

Statement of committee member responsibilities

BNCHA's rules require that committee members sign up to a statement of committee member responsibilities.

Physical signing of the Code of Conduct may be difficult in the pandemic, and so committee members may either sign up to the Code:

- physically by signing this form and returning it to the BNCHA Chair or Chief Officer
- or by sending an email to nic@cch.coop stating that "As a committee member of Belgrave Neighbourhood Co-operative Housing Association, I am signing up to the Statement of committee member responsibilities and I agree to abide by the code of conduct included in the Statement of committee member responsibilities. I also understand and agree to the interpretations of the code of conduct as set out in the same document".

Committee members are required to have signed up to the statement of committee member responsibilities by 1st November 2021¹.

The responsibility of all committee members is to act only and at all times in BNCHA's best interests and not for personal benefit or gain or on behalf of any special interest group. Every committee member is required to:

- (a) abide by BNCHA's Code of Conduct for committee members set out below;
- (b) attend all committee meetings, unless it is genuinely not possible to do so, and make a positive and constructive contribution to committee proceedings, debate and decision making;
- (c) participate in appropriate training to ensure that he or she has sufficient knowledge and understanding of BNCHA's affairs in order properly to exercise the responsibilities and powers of a committee member;
- (d) avoid and declare any conflict of interest he or she may have in relation to their activities as a committee member;

¹ It should be noted that former committee members who have been found previously in breach of the Code of Conduct shall continue to be considered to be in breach of the Code of Conduct for the period determined by the committee at the time the committee agreed the former committee member was in breach of the Code. Any former committee member who was considered in breach of the Code is therefore not eligible or able to sign the Statement of Committee Member Responsibilities until the time period elapses as originally set by the committee for the period of the breach. Committee membership of former committee members found guilty of breaches of the Code shall therefore be considered null and void until the period of breach elapses.

- (e) comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and treat all personal information about members and their households and applicants to BNCHA as confidential and not disclose any data held on any person by BNCHA to any other person or organisation unless required to do so by law.

Code of conduct

Being a member of BNCHA's committee is an important role which involves making collective decisions that will benefit co-op members.

The role comes with responsibilities, and I am signing below to accept the following responsibilities as a committee member:

- 1 I will not harass, threaten, abuse or insult other co-op members, service provider staff and contractors, or any other visitor to the co-op. I will not use abusive or threatening language or gestures in meetings.
- 2 I will promote constructive dialogue and debate and support fellow co-op members and staff. I will respect the views of others.
- 3 I will recognise and support the role of the chair in meetings.
- 4 I will abide by the co-op's Equality and Diversity Policy.
- 5 I will not let private or personal interests to influence my decisions. I will not use my position in the co-op for personal gain.
- 6 I will declare any interests I may have that may conflict with co-op activities.
- 7 I will keep confidential co-op matters that are identified as needing to be kept confidential, in particular any issues I come across that includes personal information about co-op members.
- 8 I shall declare any instances of hospitality or gifts that I receive when on co-op business.
- 9 I will support the co-op's staff and engage with them in a professional manner.
- 10 I will make every reasonable effort to attend and participate constructively in all committee meetings
- 11 I will keep myself informed about the committee's work by joining in appropriate training sessions and reading information sent out prior to meetings

- 12 I accept that I share responsibility for the decisions made by the committee (even if I voted against them)
- 13 I will not use my position on the committee to seek preferential treatment for myself or for my family and friends.
- 14 I accept that if I breach the co-op's code of conduct, the matter may be investigated and actions may be taken against me, including potentially my not being able to be involved in the committee or other co-op activities.

As a committee member of Belgrave Neighbourhood Co-operative Housing Association, I agree to abide by this code of conduct and the Statement of Committee Member Responsibilities.

I confirm that I have not been found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct.

I also understand and agree to the interpretations of the code of conduct as set out below.

Signed

Dated

Interpretation of clauses in the code of conduct

Clause 7 of the Code of Conduct regarding confidentiality requires that all committee members confine discussions about BNCHA business to committee members and officers working for BNCHA (eg. the Chief Officer, the Admin worker, Pinnacle liaison staff, TPAS staff appointed to work with the committee).

Unless a committee member has delegated authority so to do, it is a breach of the Code of Conduct for BNCHA committee members to discuss confidential BNCHA business in person, by email or by other methods of communication with:

- Anyone external to BNCHA's committee or officers (as above)
- BNCHA members who are not committee members where a committee member is seeking to present information or positions that are contrary to information or positions held by BNCHA
- Representatives of Cossington Housing Co-op
- Consultants or others who may have previously worked with BNCHA
- The Regulator of Social Housing or any other external organisation

If any committee member considers that they have a reason to discuss any confidential matter relating to BNCHA outside of the co-op, they should resign as a committee member before so doing.

A committee member should assume that any business is confidential unless the Chief Officer has confirmed that it is not confidential, or it is public (ie. that it is widely known outside the committee) before the committee member discusses it.

Communication in accordance with any agreed BNCHA Whistleblowing Policy is permitted.

Clause 12 of the Code of Conduct means that all committee members share equal responsibility for committee decisions. This means it is a breach of the Code of Conduct if any committee member seeks to form factions or groupings within the committee. Manifestations of this that would be a breach of the Code of Conduct include:

- Organising petitions of particular committee members
- Organising petitions that include general BNCHA members (both a breach of Clause 12 and Clause 7)
- Seeking to coerce other committee members to vote in particular ways on any matter being considered by the committee
- Voting on a matter under consideration in the committee on the basis of what another committee member has instructed the committee member

to vote for rather than on the basis of proper consideration of the facts and information available.

If any committee member wishes for any further clarification of these matters or is in doubt about what they may or may not do under the Code of Conduct, they should seek clarification from the Chief Officer.