



## WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

### Purpose

- The Holt Community Centre is committed to the highest standards of openness, honesty, and accountability.
  - This Whistleblowing Policy provides a safe way for individuals to raise concerns about serious wrongdoing in the public interest, without fear of victimisation or retaliation.
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### Legal Framework

This policy is written in line with the **Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA)**.

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### Scope

- Staff
  - Volunteers
  - Trustees and Management Committee members
  - Contractors and consultants
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### What Is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is the reporting of concerns about serious wrongdoing that is in the **public interest**, including:

- Criminal offences
- Breaches of legal obligations
- Safeguarding failures
- Health and safety risks
- Financial malpractice or fraud

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- Misuse of Centre funds or resources
- Abuse of authority
- Deliberate concealment of wrongdoing

This policy is **not** intended for personal grievances, which should be raised through the Complaints Procedure.

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### **Our Commitment**

The Holt Community Centre will:

- Take all whistleblowing concerns seriously
  - Investigate concerns appropriately
  - Protect whistleblowers from victimisation, harassment, or disadvantage
  - Maintain confidentiality wherever possible
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### **How to Raise a Concern**

Concerns should be raised as soon as possible and can be made:

#### **Step 1 – Internal Reporting**

Concerns should normally be raised with:

- The Centre Manager, or
- The Chair of the Management Committee

Concerns may be raised verbally or in writing.



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## Step 2 – Alternative Reporting

If the concern involves the Centre Manager, or if the individual feels unable to raise the concern internally, it should be reported to:

- The Chair of the Management Committee, or
- Another Trustee

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## Information to Provide

When raising a concern, provide:

- The nature of the concern
- Dates, times, and locations
- Names of individuals involved (if known)
- Any supporting evidence

Concerns do not need to be proven to be raised.

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## Confidentiality & Anonymity

- Concerns will be treated confidentially wherever possible
- Anonymous concerns will be considered, although this may limit investigation
- The identity of the whistleblower will not be disclosed without consent unless legally required

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## Investigation & Outcome

- Concerns will be acknowledged promptly
- An appropriate investigation will be carried out



- The whistleblower will be informed of the outcome where possible

Timescales will depend on the nature of the concern.

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### **Protection from Victimisation**

The Holt Community Centre will not tolerate any form of:

- Harassment
- Victimisation
- Disciplinary action

against an individual who raises a genuine concern in good faith.

Any retaliation will be treated as a serious matter.

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### **Malicious or False Allegations**

Concerns raised maliciously or in bad faith may result in action being taken.

However, individuals who raise concerns honestly and reasonably will be protected even if the concern is not upheld.

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### **External Disclosure**

If a concern cannot be raised internally or has not been addressed, individuals may raise concerns with appropriate external bodies, including:

- The Charity Commission
- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
- Local authority safeguarding teams
- The Police

Independent advice can be obtained from **Protect (formerly Public Concern at Work)**.

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### **Record Keeping**

Holt Community Centre, Kerridge Way, Holt, Norfolk, NR25 6DN  
Registered Charity Number 1046613  
Tel: 01263 713427  
Email: holtcommunitycentre@gmail.com



All whistleblowing concerns and actions taken will be:

- Recorded securely
  - Retained in line with data protection requirements
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### **Review**

This policy will be:

- Reviewed annually
  - Updated following changes in legislation, guidance, or Centre operations
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### **Approval**

This Whistleblowing Policy is approved by the Management Committee of The Holt Community Centre.

**Date approved:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Review date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed (Chair / Authorised Person):** \_\_\_\_\_