

## **Complaints Policy & Procedure**

### **1.0 Introduction**

Ulster Wildlife wants to exceed your expectation in everything we do. However, we know that there may be times when we do not meet our own high standards. When this happens, we want to hear about it, in order to deal with the situation as quickly as possible and put measures in place to stop it happening again.

We take complaints very seriously and we treat them as an opportunity to develop our approach. This is why we are always very grateful to hear from people who are willing to take the time to help us improve.

### **2.0 Scope**

This policy covers:

Feedback about Ulster Wildlife's governance, policies, decisions, activities, quality, performance and behaviour. This includes feedback from individuals, groups and communities, members, supporters, partners, suppliers and the wider public.

This policy does not cover:

- Feedback from staff and volunteers – this is covered by other policies.
- Contractual disputes.
- Requests for information (including Subject Access Requests under the Data Protection Act), or to amend records.
- Employee Whistleblowing

### **3.0 Our Complaints Policy**

Our policy is:

- To provide a fair complaints procedure that is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint.
- To publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint.
- To make sure everyone in our organisation knows what to do if a complaint is received.
- To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way.
- To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired.
- To learn from complaints and feedback to help us to improve what we do.

### **4.0 Our Complaints Procedures**

A complaint will be logged if:

- The person is clearly stating either verbally or in writing that they want to make a complaint.
- The person is unhappy that a member of staff is unable to resolve an enquiry to their satisfaction and the member of staff asks them if they wish to make a formal complaint.

A complaint will not be logged if it can be dealt with verbally and informally by a member of staff at the time.

Formal complaints made in writing must be sent to the Operations Director, Ulster Wildlife, McClelland House, 10 Heron Road, Belfast, BT3 9LE or emailed as a complaint to [info@ulsterwildlife.org](mailto:info@ulsterwildlife.org).

Ulster Wildlife will make every effort to resolve any complaint quickly and will make at least an initial response within 10 working days.

The relevant parties will be contacted to give an account of the matters that are the subject of the complaint. The complainant's identity will be kept confidential from other parties. There is no fee for submitting a complaint.

## 5.0 Our Appeals Procedure

We will do our best to ensure that any person making a complaint is satisfied with the way we handle it. However, if you are not satisfied, then you can write to the Chief Executive within 28 days of receiving our written response, outlining the details of the complaint, why you are not satisfied with our response and what you would like us to do to put things right. The CEO will reconsider the information already collected, re-investigate if necessary, consider your appeal and what further action may be taken and will reply to you within 15 working days.

Following this stage, if you are still not satisfied, you should write directly to the Chair of Ulster Wildlife. You will be notified of the progress and outcome of this final review, normally within 28 days.

If you remain unsatisfied after all three stages have been completed, there is no further right of appeal within Ulster Wildlife. However, if you are still dissatisfied, you can pursue your complaint with the Northern Ireland Charity Commission (<http://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/>).

## 6.0 Dealing with anonymous complaints

Anonymous complaints will be directed to the CEO & Chairman who will decide whether to investigate or not. If the complaint relates to the CEO it will be directed to the Chairman.

## 7.0 Complaints About Fundraising

Ulster Wildlife is committed to the highest standards in fundraising practice. We are a member of the Institute of Fundraising and adhere to the Fundraising Regulator's (England & Wales) Code of Practice.

Please use the general complaints procedures above for complaints that relate to our fundraising practice.

If your complaint relates to fundraising and you feel it remains unresolved following the general complaints procedure then the Fundraising Regulator\* can investigate your complaint. You should contact them within two months of receiving your response from us.

<https://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/>

\*Ongoing consultation is being led by NICVA on how fundraising regulation should be developed in Northern Ireland but in January 2017 NICVA announced that the Working Group had agreed to an interim arrangement where Northern Ireland would come under the remit of the UK Fundraising Regulator pending the results of the local consultation exercise. Therefore, the UK Fundraising Regulator has agreed to investigate fundraising complaints that relate to Northern Ireland-based charities.

Further assistance with regards to your complaint about fundraising can also be sought from the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland <http://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/>

## 8.0 Complaints about Data Protection

Ulster Wildlife understands that you have trusted us with your personal data and in addition to our own high standards and values we are also organisational members of the Institute of Fundraising. Their strict policies regarding the protection of your data can be found at [www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk](http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk) Ulster Wildlife will never sell or pass your details to third parties for commercial purposes.

Please use the general complaints procedures above if your complaints relates to how we handle your data.

If your complaint relates to data protection and you feel it remains unresolved following the general complaints procedure, advice can be sought from the Information Commissioner's Office (<https://ico.org.uk/>)