



Housing Justice

Charter for Christian Homelessness Agencies

The vision of Housing Justice is of a society where everyone has access to a home that truly meets their needs.

We acknowledge:

- the physical, mental and emotional vulnerability of many of those we serve through our work
- the need for all services for vulnerable people to be transparent and open in the way they operate and to avoid any 'hidden agendas' or 'strings attached' to the practical care we offer
- the way that some work for homeless people done by some Christian organisations has at times been conditional and that faith has been imposed upon those seeking help
- that secular culture can put pressure on Christian organisations to downplay the role of faith

We affirm:

- that the Christian faith is at the heart of the ethos and motivations of our organisation and remains the central reason for why we offer the services we do
- that being openly and positively Christian is *not* the same as being coercive or conditional
- the validity and relevance of offering opportunities for those we serve to explore the Christian faith and the belief that this can be done in a transparent and non-coercive way

We commit to:

1. Providing an inclusive service to people affected by homelessness and associated issues and not making any of the practical help we provide conditional on involvement in any spiritual activities.
2. Serving and respecting all people regardless of gender, race, ethnic origin, religion, age, marital status, sexual orientation or physical and mental ability.
3. Acknowledging the freedom of people of all faiths or none both to hold and to express their beliefs and convictions respectfully and freely, within the limits of the UK law.
4. Modelling and sharing the Christian faith through what we do, what we say and how we conduct ourselves.
5. Developing partnerships with other churches, voluntary groups, statutory agencies and local government wherever appropriate in order to create an effective, integrated service for our clients

We will value all individuals in a way that is consistent with our distinctive Christian ethos by:

1. Creating an environment where those we serve, as well as our volunteers and employees are encouraged, challenged and enabled to realise their potential.

2. Assisting those we serve, our volunteers and our employees to take responsibility for their own learning, development and personal growth.
3. Developing a culture where comments and complaints are properly listened to so that improvements can be made and excellence and innovation are encouraged.
4. Promoting the value of a balanced, holistic lifestyle as part of each person's overall personal development.
5. Abiding by the requirements of employment law in the UK and implementing best employment practices and procedures designed to maintain our distinctive ethos and values.

We will develop a professional approach to management, practice and funding by:

1. Implementing management and support structure for all staff and volunteers which fosters and encourages participation at all levels in order to facilitate the fulfilment of our service's goals and visions.
2. Implementing best practice procedures in terms of Health and Safety and Safeguarding in order to protect our staff, volunteers and clients.
3. Handling our funding in a transparent and accountable way and giving relevant people from outside our organisation/project reasonable access to our accounts.
4. Ensuring that all materials used to promote our organisation's work portray those who use our services in a sensitive way and that the permission of those featured will always be sought before being used for these purposes.

NAME OF ORGANISATION.....

Motivated by our Christian faith we commit ourselves to the standards set out in this Charter:

Signed _____ Date _____

Position _____

This document was written by Jon Kuhrt of the West London Mission. It was produced as an initiative of the Christian Homeless Forum in consultation with Housing Justice, October 2011 & reviewed in February 2020.