

MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT
Queniborough Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

**This Code of Conduct is based upon the Code of Conduct adopted by
Queniborough Parish Council.**

1. As a member of Queniborough Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group you have a responsibility to represent the community and work constructively with other members of the group, residents, local organisations and other stakeholders to secure a neighbourhood plan for Queniborough which is supported by the village at referendum.
2. When acting in this capacity you must be committed to behaving in a manner that is consistent with the following principles to achieve public confidence in the Steering Group:
 - (a) **SELFLESSNESS:** Members of the Steering Group should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.
 - (b) **INTEGRITY:** Members of the Steering Group should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.
 - (c) **OBJECTIVITY:** In carrying the business of the Steering Group, including making members should make choices on merit.
 - (d) **ACCOUNTABILITY:** Members of the Steering Group are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and the Parish Council, and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
 - (e) **OPENNESS:** Members of the Steering Group should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
 - (f) **HONESTY:** Members of the Steering Group have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
 - (g) **LEADERSHIP:** Members of the Steering Group should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

3. Whenever you act, claim to act, or give the impression that you are acting in your capacity as a member of the Steering Group, your conduct will in particular address the statutory principles of the Code of Conduct by:
- (a) Considering the views of residents and putting their interests first
 - (b) Dealing with representations or enquiries from residents, members of our communities and visitors fairly, appropriately and impartially.
 - (c) Not allowing other pressures, including the financial interests of yourself or others connected to you, to deter you from pursuing the work of the Steering Group in a proper manner.
 - (d) Exercising independent judgement and not compromising your position by placing yourself under obligations to outside individuals or organisations who might seek to influence the way you perform your duties as a member of the Steering Group.
 - (e) Listening to the interests of all parties, including relevant advice from statutory and other professional officers, taking all relevant information into consideration, remaining objective and making decisions on merit.
 - (f) Being accountable for your decisions and co-operating when scrutinised internally and externally, including by local residents.
 - (g) Contributing to making the Steering Group's decision-making processes as open and transparent as possible to enable residents to understand the reasoning behind those decisions and to be informed when holding yourself and other members to account, but restricting access to information when the wider public interest or the law requires it.
 - (h) Behaving in accordance with all your legal obligations, alongside any requirements contained within the Steering Group policies, protocols and procedures, including on the use of the Council's resources.
 - (i) Valuing other members of the Steering Group and Working Groups and engaging with them in an appropriate manner and one that underpins the mutual respect between us that is essential to good local government.
 - (j) Always treating people with respect, including the organisations and public you engage with and those you work alongside.
 - (k) Providing leadership through behaving in accordance with these principles when championing the interests of the community, with other organisations and stakeholders, as well as within the Steering Group.

4. Financial and Personal Interests

(a) Financial interests

A Financial Interest is an interest of yourself or your partner (which means spouse or civil partner, a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners) within:

Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation; sponsorship; contracts; land; tenancies; any other business or financial interest from which you or a partner may benefit.

(b) Personal interests

A Personal Interest refers to your involvement with any body, group or charity of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management

(c) Notification of interests

Within 28 days of becoming a member or co-opted member, you must notify the Chair of the Steering Group of any financial or personal interests. You must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest or change to any interest registered under this section, notify the Chair of the Steering Group of the details of that new interest or change.

You must also notify the Chair of the Steering Group of any financial or personal interests that arise at meetings as set out in 4 (e)

(c) Register of interests

Any interests notified to the Chair of the Steering Group will be included in the register of interests.

A copy of the register will be available for public inspection and will be published on the authority's website.

(d) Sensitive interests

Where you consider that disclosure of the details an interest could lead to you, or a person connected with you, being subject to violence or intimidation, and the Chair of the Steering Group agrees, if the interest is entered on the register, copies of the register that are made available for inspection and any published version of the register will exclude details of the interest, but may state that you have an interest, the details of which are withheld.

(e) Disclosure and non participation in case of disclosable financial and personal interests at meetings

- (i) If you are present at a meeting of the Steering Group or one of its Working Groups, and you have a disclosable financial or personal interest in any matter to be considered or being considered at the meeting:

- (aa) You may not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting;
 - (bb) You may not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting;
 - (cc) You must disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting;
 - (dd) If the interest is not registered and is not the subject of a pending notification, you must notify the Steering Group Chair of the interest within 28 days;
 - (ee) You must leave the room where the meeting is held while any discussion or voting takes place, other than as set out in paragraphs 4(f).
- (ii) Where you have a disclosable financial or personal interest in any matter you must not seek to improperly influence any decision on the matter.
 - (iii) Where a member may discharge a function alone and becomes aware of a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter being dealt with or to be dealt with by her/him, they must notify the Chairman of the Steering Group of the interest and must not take any decision or further steps in the matter.

(f) Dispensations

The Steering Group may, having regard to all relevant circumstances, grant you a dispensation to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest in the following circumstances:

- (i) that without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;
- (ii) granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area;
- (iii) it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

(h) Gifts and hospitality

You must, within 28 days of receiving any gift or hospitality over the value of £25, notify the Chairman of the Steering Group in writing of the details of the gift or hospitality including the identity of the person from whom it was received.

Any receipt of gifts of hospitality notified to the Steering Group will be included in the register of interests.