

Code of Conduct for Notting Hill Genesis Resident Involvement Activities

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected of all residents who take part in any Notting Hill Genesis involvement activities, including formal meetings, consultations, forums, focus groups or those who act as independent complaint reviewers. As well as within meetings, this also extends to conduct outside of that setting e.g. email, written communications, external events (i.e., seminars, conferences), social media or telephone correspondence.

The code aims to ensure that all involved residents always observe the highest standards of propriety and act in the best interests of Notting Hill Genesis residents and staff. The Code of Conduct will be referred to at the start of each Involvement activity by the chair or lead for that meeting.

In taking part in any involvement activity, residents agree to adhere to the Code of Conduct as detailed below.

Executive summary

Residents are encouraged to read the details below, but the main principles of the Notting Hill Genesis Resident Involvement Code of Conduct can be summarised as follows:

- Refrain from using involvement as a means to gain preferential treatment.
- To observe and uphold good meeting etiquette and act respectfully towards any staff or residents you are working with.
- To agree not to share any sensitive information obtained in groups, activities or meetings without written consent in any way.
- Declare any conflict of interests which may affect your input or contributions to involvement discussions (including any active complaints or breaches of tenancy).

1. Personal Conduct

Involved residents agree to always:

- 1.1** Refrain from seeking preferential treatment by virtue of their involvement and are expected to use the normal procedures for reporting repairs, neighbourhood issues, complaints (i.e., via their Housing officer or Property Management Officer or through our formal complaints process). The resident experience is fundamental to understanding where improvements can be made to the service, so personal experiences may be relevant in the interest of devising solutions but should not dominate proceedings.
- 1.2** Demonstrate good manners, to gain and maintain the respect and trust of all those with whom they work.
- 1.3** Respect differences in background and ability and act fairly in ways that do not discriminate against anyone, actively listening to the views of others.
- 1.4** Refrain from using abusive, offensive, or aggressive behaviour; bad language or defamatory or insulting comments at all times.

- 1.5 Refrain from promoting individual political or religious views.
- 1.6 Refrain from personal attacks on fellow residents, Notting Hill Genesis staff, or representatives of other organisations. As well as within organised meetings, this includes via email, telephone, letters, during attendance at events (i.e., seminars, conferences, social media and in the press).
- 1.7 Ensure that confidentiality is always maintained, whether in relation to matters of a personal or sensitive nature, or any information that is shared in confidence by Notting Hill Genesis within these meetings. Again, as per 1.6 as well as within organised meetings, this includes not to share sensitive information on email, telephone, letters, social media and in the press.
- 1.8 Declare any potential conflicts of interest that are identified to a member of the Resident Involvement Team (e.g., personal relationships, employment, involvement with other groups, business interest). This includes active formal complaints against Notting Hill Genesis, being party to legal proceedings against Notting Hill Genesis or the subject of active investigations by Notting Hill Genesis (i.e. a breach of tenancy agreement).
- 1.9 Fiduciary Duty: You must exercise fairness and impartiality when dealing with all consultants, suppliers, contractors, and sub-contractors. No special favour should be shown to any business which you or your family or friends have some personal or professional connection to. If there is such a connection, you should declare this (as per 1.8 above).
- 1.10 Gifts and Hospitality: You should ensure you comply with the Bribery Act 2010 and should neither accept bribes nor attempt to bribe anyone else. As with numbers 8 and 9 above, if you feel any cash, gifts or hospitality have been offered with the clear intention of trying to influence you (even if you declined the offer), please inform a member of the Resident Involvement Team.
- 1.11 Data Protection: Personal information about NHG's residents, applicants for housing, your colleagues, staff, or other individuals is strictly confidential and may only be released with the consent of the individual concerned. The same rules apply to confidential and commercially sensitive business information and discussions leading to the development of policy. These should not be distributed by you unless explicit consent to this has been given. Any evidence of the sharing of personal or sensitive business information without **written** authorisation may result in suspension or banning from involvement activities. If you are unsure, always check with the Involvement Team and please refer to our Privacy policy on our website.

2. Meetings

In addition to the personal conduct rules above, attendees are expected to:

- 2.1 Confirm their attendance promptly or send apologies if they are not able to attend a meeting, event, or training.
- 2.2 Actively contribute to meetings and agenda item as a member of the group.
- 2.3 Prepare for meetings by reading any paperwork in advance.

- 2.4** Arrive punctually to enable meetings to start promptly.
- 2.5** Leave any personal issues to discuss outside of the meeting. The resident experience is fundamental to understanding where improvements can be made to the service, so personal experiences may be relevant in the interest of devising solutions but should not dominate proceedings.
- 2.6** Keep points brief and to the point - address the discussion points on the agenda.
- 2.7** Make your own contribution by responding to the matter at hand or by way of a question.
- 2.8** Switch off mobile phones or put them on silent mode during the meeting.
- 2.9** Accept collective responsibility for the decisions taken at a meeting.
- 2.10** Work with other members constructively to arrive at the best possible solution.
- 2.11** Where meetings are conducted online (or in a hybrid setting), be fully present at the meeting and make it clear if any requests to record all or part of the meeting are not acceptable for you (NHG will always seek permission before recording a meeting in any way).
- 2.12** Be bound by regular meeting etiquette, such as:
- a. Do not interrupt when another member is speaking.
 - b. Co-operate with the resident chair or lead in keeping to the agenda and time allocated for the meeting/ agenda items.
 - c. Accept that the resident chair or lead rule is final.
 - d. Keep contributions brief and to the point.
 - e. Do not distract the meeting by holding individual conversations with others.
 - f. Accept other members' right to speak and accept that different points of view are valuable to good decision making.
 - g. Avoid jargon or provide explanations.
 - h. If participating in an online meeting, respect the boundaries and behaviours set out by the resident chair/ lead at the start of each meeting with regards to online meeting etiquette. For more details, please refer to our Hybrid meetings - Good Practice Guide on our webpage.

3. Chairing code

Any resident chair or lead conducting the running of a group, project or meeting should:

- 3.1** Demonstrate a minimum level of chairing competency or be willing to undertake training on chairing skills.
- 3.2** Lead the group to set and achieve its aims.
- 3.3** Encourage all to participate and ensure everyone can offer views and ask questions.
- 3.4** Sum up at the end of each discussion / agenda item and ensure all actions and recommendations are captured.

3.5 Manage the agenda and timing of meetings.

3.6 Be impartial and neutral. If there is a 'deadlock' or stalemate situation, the resident chair/ lead will cast the deciding vote.

3.7 The conduct of any resident chair or lead should also extend to outside of a meeting, e.g. a pre-meeting or 1:1 with a staff member.

4 Breaches of this Code of Conduct

All members of the group are responsible for abiding by the Code of Conduct and helping to ensure that others do so.

Within a meeting, following a breach of the Code of Conduct, the resident chair/ lead will follow these steps:

4.1 The resident chair/ lead will remind the individual of the existence and terms of the Code of Conduct.

4.2 A repeated disruption can lead to a five-minute 'time out' (e.g. some quiet reflection, allowing others to speak) for the individual at the discretion of the resident chair/lead, if necessary. Any member of the group can suggest this option to the resident chair/ lead.

4.3 If a member of the group continues to breach the Code of Conduct, the resident chair/ lead will give a formal warning that the member will be asked to leave the meeting if the behaviour recurs.

4.4 If the resident chair/ lead does not abide by the Code of Conduct, a group member or the leading Notting Hill Genesis officer present will warn that the resident chair/ lead will be asked to leave the meeting if the behaviour recurs.

5. Follow up to breach

5.1 Any breaches of the Code of Conduct that is seen by or reported to the Resident Involvement Team may be subject to further investigation.

5.2 Any reports or incidents will be followed up by the Resident Involvement Team and will involve a conversation or correspondence to discuss the key principles of the Code of Conduct and a reminder to the individual to uphold them.

5.3 An appraisal of individual members who persistently breach the Code of Conduct may also be required.

5.4 Depending on the gravity or persistence of the breach, the outcome decided by the Resident Involvement Team may be one of the following:

- 1) A time-specific suspension of their involvement in that project, group or meeting.
- 2) A time-specific suspension of their participation in all involvement activities.
- 3) A permanent ban from that project, group or meeting.

4) A permanent ban from all involvement activities.

5.5 The chairs/leads will be consulted by the Resident Involvement Team as part of their final decision unless the chair themselves are found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct.

5.6 Should the chair/lead be suspended or banned, and should the group have an elected vice chair, they will be asked to chair the meetings going forward. If there is no vice chair in place, or the vice chair chooses not to lead the meetings, elections will take place for a replacement chair.

6. Appeals

Any suspension or ban may be appealed.

6.1 An appeal must be made in writing within 30 days of being suspended/ banned **OR** A special meeting to hear appeal must be requested within 30 days. Appeals should be addressed to the Head of Resident Engagement.

6.2 Appeal meetings will involve the staff supporting the meeting or group, the Resident Involvement Manager/Head of Resident Engagement and the Director of Customer Experience.

6.3 A decision will be given within 14 days of any appeal meeting.

Review date: December 2023

Next review date: December 2025