



WHISTLE- BLOWING POLICY

Freebridge
COMMUNITY HOUSING



Whistleblowing Policy			
Last Reviewed	January 2026	Next Review	January 2029
Responsible Officer	Company Secretary		

Policy Statement: We are fully supportive of the principle for reporting, and shall enable our employees or others to report, any form of malpractice within Freebridge.

Freebridge is committed to the highest standards of openness, probity and accountability and encourages any employee, contractor, agency worker, home worker, tenant or anyone else who has a serious concern about malpractice in any aspect of the organisation's work to "do the right thing" and come forward and express their concerns.

In addition, the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act 2023 requires large companies to take reasonable steps to prevent fraud or they could be found liable to the offence of failure to prevent fraud. Freebridge is committed to ensuring that fraud prevention measures are aligned to the risk of fraud and that Whistleblowing responsibilities and procedures are regularly communicated to all staff.

It may not be possible to deal with concerns under the organisation's normal management procedures, but it is recognised that in some cases individuals may wish to come forward on a confidential basis. The organisation encourages this and wishes to make it clear that they can do so without fear of reprisal or victimisation and that they will get a sympathetic hearing and will not be regarded as disloyal for making their concern known.

Investigations shall be carried out in line with relevant Freebridge policies and procedures, such as the Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy, the Data Protection Policy, Financial Regulations, codes of conduct and disciplinary procedures. If appropriate, cases may be reported to the Police and/or taken through the courts. Investigations shall always be carried out by an individual who has not been involved in the situation; this may be someone from within Freebridge or external to Freebridge. Individuals who may have been involved will not have any undue influence, either on the investigation or on any decisions arising from the investigation.

The outcome of any investigation shall be communicated to the person who made the disclosure.

Policy Detail:

Who to contact if you are an employee

If you are an employee:

- Consider reporting the matter to your immediate manager. If you feel this would be difficult you can report the matter to the Company Secretary on 01553 667770 or the Chief Executive on 01553 667810;
- You can call Protect on 020 3117 2520 or visit [Contact our Advice Line - Protect - Speak up stop harm \(protect-advice.org.uk\)](https://protect-advice.org.uk);
- You can call Claire Lavery, a Director at TIAA, Freebridge's Internal Auditors, on 0845 300 3333 or email her on claire.lavery@tiaa.co.uk;
- You can contact the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, Andy Orrey, at andy.orrey@freebridge.org.uk.

The Organisation will act reasonably to respect confidentiality. The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 gives legal protection to whistle blowers who honestly and reasonably believe the information or allegations they make are true.

Employees should note that disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who knowingly makes a false report of illegal or improper behaviour by someone else.

Tenants, contactors or other interested parties

Tenants, contractors or other interested parties who wish to report a concern, can contact:

- The Company Secretary on 01553 667770 or the Chief Executive on 01553 667810;
- Claire Lavery, a Director at TIAA, Freebridge's Internal Auditors, on 0845 300 3333 or email her on claire.lavery@tiaa.co.uk;
- The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, Andy Orrey, at andy.orrey@freebridge.org.uk

Freebridge will treat expressions of concern in the same way as it would an expression of concern from an employee. It will be dealt with fairly, and with confidentiality.

How a reported matter will be addressed

Freebridge will be fair to all parties involved and shall investigate both sides of any reported matter. However, in its investigations the organisation will respect any concerns expressed, for instance for about one is career or even personal safety. It will also act to prevent or minimise any difficulties acting as a result of these arrangements, including the protection of complainants as far as is practicable.

Freebridge shall act in a timely manner.