

Our 'RESPECT' Code of Conduct – A few simple rules

LiveWest recognises the valuable contribution that volunteers make to the organisation, and we want all volunteering opportunities to provide a welcoming and safe space for those who choose to give up their time.

Our Code of Conduct sets out how volunteers should behave, both towards each other, staff in person and when online. This code is not restricted to engagement activities, there is an expectation that it will cover people's behaviour in their own communities as well.

Respect: Respect to be shown, always, to other residents, staff, and contractors. This includes listening to others, being courteous, using appropriate language, behaving, and dressing appropriately. (see 'meeting tips and guidance')

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI): Treat everyone the same regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, age, and disability. To respect and appreciate differences. To avoid *and challenge* discrimination at all levels. For further information about EDI at LiveWest, please see the EDI pages of our website: <https://www.livewest.co.uk/about-us/equality-diversity-and-inclusion>

Safeguarding and seeking support: Do not behave in a way that might endanger the health, safety or security of yourself or others. Always seek support and advice when there are any concerns or uncertainties about practices, procedures, or if a situation upsets or worries you in any way.

Partnership and Positive solutions: Work in close partnership with LiveWest, operate as a team and uphold the values of collaborative working to produce positive solutions. When representing LiveWest externally you must uphold and promote LiveWest's vision, values, purpose, and policies.

Expectations: Be clear about what is expected by both customers and the organisation. The organisation to provide support, training, and expenses where appropriate. The customer is to adhere to the Terms of Reference of any groups or panels and undertake any induction or training activities necessary to carry out the role.

Confidentiality: Always respect the confidentiality of the business and individuals, both in meetings and when carrying out other activities. Not to disclose any confidential information to a third party, and not to use confidential information for anything other than its original purpose. Always abide by the organisations Data Protection Policy.

Transparency: To declare any conflict of interest that may influence your approach to the matter under discussion. Not to use involvement to promote your own agenda. Not to use involvement to promote any political agenda. Not to misuse LiveWest funds or resources. This includes adhering to LiveWest's Probity standards and procedures, and our Financial Crime prevention policy and procedures.

Where it is necessary, the following steps will be taken if an individual is found to have breached the terms of this code of conduct:

Any alleged breach will be investigated by the Customer Engagement Team, and where appropriate, seek input from customers and staff. The Customer Engagement team will ensure that the views of all customers involved are considered and will decide on appropriate action to address the breach. In any extreme circumstance where there is a breach of conduct including violence, bad language or discriminatory abuse, step 3 will be enforced with immediate effect.

Step 1- a report is raised of an individual customer who has broken one or more of the terms above. Contact will be made by a member of the Customer Engagement Team to discuss the situation with the individual concerned and support them in resolving any personal issues. Where that contact is made by phone, an e-mail will also be sent to confirm the contents of the conversation and the agreement reached. This agreement will be reviewed after 6 months.

Step 2- Further breach for code of conduct, within 6 months. A formal written letter will be sent. The letter will outline the circumstances of the last breach of the code of conduct, the outcome of the previous telephone conversation and any sanctions including the potential to remove the volunteer from the group(s) involved if a further breach takes place.

Step 3- Third breach of the code of conduct, within 6 months. The customer will be automatically removed from the group/s with a written letter to confirm the details of why, and their option to appeal this decision to the Customer Engagement Team Leader.

The Appeal

The appeal must be submitted within 10 days of the date of the letter confirming removal from the group (as per step 3). The Customer Engagement Team Leader will respond within 5 working days of receipt of the appeal.

The customer has the right for a review of the appeal if they wish. The review of any appeal will be carried out by the Customer Experience Manager within 14 days of the appeal.

Wider tenancy issues

LiveWest operates as a joined-up organisation. Whilst we cover a large geography, staff strive to communicate effectively across the departments and locations, to provide the best services for customers. Where there have been issues around a customer's conduct, within their neighbourhood or scheme, information regarding this will be shared.

Prior to accepting customers onto groups or panels, the Customer Engagement Team will carry out some standard checks around tenancy conduct:

Rent arrears

Having rent arrears will not automatically exclude someone from joining an engagement group, however, where it is found that a customer has arrears that they have persistently failed to address there will be further discussions as to whether they will be accepted onto a group at that time.

Anti-social Behaviour

Where it is found that a customer is currently being investigated for anti-social behaviour, have any legal restrictions or instructions such as an Acceptable Behaviour Contract in place they will not be accepted onto a group at that time.

Social media activity

Whilst we welcome all feedback on our services, where a customer is known to be using social media persistently to cause offence, or damage positive relationships, we will not accept them onto a group.

Legal action

Where a customer is taking current legal action against LiveWest they will not be accepted onto a group, as this could create a conflict of interest.

If any of the above occurs or becomes apparent once someone has already joined a group, their membership will be reviewed whilst the situation is being assessed. The customer will be informed of any decisions or actions taken, and will have the right of appeal, as above.

The Director of Neighbourhoods will have the final decision on any refusals or suspensions of membership.