

Complaints and whistleblowing

RDA is committed to enriching the lives of disabled people through horses, and to ensure every participant receives an excellent service that meets their individual needs.

- Concerns should be handled in line with RDA values, codes of conduct, and agreements
- Informal resolution is encouraged before making a formal complaint
- Complaints against groups should start with the Group Chair, then escalate if needed
- Whistleblowing enables serious concerns to be raised safely and confidentially

Our network of committed volunteers and staff makes it possible for RDA to deliver safe, high-quality experiences for all participants. We aim to resolve concerns or dissatisfaction in a fair, respectful way, guided by RDA's values and Codes of Conduct.

In many cases, issues can be resolved informally, giving those involved the chance to be heard and reassured their concerns are taken seriously. When this is not possible, formal processes are in place to ensure complaints are managed appropriately, and serious concerns can be raised under RDA's Whistleblowing Policy.

Handling complaints in line with RDA values

- All complaints should be approached in line with RDA's values and responsibilities.
- Everyone involved should be reminded of their responsibilities under the *RDA UK Codes of Conduct and Agreements*, including the *Working Together Code of Conduct* ([link](#)).
- Informal resolution between parties should always be attempted first.

Complaints against an RDA Group

Stage One – Informal Resolution: Raising issues at the Group first

- RDA UK encourages informal resolution wherever possible.
- We believe many concerns can be resolved more effectively if handled early, through open, respectful conversation at a local level. Often, individuals simply want to be heard, share their perspective, and feel confident that their concerns are taken seriously. Informal resolution also gives Groups the opportunity to listen to feedback, engage constructively, and take prompt action where appropriate, helping to achieve positive outcomes for everyone involved.

Stage Two – Making a Formal Complaint:

- If an informal resolution has been tried but hasn't worked for any reason, formal complaints must be submitted in writing (either on paper or digitally).
The RDA Group Complaints Template should be used, where possible, and the complaint must include the following information:
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 - Full name of the person making the complaint
 - Member Group the complaint relates to
 - Contact details of the person making the complaint (phone number and email, if possible)
 - Their connection to RDA (e.g. participant, volunteer, staff member, or member of the public)
 - Whether they are submitting the complaint for themselves or on behalf of someone else (e.g. parent, guardian, carer – consent may be needed)
 - A description of the complaint and how this has affected you, please include details of when the issue happened, witnesses and any steps that were carried out already following the informal route.

- What they feel would be a suitable outcome or resolution (e.g. an apology, a change in process or assurance of improvements that may be made)

The complaint should be addressed to the Group Chair of the Trustees, where either the Chair or designated person will handle the complaint. If the complaint is about the Group Chair, then the complaint should be made to the full Board of Trustees.

Complaints submitted directly to RDA UK, without first being raised with the group, will be referred back to the Group Chair or Board of Trustees for investigation and response.

Following the closing of the complaint, an RDA UK Complaint reporting form should be submitted by the Group. You can find the form (online) [here](#):

RDA UK - Group Complaint Reporting Form

*Following the closing of the complaint, a RDA UK Complaint reporting form should be submitted by the Group. This enables RDA UK better oversight of complaint themes across the federation and the opportunity to provide further support including training and guidance etc. Group names are an **OPTIONAL** field. Ammonised (not group named) may be shared with Regional Chairs for regional training purposes.*

If, during the course of the complaint investigation, any safeguarding concerns become apparent, these must be reported separately to the RDA UK Safeguarding Team in accordance with the RDA UK Safeguarding Policy."

When you submit this form, it will not automatically collect your details like name and email address unless you provide it yourself.

Required

Please enter your region name

Select your answer

OPTIONAL - Please enter your group name

Please provide a 1 or 2 word summary of the complaint theme "Equine Welfare", "Governance Concerns" etc

Please provide a short summary of the complaint. Please do not include names or personal details

What was the key outcomes and learnings from the complaint.

Submit

This enables RDA UK better oversight of complaint themes across the federation and the opportunity to provide further support including training and guidance etc.

Complaints against RDA UK volunteers or staff

- Complaints regarding RDA UK volunteers, RDA UK staff, or RDA UK Trustees must follow the RDA Complaints Policy and Guidance.
- All complaints are taken seriously and handled appropriately.

Whistleblowing

RDA is committed to the highest standards of openness, integrity, and accountability.

- Employees, volunteers, and others are encouraged to raise serious concerns about any aspect of RDA's work.
- The RDA UK Whistleblowing Policy supports and protects those who report concerns, and underpins RDA's zero tolerance of inappropriate behaviour.