

**NEIGHBOURHOOD & HOME WATCH NETWORK  
(ENGLAND & WALES)**

**ETHICS & STANDARDS GUIDELINES  
FOR MEMBERS & GROUPS  
(INCLUDING FORCE AND REGIONAL LEVEL ASSOCIATIONS)**

**Overview**

**The aims and objectives of the Neighbourhood and Home Watch movement are:**

- To increase public participation in the prevention and detection of crime,
- To help reduce the fear of crime,
- To promote good citizenship and greater public awareness through Neighbourhood and Home Watch groups,
- To help increase community and public safety, and
- To improve police/community liaison

And where appropriate, in partnership with recognised Authorities and other relevant organisations.

In order to further these aims and objectives and to ensure public confidence in Neighbourhood and Home Watch, it is appropriate that members of Neighbourhood and Home Watch adhere to these Ethics and Standards Guidelines.

**Important note: The expression “members” herein includes individuals, and all groups of members, whether or not constituted, incorporated or charitable in nature.**

**A. Members’ overall responsibilities include:**

1. Dealing with other members, the public and other organisations in an honest, open, clear, fair, reasonable and co-operative manner.
2. Ensuring that all matters relating to Neighbourhood or Home Watch and its activity are dealt with promptly and courteously, and not in an inappropriate or frivolous manner.
3. Operating within the law and within the spirit of the law.
4. Making sure that their Neighbourhood and Home Watch group and themselves are, where required, suitably authorised, regulated and have effective arrangements to comply with all relevant laws, rules and regulations, and the terms and conditions of any Licences granted to them.

5. Ensuring that these Guidelines are complied with to the best of their knowledge and belief.
6. Reporting any breaches or reasonable suspicions of breaches of these Guidelines to the relevant recognised and constituted Neighbourhood or Home Watch body in or operating in respect of their area.

## **B. Members should act with the highest ethical standards and integrity. This includes:**

1. Being honest, trustworthy, open, reliable and respectful.
2. Promoting and demonstrating high moral and ethical standards.
3. Behaving in a professional manner.
4. Keeping their promises and commitments wherever reasonably possible, doing their best not to make promises they are unable to keep, and providing a prompt explanation in the event of any failure to honour them.
5. Not taking unfair advantage of anybody.
6. Not bringing the Neighbourhood and Home Watch movement into disrepute or conducting themselves in a manner which might lead to such a situation.
7. Not offering or accepting gifts, hospitality or services which could imply an improper obligation.
8. Being open and transparent about any expenses, fees and costs relating to Neighbourhood and Home Watch matters.
9. Operating in a financially responsible and prudent manner.
10. Ensuring that adequate and correct records are kept.
11. Respecting other people's privacy, and treating all confidential information as such, including compliance with Data Protection legislation.

## **C. Members should act in the best interests of each member and the public. This includes:**

1. Encouraging their local Neighbourhood or Home Watch to put proper and fair treatment and overall community and public safety at the centre of its culture.
2. Basing their decisions on a clear understanding of needs, priorities, concerns and circumstances.
3. Giving all the necessary information of which they are aware to allow people to make informed decisions, provided that such information is not confidential.
4. Ensuring that they do not use information from Neighbourhood or Home Watch or any Authorities or other parties improperly, or to their personal or business advantage.
5. Avoiding any situation where a conflict of professional or personal interests may exist between them, their employer, their business and/or other parties, and Neighbourhood or Home Watch.

## **D. Members should endeavour to provide a high standard of service. This includes:**

1. Communicating in a way that is accurate and straightforward, and expressed in a way that people can easily understand.
2. Making sure that reasonable steps are taken to ensure that all advice given is accurate and suitable.
3. Not providing advice where they are not competent or qualified to do so.
4. Acting with skill, care and diligence.
5. Acting within their ability and authorisation, and seeking help where necessary.
6. Ensuring that their relevant knowledge and expertise is kept up-to-date.
7. Ensuring that as far as possible those who work or function with them have appropriate training and supervision, and contributing to their learning and development.

## **E. Members should treat people fairly and with equal opportunities regardless of:**

1. Race or racial group including ethnic or national origin or skin colour; cultural background; sex or sexual orientation including marital or civil partnership status; pregnancy, maternity or paternity; religion or belief including philosophical beliefs similar to a religion; age; disability or health status; or any political opinions.

## **F. Treating people fairly and with equal opportunities includes, but is not limited to:**

1. Obeying equality and diversity laws; treating each person as an individual; challenging and reporting unlawful or otherwise unfair discriminatory behaviour and practice; acting openly and fairly; treating everybody with equal respect and opportunity; making reasonable adjustments to assist children and young people, the elderly, the vulnerable, people with disabilities or particular needs, and encouraging others to do so.

## **G. Basic principles additionally applicable to organised groups of members including Force Level and Regional Associations**

1. Good and effective management dictates that recognised organised groups of members including Force Level and Regional Associations must have a clear and unambiguous governing document. This could be a Constitution, Protocols or Articles of Association for a Company.
2. If you are not using a model or approved governing document you can draft your own. At the minimum your governing document needs to set out, where applicable in the circumstances:
  - Your organisation's name
  - Any Registered Charity or Company number
  - Definitions and interpretations (if appropriate)

- Your organisation's Objects and purposes
  - What it can do to meet its aims and purposes (its 'powers'), such as borrowing money
  - Who can be a member, and provision for termination of membership
  - Who runs it (e.g. trustees/officers)
  - How trustees/officers are appointed and may retire or be terminated
  - How meetings and elections will be held, and ensuring that all actions are undertaken on a fair and democratic basis
  - Financial rules applicable, including bank accounts and their proper operation, preparation and verification of periodical accounts, and how funds may be applied
  - Any rules about paying trustees, investments and holding land
  - Whether the trustees/officers can change the governing document, and if so then to what extent; how members can change the governing document, and any related conditions
  - How to close the organisation.
3. Please note that more specific requirements apply to Charities and Companies. For more information please refer to the Charity Commission and/or Companies House, or seek professional advice.

## H. Charities

1. When you set up a charity, by law you must have a governing document. This is the rule book which sets out how your charity will be run. You should give each new trustee a copy of the governing document when they are appointed. Trustees should refer to your governing document regularly to make sure that its rules are followed.

## I. Sanctions for non-compliance with these guidelines

1. In the event that a member fails to honour these Guidelines or is otherwise considered to be unsuitable to continue to be a member, Neighbourhood and Home Watch may impose appropriate and reasonable sanctions upon any member. These may include:
  - Withdrawal of recognition as a member of Neighbourhood and Home Watch.
  - Withdrawal of recognition as a holder of any position within Neighbourhood and Home Watch.
  - Withdrawal of any consent to use any Neighbourhood or Home Watch trade mark or service mark or the like, including the use of the words "Neighbourhood Watch" and/or "Home Watch".
  - Reference to any lawful Authority.

2. If a member wishes to appeal against any sanctions they should take their appeal to the relevant recognised and constituted Neighbourhood or Home Watch body in their area.
3. If a Force or Regional Level Association wishes to appeal against any sanctions they should take their appeal to the Chairman of the Neighbourhood & Home Watch Network.