

Friends of Evington Members' Conduct Policy

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1. Introduction

1.1 This policy is designed to ensure that the Members' Conduct Policy is comprehensive, reflective of best practices in the voluntary sector, and in compliance with the regulations set by the UK Charity Commission. This policy is a fundamental tool for guiding and regulating the conduct of all individuals associated with our charity. It reflects our commitment to ethical practices, legal compliance, and the promotion of a positive and respectful environment, which are essential for the success and sustainability of our work in the community.

1.2 Friends of Evington's constitution is available to view on-line at www.evingtonecho.uk or by requesting a copy. We summarise our charitable objects (aims) within our vision as follows:

1.3 Vision: Friends of Evington seeks to inspire a healthy community in Evington through bringing environmental and educational projects to life, providing solutions that benefit local people and protect the planet.

1.4 This policy also sets out how Friends of Evington will fulfil its statutory duties and responsibilities effectively, both within its own organisation, and for the affiliated groups and members that help with Friends of Evington's charitable vision and objectives.

2. Purpose of Policy

The Members' Conduct Policy for Friends of Evington serves a vital role in delineating the standards of behaviour and ethical practices expected of its members, including trustees, volunteers, and staff. Its primary purpose is to ensure that all members contribute positively to the charity's mission, uphold its values, and maintain the highest levels of integrity and professionalism in their conduct. This policy is crucial for several reasons:

Upholding Ethical Standards: It provides a clear framework for ethical behaviour, guiding members in decision-making processes and interactions with each other, beneficiaries, and the public. This is essential for maintaining trust and credibility.

Legal and Regulatory Compliance: As a charity registered in the UK, Friends of Evington is obligated to adhere to the regulations of the UK Charity Commission. The conduct policy helps ensure compliance with these legal requirements, reducing the risk of legal liabilities and ensuring good governance.

Protecting the Charity's Reputation: The behaviour of its members directly impacts the reputation of Friends of Evington. A clear conduct policy helps prevent actions that could damage the charity's public image, ensuring its continued ability to attract volunteers, donors, and support from the community.

Creating a Positive Work Environment: By setting clear expectations for conduct, the policy fosters a respectful, inclusive, and collaborative environment. This is conducive to the personal and professional growth of members and enhances the overall effectiveness of the charity.

Conflict Resolution: The policy refers to mechanisms for addressing grievances and conflicts, ensuring they are handled fairly and constructively, thereby maintaining harmony within the organisation.

Accountability: It refers to a system of accountability, where members are aware of the consequences of violating the policy. This helps in maintaining discipline and order within the charity.

The Members' Conduct Policy is a cornerstone document for Friends of Evington, crucial for maintaining ethical standards, legal compliance, a positive work environment, and the overall reputation and effectiveness of the charity. It reflects the organisation's commitment to transparency, integrity, and excellence in all its endeavours.

3. Scope and Applicability

3.1 The Friends of Evington Members' Conduct Policy is an integral document designed to outline the standards of behaviour and ethical practices expected from all individuals associated with our charity, including trustees, volunteer leaders, volunteers and others who come into contact with the charity's volunteers. This policy is comprehensive in its scope and applicability, ensuring alignment with the expectations set forth by the UK Charity Commission and the norms within the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS).

3.2 **Applicability to Members:** The policy applies to all members of Friends of Evington, encompassing trustees, volunteers, staff (if any), and any other individuals engaged in the charity's activities. It is crucial that everyone who represents or works under the umbrella of our charity understands and adheres to these standards.

3.3 **Consistency with Charity Commission Guidelines:** Our policy is developed in strict accordance with the guidelines and regulatory requirements of the UK Charity Commission. This ensures that our operational practices not only meet but exceed the standards of governance and conduct expected of charities in the UK.

3.4 **Relevance to the VCS Sector:** The policy is tailored to reflect the unique environment of the VCS sector, acknowledging the diverse roles and responsibilities of those involved in voluntary and community activities. It recognises the value of inclusivity, collaboration, and community engagement, which are pivotal in the sector.

3.5 **Adaptability and Relevance:** While the policy sets forth clear standards, it is also designed to be adaptable to the dynamic nature of our work. As our charity evolves and as the VCS sector faces new challenges and opportunities, our policy will be periodically reviewed and updated to remain relevant and effective.

3.6 **Education and Awareness:** We are committed to ensuring that all members are fully aware of and understand the policy. Regular training and educational initiatives will be conducted to facilitate this understanding and to promote a culture of ethical conduct and professionalism.

3.7 Enforcement and Accountability: The policy is not merely advisory but is enforceable. Clear procedures are outlined for addressing any breaches of conduct, ensuring that all members are held accountable for their actions in a fair and transparent manner.

4. Core Values and Ethical Standards

4.1 The core values are:

- Commitment to integrity, transparency, and respect.
- Adherence to ethical standards as defined by the Charity Commission.
- Alignment with the objects, values and of Friends of Evington.

4.2 The adherence to the core values of Friends of Evington, along with the ethical expectations set by the Charity Commission and the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS), forms the bedrock of our organization's integrity and public trust. Our commitment to these values and ethical standards is not merely a compliance requirement, but a reflection of our dedication to excellence and responsibility in all our endeavours.

5. Adherence to Core Values

5.1 Integrity and Honesty: Our actions and decisions are guided by unwavering integrity and honesty. We recognize that these virtues are fundamental to building and maintaining trust among our members, beneficiaries, and the wider community.

5.2 Transparency and Accountability: We are committed to transparent practices and being accountable for our actions. This includes open communication, responsible financial management, and clear reporting mechanisms, ensuring that we operate in a manner that is both ethical and exemplary.

5.3 Respect and Inclusivity: Respect for individual dignity, diversity, and inclusivity is central to our operations. We strive to create an environment where all voices are heard and valued, fostering a culture of collaboration and mutual respect.

5.4 Commitment to Beneficiaries: Our primary focus is the wellbeing and interests of our beneficiaries. We are dedicated to delivering services and support that meet their needs and contribute positively to their lives.

6. Alignment with Ethical Expectations of the Charity Commission and VCS Sector:

Regulatory Compliance: Adhering to the legal and ethical standards set by the Charity Commission is non-negotiable. This ensures our operations are not only lawful but also meet the highest standards of charity governance.

Best Practices in the VCS Sector: We align with the best practices within the VCS sector, continually learning and evolving to ensure our methods and approaches reflect the most effective and ethical ways of working.

Safeguarding and Welfare: The safeguarding of our beneficiaries, members, and staff is paramount. We adhere to rigorous policies and practices to ensure the safety and welfare of all individuals associated with our charity.

Environmental and Social Responsibility: Our responsibility extends beyond our immediate activities, encompassing environmental stewardship and a commitment to positively impact the broader community.

In essence, our adherence to the core values of Friends of Evington, alongside the ethical expectations of the Charity Commission and the VCS sector, is foundational to our identity and success as a charity. It underpins our credibility, guides our actions, and shapes the positive impact we aspire to make in the community.

7. Conduct Expectations

7.1 The conduct expectations are for:

- Professional and respectful behaviour.
- Confidentiality and data protection responsibilities.
- Conflict of interest avoidance and declaration.
- Upholding the charity's reputation.

7.2 The Friends of Evington Members' Conduct Policy sets clear expectations in line with the Charity Commission and the VCS sector's standards. Members are expected to act professionally, demonstrating respect, integrity, and ethical conduct. Confidentiality and data protection must be upheld. Members should avoid conflicts of interest and ensure their actions support the charity's reputation and objectives. Compliance with laws and regulations is mandatory. The policy fosters a positive, inclusive environment, discouraging any form of discrimination, harassment, or bullying. Adherence to these standards is crucial for maintaining the charity's integrity and effectiveness. Expectations for members' conduct in a UK charity include:

7.3 Professional and Respectful Behaviour: Members should conduct themselves professionally and respectfully, fostering a positive environment, and treating others with dignity and courtesy.

7.4 Confidentiality and Data Protection: Adherence to data protection laws (such as GDPR) is essential. Members must maintain confidentiality of sensitive information and ensure personal data is handled securely and lawfully.

7.5 Conflict of Interest Avoidance and Declaration: Members should avoid conflicts of interest and declare any potential or actual conflicts to the charity's board. This ensures transparency and trustworthiness in decision-making.

7.6 Upholding the Charity's Reputation: Members must act in ways that positively represent and protect the charity's reputation. This includes avoiding actions that could bring the charity into disrepute and actively supporting its objectives and values.

8. Equality and Diversity

8.1 This involves:

- Commitment to inclusive practices.
- Prohibition of discrimination, harassment, and bullying.
- Respect for diverse perspectives and backgrounds.
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8.2 Members of Friends of Evington are expected to uphold the highest standards in matters of Equality and Diversity. This includes a firm commitment to inclusive practices, ensuring that all activities and interactions within the charity are accessible and welcoming to everyone, regardless of their background or identity. Discrimination, harassment, and bullying are strictly prohibited,

reflecting our zero-tolerance approach to any behaviour that undermines the dignity or respect of individuals. Members must actively respect and value diverse perspectives and backgrounds, recognizing that such diversity enriches the charity and contributes to a more holistic and empathetic understanding of the community we serve. This commitment to Equality and Diversity is central to our ethos and is integral to the successful fulfilment of our charitable objectives.

9. Compliance with Laws and Regulations

This involves:

- Adherence to all relevant laws and regulations.
- Reporting and addressing any legal violations.
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Members of Friends of Evington are expected to strictly adhere to all relevant laws and regulations. This commitment underscores the charity's dedication to lawful and ethical conduct. Members have a duty to report any legal violations they observe and to actively participate in addressing these violations. This adherence ensures the charity operates within legal frameworks, upholding its integrity and trustworthiness, which are vital for maintaining public confidence and achieving our charitable objectives.

10. Conflict Resolution

10.1 This involves:

- Processes for addressing grievances and conflicts.
- Mediation and conflict resolution steps.

10.2 Members of Friends of Evington are expected to actively support conflict resolution in the event of differences arising between members. This includes engaging in open and respectful dialogue, utilizing established processes for addressing grievances, and participating in mediation and conflict resolution steps. The aim is to resolve conflicts amicably and constructively, maintaining the harmony and collaborative spirit essential for the charity's successful operation.

11. Reporting and Whistleblowing

11.1 This involves:

- Procedures for reporting unethical or illegal conduct.
- Protection for whistleblowers.
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11.2 Members of Friends of Evington are expected to actively participate in reporting and whistleblowing processes. This includes responsibly reporting any observed unethical or illegal conduct within the organisation. The charity provides clear procedures for such reporting, ensuring confidentiality and protection for whistleblowers. This practice is vital for maintaining transparency, integrity, and accountability within the organisation, and supports the charity's commitment to ethical conduct and legal compliance.

12. Policy Violations and Sanctions

12.1 This involves:

- Definition of policy breaches.
- Range of sanctions for misconduct.

- Fair and transparent disciplinary process.
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12.2 Members of Friends of Evington are expected to understand the implications of policy violations and the range of sanctions that may be imposed for misconduct. This includes a clear definition of what constitutes a breach of policy, such as actions that contravene the established standards of conduct, ethics, and legal compliance. Sanctions for such breaches can vary, depending on the severity of the misconduct, and may include reprimands, suspension, or termination of membership. It is crucial that any disciplinary process undertaken is fair and transparent, ensuring that members are treated equitably and with due process.

13. Review and Amendments

13.1 This involves:

- Regular review of the policy.
- Process for suggesting and implementing amendments.

Members of Friends of Evington are expected to be aware that the membership policy is subject to regular review and amendment to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. This involves a structured process for suggesting and implementing amendments, encouraging member participation in the policy's evolution. This practice ensures that the policy remains up-to-date, reflective of changing legal requirements, ethical standards, and the needs of the charity and its community.