Involved Tenant and Resident Code of Conduct

Introduction

This document sets out how involved tenants, members of the community and ForHousing will work together effectively to create an inclusive environment based on the values of openness, respect, trust and passion.

The Code

This document sets standards which will enable everybody working within the ForHousing involvement structure to maintain the values and vision of ForHousing.

Involved tenants and residents are acting as ambassadors of ForHousing at all times and this code of conduct extends to other meetings, both internally and externally, as well as outside of meetings including on social media.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality of all tenants, customers, residents, staff and the organisation will be respected at all times.

Involvement may mean tenants and residents hear about and deal with issues that are sensitive and/or controversial. Involved tenants and staff agree to exercise discretion and care in performing their duties and responsibilities in relation to these issues.

Any information received prior to meetings and discussed at meetings shall remain confidential until such time that it is in the public domain. Should there be any doubt around the level of confidentiality, a member of staff will provide confirmation.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is a guiding principle in everything we do, with everyone, treating each other with respect. This is required to ensure that no individual or group of people with shared characteristics is treated less favourably and that the benefits of diversity are realised.

Conflicts of Interest

Involved tenants and residents should disclose any interest, whether personal or on behalf of any group they represent, that they consider may affect or influence their approach to any matter under discussion.

Involved tenants and residents must not use their position to obtain any financial gain or advantage, or to obtain a preferential service from the organisation.

Social Media

Many involved tenants will use social media. Whilst not acting on behalf of the organisation, they must be aware that they can damage the reputation of the organisation if they are recognised as being an involved tenant of ForHousing. Any communication that an involved tenant makes through social media must not:

- bring the organisation into disrepute for example by:
  - criticising or arguing with other members of the community
  - making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups
  - posting images that are inappropriate or links to inappropriate content
- breach confidentiality for example by:
  - revealing information owned by ForHousing
  - giving away confidential information about an individual or organisation
  - discussing ForHousing's internal workings or future business plans that have not been communicated to the public
- do anything that could be considered discriminatory or bullying or harassment for example by:
  - making offensive or derogatory comments about somebody
  - using social media to bully another individual
  - posting links that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such images

Conduct

We will:

- follow the agenda and keep to time by making contributions as brief as possible and to the point
- arrive punctually to enable meetings to start promptly
- switch off mobile phones and laptops during the meeting unless absolutely necessary
- come prepared by reading all the relevant papers beforehand and bring them to the meeting
- avoid detailed discussion of personal issues during the course of meetings – lived experience can be used as examples
- respect everybody for who they are
- be courteous to each other and support and assist all attendees to contribute to meetings

- be open, honest and respectful and listen to the views of others
- provide and welcome constructive challenge
- refrain from the use of inappropriate or offensive language
- refrain from attending meetings under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs / substances
- support the Chair and follow the guidance in the conduct of meetings as outlined in the terms of reference
- seek approval from ForHousing before speaking or writing on behalf of the group publicly

Terms of Reference

Each formal involvement group will have its own terms of reference. Failure to follow the terms of reference will be a breach of this code of conduct.

Making a complaint/ raising issues

Wellbeing issues or concerns and complaints can be raised via the Chair and/or Lead Officer.

Safeguarding concerns will be logged by the Lead Officer via ForHousing's formal Safeguarding process.

Dispute resolution

The Chair and/or Deputy Chair will ensure that members of the groups will adhere to the code of conduct and treat both members and colleagues with respect.

Reasonable steps will be taken to deal with disruptive or inappropriate behaviour.

If an attendee at any meeting breaches any behaviours listed in section 4, they will be asked to leave the meeting. If appropriate, the Chair will close the meeting.

If there are concerns with a member this will be discussed by the Chair and/or Deputy Chair of the group and the member.

If, no resolution is reached, then the following procedure will be instigated.

Procedure for dealing with a breach of code of conduct

An investigation will be carried out by the Chair of the group where the breach took place together with the ForHousing Officer with responsibility for that group. If it is the Chair that has allegedly breached the code of conduct the investigation will be carried out by the Officer and the Chair of another ForHousing involved group.
The investigation will collect statements 4 weeks from the date of reporting from those involved. In the case of a

serious breach it may be necessary to suspend the involved tenant or resident from all involvement whilst the investigation is conducted. An involved tenant or resident being investigated will be able to receive advice or representation from the Chair of another involved tenant and resident group or an independent person not involved in the breach.	
A report of the findings and outcome of the investigation will be provided to relevant parties. Where it is agreed that there is no further action required the matter will be closed.	Within 1 week of investigation
Any agreed actions will be implemented with the agreement of the member, eg. training/ support.	Within 2 weeks of the decision
In the event that the involved tenant or resident does not agree with the outcome of the investigation, they will have the right to appeal to a Manager more Senior than the investigating Officer, who will determine the final consequences of the breach as per the escalation route at appendix A Any complaints about staff will follow ForHousing's formal policies and procedures.	Within 2 weeks of the final decision