

Roots *and* Shoots

Whistleblowing Policy

Last Updated: 8 May 2026

Walnut Tree Walk, Kennington, SE11 6DN
Charity number: 1064070

Whistleblowing Policy

This policy applies to all employees and officers of the Charity, it does not form part of employees' terms and conditions of employment and may be subject to change at the discretion of management. Other individuals performing functions in relation to the Charity, such as agency workers and contractors, are encouraged to use it.

It is important to the Charity that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by employees or officers of the Charity is reported and properly dealt with. The Charity therefore encourages all individuals to raise any concerns that they may have about the conduct of others in the Charity or the way in which the Charity is run. This policy sets out the way in which individuals may raise any concerns that they have and how those concerns will be dealt with.

Protected Interest Disclosures

Whistleblowing is the reporting of suspected wrongdoing or dangers in relation to the Charity's activities. These disclosures can be in relation to:

- A criminal offence.
- A miscarriage of justice.
- An act of sexual harassment.
- An act creating risk to health and safety.
- An act causing damage to the environment.
- A breach of any other legal obligation or concealment of any of the above.

It is not necessary for the employee to have proof that such an act is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed - a reasonable belief is sufficient. The employee has no responsibility for investigating the matter - it is the organisation's responsibility to ensure that an investigation takes place.

An employee who makes such a protected disclosure has the right not to be dismissed, subjected to any other detriment, or victimised, because they have made a disclosure.

The Charity encourages employees to raise their concerns under this procedure in the first instance. If an employee is not sure whether or not to raise a concern, they should discuss the issue with their line manager.

Principles

Everyone should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing at work. Employees should be watchful for illegal or unethical conduct and report anything of that nature that they become aware of.

Any matter raised under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation reported back to the employee who raised the issue.

No employee will be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure. This means that the continued employment and opportunities for future promotion or training of the employee will not be prejudiced because they have raised a legitimate concern.

Victimisation of an employee for raising a qualified disclosure will be a disciplinary offence.

If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure the Charity's disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures.

Maliciously making a false allegation is a disciplinary offence.

An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a manager, employees should not agree to remain silent. They should report the matter to a director.

Reporting Procedure

This procedure is for disclosures about matters other than a breach of an employee's own contract of employment. If an employee is concerned that their own contract has been, or is likely to be, broken, they should use the Charity's grievance procedure.

Stage 1

In the first instance, and unless the employee reasonably believes their line manager to be involved in the wrongdoing, or if for any other reason the employee does not wish to approach their line manager, any concerns should be raised with the employee's line manager. If they believe the line manager to be involved, or for any reason does not wish to approach their line manager, then the employee should proceed straight to stage 3.

Stage 2

The line manager will arrange an investigation of the matter (either by investigating the matter themself or immediately passing the issue to someone in a more senior position). The investigation may involve the employee and other individuals involved giving a written statement.

Any investigation will be carried out in accordance with the principles set out above. The employee's statement will be taken into account, and they will be asked to comment on any additional evidence obtained. The line manager (or the person who carried out the investigation) will then report to the board, which will take any necessary action, including reporting the matter to any appropriate government department or regulatory agency.

If disciplinary action is required, the line manager (or the person who carried out the investigation) will report the matter to the human resources department and start the disciplinary procedure. At the conclusion of any investigation, the employee will

be told the outcome of the investigation and what the board has done, or proposes to do, about it. If no action is to be taken, the reason for this will be explained.

Stage 3

If the employee is concerned that their line manager is involved in the wrongdoing, has failed to make a proper investigation or has failed to report the outcome of the investigations to the board, they should inform a director of the Charity, who will arrange for another manager to review the investigation carried out, make any necessary enquiries and make their own report to the board as in stage 2 above.

If for any other reason the employee does not wish to approach their line manager they should also in the first instance contact a director. Any approach to the director will be treated with the strictest confidence and the employee's identity will not be disclosed without their prior consent.

External Disclosures

If at the conclusion of the procedure the employee reasonably believes that the appropriate action has not been taken, they should report the matter to the proper authority. The legislation sets out a number of bodies to which qualifying disclosures may be made. These include:

- HM Revenue & Customs.
- The Financial Services Authority.
- The Office of Fair Trading.
- The Health and Safety Executive.
- The Environment Agency.

Support for Whistleblowers

The Charity aims to encourage openness and will support whistleblowers who raise genuine concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

Whistleblowers must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a concern. If you believe you have suffered any such treatment, you should inform a director immediately. If the matter is not remedied, you may wish to raise the matter formally using in line with our grievance procedure.

Protect is an independent confidential helpline that supports whistleblowers.

Protect helpline: 020 3117 2520

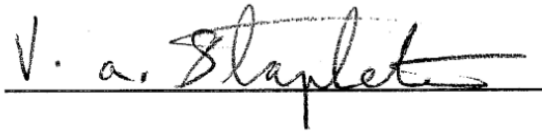
Website: https://protect-advice.org.uk

Signed by the Director:



Date: 08/05/26

Signed by the Chair of Trustees:



Date: 08/05/26