

**Whistleblowing Policy**

**1.   Scope of the Policy**

1.1   Harrison Housing operates an open and supportive culture, including dealings with staff, volunteers and Trustees. We want to ensure that no one is at a disadvantage in raising concerns.

1.2 Our Whistleblowing Policy aims to help and support you in raising any serious concerns you might have about the Trust and/or any connected individual. You should be able to do this with confidence and without having to worry about being victimised, discriminated against or disadvantaged in any way as a result. We are committed to dealing with all disclosures consistently and fairly.\*

**2.   What should be raised under the Whistleblowing Policy**

2.1   This policy covers serious or sensitive concerns about any wrongdoing including:

* Criminal activity
* Failure to comply with a legal obligation
* Failure in the protection of a vulnerable adult
* Improper conduct or unethical behaviour
* Financial malpractice or impropriety or fraud
* A health and safety risk
* Attempts to conceal any of the above

Employee concerns should normally be dealt with through our Grievance Procedure rather than under this Policy.

**3.   How do I raise a concern?**

3.1   Whistleblowing concerns are handled by Harrison Housing’s CEO, Kathryn Dowlath who can be contacted as follows:

* Email kathryndowlath@harrisonhousing.org.uk
* Phone 07590840168

3.2 If the concern involves Kathryn Dowlath, it should be raised to trustee Samantha Barber who can be contacted as follows via email Samanthabarber@harrisonhousing.org.uk.

3.3 A concern can be raised in phone or in writing. If you raise a concern by phone, please can you be clear you are doing this under our Whisteblowing Policy.

3.4 It would help the investigation if you can provide as much information as possible – the history or the concern, and if relevant, names, dates and locations as well as the nature and basis of the concern. You do not need to provide proof or evidence for us to investigate a concern.

**4. What happens next?**

4.1 A thorough investigation will be carried out as quickly as reasonably possible. The disclosure will be acknowledged within 5 working days, and you will be kept updated of the outcome where appropriate.

**5. Will by complaint remain confidential and will it affect my relationship or employment with Harrison Housing?**

5.1 If you raise a genuine concern under this process, you will not be dismissed or subjected to detriment as a result of such action. Detriment includes unwarranted disciplinary action and victimisation. If you believe that you are being subjected to a detriment within the workplace as a result of raising concerns under this procedure, you should inform the Chair of the Board of Trustees immediately. Any staff, trustees or volunteers who victimise or retaliate against those who have raised concerns under this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

5.2 Any disclosure will be treated in a confidential and sensitive manner. Your anonymity will be maintained when requested, unless we are required by law to identify you.

5.3 We are committed to taking appropriate action to protect any individual that raises a concern from any harassment, victimisation or bullying.

5.4 If an investigation under this procedure concludes that a disclosure has been made maliciously, vexatiously, in bad faith or with a view to personal gain, the whistleblower will be subject to disciplinary action. Those choosing to make disclosures without following this procedure or anonymously may not receive the protection outlined in paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2.

**6. What happens if I am dissatisfied at the end of this process?**

6.1 The aim of this policy is to provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating and remedying any workplace wrongdoing. It is therefore hoped that it will not be necessary for staff, trustees or volunteers to alert external organisation. However, in very serious circumstances, or following an internal report which has not been addressed, we recognise that it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an external body.

6.2 The government has prescribed a list of appropriate bodies for such external reporting: for example, the Environment Agency, the Health and Safety Executive or the Charity Commission. A full list is available from an independent charity called Protect – Speak Up Stop Harm (previously Public Concern at Work) atwww.pcaw.org.uk, who can be contacted by telephone on 020 3117 2520 (\* option 1) and by e-mail at whistle@protect-advice.org.uk

\* Employees who ‘blow the whistle’ on malpractice within their organisation are protected by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

**This policy has been authorised and approved by**

**Name:** Kathryn Dowlath

**Position:** CEO

**Approved by board on:** 22 March 2021

**Next review:** March 2024