

The Arboricultural Association
WHISTLE-BLOWING POLICY

Version 1

Effective from 29 July 2018

The Arboricultural Association whistle-blowing policy provides anyone who has concerns regarding the conduct of one of its Members with a safe, fair, effective, and where necessary confidential means of raising such concerns with the Association.

This policy for reporting concerns to the Arboricultural Association may be used by anyone wishing to report the conduct of a member when the Association's complaints procedure wouldn't apply, but where they feel it necessary to report the conduct not directly affected by their actions. The policy provides guidance for and may be used by members of the public; service users; Members of the Association and anyone involved with the Association.

In this policy the word 'Member' means every Approved Contractor, Registered Consultant, and all Members of the Arboricultural Association who are engaged in the practice of arboriculture in a professional capacity.

There is also an Arboricultural Association complaints procedure published on the Association's website.

1. If someone feels a Member may have breached the Arboricultural Association's Code of Conduct and Ethics, or has reason to believe they are not practicing arboriculture to the high standard expected of the Arboricultural Association, the Association encourage them to report their concerns to our Chief Executive or Chair of Trustees without fear. Examples could include failure to uphold professional standards, breach of health and safety or similar. Possible criminal activity or fraud should be reported to the Police or relevant enforcement authority in the first instance. The Association takes very seriously any form of misconduct by its Members and wants to help people to raise concerns at an early stage and in the right way. We would rather the matter was raised when it is just a concern than wait for proof.
2. As long as people are acting in good faith, it does not matter if they are mistaken. The Arboricultural Association will not tolerate the harassment or victimisation of anyone raising a genuine concern.
3. The Arboricultural Association will not tolerate someone raising a matter they know is untrue, in order to create trouble or cause mischief to the organisation or to a particular person or people. If this happens, the Association will take appropriate action.
4. You can report the matter to the Arboricultural Association anonymously but we may not be able to take the matter further if you haven't provided all the information we need.
5. You must say straight away if you don't want anyone else to know it was you who raised the concern. If the AA is asked to protect someone's identity we will make every effort not disclose it without their consent (unless required to do so by a court or the law).

6. The Arboricultural Association Code of Conduct & Ethics and its complaints procedure are available to download via the Association's website – www.trees.org.uk. You can also call our head office on 01242 522152 to ask for a copy of the Code of Conduct & Ethics or the complaints procedure.

How to make contact and how concerns are dealt with

7. Anyone wishing to raise a concern under this policy can use any of the following methods: speak to, email or write to the Chief Executive or the Chair of Trustees. Please say if you want to raise the matter privately so that they can make appropriate arrangements.
8. The Chief Executive (or Chair of Trustees) of the Arboricultural Association will assess what action should be taken and will confirm its response in writing.
9. The Arboricultural Association may not be able to tell you the precise action we take, particularly if this would involve the Association breaking the confidentiality of other people. The Association will deal with all matters raised fairly and appropriately.
10. You won't have a say in how your concern is dealt with.

Contact details

You can contact the Arboricultural Association Chief Executive or Chair of Trustees by telephoning the head office 01242 522152. A member of staff will forward your call or provide you with the necessary contact details upon request.

The address is:

Arboricultural Association
Malthouse
Standish Green
Stonehouse
Glos
GL103DL

Who regulates the AA's activity and how to contact them?

The AA is a charity registered in England (No. 797997) and our work is regulated by the Charity Commission.

If you have any concerns about the Arboricultural Association that you would like to bring to the attention of the Charity Commission they can be contacted by telephone on 0845 3000218.

If you would like to contact them or find further information you can do so through their website: <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>

Their postal address is:
Charity Commission Direct
PO Box 1227
Liverpool
L69 3UG