



New Mills & District Volunteer Centre

Conflict of Interest Policy

This policy applies to the Trustees.

1. Why we have a policy.

Trustees have a legal obligation to act in the best interests of New Mills and District Volunteer Centre and in accordance with the New Mills and District Volunteer Centres governing document.

Conflicts of interests may arise where an individual's personal or family interests and/or loyalties conflict with those of the New Mills and District Volunteer Centre. Such conflicts may create problems; they can:

- a) Inhibit free discussion
- b) Result in decisions or actions that are not in the interest of New Mills and District Volunteer Centre; and
- c) Risk the impression that New Mills and District Volunteer Centre has acted improperly.

The aim of this policy is to protect both the organisation and the individuals involved from any appearance of impropriety.

2. The Declaration of interests.

Accordingly, we are asking Trustees to declare their interests, and any gifts or hospitality received with their role in the New Mills and District Volunteer Centre. A declaration of interests form is provided for this purpose, listing the types of interest you should declare.

To be effective, the declaration of interests needs to be updated at least annually and also when any changes occur.

If you are not sure what to declare, or whether/when your declaration needs to be updated, please err on the side of caution. If you would like to discuss this issue, please contact the charity secretary for confidential guidance.

Interests will be recorded on the charity's register of interests, which will be maintained by the Secretary. The register will be accessible by contacting the Secretary or the Centre Manager.

3. Data Protection.

The information provided will be processed in accordance with data protection principles as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998. Data will be processed only to ensure that trustees act in the best interests of New Mills and District Volunteer Centre. The information provided will not be used for any other purpose.

4. What to do if you face a conflict of interest.

If you are a user of New Mills and District Volunteer Centres services, or the carer of someone who uses New Mills and District Centres services, you should not be involved in decisions that directly affect the service that you, or the person you care for, receive. You should declare at the earliest opportunity and withdraw from any subsequent discussion. The same applies if you face a conflict for any other reason.

You may, however, participate in discussions from which you may indirectly benefit, for example where the benefits are universal to all users, or where your benefit is minimal.

If you fail to declare an interest that is known to the Secretary and /or the Chairman of the Board will declare that interest.

5. Decisions taken where a trustee or member of staff has an interest.

In the event of the board having to decide upon a question in which a trustee or member of staff has an interest, all decisions will be made by vote, with a simple majority required. A quorum must be present for the discussion and decision; interested parties will not be counted when deciding whether the meeting is quorate. Interested board members may not vote on matters affecting their own interests

All decisions under a conflict of interest will be recorded by the Secretary and reported in the minutes of the meeting. The report will record:

- a) The nature and extent of the conflict.
- b) An outline of the discussion.
- c) The actions taken to manage the conflict.

A *de minimis* exemption applies to contracts less than £50.00 in value. Random checks against the register of interest will be made on the award of contracts below this value. If the cumulative value of a series of small contracts exceeds £1000.00, the trustees will operate the policy used for individual contracts over that sum.

The *de minimis* exemption does not apply to contracts of employment with New Mills and District Volunteer Centre.

Independent external moderation will be used where conflicts cannot be resolved through the usual procedures.

6. Managing contracts.

If you have a conflict of interest, you must not be involved in managing or monitoring a contract in which you have an interest.

Adopted 14 December 2005
Reviewed 21st April 2008

Norman H Heald
Company Secretary
23rd April 2008