

AGE UK EXETER

Controlled Document

Document Name: Whistleblowing Policy

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Agreed by the Risk and Quality Committee on: 29.07.25

Approved by Board of Trustees on: 26.08.25

Review Schedule: Every three years

Next review due: August 2028

Owner (Responsibility): Chief Executive Officer

Revision History: See end of document.

Document Location: www.ageuk.org.uk/exeter/about-us/policiesandguidelines/

Document Description

Age UK Exeter (AUKE) is committed to maintaining high standards of openness, honesty, probity and accountability. In line with this commitment, it encourages employees and volunteers with serious concerns about any aspect of the charity's work to come forward and voice those concerns. This policy makes it clear that such concerns can be raised without fear of reprisal and reflects the requirements of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Implementation & Quality Assurance

Implementation is immediate and this policy shall stay in force until any alterations are formally agreed.

The policy will be reviewed every three years by the Board of Trustees, sooner if legislation, best practice, or other circumstances indicate this is necessary.

All aspects of this policy shall be open to review at any time. If you have any comments or suggestions on the content of this policy, please contact the Chief Executive Officer via email on info@ageukexeter.org.uk or at Age UK Exeter, The Sycamores, Mount Pleasant Road, Exeter, EX4 7AE, 01392 202092.

Whistleblowing Policy

1. About this policy

We are committed to conducting our business with honesty and integrity and we expect all staff to maintain high standards. Any suspected wrongdoing should be reported as soon as possible.

This policy covers all employees, officers, consultants, contractors, volunteers, interns, casual workers and agency workers.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and we may amend it at any time.

2. What is whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is the reporting of suspected wrongdoing or dangers in relation to our activities. This includes bribery, facilitation of tax evasion, fraud or other criminal activity, miscarriages of justice, health and safety risks, damage to the environment, sexual harassment, and any breach of legal or professional obligations. It also includes the following matters specific to this workplace, poor quality of care, abuse and neglect, and conflicts of interest.

3. How to raise a concern

We hope that in many cases you will be able to raise any concerns with your manager. However, where you prefer not to raise it with your line manager for any reason, you should contact the Chief Executive Officer or Chair of the Board of Trustees if that is not possible. Contact details are at the end of this policy.

We will arrange a meeting with you as soon as possible to discuss your concern. You may bring a colleague or union representative to any meetings under this policy. Your companion must respect the confidentiality of your disclosure and any subsequent investigation.

4. Confidentiality

We hope that you will feel able to voice whistleblowing concerns openly under this policy. Completely anonymous disclosures are difficult to investigate. If you want to raise your concern confidentially, we will make every effort to keep your identity secret and only reveal it where necessary to those involved in investigating your concern.

5. External disclosures

The aim of this policy is to provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating and remedying any wrongdoing in the workplace. In most cases you should not find it necessary to alert anyone externally.

If the matter is of extreme concern or is not a concern which can be raised internally within AUKA, it can be raised with a representative at Age UK. Their contact details are at the end of this policy. Serious concerns should also be raised with the Charity Commission at www.charitycommission.gov.uk.

The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate for you to report your concerns to an external body such as a regulator. We strongly encourage you to seek advice before reporting a concern to anyone external. Protect (formerly Public Concern at Work) operates a confidential helpline. Their contact details are at the end of this policy.

6. Protection and support for whistleblowers

We aim 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 genuine concern. If you believe that you have suffered any such treatment, you should inform the Chief Executive Officer immediately. If the matter is not remedied, you should raise it formally using our Grievance Procedure.

You must not threaten or retaliate against whistleblowers in any way. If you are involved in such conduct, you may be subject to disciplinary action. In some cases, the whistleblower could have a right to sue you personally for compensation in an employment tribunal.

However, if we conclude that a whistleblower has made false allegations maliciously or with a view to personal gain, the whistleblower may be subject to disciplinary action.

Protect operates a confidential helpline. Their contact details are at the end of this policy.

7. Contacts

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| Chief Executive Officer | Name: Nicky Flynn Telephone: 01392 202092 E-mail: n.flynn@ageukexeter.org.uk |
| Chair of the Board of Trustees | Name: Darren Burr Telephone: 07484 705481 |
| Protect (Independent whistleblowing charity) | Helpline: (0203) 117 2520 E-mail: whistle@protect-advice.org.uk Website: https://protect-advice.org.uk |
| Age UK | Chief Executive Age UK, Tavis House, 1 - 6 Tavistock Square, London, WC1 9NA Age UK The UK's leading charity helping every older person who needs us |
| Charity Commission | www.charitycommission.gov.uk |

Revision History

| Revision date | Summary of Changes | Other Comments |
|---------------|--|--|
| 4.9.15 | Routine review by Standards Committee | |
| 15.9.15 | Approved by Board of Trustees | Next review due September 2017 |
| 4.9.17 | Routine Review by Standards Committee. Minor tweaks. | Recommended to the Board for approval. |
| 12.9.17 | Approved by Board of Trustees | Next review due September 2019 |
| 08.01.18 | Reviewed by Standards Committee Amended to mirror the procedures for the Complaints Policy. | Recommended to the board for approval. |
| 09.01.18 | Approved by the Board of Trustees | Next review due January 2020 |
| 6.1.20 | Routine review by Standards Committee. No changes made. | Recommended to the Board for approval |
| 14.1.20 | Reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees. | Next review due January 2022 |

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| 29.12.2021 | Reviewed and template provided by HR Express adopted. Minor tweaks only | Approved by the board of Trustees on 10 February 2022. Next review due January 2025 |
| 09.05.25 | Checked against HR Express template and formatting required. Slight amendment to paragraph 5 to state that a representative at AUK could be contacted to report a concern and that the Charity Commission should be contacted regarding serious concerns. | Next review due August 2028 |
| 01.04.26 | Small insert at section 2 to note sexual harassment as recommended by HR Express. | |