

St John's Drug and Alcohol Policy



Cumann Lúthchleas Gael are committed as part of their overall philosophy to *‘Discourage the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco on the basis that they are incompatible with a healthy approach to sporting activity’*

St John's GAC are commitment to being at the Heart of a Healthy Community. We have developed a Health and Wellbeing Strategy to ensure that our members continue to enjoy the health and wellbeing benefits of our activities, that we to extend the benefits to others and that we increase the benefits that we each receive.

This Drug and Alcohol Policy is part of our Health and Wellbeing Strategy (Action #2.5) as recognition that it is vitally important that these benefits are not compromised by the misuse or abuse of drugs and alcohol.

St John's believes that we need to work towards creating a safe, healthy club environment where we can develop the skills and attitudes necessary to cope with drug and alcohol related issues. We are committed to this drug and alcohol policy as part of an overall philosophy to discourage the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco on the basis that they are incompatible with a healthy approach to sporting activity.

“health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”.

- World Health Organisation

Aims and Objectives:

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all club members are kept safe from drug-related harm when involved in club activities. Our objectives are...

- To develop a consistent approach to drug and alcohol-related issues to be adopted by all club members.
- To develop procedures and protocols that address drug and alcohol-related issues in the club.
- To establish clear procedures for managing specific incidents of suspected drug and alcohol misuse.
- To help protect our juvenile members from the harm caused by drug and alcohol misuse and abuse.

Roles and Responsibilities:

All persons associated with our club can help prevent drug-related harm from occurring during club activities.

All club members, officials, coaches and volunteers shall be aware of and support this policy and shall abide by this policy. They should display leadership and good example, particularly when dealing with underage members, and shall follow the law when it comes to illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco.

Parents & Guardians shall support the club in the development and implementation of this policy including procedures for handling incidents of suspected alcohol and drug misuse.

Coaches & Youth Workers shall be aware of the possibility of drug misuse among players and pass on concerns with the aim of preventing harm.

Club ASAP Officer shall be responsible for overseeing the development, implementation and evaluation of this policy in conjunction with the Club Chairperson and Executive.

All relevant information, paraphernalia or suspected substances found or received shall be forwarded to the Club Chairperson who shall consult with the necessary parties before taking relevant action based upon this policy. In the event of the Chairperson not being available to discharge these duties this responsibility will then automatically fall to the Vice Chairperson or Secretary.

St John's Actions:

1. We will erect appropriate signage in support of our Smoke-Free Policy¹ by December 2014.
2. We will not sell tobacco on club premises.
3. We will host Alcohol & Drugs Awareness Evenings for our members and others on a 3-5 yearly cycle.
4. We will not sell alcohol during any juvenile functions or matches.
5. Water/Cordial & Tea/Coffee will be freely available at all times when bar is open.
6. We will not allow alcohol advertising on club jerseys or club property.
7. Under-age teams shall not stop in pubs on the way home from matches, outings or training sessions.
8. Medal ceremonies shall not be held in pubs.
9. Coaches and Club Officials shall not smoke or drink alcohol while representing their club at matches or training sessions.
10. Alcohol shall not be permitted in club changing rooms.
11. We will appoint a club ASAP officer to take lead role in all matters related to this ASAP Policy.
12. We will support Croke Park, Ulster Council and Down GAA's ASAP programmes.
13. Coaches and mentors will not allow players who appear to be under the influence of drugs +/- alcohol to participate in training and matches.
14. We will give consideration before each social event as to how best to prevent under-18s obtaining alcohol.

Protocol for dealing with drug misuse

St John's GAC shall endeavour to respond to all drug-related incidents in a firm but fair manner, with due respect for the safety and welfare of individuals involved, other members of the club and the wider community. We shall also fulfil any legal obligations that might apply.

Outline of Restrictions

The misuse or supply of drugs is viewed as unacceptable by St John's GAC and is punishable by warnings, suspensions and expulsions as deemed appropriate. It is also unacceptable for members or officials to present for club duties while under the influence of a drug.

Reporting of Incidents

Alleged or confirmed incidents in breach of this policy shall be referred to the Club Chairperson, Secretary or ASAP Officer.

Recording of Information

Information regarding alleged or confirmed incidents in breach of this policy shall be recorded in writing. The recording of factual information is preferable and all opinions shall be stated as such. Responses to cases shall also be recorded in this way. Only in confirmed cases shall names of individuals be recorded.

Confidentiality

While every effort shall be made to respect confidentiality, it may not be always be possible to guarantee confidentiality in relation to drug-related incidents.

Involving Parents/Guardians

Incidents involving any person under 18 years of age will require their parents/guardians to be informed. Parents/guardians shall be invited to discuss what has happened and shall be informed of any course of action to be taken by the club. The Club Chairperson and Executive shall nominate a person to inform parents/guardians on a case by case basis.

PSNI Involvement

Incidents that involve the illegal supply of drugs shall require PSNI involvement. In all other drug-related incidents, each case shall be considered on an individual basis and the decision shall rest with the Club Chairperson and Executive as to whether or not the police are involved.

Search

The Club Chairperson and Executive retain the right to direct a search of any part of club property if there is reasonable cause to believe a substance in breach of this policy is contained therein. Two officials of the club shall be present during any form of search. Club Officials are not allowed to search an individual or their personal property. Where there is reasonable cause to believe a person has in

their possession a substance in breach of this policy, they shall be asked to volunteer the substance. If they refuse, the PSNI may be called in to conduct a search.

Disposing of suspected illegal substances

If a suspected illegal substance is found on club property it shall be brought to the attention of the Club Chairperson. The substance shall be stored securely and the Club Chairperson shall then decide whether the PSNI should be called to collect it, or whether it should be disposed of. Any disposal of suspected illegal substances shall be recorded and witnessed by two officials. At no time shall a suspected illegal substance be removed from club property by anyone other than the PSNI.

Availability, use and storage of solvents and gases

A large number of solvent based products have the potential to be abused (e.g. deodorants, paints, thinners, cleaning fluids etc). All solvent based materials and gases shall be stored securely and safely away from public access.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy is in force at all times and during all activities conducted under the aegis of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael. This policy shall be evaluated annually and after every drug-related incident. This policy shall come into effect on 18th March 2014 and shall be reviewed every three years thereafter by the ASAP Club Officer in conjunction with the Club Chairperson and Executive.

Signed __PJ McGrady_____ Chairperson

Signed __Kevin McGlynn_____ Secretary

Signed __Ciaran Cahill_____ ASAP Officer

¹ We initially adopted a “Smoke Free” policy on 16th April 2007 which came into effect on 30th April 2007. This was re-adopted at our AGM on 24th November 2010. (HWBS Action #2.1)

² [We will continue to provide information and education through workshops and information sessions, the club publications (e.g. bulletin and information packs for juvenile players & parents, information pack for coaches), the provision of literature and the promotion of club policy.] (HWBS Action #2.6).

Appendix 1: Definition of Drugs:

For the purpose of this policy the term “drug” shall include all mood altering substances, both legal and illegal and involve substances such as:

- **Alcohol**
- **Tobacco**
- **“Over the counter” medicines such as paracetamol, anti-histamines, cough medicines etc.**
- **Prescribed drugs such as antibiotics, inhalers, painkillers etc.**
- **Volatile substances such as aerosols, glues, petrol, cigarette lighter fuels etc.**
- **Controlled drugs such as cannabis, ecstasy, amphetamines, magic mushrooms, cocaine, etc.**
- **Performance enhancing sports related drugs as outlined by the World Anti-Doping Agency.**

Appendix 2:

Information pack for juvenile players and parents 2014 (extract)

Alcohol and substance abuse prevention

St John's believe that there no place for alcohol or drug abuse in sport and indeed that these are detrimental to our society as a whole.

St John's have run seminars and workshops aimed an empowering young people to make informed, sensible and mature decision regarding these issues over the past number of years and will continue to give these matter close attention.

In line with GAA best practice we hope to develop and implement a policy dealing with drug and alcohol related issues in the near future and your input would be welcomed.

It is against the law for anyone

- to knowingly sell alcohol to a person under 18 years of age
- to give alcohol to anyone under 14 years of age
- to buy alcohol for someone under 18 years of age to consume on a licensed premises

We acknowledge that some parents may give or allow older teenagers to take a drink at home in the hope that this may "demystify" drinking and avoid binge drinking when they child turns 18. We respect the parents right to do this, but **please do not expect or "allow" anyone under 18 years of age to get an alcoholic drink at St John's.**

If you have any concerns about alcohol or drug abuse please contact our Alcohol and Substance Abuse Programme (ASAP) Officer

Appendix 3:
Health and Wellbeing Strategy (Extract)
Objective 2 - Encourage Healthy Lifestyle Choices

We will encourage our members to make healthy lifestyle choices by providing appropriate advice and information and outlets for physical activity. We will support National, Provincial and County initiatives and will form cluster arrangements with other clubs and other organisations to achieve this objective.

Action	Description	Timescale
2.1	We will erect appropriate signage in support of our Smoke-Free Policy [We adopted a “Smoke Free” policy on 16 th April 2007 which came into effect on 30 th April 2007]	May 2011
2.2	We will provide GAA cardiac screening questionnaire for all players in appropriate age groups	On-going
2.3	We will provide First Aid / CPR training [There will be at least one trained person at all games and official training sessions.]	3 year cycle
2.4	We will provide an AED (defibrillator) and training in its use	2013
2.5	We will adopt a ASAP Policy (Alcohol and Substance Abuse Policy)	March 2011
2.6	We will host Alcohol & Drugs Awareness Evenings for our members and others	3-5 yearly cycle
2.7	We will host Cancer Awareness Evenings for our members and others, and provide information on reducing cancer risks. [For example we will support the Ulster Council’s “Well-Woman” and “Well-Man” initiatives (run in association with the Ulster Cancer Foundation).]	<5 yearly cycle
2.8	We will provide information on Safer Driving for our members and others and may host Awareness Evenings on Safer Driving [Supporting Ulster Council’s “Live to Play” initiative; IAM, PSNI Traffic Branch, Insurers]	<5 yearly cycle
2.9	We will provide information on Mental Health Awareness for our members and others	<5 yearly cycle
2.10	We will provide information provide nutrition and hydration information for our members and others	<5 yearly cycle
2.11	We will encourage healthy eating when we host under-age games	On-going