



# **West Heath Community Association**

## **Whistleblowing Policy**

West Heath Community Association is a registered charity (no: 1124993)  
and has limited liability being a company limited by guarantee  
registered in England & Wales (no: 06570815)

## Whistleblowing Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Centre Manager or sooner if legislation or best practice changes. West Heath Community Association will amend this policy, following consultations with the Community Centre Manager where appropriate.

Date of last review:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Change</i>
<i>March 2026</i>	<i>New document created.</i>
<i>April 2026</i>	<i>Agreed by Board</i>

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## **1. Purpose of this Policy**

At West Heath Community Centre we are committed to operating with honesty, integrity, and accountability. This policy provides a safe and confidential way for staff, volunteers, trustees, and contractors to raise concerns about wrongdoing without fear of victimisation.

This policy supports the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA), which protects individuals who raise concerns in the public interest.

## **2. Who This Policy Applies To**

- Employees
- Volunteers
- Board of Directors
- Freelancers, contractors, and sessional workers
- Agency workers
- Anyone working on behalf of the centre

## **3. What Counts as Whistleblowing**

A whistleblowing concern is a disclosure of information that is in the public interest and relates to wrongdoing such as:

- Criminal activity
- Safeguarding concerns or risks to children or vulnerable adults
- Health and safety dangers
- Fraud, theft, or financial mismanagement
- Breaches of legal obligations
- Environmental damage
- Covering up any of the above

Personal grievances (e.g., bullying, disputes, or employment issues) are not whistleblowing and should be handled through the centre's complaints procedures.

## **4. Our Commitment to You**

We will:

- Take all concerns seriously
- Treat disclosures sensitively and confidentially wherever possible
- Protect whistleblowers from dismissal, victimisation, or disadvantage
- Investigate concerns promptly and fairly
- Keep you informed of progress where appropriate
- Ensure no one is discouraged from raising concerns

Retaliation against a whistleblower is a disciplinary offence.

## **5. How to Raise a Concern**

You can raise a concern verbally or in writing. Please provide as much detail as possible.

### **Step 1 – Raise it Internally**

You may contact:

- Centre Manager: Marie Green
- Board of Directors: Mike Bennett
- Board Safeguarding Lead: Sarah Walker

If the concern involves one of the above, you may go directly to another listed contact.

### **Step 2 – If You Feel Unable to Raise it Internally**

If you believe your concern cannot be raised internally or has not been handled properly, you may contact a prescribed external body, such as:

- Charity Commission
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for safeguarding
- Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for data breaches

You do not need to prove wrongdoing—only that you reasonably believe your concern is true and in the public interest.

## **6. Confidentiality**

We will make every effort to keep your identity confidential. However, in some cases (e.g., safeguarding or criminal investigations), we may need to share information with relevant authorities. We will always discuss this with you where possible.

Anonymous disclosures will be considered, but they may be harder to investigate.

## **7. How Concerns Will Be Handled**

Once a concern is raised:

1. It will be acknowledged within 5 working days
2. An initial assessment will be carried out
3. A decision will be made on next steps, which may include:
  - Internal investigation
  - Referral to external authorities
  - Independent review
4. You will be informed of the outcome where appropriate

Records will be kept securely and in line with data protection law.

## **8. Protection Under the Law**

Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, whistleblowers are protected if:

- The disclosure is in the public interest
- The concern relates to one of the categories of wrongdoing listed in Section 3
- The disclosure is made to an appropriate person or body

Whistleblowers must not be dismissed, disciplined, or disadvantaged for raising a genuine concern.

## **9. Malicious or Vexatious Allegations**

Raising a concern in good faith will never result in disciplinary action.

However, deliberately false or malicious allegations may be treated as misconduct.