



## Whistleblowing Procedures

### **Purpose**

Everyone suffers when malpractice or improper conduct occurs in an organisation and it is important that such allegations are raised at the highest level. These Whistleblowing Procedures provide a route to raising serious concerns or allegations that fall outside other policies and procedures or that relate to a Trustee, a member of Croquet England's senior management team, its National Safeguarding Officer or its Complaints Administrator.

### **Scope**

These procedures explain how any of Croquet England's members, associates, employees, players or visitors can raise a serious concern or make an allegation.

### **Procedure for making an allegation or raising a concern.**

A report or disclosure must not be made for the purposes of personal gain. Concerns must be raised in good faith and the individual must reasonably believe that the information disclosed is accurate. If an allegation is shown to be intentionally malicious or deliberately false, it will be regarded as a serious disciplinary offence.

A whistleblower may make his/her original report verbally or in writing but should, as soon as possible, provide relevant information in writing including:

- The name of the person making the allegation with contact details.
- The background and history of the allegation (giving relevant dates and names and positions of those who may be in a position to have contributed to the alleged occurrence).
- The specific reason for the allegation. Although someone making an allegation will not be expected to prove that it is true, they will need to provide information to establish that there are reasonable grounds for the allegation.

The report should be addressed to Croquet England's Chair of the Board of Trustees, Chair of the Executive, Treasurer or President, depending upon the nature of the allegation. Contact details can be obtained from the Secretary or The Croquet Gazette. For the purposes of this policy, the person receiving the report will be known as the Receiving Officer.

Anonymous allegations are discouraged since they make investigation and substantiation much more difficult. They will only be followed up if corroborative evidence is available.

### **Action on receipt of an allegation or concern**

The Receiving Officer will record details of the allegation including:

- The date of receipt of the allegation.
- The report of the allegation.
- The acknowledgement of the allegation.
- Any documents supplied by the person making the allegation.
- The preferred means of communication and contact details of the person reporting.

The course of action will depend upon the nature of the allegation. The Receiving Officer will determine if it should be investigated under this whistleblowing policy or a different policy, and who should investigate. Any investigation will not, at any stage, be carried out by any person against whom allegations are made, and details will only be shared with those individuals who are considered vital to the effective functioning of any investigation.

The Receiving Officer may appoint him/herself or another appropriate person as the Investigating Officer.

The Investigating Officer will decide if there is sufficient evidence to proceed. If a full investigation is conducted it may be an internal investigation or it may be necessary to refer the matter to an external authority such as the auditors, Sport England, the police or the Charity Commission.

Someone making an allegation may be accompanied by another person of their choosing during any meetings or interviews in connection with the allegation. However, if the matter is subsequently dealt with by an external agency, the right to be accompanied will, at that stage, be in accordance with the relevant procedure or the rules of the relevant agency.

### **Timetable**

The person making the report will receive an acknowledgement of the allegation in writing from the Receiving Officer. He/she will also receive, as soon as possible thereafter:

- A decision on whether further investigations will take place and if not, why not.
- Details of how Croquet England proposes to deal with the matter.
- An estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response.
- Outcome of the investigation and action taken.

### **How to report concerns that are covered by other policies**

Raising concerns about safeguarding issues, except where the concern relates to a trustee, senior manager, or a welfare or safeguarding officer, are covered in the child safeguarding procedures and the adults safeguarding procedures. These should be addressed to the Club Welfare Officer, the Federation Safeguarding Officer or the National Safeguarding Officer at [safeguarding@croquet.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@croquet.org.uk),

The process for raising formal complaints about maladministration and conduct are described in the Complaints Procedure. Formal complaints should be addressed to the [Complaints Administrator](#).

Formal complaints relating to infringements of Croquet England’s equality, diversity and inclusion policy should be addressed to the [Complaints Administrator](#).

Anti-bullying concerns should follow the guidance given in the Anti-bullying Policy and Procedures

Complaints about breaches of tournament regulations should be addressed to the tournament manager, the chair of the appropriate tournament committee or a formal complaint may be raised with the [Complaints Administrator](#).

Grievances by employees are covered in the Grievance Procedure and Staff Disciplinary Procedure, which are provided to all employees.

If a club member has a concern about the conduct of another member of their club, they should raise this with their club committee. Formal complaints about the behaviour of a club committee should be addressed to the [Complaints Administrator](#).

All members and associates of Croquet England should follow its Codes of Conduct.

## References

Whistleblowing Policy  
Complaints Procedure  
Child Safeguarding – Responding, Recording and Reporting Procedures  
Adult Safeguarding – Responding, Recording and Reporting Procedures  
Anti-bullying Procedures  
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Procedures  
Tournament regulations  
Codes of Conduct

***Issuing Authority:*** Executive

***Approved by:*** Executive

***Date approved:*** 30 June 2023

***Next review date:*** 30 June 2026

***Version:*** v1.0

***Reason for Change:*** New