

SHEPWAY HARNESS CLUB WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY



This document is **Shepway Harness Club's** Whistleblowing Policy as defined under Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which came into force on 2 July 1999. The Act protects workers who disclose information about malpractice at their current or former workplace, provided certain conditions are met. For the purposes of this policy the workplace includes all locations used for competitions and training camps arranged by **Shepway Harness Club**.

Scope

Introduction

All athletes, contractors, officials and students within **Shepway Harness Club** in any capacity, at one time or another may have concerns about what is happening. It is the duty of everyone to speak up about genuine concerns. These concerns are usually best resolved by having a conversation with the Chairman of **Shepway Harness Club** or the event organiser.

When disclosing a concern, an athlete, contractor, official or student must reasonably believe two things:

1. That they are acting in the public interest; and
2. that the disclosure may fall under one or more of the following headings of malpractice (the list is not exclusive):
 - a criminal offence e.g. fraud;
 - betting, corrupt conduct, inside-information and match fixing;
 - someone's health and safety is in danger e.g. coercion of an athlete to train against medical advice or conducting an unsafe-practice;
 - risk or actual damage to the environment;
 - a miscarriage of justice;
 - an organisation is breaking the law e.g. incorrect or inadequate insurance cover;
 - or
 - covering up wrong-doing, such as fabricating test results or supporting cheating (sport rule violation, anti-doping rule violation).

Athletes, contractors, officials and students may be worried about raising such issues or may want to keep the concerns to themselves, perhaps feeling that it is none of their business or that it is only a suspicion. They may feel that raising the matter would be disloyal to colleagues, event organisers or to **Shepway Harness Club**. They may decide to say something but find that they have spoken to the wrong person or raised the issue in the wrong way and are not sure what to do next.

Shepway Harness Club takes any form of misconduct seriously and has introduced this policy to enable athletes, contractors, officials and students to raise concerns early and in the right way. We encourage all individuals, where appropriate, to raise the matter as a concern rather than wait for proof.

Assurances to athletes, contractors, officials and students

Commitment

The **Shepway Harness Club** committee members are committed to this policy. If a genuine concern is disclosed under it, **Shepway Harness Club** will use all reasonable endeavours to protect the position of the individual concerned, provided they are acting in good faith. This assurance does not apply to someone who maliciously, raises a concern that they know is untrue.

The daily environment athletes, contractors, officials or students may be challenging following a whistleblowing disclosure, both whilst the disclosure is being investigated and following the conclusion of the process.

Confidence

Shepway Harness Club does not tolerate the harassment or victimisation of anyone raising a genuine concern. However, we recognise that someone may wish to raise a concern 'in confidence'. If any individuals ask us to protect their identity we will not disclose it without their consent. If the situation develops and **Shepway Harness Club** is not able to resolve the concern without revealing their identity (for instance because evidence is required for disciplinary proceedings or in court), we will consult with the athlete, contractor, official or student on how they would like to proceed.

Shepway Harness Club recognises that if we do not know the identity of the person disclosing a concern, it may be more difficult to resolve the matter; however, we will always endeavour to balance this with the needs of the individual raising a concern.

Procedure

Once **Shepway Harness Club** has been made aware of a concern we will make an initial assessment in order to decide what action should be taken. This may involve: an internal investigation; or an external review/investigation completed by independent experts who are not involved in the operation of **Shepway Harness Club**.

The person disclosing will then be made aware of who is handling the concern and how they can be contacted and whether they will be required to assist in the future. If appropriate a Disciplinary Committee will be appointed pursuant to the **Shepway Harness Club** rulebook.

Shepway Harness Club will act as quickly as possible to resolve the matter though the time taken to come to a resolution will depend on the nature of the disclosure. If appropriate and confidentiality allows, the person disclosing may be kept informed though this may not always be possible.

When raising a concern the athlete, contractor, official or student may be asked how they feel the matter might best be resolved. At this stage, we must be made aware of any personal interest in the matter. Records of disclosures will be kept in accordance with applicable law.

Further information

For your information some regulatory statutory bodies are listed below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/blowing-the-whistle-list-of-prescribed-people-and-bodies--2>)

These Regulatory statutory bodies have individual policies and procedures for handling concerns and complaints. Many of their websites contain guidance on issues that you may face which may be helpful in your initial deliberations on whether to make a disclosure.

The Information Commissioner

In relation to compliance with the requirement of legislation relating to data protection and to freedom of information. Email: casework@ico.gsi.gov.uk and the website is www.ico.gov.uk

The Health and Safety Executive

This relates to health or safety of individuals at work or the health and safety of the public that is work-related, in connection with those industries and work activities for which HSE is the enforcing authority. Online form: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/raising-your-concern.htm> and the website is www.hse.gov.uk

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)

Matters relating to child welfare and protection. Email: help@nspcc.org.uk or the Child Protection in Sport Unit of the NSPCC. www.thecpsu.org.uk

Care Quality Commission

Matters relating to the provision of health and social care. www.cqc.org.uk

General Medical Council

Matters relating to the registration and fitness to practise of a member of the medical profession. www.gmc-uk.org

Health and Care Professions Council

Matters relating to the registration and fitness to practise of health and care professional (eg physiotherapy). www.hpc-uk.org