

Trustee agreement

# Code of Conduct: Healthwatch Sutton

As a trustee of Healthwatch Sutton I undertake to abide by the fundamental values that underpin all activities of this organisation and act in accordance with Healthwatch Sutton **Code of Conduct**.

### Our values

All representatives are expected to adhere to the Nolan Principles (the seven principles of public life). These are:

* **Selflessness –** act only in terms of the public interest, not in order to gain financial or other benefits for self, family or friends.
* **Integrity –** not be placed under any financial or other obligation outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence the performance of official duties.
* **Objectivity –** make decisions on merit and the basis of evidence.
* **Accountability –** be accountable for decisions and actions to the public and submit to whatever scrutiny is appropriate.
* **Openness –** be as open as possible about all decisions and actions. Give reasons for decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
* **Honesty –** declare any private interests relating to public duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
* **Leadership –** promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Additionally, I agree to the following points.

### Law, mission, policies

I will act within the governing documents of Healthwatch Sutton and abide by the policies and procedures of the organisation.

I will not break the law or go against charity regulations in any aspect of my role of trustee.

I will support the objects and mission of Healthwatch Sutton and act as their guardian and champion.

I will develop and maintain an up-to-date knowledge of Healthwatch Sutton and its environment.

### Conflicts of interest

I will always strive to act in the best interests of the organisation and not as a representative of any other group to which I might belong, considering what is best for Healhwatch Sutton.

I will declare any conflict of interest, or any circumstance that might be viewed by others as a conflict of interest, as soon as it arises, and act in accordance with the [**Conflict of Interest Policy**](https://www.healthwatchsutton.org.uk/report/2018-03-09/conflicts-interest-policy).

I will submit to the judgment of the board and do as it requires regarding potential conflicts of interest.

### Person to person

I will not break the law, go against [charity regulations](https://www.charitygovernancecode.org/en) or act in disregard of organisational policies in my relationships with fellow trustees, staff, volunteers, members, service users, contractors or anyone I meet in my role as trustee.

I will strive to establish respectful, collaborative and courteous relationships.

Where I also volunteer with Healthwatch Sutton, I will maintain the separation of my role as a trustee and as a volunteer.

**Protecting the organisation’s reputation**

I will not make public comments about Healthwatch Sutton unless authorised to do so.

Any public comments I make about Healthwatch Sutton will be considered and in line with organisational policy, whether I make them as an individual or as a trustee.

When I am speaking as a trustee of Healthwatch Sutton, my comments will reflect current organisational policy even when these do not agree with my personal views.

When speaking as a private citizen I will uphold the reputation of Healthwatch Sutton and those who work in it.

I will respect organisation, board and individual confidentiality.

**Personal gain**

I will not personally gain materially or financially from my role as a trustee, unless specifically authorised to do so, now will I permit others to do so as a result of my actions or negligence.

I will use organisational resources responsibly. I will document expenses and seek reimbursement according to procedure.

I will not accept gifts or hospitality without the prior consent of the chair.

**Board meetings**

I will strive to embody the principles of leadership in all my actions and live up to the trust placed in my by Healthwatch Sutton.

I accept my responsibility to ensure that Healthwatch Sutton is well run and will raise issues and questions in an appropriate and sensitive way to ensure that this is the case.

I will abide by board governance procedures and practices.

I will strive to attend all board meetings, giving apologies ahead of time to the chair if unable to attend.

I will study the agenda and other information sent me in good time prior to the meeting and be prepared to debate and vote on agenda items during the meeting.

I will honour the authority of the chair and respect their role as meeting leader, and in return expect to be treated with respect.

I will engage in debate and voting in meetings according to procedure, maintaining a respectful attitude toward the opinions of others while making my voice heard.

I will accept a majority board vote on an issue as decisive and final.

I will maintain confidentiality about what goes on in the boardroom unless authorised by the chair or board to speak of it.

I will be proactive in my role and will develop my knowledge and skills in order to continually participate as an active trustee which will enhance my position on the Board.

**Enhancing governance**

I will participate in induction, training and development activities for trustees.

I will continually seek ways to improve board governance practice.

I will strive to identify good candidate for trusteeship and appoint new trustees based on merit.

I will support the chair in their efforts to improve their leadership skills.

I will support the chief executive in their executive role and, with my associate board members, seek development opportunities for them.

**Leaving the board**

I understand that substantial breach of any part of this code may result in my removal from the trustee board.

Should procedures be put in motion that may result in my being asked to resign from the board, I will be given the opportunity to be heard in line with governance arrangements. If I am asked to resign from the board, I will accept the majority decision of the board and resign at the earliest opportunity.

Throughout my tenure I will participate in succession planning where appropriate and support any handover upon my resignation or end of my term of service on the board.

Should I resign from the board I will inform the chair in advance in writing, stating my reasons for resigning. Additionally, I will participate in an exit interview.

**Signed:**

**Name:**

**Date:**

### Note: trustee terms of office

HWS Articles of Association stipulate the following:

5.6 Subject to Article 5.9, a Trustee appointed by the Members shall hold office for a term of up to three years from the date of his or her appointment.

5.7 One third (or the number nearest one third) of the Trustees must retire at each AGM, those longest in office retiring first and the choice between any of equal service being made by drawing lots.

5.8 Subject to Article 5.9, a retiring Trustee who is eligible under Articles 5.4 and 5.5 may be reappointed.

5.9 A Trustee may serve a maximum of three terms, of up to three years per term. A Trustee who has completed three continuous terms of service as a Trustee will not be eligible to be re-appointed as a Trustee until one year after his retirement at an AGM. In this Article ‘year’ means the period between one AGM and the next.