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| AGE UK EXETER |
| Controlled Document  Document Name: Ethical Policy  Document Reference Number: POL1  Document Version Number 10  Agreed by Standards Committee on: 3 September 2018  Approved by Board of Trustees on: 11 September 2018  Review Schedule Every two years  Next review due September 2020  Owner (Responsibility) Martyn Rogers, CEO  Pass amendments to: QA & Systems Manager  Revision History See appendix  Document Location Idrive/Resources/Policies/Pol1 |
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| Document Description  This policy aims to guide our decision making processes so that they are in line with the charity’s values. There are a number of decisions which need to be made on a day to day basis, particularly with respect to our fundraising activities and who we align ourselves with and this document seeks to give guidance to those decisions. |
| Implementation and Quality Assurance  Implementation is immediate and this Policy shall stay in force until any alterations are formally agreed.  The Policy will be reviewed every two years by the Board of Trustees, sooner if legislation, best practice or other circumstances indicate this is necessary.  All aspects of this Policy shall be open to review at any time. If you have any comments or suggestions on the content of this policy please contact Sue Martyr, [s.martyr@ageukexeter.org.uk](mailto:s.martyr@ageukexeter.org.uk) or at Age UK Exeter, 138 Cowick Street, Exeter, EX4 1HS, 01392 455600 |

**ETHICAL POLICY**

**Our Vision**

To help make Exeter a great city in which to grow old

**Our Mission**

To enable older people in Exeter make the most of life, whatever their circumstances. .

**Our Values and Principles**

1. To safeguard, support and serve the older people of Exeter, their families and carers, by making ourselves aware of the community’s needs and providing services to high standards.
2. To safeguard, support and treat fairly our staff, volunteers and service users.
3. To participate in the Age UK network but to maintain our independence and charitable objectives.
4. To be transparent, accountable and have strong governance systems.
5. To seek financial support from a wide variety of appropriate sources.
6. Within our resources, to maximise our provision of services, with the recognition that the governance and administration needs to be robust enough to ensure our principles are achieved.
7. To be aware of potential conflicts of interest and to address them.
8. Operate within all applicable laws, rules and regulations.
9. Safeguard personal data and information.
10. To ensure that our actions promote the values and reputation of Age UK Exeter

**INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of the Ethical Policy is to guide our decision-making process in a manner appropriate for a charity dedicated to the welfare of older people. Maintaining the charity’s reputation is paramount to its continued existence. In addition, we have an obligation to protect the Age UK brand.

Ethically correct decisions will often involve dilemmas and invariably there will be divergence of views in some areas and subjectivity depending on the ethical and moral viewpoint of individuals.

Some judgements will be almost universally supported but there will be less well defined situations where a consensus must be achieved and advice sought..

Whenever an individual in the organisation is making an decision where there is a possibility of diversity of judgement about the correctness, they are required to discuss the issue with senior members of the organisation before making that decision.

We have specific policies for many of the areas covered, which expand on the general principles set out here.

**SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

The policy is comprehensive and applies to all aspects of the Charity’s work, including:

1. Our reputation and standing in the community

2. Our staff and volunteers

3. Service Users and Service Delivery

4. Partners and stakeholders

5. Suppliers

6. Conflict of interest

7. Security and confidentiality

8. Finance and investment

9. Income generation

* sponsorship
* fundraising
* advertising
* trusts & grants
* marketing
* bequests

10. Environmental practices: recycling; energy use.

11.Trading via Age UK Enterprises

We are seeking to avoid harm to:

* service users, their families and carers
* our staff and volunteers
* our stakeholders
* the reputation of the organisation and the Age UK brand
* the environment.

IMPLEMENTATION

An ethical code is designed to facilitate ethical decision making. A key is to identify issues within a decision making structure, to interpret the principles, and to implement a decision in specific cases.

We are all responsible for applying Age UK Exeter’s principles. Staff and volunteers should be aware of the policy and in particular be familiar with the Ethical Code and should conduct themselves in accordance with the culture and principles of the charity.

Co-ordinators and staff should raise concerns with a member of the Senior Management team with reference to the attached code. The Senior Management Team should use the three committees (Finance & General Purpose, Standards, Income Generation) to fully discuss issues and new projects.

The trustees should be fully satisfied that any decisions made have followed the agreed ethical framework and areas outside the framework have gone to the Standards Committee for approval.

KEY PRINCIPLES

1. Our Community

We recognise our responsibility in terms of the contribution we can make to the wellbeing of our communities in Exeter.

We seek:

* to identify the needs of older people in Exeter
* to contribute significantly to our community through our services, volunteering activities and participation in partnerships with local agencies and other charities
* to influence local government and organisations on behalf older people in the city.

2. Our Staff and Volunteers

As a recruiter and employer, we give equal respect, consideration and opportunities to all.

* treating staff and volunteers fairly, openly and honestly.
* prioritising co-operation over self-interest.
* treating colleagues with respect.

We expect our staff and volunteers to maintain the highest standards of behaviour when conducting any aspects of our work. Our employment practices support the high standards we have to ensure good conduct, honesty and integrity.

We strive to offer our staff a good work/life balance and we recognise you will have personal commitments, responsibilities and interests which have to balance with the demands of work.

We recognise the value of volunteers and the importance of the contribution that they make.

3. Our Services

Our reputation and success are dependent on our behaviour and standards in supporting and serving the needs of older people in Exeter, their families and carers.

We wish to ensure

* the right level of advice at the right time
* the highest standards of service and support
* the safeguarding of the individual
* the provision of professional, friendly and responsive services
* a broad range of services, which are clear and accessible and meet a range of needs
* to reach all those in need
* people can access our services in a variety of ways, enabling users to engage with those best suited to them.

4. Our Partners

We aim for our partners to work to a similar set of ethical standards as ourselves and will raise concerns with them if there appears to a major divergence of ethical standards between us. We wish to ensure:

* good communications
* high standards of service
* transparency, accountability and robust reporting systems
* the security of user information
* there is no conflict of interest
* there is a complaints procedure

5. Suppliers

We recognise the important contribution suppliers make to our business and expect our staff and volunteers to treat them fairly and in an ethical manner.

We also expect suppliers to act in a fair and equitable manner when conducting their business.

We ensure that major contracts are reviewed from time to time and that appropriate suppliers have an equal opportunity to win our business at these times.

We aim to ensure that our suppliers comply with our standards, which cover the following areas:

* payment in accordance with the agreed terms and deal with exceptions in a timely manner
* transparency and accountability
* equal opportunities
* health & safety
* ethical business practises
* good environmental practice

6. Security and Confidentiality

We will ensure that personal information is held securely and that the movement of information is monitored and controlled in a secure manner. Information should not be disclosed to any third parties without consent other than to those that process information on our behalf unless there are regulatory or legal obligations to do so.

7. Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest may arise between ourselves and our stakeholders, our users, our employees and volunteers. A conflict of interest is where our duties to any of these may conflict with what is best for Age UK Exeter. We will identify and tell our stakeholders about any such conflicts.

To ensure we treat our stakeholders consistently and fairly, we have a Conflicts of Interest Policy on how to identify and manage these conflicts.

8. Financial and Investment

* To ensure all surpluses are retained within the Charity and used for charitable purposes
* To seek financial support from a wide variety of sources to achieve a diversity of funding
* To be transparent, accountable and have strong reporting systems.
* To use our reserves to manage risks in our budgeting.
* To monitor monthly accounts against the budget.
* To reward our staff fairly.
* To be aware of potential conflicts of interest and address them.
* To operate within all applicable laws, rules and regulations.
* To have an investment policy that does not conflict with our ethical standards

We have adopted a medium risk approach to the investment of our reserves.

9. Income Generation

Income generation is largely dependent on Age UK Exeter maintaining a good relationship with a range of stakeholders. Income generation has a number of elements:

* contracts
* charges for services
* grants & trusts
* community fundraising
* donations
* legacies
* sponsorship
* marketing and advertising
* business partnerships.

The paramount aim of any relationship we have is the wellbeing and best interests of our beneficiaries; and to enhance or maintain our reputation.

In addition, we will:

* + seek financial support from a wide variety of sources
  + aim not to be over dependent on or favour particular companies or individuals
  + be transparent, accountable and have strong reporting systems
  + be aware of potential conflicts of interest and address them
  + operate within all applicable laws, rules and regulations
  + protect the reputation and standards of the Age UK brand.

An organisation or individual offering a source of financial support should be considered in the light of this ethical policy at an early stage to ensure that their ethical principles are similar to our own. In order to understand their service or product and the benefit the organisation or individual is purchasing we will confirm:

* the organisation or individual has a good reputation.
* they have good communication, transparency and have strong reporting systems.
* the method and source of financial support will be in the best interests of our service users if income is raised to support a service.
* the amount does not form a too large a proportion of the overall income type received by the Charity.
* that the benefit to the sponsor is not excessive or disproportionate to the level of the sponsorship income of the Charity.
* that we are not explicitly endorsing a product or service. If endorsement is required, the service or product provided by the organisation or individual needs to have the same qualities we aim to achieve in our own services.

10. Bequests

We would wish to raise awareness of the importance bequests have to us and to encourage people to remember us in their will. We have a Legacy Policy.

11. Environment

We recognise our responsibility to manage our activities in such a way as to respect the environment:

* We ensure compliance with all relevant environmental legislation and the other Codes of Practice and Agreements to which we subscribe.
* We have an Environment policy that details how we manage and mitigate the Charity’s impact on the environment

**GUIDANCE NOTES ON   
WORKING WITH THE ETHICAL POLICY**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Ethical Policy guides our decision-making processes in a way appropriate for a charity dedicated to the welfare of older people. Maintaining the Charity’s reputation is paramount to its continued existence. In addition, we have an obligation to protect the Age UK brand. This ethical code is designed to facilitate the implementation of the ethical policy.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Ethical behaviour is fundamental for us as a Charity helping older people. In building and maintaining our reputation, we strive to earn and retain an excellent reputation and, therefore, take our responsibilities towards the people with whom we come into contact very seriously by showing the highest standards of integrity in all dealings with them.

**PURPOSE OF THE CODE OF ETHICS**

The purpose of this code is to set out the ethical values and standards of behaviour with which we expect employees and volunteers of the Charity to comply. It doesn’t deal with every possible situation but is designed to enable you to think through the ethical implications of actions and how to get more help if required.

**IMPLEMENTATION AND ETHICAL DECISION MAKING**

The key is to have issues identified within a decision making structure to interpret the principles and to implement a decision in specific cases. We are all responsible for applying these principles. Staff and volunteers should be aware of the policy and in particular be familiar with the ethical code and should conduct themselves in accordance with the culture and principles of the charity.

We are all responsible for our actions on behalf of Age UK Exeter. In deciding whether or not any act may be unethical we ask the questions:

* does it feel right?
* is it legal?
* who else could be affected by our decision?
* would I want to be treated this way?
* would I be embarrassed if others knew what I had decided?
* would my action be consistent with Age UK Exeter’s policies and values?
* if I do it how will I feel afterwards?
* do I have all the necessary information to make my decision?
* will I have acted in good conscience and be prepared and able to explain my actions?
* is there any concern that the reputation of Age UK Exeter could be adversely affected?
* should I discuss the matter with my manager or other appropriate person before committing to a course of action?

The process of making a decision could include:

1. ascertain the facts
2. define the ethical issues
3. identify the affected parties
4. identify the consequences
5. identify the relevant principles, rights and justice issues
6. consider your character and integrity
7. think creatively about potential actions and consequences
8. decide on a proper ethical action

Obviously, a number of ethical issues can be planned for and decisions agreed in advance, particularly in areas such as fundraising and marketing, procurement and finance and investment. Codes of conduct for each of these areas are attached to this document. These codes have been agreed using the decision making process set out above.

However, for new issues or projects which may not be covered under the attached codes the following should apply:

Before promoting external agencies and events ensure that you discuss it with your line manager.

Co-ordinators and staff should raise concerns with a member of the Senior Management Team when they have any doubts. If deemed necessary, the Senior Management Team, can refer the issue to the Chair of the Standards Committee or if more appropriate discuss the issue with either the Finance or Income Generation Committee.

The trustees should be fully satisfied that any decision has been made only after full consideration of the ethical policy.

Relevant policies which should be read in conjunction with this include:

1. Data Protection Policy
2. Investment Policy
3. Environment Policy
4. Gifts & Legacies Policy
5. Conflict of Interest Policy

Social Media Policy

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| **Areas of contention** | Grants | Part-sponsor | Main-sponsor | Lone advert | Group advert | Charity of the Year | Any other routes? |
| Alcohol related | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber |
| Gambling related | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber |
| Tobacco related | Red | Red | Red | Red | Red | Red | Red |
| Private healthcare | Green | Green | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber |
| Dom care providers | Green | Green | Amber | Red | Green | Amber | Amber |
| Care home providers | Green | Green | Amber | Red | Green | Amber | Amber |
| Equity release schemes | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber |
| Poor reputation – Amazon, Starbucks, Sports Direct | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber |
| Individuals whose evidenced values do not align with our own e.g. fundraising speakers | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber | Amber |

**Green** = go ahead, no further discussion needed

**Amber** = discussion and agreement by Standards Committee needed. Fast turn around within 24 hours required. Jacqui to send request to Sue who will liaise with the Standards Committee (plus John Cartridge), giving date of when decisions are needed.

**Red** = do not proceed, no further discussion needed.

For companies with a poor reputation, further investigation should be carried out before a decision is made, eg how long ago was the concern about them and is it still relevant/current.

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLIERS**

Age UK Exeter recognises its ethical position as a buyer of goods and services. Within the resources available to the charity and where practicable to do so Age UK Exeter will:

* Test the market and source goods and services locally wherever possible
* Ensure all tradespeople are suitably qualified and insured to undertake work required
* Use Fairtrade and Farm Assured products in our catering
* Use paper that is sustainably sourced
* Ensure arrangements are in place for the recycling of its waste
* Be mindful of its energy use and carbon footprint and seek to minimise these where practical to do so
* Settle our bills within the terms specified by our suppliers

Age UK Exeter recognises there is sometimes a cost to sourcing goods and services ethically and decisions will therefore be taken on a case by case basis, based upon the cost to the charity and the product or service in question.

**REPORTING**

The Board of Trustees will receive an annual report on all new partnerships and confirmation that the policy has been followed.

**Revision History**

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| **Revision date** | **Summary of Changes** | **Other Comments** |
| 31.10.16 | Versions 1 to 9 – formulating new policy.  Reviewed by Standards Committee | Recommended to the Board for approval |
| 8.11.16 | Reviewed by the Board | Approved  Next review due  November 2018 |
| 3.9.18 | Routine review by the Standards Committee. | Tweaks to Our Vision and Mission at the beginning. The coding for alcohol and gambling in the RAG table changed from green to amber.  Recommended to the Board for approval. |
| 11.9.18 | Reviewed by the Board.  Approved. | Next review due  September 2020. |