



CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY FOR TRUSTEES

INTRODUCTION

HM Forage recognises that the principle of confidentiality should not comprise any information about its members, volunteers or staff and the internal affairs of the organisation and should be adhered to by all Board members.

Trustees will be made aware that their duty of confidentiality is a main term and condition of their position on the Board of Trustees and will be asked to sign a statement of confidentiality indicating that they have read, understood and will abide by this policy.

AIM

The aim of this policy is to:

- Ensure that Trustees can go about their duties with trust and confidence.
- Ensure that all Trustees and staff of HM Forage understand and carry out their duties to safeguard the organisation by avoiding careless or wrongful disclosure of information entrusted to them by HM Forage.
- Ensure that all Trustees and members of staff of HM Forage understand that their knowledge about internal affairs or the financial and legal status of HM Forage, its Board members and staff is strictly confidential.

PRACTICAL ASPECTS

Discussion of information with another Trustee or member of staff of HM Forage who may be able to help with the query, does not breach confidentiality.

In no circumstances should details or information about Trustee Board Meetings be discussed with anyone outside of the organisation.

Any communications with staff or members of HM Forage about the content of Trustee Board Meetings who are not trustees will be pre-planned and approved by the Chair and will usually be disseminated in writing. Individual Trustees should not discuss details or information about board meetings with members of staff without the agreed communications plan.

It is expected that Trustees will apply common sense to all aspects of confidentiality, but if in doubt, pre-approve with the Chair or in their absence the Vice-Chair before disclosing information.

USE OF TELEPHONE, EMAILS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

It is important that care is taken on telephone calls, using emails and posting on social media. Trustees must be mindful not to disclose information that may be overheard by members of the public on a telephone conversation.

Emails used for HM Forage business must be kept private and secure. Personal social media posts about HM Forage business must not disclose any sensitive business information such as information about meetings, financial, legal or operational status.

Confidential information sent by email must have PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL as the subject and any confidential or sensitive documents must be password protected, with passwords passed to the recipient through another method other than the email address in which they have received the document.

REMOTE WORKING

Due to the nature of our work, HM Forage trustees work remotely and therefore have confidential documents on personal computers at home or at other places of work. Any documents relating to and belonging to HM Forage must be kept in a secure password protected folder on a Trustee's personal computer.

Care must be taken with any documents being carried by a Trustee when travelling.

INFORMATION FROM OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Trustees may receive confidential or sensitive information relating to other groups or other organisations. The same standards of confidentiality should be adhered to. Such information should only be divulged, if appropriate, to a colleague or

third party within the organisation, and never to anyone outside without consultation with the Chair.

When in doubt about how to handle any information received, trustees should discuss with the Chair and/or the Charity Secretary.

BOARD MEETINGS

In respect of confidential agenda items at meetings and confidential minutes, Board members will be expected to adhere to the policy and guard against any breaches intentional or unintentional.

Where there may be a conflict of interest between employees who are Board members, some matters will remain confidential and the procedure at meetings may therefore exclude individuals who may have a conflict of interest.

BREACH OF POLICY

Any breach of this Confidentiality Policy for Trustees may lead to an investigation that can lead to termination of position on the Board of Trustees.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

I confirm that I have received a copy of HM Forage's Confidentiality Policy for Trustees and that I have read and understood it and will abide by this policy now and after I have ceased my position with the organisation.

I declare that, at all times:

I will keep confidential any staff/trustees/volunteer/ information I receive, or to which I have access, and will not disclose it without permission and that

I will keep confidential any information about organisational operations, conduct, proceedings, meetings and the financial status of HM Forage.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____

VERSION CONTROL

<i>Version No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>By (Name, Position)</i>	<i>Details of changes</i>	<i>Reviewed and approved by Board of Trustees</i>
1	18/12/2023	Graham Hawkes, Trustee & Secretary	N/A	07/01/2024