

Whistleblowing Policy (2025–2026)

1. PURPOSE

This policy ensures that BLTSRC operates with openness, transparency and accountability. Whistleblowing enables any individual—staff member, volunteer, parent, participant or visitor—to raise concerns about behaviour, safeguarding issues, misconduct or illegal activity without fear of retaliation.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- Coaches and volunteers
- Staff and Committee members
- Parents, carers and guardians
- Junior and adult members
- Visitors and contractors

It covers concerns related to:

- Safeguarding and child welfare
- Bullying or harassment by adults
- Misuse of club funds or property
- Criminal behaviour
- Breaches of health & safety regulations
- Discrimination or abuse of authority
- Any behaviour that places a child or adult at risk

3. DEFINITIONS

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Whistleblowing: Raising a concern about malpractice, wrongdoing or risk to a child or adult that affects the wider club environment rather than personal dissatisfaction.

Malpractice includes:

- Safeguarding breaches
- Failure to follow procedures
- Fraud or corruption
- Unsafe coaching practices
- Intimidation or victimisation
- Illegal acts

4. PRINCIPLES

BLTSRC commits to:

- Protecting whistleblowers from retaliation
- Responding swiftly and proportionately
- Maintaining confidentiality wherever possible
- Investigating all concerns fairly and objectively
- Complying with legal and safeguarding obligations

Whistleblowers acting in good faith will never be penalised.

5. WHEN TO WHISTLEBLOW

Concerns should be raised if:

- A child or adult at risk is endangered
- An adult behaves inappropriately toward a child
- A safeguarding concern has been ignored or mishandled

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- There are signs of fraud or misuse of club finances
- Health & safety standards are being breached
- A coach or volunteer breaches professional boundaries
- A member of staff attempts to cover up wrongdoing

6. HOW TO RAISE A CONCERN

If a child or adult is in immediate danger → CALL 999

Otherwise report directly to:

Club Welfare Officer:

Sarah Markwort

Tel: 07879 843360

Email: welfareofficer@bltsrc.co.uk

If the concern involves the CWO or you feel unable to report to them:

- LTA Safeguarding Team – safeguarding@lta.org.uk / 020 8487 7000
- England Squash SafeSquash Team – safesquash@englandsquash.com / 0161 438 4302
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – 01442 228000
- NSPCC Helpline – 0808 800 5000

Whistleblowing may be verbal or written. Anonymous concerns will be considered.

7. WHAT INFORMATION TO PROVIDE

- Nature of the concern
- Names of individuals involved

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- Dates, times and locations
- Evidence (emails, screenshots, witness details)
- Your contact details (optional)

8. PROCEDURE FOR INVESTIGATION

1. CWO acknowledges receipt of the concern.
2. Initial risk assessment completed.
3. Decision made whether to escalate to LTA/ES or statutory agencies.
4. Investigation conducted:
 - Interviews with involved parties
 - Review of evidence
 - Consultation with national governing bodies
5. Interim safeguarding measures applied if necessary.
6. Outcome communicated where appropriate.

Investigations are conducted fairly, impartially and with the welfare of children as the priority.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

- Identities are protected wherever possible.
- Information is shared on a need-to-know basis only.
- Records stored securely by the CWO for a minimum of 6 years.

10. PROTECTION FOR WHISTLEBLOWERS

BLTSRC will not tolerate:

- Intimidation

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- Retaliation
- Discrimination
- Harassment

Any retaliation will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

11. MALICIOUS ALLEGATIONS

If a report is deliberately false or malicious, appropriate action may be taken.

Concerns raised in good faith will never result in penalty.

12. REVIEW & MONITORING

The Committee and CWO will:

- Review whistleblowing cases annually
- Monitor emerging patterns or themes
- Update procedures as required

Next Review: September 2026

APPENDICES

A – Whistleblowing decision flowchart

B – Concern reporting form

C – Escalation contacts (LTA, ES, LADO, NSPCC)

Version Control

Policy Owner: Club Welfare Officer

Version: 2025-2026

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Next Review: September 2026