

CONTRACTOR COMPLAINTS & DISPUTE PROCEDURE



Updated 01 December 2025

Purpose of the Policy

This procedure provides a clear and fair process for self-employed contractors (associates¹) to raise concerns or complaints in relation to their engagement with Stoke Lane Stables. It is intended to promote early, informal resolution of issues.

This procedure does not form part of any contract of employment and does not create any employment or worker rights.

Who This Applies To

This procedure applies to individuals engaged by Stoke Lane Stables on a self-employed or independent contractor basis only.

Scope of Complaints

Contractors may raise complaints relating to:

- Payment disputes
- Working arrangements under the contract
- Conduct of Company personnel
- Health and safety concerns
- Discrimination or harassment
- Breach of contract

This procedure does not replace any legal rights under the contract or at law.

Informal Resolution (First Step)

Where possible, contractors are encouraged to raise concerns informally with their main point of contact at Stoke Lane Stables in the first instance. Many issues can be resolved quickly at this stage.

Formal Complaint Process

If the issue cannot be resolved informally, the contractor may submit a formal written complaint.

How to Submit

The complaint should be submitted in writing (by email or letter) to:

Kate Kirkpatrick, Proprietor at stokelanestables@gmail.com

The complaint should include:

- A clear summary of the issue
- Relevant dates, times, and individuals involved
- Any supporting evidence
- The outcome sought

Acknowledgement

Stoke Lane Stables will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 working days.

Investigation

Where appropriate, Stoke Lane Stables will:

- Review relevant documents
- Speak with relevant parties
- Consider the contractor's representations fairly

Stoke Lane Stables aims to conclude the investigation within 15 working days, where reasonably practicable.

Outcome

The contractor will be informed in writing of the outcome and any proposed resolution.

Escalation / Review

If the contractor is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may request a review in writing within 5 working days of receiving the decision. A different manager (where reasonably practicable) will review the matter and issue a final response.

Confidentiality

All complaints will be handled sensitively and confidentially so far as reasonably possible.

No Retaliation

Stoke Lane Stables will not subject any contractor to detrimental treatment for raising a genuine complaint under this procedure.

Termination Rights Preserved

Nothing in this procedure limits either party's right to terminate the contract in accordance with its terms.

Status Clarification

Nothing in this procedure shall be interpreted as creating an employment relationship, worker status, or any obligation beyond those set out in the contractor agreement.

¹ **Associate** - A self-employed individual engaged by Stoke Lane Stables to provide professional services, including instructors. Associates are not employees, and this term does not create an employment relationship.