

ABBAY THEATRE TRUST (ST ALBANS) LTD
Visitor Feedback & Complaints Policy and Procedure

Scope

This policy is for any visitor to the Abbey Theatre (either in person or virtually), whether they attend to watch a production of the Abbey Theatre Trust's ("ATT") resident theatre companies (Company of Ten, the Company of Teens, St Albans Youth Music Theatre ("SAYMT") and any other theatrical companies established from time to time), or are attending to watch an "outside let" production.

This policy also applies to feedback and complaints from participants, donors, funders, contractors and suppliers.

The Visitor Feedback and Complaints Policy applies to any external complaint whether regarding an experience at the Abbey Theatre, our website, our social media channels, any telephone contact with us, in relation to any fundraising activity by us or on our behalf, or any other issue they may wish to bring to our attention.

Purpose

This Visitor Feedback & Complaints Policy provides a framework for the ATT including its resident theatre companies to receive and respond to feedback from members of the public: whether it is a complaint, comment or compliment.

The ATT is committed to providing excellent customer service and experiences for visitors and welcomes any feedback to allow us to reflect on and aim to improve our visitor service.

Though the ATT takes care to provide all their services to a high standard it is recognised that complaints may be made. The ATT accepts all feedback including complaints in good faith and will use them as an opportunity to learn and improve what the ATT does and how it is done, alongside the chance to put things right for the complainant.

The ATT aims to:

- provide a fair Visitor Feedback and Complaints Procedure that is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to provide feedback or make a complaint.
- publicise the existence of the Visitor Feedback and Complaints Procedure, so that people know how to contact the ATT to provide feedback or make a complaint.
- make sure everyone at the ATT, and particularly its Front of House volunteers, know what to do if a complaint is received.
- make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.

- make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired.
- gather information which helps us to improve what the ATT does.

Definitions

Feedback

For the purpose of this Policy and the ATT's set of Procedures, feedback is defined as an expression of a view or opinion on our procedures and ways of working. Feedback, highlighting great practice, or when we get things wrong, or could make improvements is really important in making the ATT responsive to and reflective of its visitors and building users.

Complaint

A complaint for the purpose of this Policy and set of Procedures is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, made by a service user in their capacity as an individual citizen or as a representative of another company.

Complaints can be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing. The ATT investigates feedback and complaints made in this way and will respond in writing (or verbally where required) to each one received.

Exception: General feedback made on social media won't always be responded to. The ATT does not have the resources to monitor the wide range of social media channels available. It will aim to acknowledge complaints made via these channels but will refer the complainant to an alternative method of communication so that the Visitor Feedback and Complaints policy can be followed.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

To process a complaint and/or feedback the ATT will need to hold personal data about the complainant, which the individual provides, and which other people give in response to the complaint. The ATT will hold this data securely and handle it sensitively in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and only use it to address the complaint. Only those directly involved in the case who need to access the information to deal with the complaint will be able to obtain relevant confidential information.

The ATT will destroy complaints files in a secure manner six years after the complaint has been closed.

Visitor Feedback & Complaints Procedure



Responsibility

Stage 1 – Abbey Theatre Manager

The Theatre Manager is responsible in the first instance for reading and acknowledging all feedback and complaints. The Manager will pass on all feedback and complaints to the Board of Trustees/Management Committee. Where appropriate, they will liaise with relevant individuals or the relevant ATT Trustee/Committee Executive to prepare the initial feedback or complaint response.

If the feedback or complaint relates to the Theatre Manager, that feedback or complaint will be reviewed by an ATT Trustee/Management Committee Executive.

Stage 2 – Abbey Theatre Trust Trustees/Management Committee Executive

The relevant ATT Trustee/Management Committee Executive will take responsibility for implementing any changes identified as necessary and will review any feedback

where the member of the public is dissatisfied with the response from the Theatre Manager. If an ATT Trustee/Management Committee Executive was involved with the **Stage 1** response, a different Trustee/Executive will review and prepare the **Stage 2** response.

Stage 3 – Abbey Theatre Trust Chairman

The Chairman will conduct any further and final internal review.

How to provide feedback or make a complaint

Our aim is deal with any feedback or complaints as soon as practically possible.

Many complaints can be resolved informally, and often at the time a situation arises. If you are on site and feel able to do so, please raise your complaint with a member of our staff or with the House or Theatre Manager who will seek to resolve a complaint directly. If the House or Theatre Manager does not feel able to respond to your complaint directly and/or if further investigation is required, they may need to respond at a later stage and involve other members of the Theatre or Board of Trustees/Management Committee.

If you are not satisfied with the response you receive, or do not wish an informal solution, you may pursue a formal complaint. Please contact us **within a month of the incident** in question. If you delay any longer, it may affect our ability to consider your complaint. In some cases, a long delay will mean that we will not be able to consider the matter at all.

Formal complaints should be sent in writing using the contact details below:

Email: feedback@abbeytheatre.org.uk

By Post: Theatre Manager
Abbey Theatre
Westminster Lodge
Holywell Hill
St Albans AL1 2DL

You will need to tell us:

- what happened and/or your complaint or other feedback.
- if appropriate include any staff names/your booking reference number, and any relevant documents.
- when it happened – please include the date, time and location of any incident if applicable.
- what you think went wrong.
- how you think we could put it right.

If someone is complaining on your behalf, we need you to tell us in writing that they are acting for you.

We will consider adjustments to our processes for people with protected characteristics such as hearing or sight impairments, language difficulties or other specific needs. If this applies in your case, please let us know what adjustments would assist you.

How we will handle complaints and feedback

All feedback and complaints we receive will be logged and will be acknowledged by the Theatre Manager within **7 working days**. We aim to provide a full reply to all complaints within **21 working days**.

You may be contacted by the Theatre Manager (or another member they deem is best placed to respond) to gather any additional information from you that will help us resolve the complaint.

If we need longer, we will tell you why and when we expect to make further contact.

If you are not happy with the way that the **Theatre Manager** has dealt with your complaint, please let us know **within 30 calendar days of our response**. Your feedback and/or complaint will then be escalated to the **Abbey Theatre Trust Board of Trustees/Management Committee** who will then review the response you received to ensure that:

- all the issues you complained about were addressed.
- any shortfalls in our service were put right or, where that is not possible, action was taken to avoid a similar situation arising again.
- the outcome was explained clearly to you.
- You will be clear whether any further action is required by the ATT.

The **Trustee/Management Committee Executive** will conduct this review and respond to you within **21 working days**.

If you are still dissatisfied with the outcome of the matter, you can write to Chairman of the Abbey Theatre Trust at:

Abbey Theatre
Westminster Lodge
Holywell Hill
St Albans AL1 2DL

Or by email to: chairman@abbeytheatre.org.uk

If a criminal offence is alleged, then the police will be informed.

Please note that all of our Board of Trustee/Management Committee roles are undertaken by volunteers, who will do their best to learn from feedback and address reasonable complaints. We reserve the right to close an issue where no further progress can be made, or where a complaint or complainant has become unreasonably persistent. This will be communicated to the person or people raising the issue by the Chairman.

Can You Take Your Complaint Elsewhere?

You may wish to refer your complaint to the following organisations if appropriate:

Complaints about charitable activities

Though we encourage you to contact us directly to resolve your complaint in the first instance, you can contact the Charities Commission and make a complaint at any point.

For example, if you were concerned we were:

- not doing what we claim to do
- losing lots of money
- harming people
- being used for personal profit or gain
- involved in illegal activity

Serious complaints can be raised with the Charity Commission via their online complaints form at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission/about/complaints-procedure>

Fundraising Complaints

If you have an unresolved complaint about:

- the way we have asked you or someone else for donations
- how fundraisers have behaved

Fundraising complaints can be raised with the Fundraising Regulator via their online form:

<https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/service/complaints-and-investigations>

Advertising Standards Authority

If you have an unresolved complaint about:

- an advertising campaign we have run which you think is offensive, deceptive or inaccurate
- the number of emails or mail you get from us

You can raise the complaint with the Advertising Standards Agency via their website:
<https://www.asa.org.uk/make-a-complaint.html>

Personal Data Complaints

If your complaint relates to how we collect and use your personal data you have the right to report your concerns to the Information Commissioner's Office www.ico.org.uk.

Monitoring complaints

A log of complaints received is monitored and reviewed by the Board of ATT Trustees/Management Committee on an ongoing basis.

Review

This Policy and set of Procedures is reviewed annually and is updated as required.

Record of Policy

Version	V1
Policy First Created	2025
Last Updated	
Review Frequency	Annual
Person/s responsible	Chairman Secretary Theatre Manager
Associated Policies	Data Protection Policy EDI Policy