

HFC Code of Conduct February 2024

The Code of Conduct sets out the core values and principles of behaviour for all individuals who engage in business on behalf of the Homes for Change housing co-operative.

The Code of Conduct sits within HFC Primary and Secondary Rules. These include 6 principles and values that are determined by the International Co-operative Alliance. This Code applies to everybody. However members in governance positions within the co-op have a particular responsibility to promote a culture which enables and supports everybody to meet their responsibilities.

The Code is:

1. We will treat each other with respect, care and consideration. We will promote through our behaviour a culture that is welcoming, accepting and supportive to people of all backgrounds, cultures and personal and protected characteristics.
2. We will be professional, fair, honest and courteous in the way we communicate with others. We will not harass, bully or attempt to intimidate any person, or use threatening or aggressive behaviour. We will not use language which other people might reasonably find offensive.
3. If it is necessary to raise issues of performance of a person engaged in business on behalf of HFC, these will be raised constructively and through the appropriate channels.
4. In representing the co-op in any capacity, including on social media, we are ambassadors for the co-op and will uphold and promote its values, objectives and policies. We will not seek to officially represent the views or position of the co-op unless we have authority to do so.
5. We will respect principles of confidentiality and will not disclose, without the required permission and authority, personal information about tenants or members or any sensitive business information. This duty continues to apply if we leave the co-op or step down from our roles.
6. We will comply with the rules governing the co-op and relevant laws and regulations.
7. We will not act in a way that discriminates against, or unjustifiably favours, particular individuals, groups or interests, including on the basis of any protected characteristics they may have. We will treat equitably those from marginalised groups, backgrounds or circumstances.
8. We will respect the principle of collective and informed decision-making and welcome views from residents and members when making decisions that will affect them.
9. We will take all reasonable steps to make sure that no conflict arises, or could reasonably be perceived to arise, between our duties to the co-op and our personal interests or relationships. We will not offer, seek or accept gifts or other benefits that might

reasonably be seen to compromise our judgement or integrity. We will not misuse the co-op's funds or resources or seek preferential treatment for our own personal benefit.

10. We will not conduct ourselves in a manner that could reasonably be regarded as bringing the co-op into disrepute. We will not perform our roles under the influence of non-prescribed drugs or alcohol

11. We will undertake training as necessary. Members in governance positions are strongly encouraged to undertake Equalities training.

12. We will not knowingly put our own or others' health, safety, security or wellbeing unnecessarily at risk. If we have any concerns about the health, safety, security or wellbeing of ourselves or others we will report this through the appropriate channels.

Application of this Code

What action will be taken if a member fails to meet these standards.

Behaviour at meetings

There is an expectation that minor breaches will be resolved informally. Working Group Co-ordinators have a responsibility to support this process where it happens in relation to the work of their Group

Where a member breaches the HFC Code of Conduct the Chair or Co-ordinator will have the right to ask them to leave the meeting. Where this behaviour is repeated by the same person over a period of time the Chair or Co-ordinator will have the option of raising the issue under the Complaints Procedure. Where the Complaints Procedure does not provide a satisfactory resolution or the behaviours continue regardless then there is the option to escalate to consideration under Primary Rule 10 which is a proposal to GM of expulsion of a member for conduct detrimental to the Co-op.

Behaviour outside meetings

Where a member behaves in a manner that repeatedly or seriously breaches HFC Code of Conduct such behaviour might be raised under the Complaints Procedure. Where the Complaints Procedure does not provide a satisfactory resolution or the behaviours continue regardless then there is the option to escalate to consideration under Primary Rule 10 which is a proposal to GM of expulsion of a member for conduct detrimental to the Co-op.

The Code cannot aim to cover every situation in which people may find themselves as they perform their roles. Members need to apply good judgement even where the code does not contain specific requirements.

It is always important to consider how any action taken or decision made aligns with the co-op's purpose and values, and what impact it may have upon residents and reputation. The Code is written on the assumption that those using it will comply with all legal and regulatory requirements relevant to this Code and with all of the co-op's policies and procedures. Users of this Code must have access to all relevant policies and procedures. Laws and policies may change during the lifetime of this Code and the Code will be reviewed accordingly.