

The National Forest Ethical Policy

Why have an ethical Policy?

The National Forest Company is a public body which aspires to the high standards expected of such bodies. It also receives money and support from individuals, businesses and a wide range of partner organisations. It wishes to see itself as an exemplar of good practice and its success is dependent on being trusted, particularly at a time when its identity is becoming more well-known and it is entering into association with more partners and companies.

For all these reasons it is important for it to set out the ethical standards to which it aspires in fulfilling its mission.

The aims of this policy are:

- to articulate to partners and sponsors what they can expect from The National Forest Company and
- to drive our efforts to act with the highest ethical standards.

Core Values

The core value of the Company is integrity. We aspire to deliver what we say we will deliver, to be honest when this is not possible and to be truthful in the claims we make for ourselves and the Forest.

Alongside this, a key aspiration is sustainable development, (taking a long term view about the impact of our activity in all its dimensions), and this is reflected in the decisions we make about what we do, how we do it and with whom we work to achieve our mission.

Working with delivery partners

The company will:

- Promote and deliver activity which has real benefit for the Forest and not just for the reputation of the Company.
- Commit to activity which it can deliver, given its priorities and resources, or be clear if the proposed activity is more aspirational or long term.
- Communicate accurately about the status and achievements of The National Forest, within the constraints of available data.
- Promote high standards of professionalism in all its dealings with partners, conducting all its transactions fairly and honestly.

Working with sponsors and investors

The National Forest Company welcomes the opportunity to work with a wide range of supporters, sponsors and investors. It does not seek, or have the

resources to, scrutinise all aspects of their operations. However, it will come to a view about the extent to which their business and approach is consistent with that of the National Forest Company.

The Company will:

- Give potential sponsors and investors accurate and evidence-based information about the costs of sponsorship and funding opportunities.
- Fulfil any obligations agreed as part of sponsorship and funding opportunities.
- Reserve the right not to work with companies whose approach to sustainability, environmental responsibility and public benefit is not clearly evidenced and whose association with the NFC might undermine the credibility of the Company.

Relationship with funders

The Company aims to achieve the highest standards in its relationship with its funders, maintaining openness about how their resources are spent and working honestly with them, recognising their drivers, aims and the environment within which they operate.

Internal procedures

The National Forest Company seeks to act with probity and a high degree of responsibility in its use of resources, human and financial. Its system of internal controls, planning and review provides the framework within which this happens.

The National Forest Company's corporate responsibility

The National Forest Company is a public body, the core responsibility of which is to provide a public good. It does not create profits which can be deployed to meet corporate social responsibility objectives but it does provide opportunities for others to exercise their corporate responsibility. In addition, it actively seeks opportunities to exercise leadership particularly in social and environmental good practice. For example:

- The National Forest Company aims to be a leading small non departmental public body in assessing its own environmental impact and reducing it.
- In its engagement with individuals who plant trees in The National Forest, the Company recognises that this is often an act of emotional importance and it provides the time for this to happen, regardless of questions of efficiency.
- Whilst recognising the need to promote its core business, the Company aims to play a full part in supporting wider partner efforts to build strong communities across the Forest, recognising a commitment to the wider well-being of the area.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board.

**Dinah Nichols
Chair**

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