

Museums Northumberland Complaints Procedure

Museums Northumberland is committed to delivering and maintaining excellent service standards to all our audiences, be they general visitors in person or online, our local communities, educational or outreach groups.

Anyone who expresses dissatisfaction with any aspect of their visit or the services which Museums Northumberland has provided can expect to have their complaint addressed as quickly as possible. We welcome constructive feedback of any sort, and will deal with your complaint promptly, with courtesy and respect and in a fair and impartial manner.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is when you tell us you are not happy with an experience or service that Museums Northumberland has provided; for example if you receive a poor-quality service, are given the wrong information, or you feel a member of staff has not met expected standards of customer service.

Step 1. Making an Informal Complaint:

Informal complaints may be addressed to the museum either verbally to staff in person or on the phone, or in writing and it is expected that most of these will be resolved quickly and informally by means of an immediate reply or explanation. An informal complaint may relate to any aspect of our museums or our service that you feel we could improve upon.

We will always endeavour to deal with your complaint informally. Our staff will do their best to settle your complaint without you needing to do anything else.

- **To make a complaint on site at our Museums:**

Please ask to speak to the Visitor Experience Supervisor on duty. They may ask you to fill out a Customer Comments card, so that we can log your complaint for internal review. If you want a response they will ask for your contact details.

- **To make a complaint by phone:**

Please call 01670 624455 and ask to speak to the Visitor Experience Supervisor on duty or the Museums Manager.

- **To make a complaint via email:**

Please send your complaint to hello@museumsnorthumberland.org.uk

Step 2. Making a Formal Complaint:

If you have spoken to a relevant staff member about your complaint but they have not been able to put things right, or you are not happy with the response, the next

step is for you to make a formal complaint. At this stage, we need the details of your complaint in writing, and your contact details so that we can get back to you.

We will respond to you within 5 working days to let you know we have received your complaint.

Following this, we will investigate your complaint, take any necessary action and send you a written reply within 28 working days. If your complaint needs more investigation, and we cannot send you a written reply within 28 working days, we will write to you and let you know when you will receive a written reply.

In our complaint response we will:

- Deal with the complaint quickly and fairly
- Tell you what is happening with your complaint and do everything we can to help you.
- Treat the information you give us in confidence.
- Explain our decision.
- Use complaints to review and improve the way we provide services.
- Hold information about you and your complaint for a minimum of 2 years, unless you contact us to request that we delete it sooner.

To make a formal complaint please sent it to:

- **Email:** hello@museumsnorthumberland.org.uk
- **Post:** Visitor Experience, Museums Northumberland, Woodhorn Museum, QEII Country Park, Ashington NE639YF.

Step 3. Escalating a Complaint for Review:

If you have followed our complaints procedure and are still not happy with the results of the investigations, you can ask the CEO of Museums Northumberland to review your complaint. The CEO will write to you within 5 working days to let you know that they are reviewing your complaint and approximately when they will send out a written reply. We would expect this to take no longer than 28 working days.

To escalate your complaint:

Please mark your request to escalate your complaint for the attention of **Chief Executive Officer:**

- **Email:** hello@museumsnorthumberland.org.uk
- **Post:** CEO, Museums Northumberland, Woodhorn Museum, QEII Country Park, Ashington NE639YF.

Complaint Response Exceptions:

Museums Northumberland may not respond to behaviour which we deem to be abusive, aggressive or unreasonable. This may include:

- Insulting, abusive, or degrading language
- Any form of physical violence or threats of physical violence
- Derogatory racist, sexist, ageist, or homophobic remarks
- Comments relating to disability, perceived gender, religion, belief or any other protected characteristic.
- Persistent contact on the same issue, not in line with our escalation processes detailed in the Complaints Procedure.

This list is not exhaustive, and we will always consider each complaint on its own merits.