

# Managing Complaints and whistleblowing

## Statement of Intent

This is the Managing Complaints and whistleblowing Policy Statement of the:

### **Northern Ireland Raspberry Jam (Registered Charity no. NIC107983)**

The Northern Ireland Raspberry Jam Trustee Board recognises the importance of addressing concerns and complaints in a fair, transparent, and timely manner. It is committed to ensuring that all volunteers, attendees, and members of the public feel safe and supported in raising issues, whether informally or formally.

Complaints will be handled confidentially and professionally, with no individual penalised for raising a concern in good faith. The Trustee Board will ensure that all complaints are investigated appropriately and, where necessary, escalated to a higher level or independent party to achieve a fair resolution.

The Trustee Board is also committed to upholding whistleblowing principles, providing a safe process for reporting serious concerns including safeguarding issues, financial misconduct, or other forms of wrongdoing. Whistleblowers will be treated with confidentiality and protected from retaliation.

This policy applies to anyone engaging with the Northern Ireland Raspberry Jam and ensures that all concerns are handled in line with best practices and legal obligations.

**Signature of Chair:**



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Date of Signature: 04/04/2025

**Signature of DSO:**



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Date of Signature: 04/04/2025

## Introduction

This policy sets out the procedures for handling complaints and whistleblowing at the Northern Ireland Raspberry Jam. It ensures that concerns are addressed fairly, transparently and in line with best practices.

## Managing Complaints

### Principles

- Everyone has the right to raise concerns or complaints
- Complaints will be handled confidentially, fairly and professionally
- No one will be penalised for raising a complaint in good faith
- Complaints will be resolved at the most appropriate level, escalating where necessary

### Complaint Procedure

#### Step 1: Informal Resolution

- Wherever possible, concerns should be raised informally with a relevant volunteer or trustee.
- If the issue is not resolved or requires further action, a formal complaint should be submitted.

#### Step 2: Formal Complaint

- A formal complaint should be made in writing (email or letter) to the Northern Ireland Raspberry Jam board of trustees.
- A complaint should include:
  - Name and contact details of the complaint (unless anonymous)
  - Details of the complaint, including relevant dates, times and people involved.
  - Any supporting evidence
  - The desired outcome or resolution sought

#### Step 3: Investigation

- The trustees will acknowledge receipt within 10 working days and assign an appropriate person to investigate.
- The complainant may be asked for further details or clarification
- A response will be provided within 20 working days, outlining findings and any actions taken. If more time is required, an update will be provided.

#### Step 4: Appeal

- If the complainant is unsatisfied with the outcome, they may request an appeal within 10 working days.
- A different trustee (or independent third part if necessary) will resolve the complaint
- A final decision will be made within 20 working days, and no further appeals will be considered.

## Whistleblowing

### Principles

Whistleblowing refers to reporting serious concerns about misconduct, safeguarding issues, financial mismanagement, or illegal activities within the Northern Ireland Raspberry Jam. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Abuse or neglect of children or vulnerable individuals
- Fraud, corruption or mismanagement of funds
- Discrimination or harassment
- Health and safety risks.

### Whistleblowing procedure

- Concerns should be reported directly to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) or a trustee.
- If the concern involves the DSO or trustees, the whistleblower may contact an external body such as the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland or the NSPCC whistleblowing advice line.
- The identity of the whistleblower will be kept confidential, unless disclosure is legally required.
- Whistleblowers will be protected from retaliation and must not be treated unfairly for raising a concern.

### Investigation Process

- The concern will be acknowledged within 10 working days.
- An investigation will be carried out, ensuring impartiality and confidentiality
- If wrongdoing is found, appropriate action will be taken, including reporting to the relevant authorities.
- The whistleblower will be informed of the outcome where possible.

## Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to any significant changes in the safeguarding legislation.

For further guidance, contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).