

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURE

Our Policy:

The Exmoor Pony Society (EPS) aims to provide our members and owners with the best possible service. We take complaints very seriously, so if you are not satisfied with our service we will do our best to put things right.

General Principles:

- The EPS does not investigate anonymous complaints except in exceptional circumstances, as determined by the trustees.
- The EPS does not accept complaints that are raised on behalf of or regarding other people.
- The EPS does not accept complaints that are broadly or substantively the same as a previous complaint by the same complainant.
- The EPS does not progress complaints that we believe to be vexatious or malicious.
- Complaints should be made to the Secretary of the EPS within 14-days of the event.

How we will handle your complaint:

1 We will acknowledge your complaint by telephone, mail or electronic means within 7 days of receiving it. Any complaint must be complete, without the need to seek additional evidence or supporting documents from you (the complainant) once made.

2. Unless deemed particularly complex by the Chair and Vice Chair(s), the complaint will be investigated by them, with additional evidence sought as necessary. They will attempt to find a solution agreeable to you within 28-days. This will be communicated to you by telephone, mail or electronic means.

3. Appeals. If the resolution is not agreeable to you, the matter can be appealed by mail or electronic means within 14-days of the proposed resolution being communicated. The appeal will be considered at the next practicable EPS Trustees Meeting. An appeal deposit fee of £100 must be paid to the EPS before the appeal is considered. The fee is refundable in the event that any substantial (non-trivial) matter is accepted on appeal. The appeal must not introduce new information (i.e. information not raised in the original complaint or EPS response) and must explain precisely how and why the solution is not acceptable, referring to legislation/EPS Rules/Articles of Association/Policies as relevant.

4. Within 7-days of the relevant EPS Trustee meeting we will contact you by telephone, mail or electronic means to inform you of the outcome of the appeal.

5. If the outcome of the appeal is not agreeable to you and involves legislation or operating matters, it will be for you (the complainant) to refer the matter to the relevant authorities for consideration if you so wish. The EPS will co-operate with such authority's investigations.

Note:

a) Complaints are managed by part-time staff and volunteers. Timescales stated are targets, but may be extended in events such as: high workload, limited volunteer/staff availability, need to seek information/evidence from other parties, negotiations regarding resolution.

b) Complaints are accepted on the basis that where the complaint may require investigations or advice from other agencies and the complainant accepts their name/address/equine identity may be shared with other Agencies or Enforcement Bodies if necessary to investigate the complaint, including matters that arise as a result of, but outside the original complaint. Authorities may include (not exhaustive): DEFRA, Trading Standards, Police, RCVS, HMRC, RSPCA, ICO. See the EPS Privacy Notice for clarity.

c) Once a complaint has been placed, the complainant's additional communication regarding the respective complaint cannot be handled unless explicitly invited by the Society or response deadlines having passed.

d) To prevent misuse of the complaints procedures, no member shall pursue more than two (2) unsettled complaints at any time, unless a deposit of £100 has been made for any exceeding complaint.

Date of Change:	Changed By:	Comments:
15/4/2025	Trustees	Policy approved by the Trustees