

ENGLISH RURAL HOUSING
2010 BRIBERY ACT AND GUIDANCE

ANTI-BRIBERY POLICY STATEMENT

Report by the Chief Executive

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 English Rural Housing Association values its reputation for ethical behaviour and for financial probity and reliability.
- 1.2 It recognises that over and above the commission of any crime, any involvement in bribery will also reflect adversely on its image and reputation.
- 1.3 The purpose of this Policy Statement is to set out for Board members and employees of the Association the aim of limiting the Association's possible exposure to bribery by:
 - Setting out a clear anti-bribery policy;
 - Training all employees and Board members so that they can recognise and avoid the use of bribery by themselves and others;
 - Encouraging its employees to be vigilant and to report any suspicions of bribery, providing them with suitable channels of communication and ensuring sensitive information is treated appropriately;
 - Rigorously investigating instances of alleged bribery and assisting police and other appropriate authorities in any resultant prosecution;
 - Taking firm and vigorous action against any individual(s) involved in bribery.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This Policy Statement applies to Board members, co-opted members of committees, and all employees and third party service providers who work for the Association.

The Association prohibits;

- The offering, the giving, the solicitation or the acceptance of any bribe, whether cash or other inducement as defined in the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations (SOFR's)

To or from

- Any person or company, wherever they are situated and whether they are a public official or body or private person or company

By

- Any individual employee, Board member, agent or other person or body acting on the Association's behalf

In order to

- Gain any commercial, contractual or regulatory advantage for the Association in a way which is unethical

Or in order to

- Gain any personal advantage, pecuniary or otherwise, for the individual or anyone connected with the individual.

3. FURTHER CLARIFICATION

- 3.1 The Association already operates to high standards of probity and good practice as set out in the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations (SOFR's). This Policy Statement supplements the standards contained within the SOFR's. It expressly prohibits any inducement which results in a personal gain or advantage to the recipient or any person or body associated with them, and which is intended to influence them to take action which may not be solely in the interests of the Association or of the person or body employing them or whom they represent.

- 3.2 This policy is not meant to prohibit the following practices which are customary in the industry sector, are proportionate (the Chief Executive will advise) and are properly recorded:
- Normal and appropriate hospitality
 - The giving of a ceremonial gift on a festival or another special time
 - The use of any recognised process which is available to all on payment of a fee
 - The offer of resources to assist the person or body to make a decision more efficiently provided that they are supplied for that purpose only. An example could be assisting a Parish Council or voluntary body.
- 3.3 The Association's Codes of conduct for Board Members and Employees give details of the actions to be taken where they perceive fraudulent or corrupt acts are being perpetrated. Further guidance is contained in the Association's Whistle blowing procedure.
- 3.4 Inevitably, in decisions as to what is acceptable may not always be easy. If anyone is in doubt as to whether a potential act constitutes bribery, the matter should be referred to the Chief Executive. If necessary, guidance may be sought from the association's legal advisors.

4. EMPLOYEE AND BOARD RESPONSIBILITY

- 4.1 The prevention, detection and reporting of bribery is the responsibility of all employees and Board Members throughout the Association. Suitable channels of communication by which employees and others can report confidentially any suspicion of bribery will be maintained by the Whistleblowing procedure.
- 4.2 Internal and External Audit process provide another mechanism to alert the association to possible cases of bribery, corruption or fraudulent activity.

5. RELATED POLICIES

- 5.1 The Association's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations (SOFR's), Development and Procurement Procedures demonstrate to all that the

Association will not tolerate any party who it either employs or works with entering into fraudulent or corrupt acts that would damage their reputation or financial standing.

Confidential Reporting (also known as “whistleblowing”).

Anti-Fraud

Gifts and Hospitality

The above information can be found in the Association’s SOFR’s and/or Staff Handbook saved on the Association’s ‘Shared’ drive.