



Aberdeenshire *housing partnership*

Aberdeenshire Housing Partnership

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS POLICY

JUNE 2005

Relationships with other Organisations Policy

The aim of the policy is to ensure that Aberdeenshire Housing Partnership continues to work within an explicit framework that will support all of its professional work. This policy will set out and clarify the expectations with regard to:

- **Advertising.**
- **Sponsorship.**
- **Affiliation and partnerships with commercial organisations.**
- **Commercial consultancy.**
- **The use of the AHP logo.**
- **AHP endorsement.**
- **Research.**

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Relationships with other Organisations Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy gives guidance to ensure that these relationships do not call into question the financial independence, professional judgment or standing of Aberdeenshire Housing Partnership. The Partnership is aware of the position of trust its Board members has with tenants and other stakeholders and their interests, and this document gives detail to clarify the position. The Partnership will seek to pursue, support, affiliate and form partnerships with individuals and associations that support our aims, objectives and activities. It will expand the professional network that it has access to, identifying the practice and research of other organisations, enabling broader exposure to a variety of information, practice and opportunities to allow AHP to develop as an organisation.
- 1.2 AHP will not engage in projects or initiatives etc. which do not meet its strategic objectives, with external organisations or which might place AHP's reputation at risk.
- 1.3 AHP staff and board members will work to this policy to the best of their ability. Where uncertainty arises, staff will consult others within the organisation appropriately. The terms of this policy cover all staff and Board members of the Partnership. It also covers all agencies working with or for AHP. This includes other registered social landlords, companies, public relations agencies, industry wide marketing organisations, trusts funded by companies in particular industries and other organisations from the public, voluntary, or charitable sectors.

2. AHP's Website

- 2.1 When developed commercial advertising may feature through the AHP website. With regards to other sites which are accessed via AHP links, the AHP holds no responsibility for the opinions or content contained on these sites. This is because it is not feasible to vet all sites for all alterations in their content. Whenever possible, the original contents at time of link will be vetted.

3. Working Partnerships / Collaboration and Sponsorships

- 3.1 On occasion AHP will form partnerships (including potentially legal entities) with individuals, professionals, organisations and commercial companies. These partners will be required to support the aims, objectives and activities of AHP.
- 3.2 AHP will actively pursue partnerships where the goals and mission of the partner organisation are similar with its own. In order to benefit the organisations involved it is an aim to achieve close, ongoing and co-ordinated working relationships.
- 3.3 Any partnership entered into with another organisation may be for a renewable or fixed period and will be confirmed in writing and agreed by all parties. Any such agreement

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may be subject to immediate cancellation in the event of a breach of a previously agreed condition.

4. Affiliation or Association with Other Voluntary Organisations, Professions and Charities

Associations

- 4.1 The organisation will, on occasion, form associations with organisations or companies which have aims that are consistent with AHP's own, and that will further our objectives. These associations will be made with organisations that will enhance AHP's standing and increase its credibility. The arrangements must at all times be consistent with the current Partnership policies and regulations. These arrangements will be for the purpose of furthering a particular policy or operational issue or to advocate a jointly agreed position.
- 4.2 AHP will retain control over the use of its name and logo and will reserve the right to veto the production of all material produced on our behalf. Whilst both parties will jointly agree the wording, AHP reserves the right to retain control over all copy and design for sole publications.

Affiliations

AHP will consider taking membership of or affiliate to organisations that provide services to registered social landlords with respect to their responsibilities as landlord or employer.

- 4.3 A decision to take membership of or affiliate to a voluntary or professional organisation will be based on the following criteria:
- That involvement with the organisation will benefit:
 - i) The interests of the AHP as a registered social landlord and Scottish charity.
 - ii) The interests of tenants, board members and staff.
 - That the organisations are not for profit organisations.
 - Financial implications.

AHP as a Scottish charity will not-affiliate to any political party.

The decision to take membership / affiliation will rest with the Board of AHP.

- 4.4 When requests are made for renewal of membership or affiliation, the Finance and Business Support Manager reviews the benefits to the Partnership. When approached by charitable organisations, which are unfamiliar or relatively new, the Memorandum and Articles of Association should be examined to ensure there is no conflict with AHP's principles.

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5. Use of the Partnership Logo and AHP Endorsement

- 5.1 The AHP logo is used to promote AHP and may, at times be used on a jointly produced publication or other promotional material with the expressed consent of the Chief Executive. Endorsement may be given to a particular publication that others have prepared.
- 5.2 Criteria for decision:
- The Chief Executive must be confident that the document is well written.
 - The publication must be relevant to the objectives of AHP. In cases where there is uncertainty of its value the issue will be taken or circulated to members of AHP's Board for guidance.
 - AHP will seek only to endorse the work of other companies and organisations if it is demonstrated that this is in the interest of our tenants and / or AHP.
 - AHP's involvement in any joint initiative does not mean that endorsement is given to a product.

6. Procedure for Decision Making

- 6.1 The decision to accept an association, partnership or endorsement may be taken to the Board by the management team when their purpose is ambiguous. Where the Partnership is involved in a new project or initiative, levels of staff and resources required will be assessed prior to any decision being made.
- 6.2 Where a formal contract arises, reference will be made to any insurance liability and to payment of a professional fee and/or expenses where appropriate. Where appropriate i.e. where there is more than one potential supplier of the service the requirement of the Procurement Policy will be adhered to.

7. Committees, Board or Panel Membership

- 7.1 In their capacity as AHP Board members or staff individuals may be invited to sit on a variety of external boards, committees, panels and steering groups by a range of organisations. The decision to participate will take account of:
- Benefit to AHP.
 - Benefit to individual being considered for appointment to board etc.
 - Resource implications (time and cost), if any.
 - Potential for conflict of interest.

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Consideration of invitations to accept positions will be addressed as follows:

	Board Membership / Directorship of another organisation	Committee / Steering Group	Working Group / Panel
AHP Board member	Board	Board / Committee	Chair of Board or Committee
Management Team	Board	Chair of Board	Chief Executive
Staff	Board	Chief Executive	Management Team

8. Political Context

- 8.1 AHP is a Scottish charity and will ensure that its political independence is maintained at all times.
- 8.2 AHP will ensure, where possible, that its policy on Equality & Diversity is upheld by organisations with whom it works by for example examining:
- Their constitution.
 - Their Articles of Association.
 - Their guidelines for external activity.

9. Commissioning

- 9.1 The Partnership will at all times follow practice laid down in the Procurement Policy to ensure that efficient use is made of resources when commissioning work from external companies / organisations. In most cases this will involve a tendering process, the successful company will be that which is able to demonstrate quality and cost efficiency.

10. The Partnership as Learning Organisation

- 10.1 AHP is routinely involved in research carried out at both local, and national level and believes that such involvement is important to current and future tenants as a key aspect of continuous improvement to the services provided.
- 10.2 Research will be either commissioned:
- Directly by AHP.
 - In partnership with others.
 - By others in respect of activities AHP is involved in.

- 10.3 In each case AHP the decision to participate will take account of:

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- Benefit to tenants (currently / in the future).
- Benefit to AHP.
- Benefit to partner organisations.
- Resource implications (time and cost), if any.
- Potential for detriment to AHP.

10.4 The decision to participate in research will be taken according to the nature and scale of the exercise by the Chief Executive in discussion with the Board as required.

10.5 In respect of any involvement in research it will normally be a condition that a draft report is provided for comment prior to publication of findings.

11. Monitoring of Activities

11.1 The Board will receive information on decisions made as part of this policy as part of each Performance Board, in a format approved by them.

12. Review

12.1 This Policy will be reviewed every three years, or in the light of any legislative changes, or Communities Scotland regulatory requirements.