

'HOW TO' Complain

For all types of complaint:-

Make a record of the date, time and incident which is causing you concern

Types of Complaint

Type 1: Complaints about the management of the site or of the Society

Type 2: Complaints involving another Member

Type 1: To complain about some aspect of the management of the site or Society

You are welcome to start by having an informal chat with any Member of the Committee about your problem. For action to be taken the matter will need to be raised at a Committee meeting and an action agreed. (Very small problems may be resolved as a result of the informal communication).

To raise an item at a Committee meeting, email whitehill.allotment.society@gmail.com or write a note and put it in the 'Suggestions' box by the shop. Give the details of your concern and ask for it to be discussed at the next Committee Meeting.

If the complaint is about something that needs repair (and it is the Committee's responsibility) the Committee will establish what needs to be done and find someone to do the work. This will be Minuted.

For other types of issue the Committee will discuss the concern you have raised and make a decision about what can or can't be done. This decision will be Minuted.

A change to the rules would need to wait until the AGM so that the whole Membership could vote on the proposed change.

Type 2: Complaint involving another Member

1. Make a record of the date, time and incident which caused you concern
2. Try and sort the problem out by talking with with the other Member, politely and reasonably. Bear in mind that there may be circumstances that you are unaware of that have contributed to the problem.
3. If this does not work or if there is some reason why it is difficult for you to initiate the discussion then discuss the problem with a member of the Committee, or email whitehill.allotment.society.uk@gmail.com or put a note in the Suggestions box by the shop

explaining the problem. If appropriate the Committee will try and arrange for a member of the Committee to come with you to help begin the discussion with the other person.

Before taking up a complaint with the Committee, the Committee would usually expect some evidence that you had already tried to sort the problem out face to face.

4. If face to face discussion or mediated face to face discussion does not resolve the complaint, then you can ask the Committee to arbitrate on the matter at the next Committee meeting.

A decision of this sort would not be publicly Minuted but the result would be communicated to both of the parties involved. The Committee would confirm that any actions required by either of the parties were carried out.

Appeals/Arbitration

If you are unhappy with the outcome of your complaint you can appeal against Committee decisions

- (A) to the Committee (see A below)
- (B) using outside arbitration (Clause 55 from the Registered Rules, see B below)
- (C) by asking the Landlord, Cambridge City Council to arbitrate (see C below)

A. Extract from Clause 27 of the 1943 Bye-Laws (identical wording in the 2020 Bye-Laws

An appeal from the decision of the Committee may be granted to the Annual or a Special General Meeting upon written application signed by not less than ten members.

B. Registered Rules Clause 55

Arbitration - In case any dispute arises between the Society or any of its officers and any member or persons claiming on account of a member or under the rule, or, in case of any complaint against any member, application may be made to the Committee for redress, and should the Committee not bring the parties to agreement, the matter in dispute may be submitted to the arbitration of three persons, one appointed by each of the parties concerned, and the third by the Management Committee or the National Allotments Society, Ltd. The award of the arbitrators shall be final and the costs of such arbitration shall be borne by the disputing parties in such proportion as the arbitrators may determine. In this rule the word "member" includes any person aggrieved who has for not more than six months ceased to be a member.

C. Lease 2020, Clause 24.1

The Tenant: Whitehill Allotment Society Limited

The Landlord: Cambridge City Council

In the event of conflict between the Tenant and a plot holder the Landlord may act as arbitrator if both parties in dispute agree. Both parties will be bound by the outcome of this arbitration.