



**Yes Futures**

## **Whistleblowing Policy**

Prepared by Yes Futures  
[www.yesfutures.org](http://www.yesfutures.org)

**July 2023**



## Review

This policy was last updated by Brandon Charleston, Head of Operations, in July 2023.

This policy was reviewed and confirmed to be current and effective by Sarah Sewell, Chief Executive, in July 2023.

Signed and dated:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'S. Sewell'.

18/07/2023

## Important Contacts

**Chief Executive:** Sarah Sewell ([sarah@yesfutures.org](mailto:sarah@yesfutures.org) / 07751 194774)

**Chair of Trustees:** Andrew Thraves ([andrewthraves123@btinternet.com](mailto:andrewthraves123@btinternet.com))



## Whistleblowing Policy

This policy applies to all individuals working at all levels of Yes Futures, including employees, casual staff and volunteers (collectively referred to as "team members" in this policy).

### What is 'Whistleblowing'?

Any suspicion of wrongdoing should be reported promptly. We encourage all team members to raise relevant concerns in line with this policy. Where team members have concerns that fall within the scope of this policy, they should raise them under this procedure before contacting anyone outside of Yes Futures.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013 and the Employment Rights Act 1996 provide protection for workers who raise concerns called "qualifying disclosures". A qualifying disclosure is one which is made in the public interest by a team member who has a reasonable belief that the following is being, has been, or is likely to be committed:

- a criminal offence e.g. fraud
- a miscarriage of justice
- an act creating risk to health and safety
- an act causing damage to the environment
- a breach of any legal obligation, e.g. not having the right insurance
- someone is covering up wrongdoing

It is not necessary to have proof of such an act; a reasonable belief is sufficient. If you have a concern which you think falls within the above you should raise it in line with this policy.

It is important to distinguish between when this policy should be used and when Yes Futures' other policies should be used. As a basic principle, the **Grievance Procedure policy** is appropriate where the concern you wish to raise is about something that relates to you and your work as an employee. In contrast the whistleblowing policy is intended to be used where the concerns can impact the interests of others or of Yes Futures. Any action or failure deemed as misconduct will be dealt with under Yes Futures 's **Disciplinary Procedure policy**.

If you are not sure which policy to use, you can ask the CEO or Chair of Trustees for guidance. You should also note that in appropriate circumstances we may decide that a matter raised under this policy is better dealt with under the **Grievance Policy**.



## **What should you do if you have a concern which might be a qualifying disclosure?**

Once an individual has raised a concern in line with this policy, Yes Futures will take responsibility to ensure that there is an appropriate level of investigation and response.

Yes Futures will always handle each matter sensitively but cannot guarantee that all matters can be properly investigated and resolved without disclosing who has raised the concern. We cannot therefore guarantee that you can remain anonymous if you raise a concern. In certain circumstances, e.g. if a criminal investigation follows, the employee may be needed as a witness.

Yes Futures has rigorous procedures in place so that you will not be victimised or subjected to any detriment by the Charity for raising a concern.

### **The steps that you should follow to raise a concern are as follows:**

1. In the first instance you should raise the concern with your line manager.
2. If you think that your line manager may be involved in the wrongdoing or for any other reason you do not wish to approach your line manager, then you should raise the matter with the CEO.
3. If you conclude that it is not appropriate given the nature of the concern to approach your line manager or the CEO, then you should contact the Chair of Trustees.

We request that you give the basic details of your concern in writing and provide us with any documentation that you have that you think is relevant.

Concerns should be expressed in writing to:

- Yes Futures' CEO, Sarah Sewell: [sarah@yesfutures.org](mailto:sarah@yesfutures.org)
- Or; the Chair of Trustees, Andrew Thraves: [andrewthraves123@btinternet.com](mailto:andrewthraves123@btinternet.com)

4. Finally, if you conclude that it is not appropriate given the nature of the concern to raise it at any level you can:

- Get independent advice: If you need advice about blowing the whistle on a charity call Protect's free and confidential advice line: 0800 055 7214.
- Contact the Charity Commission: Email [whistleblowing@charitycommission.gov.uk](mailto:whistleblowing@charitycommission.gov.uk).



### **The next steps that Yes Futures will take:**

1. The person to whom you raise your concerns will arrange for an appropriate investigation of the matter. The form that this investigation will take will be tailored to the nature of the concern. In some cases, you and other individuals involved may be asked to give written statements.
2. After completing their investigations, the person to whom you raise your concerns will provide a report to the CEO or Chair of Trustees (unless the nature of the concern makes their involvement inappropriate, in which case an appropriate other individual will be nominated, e.g. another Trustee or another member of the Leadership Team).
3. CEO or Chair of Trustees (or other, as described above) will then take any necessary action, including reporting the issue to the Board of Trustees of Yes Futures if appropriate.
4. If as a result of the investigation it appears that there may be grounds to instigate some form of disciplinary process, the person who carried out the investigation will report the matter to the relevant line manager.
5. On completion of any investigation you will be told the outcome of the investigation and what has been done (or is proposed to be done) about it. If no action is to be taken, the reason for this will be explained. The level of detail that you will be given on the outcome will be appropriate to the nature of the concern and the proposed action.

### **Further steps you may take:**

If you have concerns that the nominated investigator has failed to carry out a proper investigation of your concerns or has failed to report the outcome of the investigation to either the CEO, Chair of Trustees or another Trustee (whoever has yet to be involved), you can raise your concern to another person. This person will review the investigation, make any necessary enquiries and then make their own report to the Board of Trustees.

**Under this policy you should not take the matter to any person outside Yes Futures unless the above procedure has been completed.**

## General principles around whistleblowing

- All team members should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing at work and report anything of that nature in line with this policy.
- Where necessary, the Board of Trustees will ensure team members who may deal with concerns or investigations under this policy receive regular and appropriate training.
- You will not receive detrimental treatment for raising a legitimate concern under this policy. This means that your continued employment and opportunities for future promotion or training will not be prejudiced because you have used this policy. Victimisation of an employee for raising a qualified disclosure may constitute a disciplinary offence.
- An instruction to cover up wrongdoing may itself constitute a disciplinary offence. If told not to raise or pursue any concern (even by someone senior to you) you should not agree to remain silent and should report it using this procedure.
- Maliciously making a false or unfounded allegation under this policy may constitute a disciplinary offence.

## Conflict of interests

The Trustees and employees of the organisation have an obligation to act in the best interests of Yes Futures.

Trustees and employees must at all times act in the best interests of Yes Futures and its beneficiaries, present and future. Trustees and employees need to be aware and sensitive to the possibility that activities outside the organisation (including being involved in other organisations, charities or political parties) could be perceived as having a bearing on or coming into conflict with – the objectives and integrity of Yes Futures.

Declaration of Interests and potential conflicts are dealt with by the Yes Futures **Conflicts of Interest** Policy.