



# Laburnum BOAT CLUB

Hackney's Community Boating Project

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## Whistleblowing Policy

December 2010

Laburnum Boat Club is committed to being open, honest and accountable. It encourages a free and open culture in its dealings between the Management Committee and workers.

This policy aims to help Management Committee members and staff to raise any serious concerns they may have about colleagues or their employer with confidence and without having to worry about being victimised, discriminated against or disadvantaged in any way as a result.

It is written in the context of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 which protects employees who 'blow the whistle' on malpractices within their organisation.

### What Type of Concerns

The policy is intended to deal with serious or sensitive concerns about wrongdoings such as the following:

- a criminal offence
- a failure to comply with any legal obligation
- a miscarriage of justice
- a health and safety risk to an individual
- damage to the environment
- fraud or corruption
- the mistreatment of service users
- unauthorised use of the Laburnum Boat Club's money
- breaches and abuses of the Laburnum Boat Club's own policies.
- or concealment of the above

It is not necessary for individuals who raise the concern to prove the wrongdoing that is alleged to have occurred or is likely to occur. However if an individual knowingly or maliciously makes an untrue allegation (e.g. in order to cause disruption with Laburnum Boat Club), Laburnum Boat Club may take appropriate disciplinary action against them. It may constitute gross misconduct. Individuals should note that they will not be protected from the consequences of making a disclosure if, by doing so, they commit a criminal offence.

- This policy does not deal with any complaints staff may have about their employment. This should be dealt with through Laburnum Boat Club's Grievance Procedure
- Laburnum Boat Club's Complaints policy offers protection to workers against harassment, bullying and discrimination
- Volunteers should make complaints or raise concerns through the Complaints Policy
- Service users should make complaints or raise concerns through the Complaints Policy

Laburnum Boat Club is a Registered Charity No. 801255  
and a Company Limited by Guarantee No. 2360592  
Registered in England



## **How to Raise a Concern in the Workplace**

The officer designated to handle whistleblowing concerns is Beth Ettinger (Club Coordinator) and shall be known as the Whistleblowing Officer.

Individuals should in most cases, first report their concern to their line manager, who is expected to respond to that matter. If the relevant manager cannot deal with the matter, he or she will refer the concern to the Whistleblowing Officer.

Dependent on the seriousness and sensitivity of the matter, and who is suspected of the wrongdoing, the individual can, if necessary report directly to the Whistleblowing Officer. If the matter concerns the Whistleblowing Officer, it should be raised with the Chief Executive or Chair of the Management Committee.

Individuals are encouraged to raise their concerns in writing where possible, setting out the background and history of their concerns (giving names, dates and places where possible) and indicating the reasons for their concerns.

Employees may wish to seek the assistance of their trade union representative before raising the concern. The trade union representative may, where the employee so desires, raise the concern on behalf of the employee. Employees may also invite a trade union representative or colleague to be present during any meetings or interviews about the concerns they have raised.

This is not a statutory requirement to allow the employee to be accompanied at any meetings or interviews, but it is good practice and may help the employee feel more at ease. By sharing the concern with the TU representative or colleague, the individual may find that it is easier to raise the matter with the employer.

If any individual is unsure whether to use this procedure or they want independent advice at any stage, they should contact:

- their trade union (if applicable), or
- the independent charity, Public Concern at Work's legal helpline on 020 7404 6609, email: [helpline@pcaw.co.uk](mailto:helpline@pcaw.co.uk)

Public Concern at Work will be able to advise on how and with whom to raise a concern about malpractice.

Disclosures made to a legal advisor in the course of obtaining legal advice will be protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act.

If the individual reasonably believes that the matter relates wholly or mainly to the conduct of a person or body other than Laburnum Boat Club or any other matter for which a person or body other than Laburnum Boat Club has legal responsibility, the disclosure should be made to that other person or body.

### **Protecting the individual raising the concern**

If an individual raises a concern which they believe to be true, Laburnum Boat Club will take appropriate action to protect the individual from any harassment, victimisation or bullying. Employees who raise a genuine concern under this policy will not be at risk of losing their job, nor will it influence any unrelated disciplinary action or redundancy procedures.

The matter will be treated confidentially if the individual requests it and their name or position will not be revealed without their permission unless Laburnum Boat Club has to do so by law. If in other circumstances the concern cannot be resolved without revealing the individual's identity, the Whistleblowing Officer will discuss with the individual whether and how to proceed.

Concerns raised anonymously tend to be far less effective but the Whistleblowing Officer will decide whether or not to consider the matter taking into account:

- the seriousness of the matter
- whether the concern is believable

whether an investigation can be carried out based on the information provided.

## **How Laburnum Boat Club Will Deal with the Concern**

How the concern will be dealt with, will depend on what it involves. It is likely that further enquiries and/or investigation will be necessary. The concern may be investigated by Laburnum Boat Club's Whistleblowing Officer,

the Management Committee, through the disciplinary process or it may be referred to the police, other agencies, an external auditor or an independent investigator.

It may be necessary for the individual to give evidence in criminal or disciplinary proceedings.

Laburnum Boat Club will give the individual feedback on the progress and outcome of any investigation wherever possible.

If the suspicions are not confirmed by an investigation, the matter will be closed. Staff will not be treated or regarded any differently for raising the concern, and their confidentiality will continue to be protected.

***For further advice, contact the PEACe Helpline, Monday to Thursday on 020 7700 8147***

**PEACe, October 2006  
LVSC's Personnel, Employment Advice and Conciliation Service**

*The material in this document does not give a full statement of the law, nor does it reflect changes after October 2006. It is intended for guidance only and is not a substitute for professional advice. No responsibility for loss occasioned as a result of any person acting or refraining from acting on the basis of this material can be accepted by the author or by LVSC.*

**Adopted: January 2023**

**Review Date: January 2026**