2 of the Complaint Form and email it to the editor. Use the name of the complainant and date as the file name.

Stage 2 Dealing with the Complaint

The editor will attempt to resolve the complaint and complete Part 3 of the Complaint Form.

Stage 3 Reporting Complaints

The Chair of Trustees should be advised of the suggested resolution and the editor will contact the complainant with details of this resolution if appropriate.

Timescale

Under normal circumstances the complaint process should be completed within 7 working days a final decision made within 21 working days. If the complaint is complex and cannot be dealt with within this timescale, the complainant will be updated regularly about the progression of their complaint.

Taking corrective actions

Changing your own individual actions: If the problem has come about as a result of your own individual actions, you should review your own processes and actions to avoid similar occurrences in future.

Policy Review: If problems have come about either as result of the organisation's ways of working, or an individual's actions, trustees will consider how to correct the situation.

Taking a complaint further

If the complainant feels their problem has not been satisfactorily resolved by *the Pavement*, they can request that the complaint is reviewed by IMPRESS in accordance with its [Regulatory Scheme](#), by contacting IMPRESS at the following address:

IMPRESS: The Independent Monitor for the Press CIC
16-18 New Bridge Street, London EC4V 6AG
020 3325 4288
complaints@impress.press
www.impress.press

Compliance Records

the Pavement will maintain a written record of all complaints, to include the name and contact details of the complainant, the material or conduct in respect of which the complaint is made and the alleged Code breach.

For each complaint record, *the Pavement* will include any steps taken by it to address the complaint, and the outcome of the complaint. This record will be made available to IMPRESS and to the public (in a redacted form, where necessary), for publication by IMPRESS in its annual report.

the Pavement will report to IMPRESS all compliance failures of which they become aware (whether complained about or not)

COMPLAINT FORM

This form is to be completed for all complaints received whether by letter, email, twitter, in-person or by telephone. Please attach copies of any written/email correspondence to this form when complete and send it to the editor.

Part 1: Complainant Details:

Name:

Role:

Organisation:

Phone Number:

Address:

E-mail address:

Progress Account Number:

Complaint received by:

Date received :

How received:

Part 2: Details of Problem:

Please provide full details of the nature of the problem (ensure you include all facts clearly)

Complaint passed to:

Date:

Part 3: Details of Problem Resolution:

Please detail how we plan to resolve the issue with the complainant:

Completed by:

Date: