

CONFIDENTIALITYY POLICY

HOTWELLS AND CLIFTONWOOD COMMUNTIY ASSOCIATION

Background

Hotwells & Cliftonwood Community Association (HCCA) is a voluntary sector organisation - a sector which gains much strength from its openness and accountability. However, there are some areas of activity where complete confidentiality is required.

Scope

This policy applies equally to all staff, volunteers, Management Committee members, sessional workers and others working for or on behalf of the HCCA. All these people need to be aware that confidential information must be effectively protected and not carelessly left in circumstances where confidentiality may be breached easily.

Where documents or information are deemed to be confidential they should not be disclosed to or discussed with anybody except those strictly relevant to the information, or the Chair of the Management Committee or other appropriate Trustee. The Chair or other assigned Trustee may give authorisation for the documents or information to be disclosed to and/or discussed with any other individual, group of individuals or body directly involved and may set restrictions on such authorisation.

Responsibility

It is the joint responsibility of the HCCA and any individual working for the HCCA or on HCCA's behalf to be clear about what information may be deemed to be confidential and what may be deemed to be in the public domain.

Where there is any doubt on this issue, it should be assumed that a piece of information is confidential until clarification has been provided by HCCA.

Information which is deemed to be confidential

The following information will automatically be deemed to be confidential (unless HCCA issues notice to the contrary or there is a legal requirement to publish the information):

1. personnel records including home contact details (applies to staff and volunteers);
2. service providers records;
3. Management Committee members' details (other than position within the HCCA, names and addresses, which must be published by law and other such information which they agree to have published by the HCCA);
4. all documents marked confidential;
5. all draft documents awaiting approval by the Management Committee (including draft minutes of meetings)*;
6. all budgets*;
7. all documents relating to action under HCCA Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures (except the published outcomes of such actions).

* Note that there will be circumstances where financial information or draft documents which have not been approved by the Management Committee will need to be circulated to funders and potential funders to ensure the short, medium or long term stability of the HCCA. In such cases disclosure will be at the discretion of the Chair or appropriate Trustee.

Information which is deemed to be in the public domain

The following information will automatically be deemed to be in the public domain:

1. all records which the HCCA is legally required to publish (however drafts of such documents should be treated as confidential until approved by the Management Committee);
2. all information published in the public areas of the HCCA website ;
3. all information published through HCCA newsletter;
4. the written proceedings of any open meetings organised by the HCCA (excluding drafts which are normally confidential) ;
5. any other information approved for publication by the HCCA Management Committee.

Any information approved for publication shall only be deemed to enter the public domain on the date of actual publication, unless otherwise stipulated by the HCCA Management Committee.

Breaches of Confidentiality

Breaches of confidentiality will be treated with the utmost seriousness and will be thoroughly investigated either through the HCCA Complaints or Disciplinary procedures.