

## **A message about the Proud to be British blog**

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As many of you know there was a blog posted yesterday which has upset many people and generated a great strength of feeling.

We thought very carefully about this blog and following discussions and advice from the Corporate Responsibility team and the Spectrum network, took the view that the blog was consistent with our blogging policy that we should hold open conversations on a range of views.

However, subsequent feedback, whether expressed personally or in the comments on the blog itself, has been clear that the blog did not contribute to a healthy debate or the open and supportive environment we want to foster with the blog platform. For that reason we have removed the blog and the associated comments. As we set out in our blogging policy, whether colleagues choose to discuss work or other topics, the views shared are those of the individual not the FCA. We value the blog space as a way of having open conversations and giving a voice to those we otherwise may not have heard, but to maintain their value for colleagues at all times these need to be professional and respectful.

If you have been affected by any of the issues or topics raised in this blog or others there are a range of support services, available including the Employee Assistance Programme which offers practical information and counselling services. The Corporate Responsibility team and networks are also available and happy to provide support.

We are committed to everyone bringing their whole self to work and open and passionate debating of a variety of issues is important. We encourage everyone to read an email circulated by Spectrum yesterday which clearly articulates how we should engage with debate in a way which is respectful and will move the agenda forward. This is posted below.

I'd also like to clarify one point of detail. A number of the comments noted that the blog had a high number of likes. The displayed number is not accurate and this glitch is being investigated.

Andrew Whyte  
Director of Communications

**Copy of Spectrum email:**

Good morning all,

I hope you are all keeping well.

Given recent times, I would like to thank you all for the amazing work we have done so far. Thank you for those who have written articles, those who have shared their stories, and those who are standing beside us as allies. We are getting to that place where we can have those uncomfortable conversations about race.

We have done so much, but there is still work to be done.

As with any movement for change, people will not always agree with each other. There will be some who think that everything is ok as it is. As we want to see change, we must allow space for these differences of opinion. I am sure a number of you have seen the recent blog, titled Proud to be British, that has been posted on Pulse. To some, this may be offensive and distasteful, and whilst we may feel that this does a disservice to the great work that is being done, we must allow people to have their say.

Spectrum want to see change, so we cannot afford to be seen retaliating in a manner that will discredit our efforts or close off meaningful dialogue. Please, we implore you, do not respond to this article in a negative way, if you choose to respond, please do so respectfully. If you do not feel able to respond without being upset or angry I would suggest you not respond at all. We would ask that you do not engage in a mindless back and forth with others about it.

Spectrum and our membership want to be a part of the discussion that prompt real change in a positive way for everyone so we do need to engage with those who may disagree with us and we need to do so respectfully. Not everyone will share our ambitions, and that is ok but we should not engage in any debate that sets us all back.

In an effort to continue the conversation, we will be working with our CR and Comms teams to explore how we open up discussion on the power of debate so that we can have an open discussion about how we can all challenge views we don't agree with in a way that doesn't shut the conversation down. We will share more about this soon. The best we can do for ourselves and loved ones is to know when to speak, and when to keep quiet.

Thank you for all the hard work that has been done and is being done. Remember, if you ever need someone to talk to, Spectrum is here. We're here for you.

Kind regards

[name withheld s.40 FOIA]