



Whistleblowing Policy

Baldock and District Canoe Club is committed to the highest standards of openness, honesty and accountability. The club encourages all members to raise any concerns they may have about the activities of the committee, coaches or other members of the club which may be:

- unlawful
- in breach of the club code of conduct/club policies
- likely to harm somebody/the environment or the reputation of the club.

The club believes that individuals should be able to raise a matter of concern without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. The policy is intended to encourage and enable individuals to raise serious concerns within the club rather than overlooking a problem or blowing the whistle outside the club.

SAFEGUARDS

Baldock and District Canoe Club recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, not least because of the fear of reprisal from those responsible for the alleged poor practice. If an individual believes what they are saying to be true, they should have nothing to fear in reporting their concern as they will be doing their duty to the members of the club. Baldock and District Canoe Club will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation and will take appropriate action to protect individuals when they raise a concern in good faith.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Baldock and District Canoe Club will do its best to protect the identity of the whistle blower when they raise a concern and do not want their name to be disclosed. It must be appreciated that the investigation process may reveal the source of the information and a statement by the whistle blower may be required as part of the evidence. They will be given prior notice of this and a chance to discuss the consequences.

ANONYMOUS ALLEGATIONS

This policy encourages the whistle blower to put their name to their allegation. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful, but they will be considered by the committee, taking into account the seriousness of the issues raised, the credibility of the concern and the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources or factual records.

UNTRUE ALLEGATIONS

If an individual makes an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against them. If, however, it is established that they have made malicious or frivolous allegations, or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against them. This may include termination of membership.

HOW TO RAISE A CONCERN

Concerns may be made verbally or in writing. The individual should set out the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places where possible and the reason why they are particularly concerned about the situation. The earlier the individual expresses concern, the easier it is for someone to take action. Although the whistle blower is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, they will need to demonstrate that there are sufficient grounds for their concern. Individuals should raise their concerns to either the club chairman or, if the concern is related to a

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Safeguarding issue, to the Club Welfare Officer. If the concern is about the club chairman or Welfare Officer, the individual may contact British Canoeing.

HOW WILL THE CLUB RESPOND?

The action taken by the club will depend on the nature of the concern. Matters will either be investigated internally or, if necessary, referred to British Canoeing or the police. Receipt of the individual's concern will be acknowledged immediately. The committee will aim to meet within five working days to discuss the concern. They will then contact the person who raised the concern, to inform them of the following:

- how the matter is being dealt with
- an estimated time frame for the investigation
- whether or not further investigations will be taking place.

The amount of contact between the people considering the issues and the person raising the concern will depend on the nature of the matters raised, the potential difficulties involved and the clarity of the information provided. If necessary, further information will be sought from the whistle blower as part of the investigation process. When any meeting is arranged, the whistle blower has the right, if they so wish, to be accompanied by a friend or a person of their choice who is not involved in the matter to which the concern relates. The person raising the concern should be informed of the outcome of any investigations.

HOW THE MATTER CAN BE TAKEN FURTHER

If the person raising the concern does not feel that their concern has been dealt with satisfactorily, they may contact one or more of the following, depending on the nature of the concern:

- The British Canoeing Safeguarding Officer
- Local Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)
- Social Services
- Police

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To be reviewed: 17.10.20