

## **AD&DPS Complaints Procedure**

This document sets out the procedure for complaints (“Complaints”) by members of the Adderbury, Deddington & District Photographic Society (the “Society”) against other members for breach of the Society’s Rules or Code of Conduct and Ethics.

### 1. Applicability of the procedure

- 1.1. This procedure applies where a Society member believes that another Society member has failed to act in accordance with the Society’s Rules, Code of Conduct and Ethics or any other policies, codes or rules introduced by the Society requiring adherence by members.

### 2. Definition of the “Committee”

- 2.1. If the subject(s) of a Complaint (the “Respondent(s)”) is one or more member(s) of the Committee, then the references to the “Committee” in this procedure are to the members of the Committee excluding the Respondent(s).

### 3. General

- 3.1. Time limits in this procedure should usually be met by all parties. Time limits may only be extended by the Committee where it is necessary to do so in order to ensure a fair outcome (for example, where more time is needed because of a party’s illness, or during holidays).
- 3.2. Complaints will be dealt with confidentially by all parties involved, except where it is necessary to disclose information to carry out a fair investigation (e.g. the identity of the person making the Complaint will usually be disclosed to the Respondent).
- 3.3. The Committee may decline to consider malicious, vexatious or frivolous complaints.

### 4. Informal resolution

- 4.1. The person making the complaint should consider taking steps to resolve the matter informally before making a formal complaint. This might include discussing the matter with the Respondent, and/or seeking advice from Committee members.

### 5. Submitting a Complaint

- 5.1. A formal Complaint should be made to any Officer (Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary or Programme Secretary) of the Committee within 14 days of the conduct complained of (the “Complaint”).
- 5.2. The Complaint should be in any form of written communication and should include:
  - (a) A detailed description of the event(s) complained of;
  - (b) The outcome that is sought;
  - (c) Statements by any people who witnessed the event(s) or were affected by them; and
  - (d) Any other documents or evidence relied upon in support of the Complaint;
- 5.3. If the Complaint includes an anonymous statement from a witness or refers to an individual without disclosing their identity, it must include the reasons why anonymity is requested in each case.

## 6. Interim measures

- 6.1. If it is necessary to do so to protect either or both parties and/or other Society members from a risk of harm and/or distress, the Committee may suspend the Respondent's Society membership and/or access to Society events or social media groups for up to 42 days pending proceedings under this procedure.

## 7. Response to the Complaint

- 7.1. Within 7 days of receipt of the Complaint, the Committee will write to the Respondent attaching the Complaint, all of the accompanying evidence and a copy of this procedure and stating that the Respondent has 10 days to provide written representations and any evidence in response to the Complaint (the "Response").
- 7.2. If the Response includes an anonymous statement from a witness or refers to an individual without disclosing their identity, it must include the reasons why anonymity is requested in each case.

## 8. Further Enquiries

- 8.1. Upon receipt of the Response, the Committee may make any further enquiries of any party that they consider necessary or desirable.

## 9. Decision: Complaints against Society members who are not Committee members

- 9.1. The Committee shall record its decision and the reasons for it in writing and shall send a copy of the reasoned decision to the parties within 10 days of the deadline for the Response.

## 10. Decision: Complaints against Committee members

- 10.1. If the Committee considers that it is appropriate to remove the Respondent from office, they shall:
  - (a) set out their recommendations and reasons in writing (the "Recommendations") and shall send a copy of the Recommendations to the parties within 10 days of the deadline for the Response;
  - (b) invite the parties to submit comments on the Recommendations within 5 days;
  - (c) convene an Extraordinary General Meeting as laid out in the section "AGM and EGM" of the Constitution to be held within 21 days of the deadline for comments on the Recommendations;
  - (d) submit the Complaint, the Response, the Recommendations and any comments on the Recommendations for consideration by the General Meeting, which shall then hold a vote on whether or not it is appropriate to remove the Respondent from office.
- 10.2. If the Committee considers that any other sanction is appropriate, it shall record its decision and the reasons for it in writing and shall send a copy of the reasoned decision to the parties within 10 days of the deadline for the Response.

## 11. Sanctions

- 11.1. The sanctions that may be imposed under this procedure include:
  - (a) Suspension of access to or use of the Society's events or facilities for a fixed period;
  - (b) Suspension of membership of the Society for a fixed period;
  - (c) Removal from office;
  - (d) Removal of membership of the Society.

12. Diagram of normal maximum timings

