



WILLIAMSBURGH
HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

Code of Conduct: Working Together

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1. Introduction

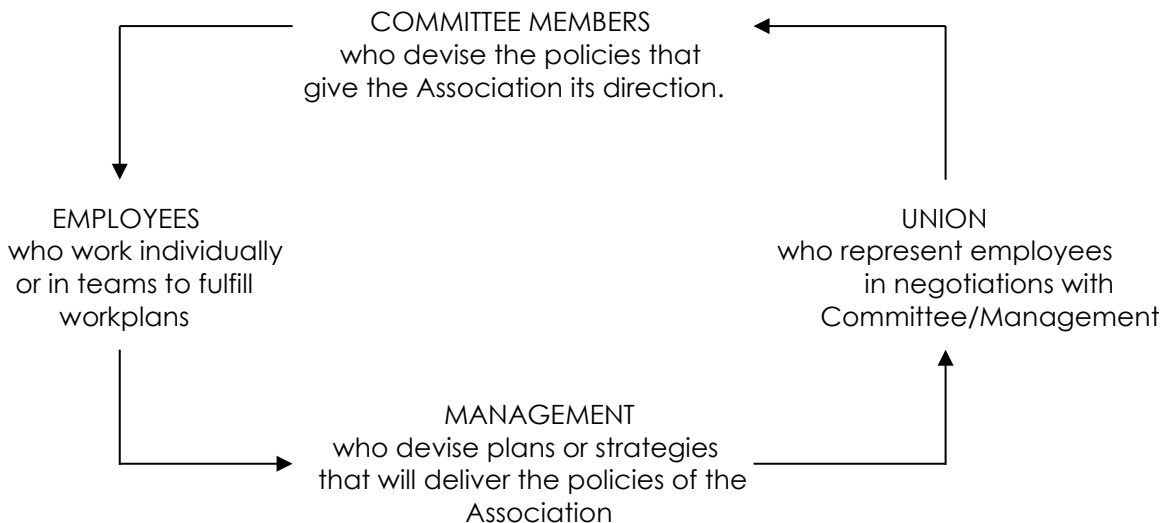
All staff and committee members are invited to review and sign up to the values promoted by the code of conduct on an annual basis.

2. Aims and Objectives

The code of conduct within Williamsburgh Housing Association known as 'Working Together' seeks to promote a positive working environment where common values are adopted and appropriate respect is shown by staff and committee members to one another.

The code is all about working together. It makes no difference who you are or where you work in the Association. The guide aims to define the best ways to work with each other, so that we all get the most out of our work and work gets the most out of us.

The aim of this code is to set standards for how we communicate with each other and conduct ourselves as we go about our business. It is about collective responsibility among all of us, who work together, to provide the Association's services:



3. Code of Conduct

Rights and Responsibilities

The Association has developed a voluntary list of rights which it was felt, all should enjoy within the workplace. These rights are based on a code of behaviour, they are not legally binding in the sense of contractual rights or employment rights but simply a code which promotes best practice in the way people work with one another.

It is acknowledged that along with the list of 'rights' comes a list of 'responsibilities'.

If people want to be treated in a certain way, they have a responsibility to behave in the same way towards others e.g. if people want the right to be listened to, then they have a responsibility to listen to others.

The whole basis of the code is to define appropriate behaviour in the workplace and agree a set of rights and responsibilities.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

| <u>Rights</u> | <u>Responsibilities</u> |
|--|---|
| 1. To know what's going on | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To be open and honest• To share information responsibly |
| 2. To be listened to | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To listen to others |
| 3. To have your say | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To respect others' points of view |
| 4. To give and receive constructive feedback | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To listen to feedback and acknowledge it• To be clear and objective when giving feedback |

3. Code of Conduct Contd.

Rights and Responsibilities Contd.

| <u>Rights</u> | <u>Responsibilities</u> |
|---|---|
| 5. To have your achievements recognised | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To recognise others' achievements and share the credit where others have contributed to success |
| 6. To know what's expected of you | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To find out if unclear• To ask questions• To be clear when delegating to others |
| 7. To receive praise | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To be prepared to praise others• To say "thanks" |
| 8. To be yourself | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To value differences in others• Not to be "me" at the expense of others and their rights• Not be "me" at the expense of the organisation or its customers |
| 9. To be treated fairly and equally | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To treat others fairly and equally |
| 10. To be treated with respect | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To respect others |
| 11. To take decisions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To contribute to the full potential of others• To make the most of opportunities presented• To take responsibility for the outcome |

3. Code of Conduct Contd.

Rights and Responsibilities Contd.

| <u>Rights</u> | <u>Responsibilities</u> |
|--|---|
| 12. To make mistakes | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To acknowledge mistakes and not blame others• To put it right• To learn from it and not repeat it |
| 13. To take risks | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To trust others to take risks |
| 14. To be supported | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To support others |
| 15. To challenge unreasonable requests | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To do it assertively |

Assertion

It seems clear that, if everyone is prepared to be more upfront, open and honest with one another, we will not only have a more productive Association but a more satisfying working environment. While it is hoped that in the main, staff will all adopt a positive attitude towards co-operating and assisting one another, staff should not suffer resentment because they feel put upon. Saying 'no' is sometimes a difficult thing to do and often is either avoided, or if not, people suffer from feelings of guilt. Saying 'no', however, can be perfectly justified at times.

Staff and Committee will, therefore, be encouraged to become assertive with one another, bearing in mind that:

Assertion is:

- expressing your feelings, opinions, needs, wants, rights and thoughts,
- in a clear, concise, controlled, honest manner,
- without trampling on the rights of others, and
- remembering that, it is the whole 'expression' that is important, i.e. that the words said must be backed up by tone of voice and body language.

3. Code of Conduct Contd.

Communication

A simple model, universally adopted within the Association, can apply to nearly all forms of communication (for example, giving criticism, making requests, checking on progress etc.), and when coupled with the code (the rights and responsibilities listed earlier), could lead to a working environment which is not only more positive, but tackles feelings of guilt, resentment, pressure and so on.

Communication Model:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Prepare | Gather your facts. Know what you want. Know the least you will accept. |
| 2. Raise the Subject | "I'd like to talk to you about...." |
| 3. Be specific | "Yesterday at 3 O'Clock...." " I need this by 3 O'Clock...." " Have you contacted ?...." |
| 4. Get a Response | " Do you agree?...." " Can you do that?" "What problems are there?" |
| 5. Ask for Suggestions | "What do you think would help?" "How could we work around this?" "What do you think we could do?" |
| 6. Be clear as to what you have agreed | "So in future.....OK?" "So you'll do this first...then..." "So the line we take is ..." |

3. Code of Conduct Contd.

Communication Contd.

Staff and Committee Members are invited:

- to provide feedback and to comment on behaviour both good and bad,
- talk to anyone who breaks the code, to try to find common ground and resolve the problem together (page 8 offers advice on how to resolve disputes through improved communication), and
- if necessary, to seek help from their Manager/Chief Executive/Chairperson on the way forward or their options. Staff are also reminded of the availability of the Employee Assisted Programme (the counselling service available to staff through the TCS Group – Time for Talking).

4. Evaluation and Monitoring

It is fundamental to the efficiency of Williamsburgh Housing Association that staff and committee members adopt operating practices which maintain the highest standards of conduct. While there is a basic expectation that we conduct ourselves with honesty and integrity, how we work together and operate is critical.

This paper identifies the code of conduct known within Williamsburgh Housing Association as 'Working Together'. This code seeks to promote a positive working environment where common values are adopted and appropriate respect is shown by staff and committee members to one another.

Adherence to this code will not only make Williamsburgh Housing Association a more pleasant workplace but foster similar values in the delivery of services to our customers.

The elements making up the code – rights, responsibilities, assertive behaviour and communications will be monitored, on a day to day basis and considered as part of the staff performance review process.

Staff and committee members will be reminded on a regular basis as to the contents of this paper and all will be invited annually to sign up to the code of conduct and communications model for use within Williamsburgh Housing Association.

5. Review

The Management Committee will have regard to this policy each year following the Annual General Meeting in order that it can be brought to the attention of new committee members. Any revisions deemed necessary can be considered at this time, otherwise the policy will be reviewed by the Management Committee every three years to ensure that it responds to any changing circumstances.