Connecting Boroughs

Code of Conduct

Charity Number: 1211291

Policy Owner: Connecting Boroughs CIO

Approved by: Board of Trustees

Review Frequency: Annually, or sooner where required

Next Review: September 2027

1. Purpose

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected from trustees, staff, volunteers and anyone representing Connecting Boroughs.

Our work involves children, families, adults at risk and people who may be experiencing difficult or sensitive circumstances. Everyone representing the charity must therefore act responsibly, respectfully and in a way that protects beneficiaries and public confidence in Connecting Boroughs.

2. Scope

This Code applies during charity activities, events, meetings, trips, online communications and any other situation in which an individual is acting or could reasonably be understood to be acting on behalf of Connecting Boroughs.

3. Expected Standards of Behaviour

Everyone representing Connecting Boroughs is expected to:

- treat beneficiaries, colleagues, partners and members of the public with dignity and respect;
- act honestly, responsibly and in the best interests of the charity;
- follow safeguarding, health and safety, confidentiality and other relevant policies;
- maintain appropriate boundaries with beneficiaries;
- avoid bullying, harassment, discrimination, intimidation or abusive behaviour;
- use charity resources responsibly;
- declare conflicts of interest;
- follow reasonable instructions and agreed procedures; and
- raise concerns where they believe someone may be at risk or the charity may be exposed to serious wrongdoing.

4. Safeguarding and Boundaries

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Any concern about a child or adult at risk must be reported promptly under the Safeguarding Policy.

Those working with beneficiaries must maintain appropriate boundaries and must not exploit a position of trust for personal, financial, emotional or other benefit.

Staff and volunteers must not promise secrecy where a safeguarding disclosure is made.

5. Respectful Communication

Communication should remain respectful even where people disagree.

- threatening, humiliating or abusive language is not acceptable;
- discriminatory remarks, jokes or harassment are not acceptable;
- personal disagreements should not be allowed to disrupt services to beneficiaries;
- confidential disputes should not be discussed publicly or in community groups; and
- concerns about another person's conduct should be raised through the appropriate internal process.

6. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Everyone representing Connecting Boroughs must support fair and inclusive treatment and comply with the charity's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy.

No beneficiary, volunteer, colleague or other person should be treated unlawfully or unfairly because of a protected characteristic or personal background.

7. Confidentiality and Privacy

Confidential information obtained through charity work must not be disclosed to unauthorised people.

Beneficiary circumstances, safeguarding matters, contact information, photographs, messages and internal records must not be shared for gossip, personal disputes or unrelated purposes.

Confidentiality obligations continue after a person stops volunteering, working for or serving the charity.

8. Social Media and Digital Conduct

Individuals must not publish confidential information, beneficiary details or internal disputes on personal social media.

No one should claim to speak officially for Connecting Boroughs unless authorised to do so.

Photographs or videos of beneficiaries must only be taken or shared in accordance with the charity's consent, safeguarding and communications procedures.

9. Professional and Personal Relationships

Individuals must not use their charity role to pressure, manipulate or take advantage of beneficiaries.

Personal relationships or friendships must not be allowed to override safeguarding, financial, eligibility or other charity procedures.

Any relationship or circumstance that could create a conflict of interest should be disclosed.

10. Money, Donations and Charity Property

Money, donations, equipment and other charity resources must only be used for authorised charity purposes.

- cash and donations must be handled according to agreed financial procedures;
- charity property must not be taken for personal use without authorisation;
- personal purchases must not be presented as charity expenses unless properly authorised; and
- any suspected theft, fraud or misuse must be reported promptly.

11. Gifts and Personal Benefit

Individuals must not request gifts, money, loans, discounts or other personal benefits from beneficiaries because of their charity role.

Significant gifts offered by beneficiaries, suppliers or partners should be declared to an appropriate senior representative before acceptance where practicable.

12. Alcohol, Drugs and Impairment

No person should carry out charity duties while impaired by alcohol, illegal drugs or any other substance that makes them unable to perform their role safely.

Illegal drugs must not be possessed, supplied or used during Connecting Boroughs activities.

13. Health and Safety

Everyone must take reasonable care of their own safety and that of others, follow risk assessments and safety instructions, and report hazards, accidents, incidents and near misses promptly.

14. Attendance and Reliability

People who have agreed to undertake charity duties should make reasonable efforts to attend on time and carry out their responsibilities reliably.

If someone cannot attend, they should inform the relevant lead as soon as reasonably possible.

15. Conflicts of Interest

Trustees, staff and volunteers must declare actual or potential conflicts between their personal interests and their responsibilities to Connecting Boroughs.

Individuals must not participate improperly in decisions from which they, a family member, close associate or connected organisation could personally benefit.

16. Raising Concerns and Whistleblowing

Anyone who becomes aware of serious wrongdoing, safeguarding concerns, fraud, unsafe practice or significant misconduct should report it through the appropriate charity procedure.

No person should be victimised for raising a genuine concern in good faith.

17. Breaches of the Code

Concerns about a possible breach will be considered fairly and proportionately.

Depending on the seriousness of the matter, action may include guidance, additional training, increased supervision, restriction of duties, removal from an activity, ending a volunteer arrangement, disciplinary action where applicable, or referral to an external authority.

Where a concern involves safeguarding, fraud, criminal conduct or another serious matter, the relevant specialist procedure will also be followed.

18. Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for maintaining appropriate standards of conduct and organisational accountability.

The Founder/CEO and designated leads are responsible for promoting this Code in day-to-day activities and escalating serious concerns where appropriate.

Every trustee, staff member and volunteer is responsible for their own conduct and for understanding the policies relevant to their role.

19. Related Policies

This Code should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding Policy;
- Volunteer Policy;
- Health & Safety Policy;
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy;

- Data Protection & UK GDPR Policy;
- Privacy & Confidentiality Policy;
- Conflict of Interest Policy;
- Whistleblowing Policy;
- Complaints Policy & Procedure; and
- Anti-Fraud, Bribery & Corruption Policy.

20. Acknowledgement

Trustees, staff and volunteers may be asked to confirm that they have read, understood and agree to follow this Code of Conduct.

Name: _____

Role: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

21. Monitoring and Review

This Code will be reviewed by the trustees at least annually and sooner where significant changes, incidents or organisational needs make this necessary.

Approved by the Board of Trustees: _____

Date approved: _____

Signed on behalf of the trustees: _____

Next review date: _____