

# Woking Community Transport Ltd



## Staff Handbook



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## Introduction

### Welcome to Woking Community Transport's Staff Handbook

Our aim in producing this handbook was to create a one-stop information point where you can access all the information you are likely to need relating to your employment with us.

The handbook gives an overview of the terms and conditions of your employment and outlines what you can expect from us as your employer. In return, we ask you for a high degree of commitment, dedication and loyalty to help us achieve the aims and objectives of the Society.

I hope you find this a helpful guide during your employment with us. However, if you are unable to find the answer to your question here, please feel free to contact your line manager or H.R., who will be able to find an answer for you.

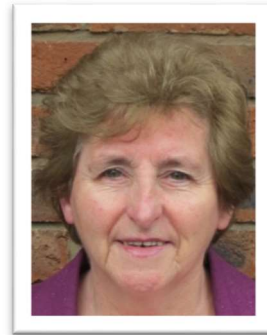
Guy Padfield-Wilkins  
CEO  
Woking Community Transport (Bustler)



# WCT Board of Directors



Sheila Rapley  
Chairman



Anne Ansell  
Vice Chairman



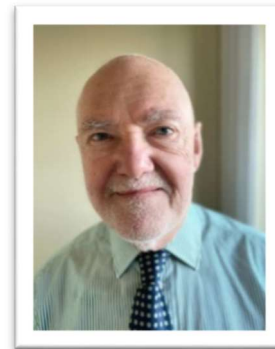
Andrew Sales  
Director of Finance



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CEO & Managing Director



Carol Magras  
Director of Community



Stephen Barklem  
WCT Director

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## Starting with the Society

### **a. About the Society**

Woking Community Transport (Bustler) was founded in 1991 at the request of Woking Borough Council and Surrey County Council, registered as an Industrial and Provident Society with exempt charitable status. Our status was designated in 2014 when we became a Registered Society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. As such, WCT has always been a not for profit organisation run for the benefit of the community. The Society provides accessible door-to-door transport to those who would otherwise be socially excluded because of poverty, vulnerability, disability or age. WCT operates several community services on behalf of Woking Borough Council, Surrey County Council, the NHS and its members.

WCT completes far in excess of 100,000 journeys per year. Core services include; dial-a-ride (transportation for social inclusion, shopping, doctor and hospital appointments etc.), community centre transport, SEND school transport, adults and children's transport to special needs centres (including dementia and autism centres), and NHS patient transport, including North West Surrey Locality Hubs.

As a transport organisation, sustainability is at the forefront of WCT's thinking. WCT has committed to a vehicle replacement programme that will see all current diesel vehicles replaced with 100% electric versions.

We pride ourselves on being a diverse, friendly, open team and are confident you will find the Society an engaging place to work. We welcome you and look forward to your contribution to our continued success; our staff are our most valuable asset.

#### **Ethics and Values**

Respect and Fairness  
Communication and Transparency  
Leadership  
Pride  
Punctual  
Environmental friendly

You can get more information on our website at [www.wokingbustler.org.uk](http://www.wokingbustler.org.uk) full policies and procedures are available on the staff library page.

### **b. Induction**

Woking Community Transport Ltd believes its employees are its greatest asset and recognises its responsibility to ensure they are afforded appropriate development throughout their employment. This development begins at the Induction stage when a new employee joins.

Our aim is to support and develop employees in their role so that they feel confident to undertake the responsibilities placed upon them and ultimately are able to contribute to the success of the Society.

The induction will be spread over your first few weeks in post. The content and duration of the induction programme will depend on your job's scope, and your line manager will outline this in detail to you on your first day with us. Copies of your induction checklist will be made available to you by H.R. or your manager on your first day with us.

### ***c. Statement of Employment Terms and Conditions***

As an employee of Woking Community Transport Ltd you will have received a document setting out specific terms and conditions of employment related to your post. Including details of:

- the names and details of us as your employer and of you the employee;
- the date when your employment (and the period of continuous employment) began;
- duration and conditions of any probationary period;
- remuneration and the intervals at which it is to be paid;
- details of all remuneration or benefits (not just pay);
- hours of work and working pattern including any possible variations to this;
- holiday entitlement including holiday pay;
- details of other types of paid leave (e.g. maternity/paternity leave)
- entitlement to sick leave, including any entitlement to sick pay;
- pensions and pension schemes;
- the entitlement of employer and employee to notice of termination;
- job title
- either the place of work or, if required to work in more than one location, an indication of this and of the employer's address
- details of any training entitlement provided by the employer and any part of that which the employee is required to complete.

Further detailed policies and procedures which may not be mentioned as part of this document but which still form part of your conditions of employment with us can be accessed through your line manager. This handbook also summarises the main terms of your employment.

Woking Community Transport Ltd reserves the right to change its terms & conditions and employment policies from time to time. You will be notified at the earliest opportunity of these changes by way of general notice to all employees affected by the change. Where a contractual change in your terms and conditions of employment results in a change to your written statement of particulars of employment, we will give you a written statement of the change at the earliest opportunity.

### ***d. Probation Periods***

All new staff are subject to a probationary period of 6 months. An initial informal review will take place after 3 months with your line manager, with a formal review after 6 months. Your appointment will be confirmed on satisfactory completion of the 6 months. During this probationary period, you will be given appropriate support and development opportunities to help you reach the required standards. Extension of the probationary period may be granted to enable the required standards to be achieved, but failure to do so could result in termination of your employment.

### **e. Your Attendance at Work**

Woking Community Transport Ltd values good attendance at work and is committed to improving the general wellbeing of its employees to achieve this. Although we aim to secure regular attendance, we do not expect employees to attend when they are unwell.

#### *i) Notification of Absence*

Your line manager should be notified as early as possible if absence from work is anticipated for hospitalisation and other medical treatment.

If you are unable to attend work due to sickness or injury, your line manager must be notified by telephone before your normal start time or as soon thereafter as possible on the first day of absence, if possible, indicating a date of return. Notification should be made by you personally unless impossible due to the nature of the illness, where you should arrange for someone else to call on your behalf. During prolonged periods of absence, your manager should be kept informed of progress and an expected return date. A return to work meeting may be required.

Any employee who has been absent due to claimed sickness and is found not to have been genuinely ill will be subject to disciplinary action, which could include dismissal.

#### *ii) Sickness Payments*

Upon successful completion of your probationary period, Society Sick Pay will be paid at our discretion and will not be unreasonably withheld. Provided you comply with the Society's requirements, you are entitled to Society Sick Pay up to a maximum of 1 month's full pay and 1 month's half pay in any rolling year of employment. Where Society Sick Pay and Statutory Sick Pay are payable in respect of the same day of sickness, you will receive whichever is the greater.

From your first day of absence, you will be required to complete a self-certification form available through your line manager on your return; if greater than 7 days, you will require a statement of Fitness for Work from your G.P.

### **f. Hours of Work**

Your normal hours and working pattern will be specified in your Statement of Terms and Conditions of Employment.

Woking Community Transport reserves the right to vary your hours and pattern of working following consultation and agreement with you.

Persistent poor timekeeping means that colleagues are put under pressure to cover your duties. This is not acceptable and will therefore be treated as a potential disciplinary offence under our disciplinary procedures.

### **g. Criminal Records Checks**

Employees of Woking Community Transport Ltd will be required to undergo an enhanced DBS check, as your employment with us brings you into contact with



children and vulnerable adults. This is a requirement of your employment with the Society and would have been discussed at the interview.

#### ***h. Conflict of Interest***

You should not, directly or indirectly, engage in, or have any interest, financial or otherwise, in any other business enterprise which interferes or is likely to interfere with your independent exercise of judgement in Woking Community Transport Ltds best interest.

Generally, a conflict of interests exists when an employee is involved in an activity:

- Which provides products or services directly to or purchase products or services from Woking Community Transport Ltd
- Which subjects the employee to unreasonable time demands that prevent the employee from devoting proper attention to their responsibilities to Woking Community Transport Ltd
- Which is so operated that the employee's involvement with the outside business activity will reflect adversely on Woking Community Transport Ltd

Should you be in doubt as to whether an activity involves a conflict, you should discuss the situation with your manager.

#### ***i. Standards of Performance and Behaviour at Work***

##### *i) Appearance*

Woking Community Transport Ltd does not seek to inhibit individual choice in relation to your appearance. However, you are expected to dress appropriately in relation to your role and ensure that your personal hygiene and grooming are properly attended to prior to presenting yourself at work.

If we have supplied you with a uniform or other clothing items, then you must wear this at all times when required to do so; it is your responsibility to ensure that this is clean and presentable. On receipt of a uniform, a signature from you will be required.

##### *ii) Society Premises*

You must not remove Society property from the organisation's premises unless prior authority from your line manager has been given.

##### *iii) Personal Property*

Any personal property such as jewellery, cash, credit cards, clothes, cars, motorbikes or bicycles etc., left on Woking Community Transport Ltd premises is done so entirely at your own risk. You are strongly advised not to leave any valuables unattended, either on our premises, in our vehicles or in your own vehicle. Woking Community Transport Ltd does not accept liability for loss or damage to any personal property whatsoever.

##### *iv) Smoking and Other Substances at Work*

Legislation "exists", which makes it illegal to smoke in enclosed public spaces. Therefore, smoking (including e-cigarettes) is strictly prohibited on all Society premises (including entrances and exits) and all Society vehicles.

Outside areas (Office based) have been identified for those who wish to smoke during their break-time. Should you wish to avail yourself of these facilities, please speak to your line manager.

Bringing alcohol or any unlawful drugs to the workplace and/or consuming them there is strictly prohibited both during work time or during a period prior to work where the effects carry over to the workplace. Any such instances will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure and may lead to your summary dismissal.

v) *Confidentiality*

During the course of your employment, you may find yourself in possession of sensitive information; should you disclose, such information would be construed as a breach of confidentiality. It is a condition of your employment that you have a duty of confidentiality to the Society, and you must not discuss any Society sensitive or confidential matter whatsoever with any outside organisation.

Any such breach of confidentiality would be deemed gross misconduct except as otherwise provided or permitted by any current legislation (e.g. the U.K. Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998) and could lead to your dismissal.

vi) *Computer, Email, Social Media and Internet use*

If you have access to the Society's computers, including email and access to the internet as part of your job, you must not abuse this by using these facilities for purposes unrelated to Society business.

Limited personal use of the internet may be permitted at the Society's discretion applicable to office-based roles. All internet use is monitored; any unsuitable material would be considered a serious disciplinary offence that may result in dismissal.

No personal use of the internet or unauthorised downloading of apps is allowed on tablets provided for Society vehicles.

Only software packages properly authorised and installed by the Society may be used on Society equipment; you must therefore not load any unauthorised software onto Society computers or tablets.

If you have a Society email address, this is provided for responsible use on Society business and should not be used in any other way whatsoever.

You must not make reference to the Society or its services or represent yourself on behalf of the Society on social media without formal permission from the Society.

All staff must familiarise themselves with the Society's Internet & Email Policy available from your line manager.

vii) *Receipt of Gifts*

Your working relationships may bring you into contact with outside organisations where it is the normal business practice or social convention to offer hospitality and sometimes gifts. Offers of this kind to you or your family can place you in a difficult position. Therefore no employee or any member of his or her immediate family should accept from a supplier, customer or other person doing business with Woking Community Transport Ltd, payments of money under any circumstances, or special considerations, such as discounts or gifts of materials, equipment, services, facilities or anything else of value unless:

- They are in each instance of a very minor nature usually associated with accepted business practice.
- They do not improperly interfere with your independence of judgement or action in the performance of your employment.

In every circumstance where a gift is offered, the advice of your line manager must be sought.

#### ***j. Data Protection and Access to Information***

Woking Community Transport Ltd will comply with all statutory requirements of Data Protection, including the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). This legislation covers any personal or sensitive information on an individual which the Society holds. Including emails too. If you receive a subject access request, you should refer this immediately to your line manager.

If you are a user of such information, you need to be sure that you are not breaching any data protection rules when you store or use the information and when you write and send emails. This could include but is not limited to:

- Using data that has not been kept up-to-date.
- Passing on or processing personal information about an individual without their consent.
- Never discuss sensitive information such as customers name and addresses or medical information/conditions with anyone not relevant, including work colleagues. Any information shared should only ever be on a need-to-know basis.
- Keeping personal information longer than necessary.
- Sending personal information outside the country.

If any breach of data protection rules is discovered, such as the leaking of personal or sensitive data, this should be reported immediately to your line manager, and any immediate action should be taken to close down such leaks. Your line manager will ensure this is properly investigated and the appropriate reporting actions are taken as necessary.

Employees can request access to the information held on them by the Society. All requests by employees to gain access to such records should be made in writing.

#### ***k. Changes in Personal Information for Employment Purposes***

It is essential that our records are correct, as inaccurate or out of date information may affect your salary or cause difficulties in situations where contact is required for emergencies. You **must** notify your Line Manager immediately of all changes in the following personal information:

- Name
- Home address
- Telephone number
- Bank account details
- Examinations passed/qualifications gained (Job-related)
- Emergency Contact
- Driving licence penalties (if you are required to drive on Society business)
- Criminal charge, caution or conviction
- Conflict, or potential conflict of interest

Personal data on employees is held in accordance with the provisions of the Society's Data Protection Policy which will be made available for inspection by you if required.

## Diversity and Dignity at Work

### ***a. Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy***

#### *i) Statement*

Woking Community Transport Ltd is committed to valuing diversity and seeks to provide all staff with the opportunity for employment, career and personal development on the basis of ability, qualifications and suitability for the work, and their potential to be developed into the job.

We believe that people from different backgrounds can bring fresh ideas, thinking, and approaches that make work more effective and efficient.

The Society will not tolerate direct or indirect discrimination against any person on the grounds of age, disability, gender/gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation whether in the field of recruitment, terms and conditions of employment, career progression, training, transfer or dismissal.

It is the responsibility of all staff in their daily actions, decisions, and behaviour to endeavour to promote these concepts, comply with all relevant legislation, and ensure that they do not discriminate against colleagues, customers, suppliers, or any other person associated with the Society.

#### *ii) Key Actions*

In adopting these principles Woking Community Transport Ltd:

1. Will not tolerate acts that breach this policy, and all such breaches or alleged breaches will be taken seriously, be fully investigated and may be subject to disciplinary action where appropriate.

2. Fully recognises its legal obligations under all relevant legislation and codes of practice.
3. Will allow staff to pursue any matter through the internal procedures which they believe has exposed them to unfair treatment within the scope of this policy. If you need to access these procedures, they can be obtained from your line manager, e.g. Grievance Procedure, Harassment Policy.
4. Will ensure that all managers understand and maintain their responsibilities and those of their team under this policy.
5. Will offer flexible working patterns, wherever operationally feasible, to help employees combine a career with their domestic responsibilities.
6. Will provide equal recruitment opportunities in a fair and non-discriminatory manner.
7. Will select candidates only based on their ability to carry out the job, using a clear and open process.
8. Will provide all employees with the training and development that they need to carry out their job effectively.
9. Will provide all reasonable assistance to employees who are or who become disabled, making reasonable adjustments wherever possible to provide continued employment. We will ensure an appropriate risk assessment is carried out and that appropriate specialist advice is obtained when necessary.

#### ***b. Dignity at Work***

##### *i) Statement*

The Society believes that the working environment should be supportive of individuals' dignity and respect. If a complaint of harassment is brought to management's attention, it will be investigated promptly, and appropriate action will be taken.

##### *ii) What and How of Harassment*

Harassment can be identified as conduct, which is unwanted or offensive and affects the dignity of an individual or group of individuals.

Sexual harassment is defined as "unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, or other conduct based on sex, affecting the dignity of women and men at work". This can include unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct.

People can be subject to harassment on a wide variety of grounds, including:

- race, ethnic origin, nationality or skin colour
- sex or sexual orientation
- religious or political convictions
- willingness to challenge harassment, leading to victimisation
- disabilities, sensory impairments or learning difficulties
- age

Forms may include:

- physical contact ranging from touching to serious assault
- verbal and written harassment through jokes, offensive language, gossip and slander, letters and so on



- isolation or non-cooperation at work, exclusion from social activities
- coercion in any way
- bullying

*iii) What should I do if subject to Harassment?*

If you feel you are being harassed, you are strongly encouraged to seek early advice/support from your line manager. If you feel your line manager is harassing you, then you should contact his / her immediate line manager.

You are encouraged to deal with any harassment issues at the first instance, and this can be informally or formally; the Society has a formal procedure for dealing with these issues, which you can obtain from your line manager.

It is good practice to keep a written record detailing the incidents of harassment and any requests made to the harasser to stop. This written record should be made as soon as possible after the events giving rise to concern and should include dates, times, places and the circumstances of what happened.

## Pay, Benefits & Pensions

### **a. Salary Arrangements**

Your salary will be paid monthly on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month by direct credit transfer to your designated bank account.

Your basic pay was outlined in your letter of appointment/statement of terms and conditions. Any subsequent amendments to your basic pay will be notified to you in writing by the Society.

Part-time employees will be paid based on the hours they work. In all other aspects, their salaries will be paid in accordance with the payment arrangements for full-time employees of the Society.

If any queries arise with regard to pay, or if it looks as if a mistake has been made, speak to your line manager or finance manager immediately so that they can take appropriate action. Unless agreed otherwise, any pay errors will be rectified in the next salary payment, whether of over or underpayment.

Appropriate deductions will be made from pay, including income tax and national insurance contributions (NICs), which are subject to each employee's earning level, family status and the number of hours worked.

### **b. Overtime**

Overtime is defined as all hours worked in excess of your full time contracted hours, which must have the prior explicit approval of your manager. All overtime will be checked against Samsara, and overtime claim forms must be completed and given to the Transport Manager by the end of the month for approval.

Overtime is payable to posts that have been specifically designated as qualifying for overtime payment. Payment of overtime for eligible employees will commence after the first 15 minutes of extra work on top of contracted hours, this excludes factors

beyond WCT control, i.e. traffic delay, which will not be paid for the first 30 minutes. The full overtime policy can be found on the society website or from head office.

### **c. Income Tax**

If there are any changes in your personal circumstances which will affect your tax status, you should notify our payroll providers, who will automatically inform the Society of any changes to your tax code.

#### Sickness Pay Provision

##### *i) Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)*

Most employees have a right to statutory sick pay (SSP) as long as they earn more than the lower earnings level. SSP is not, however, payable for the first three qualifying days of absence. (A qualifying day is a day on which you usually are expected to work under your contract of employment).

There is a limit of 28 weeks' SSP in any one period of sickness or linked periods. (Periods of sickness are said to be linked if the second period starts within eight weeks of the end of the first period.)

SSP is paid in the same way as ordinary pay and is liable to tax and national insurance contributions.

##### *ii) Society Sick Pay*

Society sick pay is paid entirely at the Society's discretion but will not be unreasonably withheld as long as you have complied with the notification requirements and have produced any necessary medical certificates, including self-certificates.

Woking Community Transport Ltd reserves the right to refuse to pay Society sick pay if it has reasonable cause to think that an employee is not genuinely sick, if it has cause to believe that an employee is abusing the sick pay scheme, if an employee has failed to comply with the notification requirements, or has not supplied the appropriate certification. If the sick pay scheme has been abused, disciplinary action may follow.

Payments of sick pay may be terminated, suspended or reduced if an employee fails to notify the Society of relevant facts, or if their absence or continued absence is due to their taking an unwarranted risk (in or out of work), conducting themselves in a way that prejudices their recovery, abusing alcohol or drugs or other substances, or recklessly endangering the health and safety at work of themselves and others.

### **d. Pension Scheme**

If you are eligible, you will be auto-enrolled into the Society Pension scheme as per the *Pensions Act 2008*, details of which you should have received when you started (if you have not yet received this, please speak to your line manager). You may elect to opt out of the scheme if you so wish. Please note that no member of the Society can advise you on whether you should join or not. If you are unsure, you should seek independent financial advice.

## Leave Arrangements

### **a. Annual Leave**

Employees of Woking Community Transport Ltd whether part-time or full-time, are entitled to a minimum 5.6 weeks paid annual leave, pro rata'd to your contracted hours.

Holidays must be agreed upon with your manager as early as possible. The Society will where possible, try to accommodate individual preferences for holiday dates, but the need of the business may have to take precedence, particularly where short or inadequate notice is given.

- Your annual leave year starts from the first day of the month you commence employment, i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> July to June 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Leave for employees who terminate their employment during the leave year is calculated on the same basis. If the annual leave entitlement has been exceeded, a deduction calculated on the same basis will be deducted from the final salary payment.
- Holiday pay in lieu of accrued leave will be paid only on termination of employment and may be subject to a maximum of days.
- Employees on school contracts must refer to their contract of terms and conditions for details.

The statutory Bank Holidays form part of employees 28-day annual leave entitlement.

### **b. Maternity Leave, Paternity Leave and Pay**

The Society will comply with its statutory obligations with respect to maternity and paternity rights and rights dealing with time off for dependants.

### **c. Time Off for Dependants**

You are legally entitled to take a reasonable amount of time off to deal with certain prescribed emergencies involving certain dependants. This leave is called Time Off for Dependants. Time Off for Dependants can be taken, for example, if a dependant falls ill or is injured, if care arrangements break down, or to arrange or attend a dependant's funeral. A dependant is your child (including adopted child), husband, wife or parent. It also includes someone who lives in your household and someone who reasonably relies on you, such as an elderly relative. Any time taken off must be necessary and reasonable in the particular circumstances. Time Off for Dependants is only paid at the Society's discretion.

## Health and Safety

### **a. Introduction**

Woking Community Transport Ltd recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer to maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety and health of its employees and of other persons who may be affected by its' activities.

It is your duty as an employee not to put at risk either yourself or others by your acts or omissions. You should also ensure that you are familiar with the Society health and safety arrangements. Should you feel concerned over any health and safety aspects of your work, this should be brought to the attention of your line manager immediately.

### **b. Procedure in the event of an accident**

An Accident Book is available from your line manager, and it is the responsibility of each individual employee to report and record any accident involving personal injury.

Any accident or near-miss occurrence (i.e. no one was injured, but the incident had the potential to injure or kill) at work should be reported immediately to your line manager.

All employees who are absent from work following an accident must complete a self-certification form, which clearly states the nature and cause of the injury.

### **c. Company Vehicle Accidents**

The Society's policy is that all accidents are reported to the appropriate authorities and, in the case of injury, that injured persons are assisted until emergency services arrive.

The practice of safe driving is essential to maintain all our drivers' ability to perform their jobs effectively. The Society endeavours to achieve the highest standards in all areas of health and safety. Society drivers are relied upon to observe all the rules of the road and guidance related to the use and maintenance of their vehicles.

On the basis that all accidents are preventable, all Society drivers are required to operate their vehicles, at all times, in a responsible and considerate manner, with due regard to the safety of themselves and others, the objective being to minimise the risk of an accident. An avoidable accident **may result** in disciplinary action being taken against the driver.

#### **In case of an accident:**

- Do not discuss at the scene of an accident who may be at fault
- If possible, exchange names and addresses and particulars with the other party or give them to any police officer who attends the scene of the accident
- If you have not given your particulars to the police at the scene, then report to the police as soon as reasonably practicable, and in any case, within twenty-four hours
- Complete an accident report form on the day of the accident and hand it to the Transport Assistant or office staff before completion of your duty

- Obtain a copy of any statement made to the police
- Inform the Transport Manager or Transport Assistant of any motoring convictions
- Take photographs of yours and the third party vehicle

Not all accidents involve a collision between one vehicle and another. Other accidents include:

- A person falling when attempting to board the vehicle
- A person falling or slipping when alighting from the vehicle
- Another vehicle, in avoiding a collision with the bus, collides with a pedestrian, animal, vehicle or property

Personal accidents/motoring convictions

Any any motoring convictions or endorsements to your licence must be notified to the Transport Manager within seven days.

#### ***d. First Aid***

The Society's policy is that all Drivers and P.A.'s will be First Aid trained. The office environment will have an appointed First Aid person.

#### ***e. Fire Safety (Office environment)***

Employees should follow these steps to help prevent fires:

- Before you use any electrical appliances, carry out a quick check to make sure that the cables, plugs etc., are not damaged.
- Do not use any electrical equipment that shows signs of damage, even if you think it is only minor. Report any faults you find to your line manager and find an alternative appliance.
- Ensure that you place your rubbish in the proper waste bins. Do not overfill the bins, and ensure that your waste bin is accessible to the cleaners at the end of each day.

Action to take when the fire alarm goes off:

- Immediately stop what you are doing and walk (do not run) to the nearest available safe fire exit. If your nearest exit/route is obstructed, choose another route. Make sure that you are aware of the fire exits and routes in your area.
- Follow the instructions of any designated Fire Warden.
- Make your way to the appropriate assembly point.
- Once you are at the assembly point, you should report to the Fire Warden so that they can account for the people in their designated area.
- Do not leave the designated assembly point or attempt to re-enter the building until you have been instructed to do so by the Fire Warden.

Action to take if you discover a fire:

- RAISE THE ALARM!



- The alarm must be raised for every occurrence of a fire, no matter how small it appears to be. This will ensure that people in the building have adequate notice to evacuate should it quickly spread. In addition, modern furnishings may allow the fire to develop unnoticed, so time is of the essence if everyone is to get out safely.
- Call the fire brigade at the earliest available and safe, opportunity and do not attempt to tackle the fire unless you have been appropriately trained and can safely do so, e.g. a small fire in a wastepaper basket. Unless you have been trained, you could be putting yourself or somebody else at risk.

## Training and Development

The Society aims to provide training opportunities which will provide:

- An induction programme that all staff will be required to undertake will assist staff in settling into their new role/job.
- Continual training and development to enable staff to develop relevant skills and acquire knowledge to underpin their current role and career aspirations.
- Help managers and staff to make effective arrangements to identify and meet learning needs

## Leaving the Society

### **a. Notice Periods**

Termination of employment either by yourself or the Society is specified in your contract of employment.

Your employment may be terminated without notice where dismissal follows disciplinary proceedings.

### **b. Working Notice**

In all cases, the Society reserves the right to enforce your full notice period. Your full remaining annual leave entitlement should be taken during your notice period in agreement with your line manager. In exceptional circumstances, if deemed appropriate and as an alternative to working your notice, the Society reserves the right either to transfer you to other suitable duties during your notice period or to require you to accept payment in lieu of any entitlement to notice.

If you resign and are in possession of Society property (including computer files), you should make your manager aware of these and arrange how they will be handed back to the Society. You remain bound by the confidentiality arrangements outlined in your contract of employment during this period.

### **c. Other Conditions on Leaving**

On leaving, the Society will deduct from any money due to you such sums as you may owe to the Society. These may include but are not restricted to any loans, court orders and payments made for holidays taken in excess of entitlement.

Should you leave the Society during the probation period, any money invested in your employment such as SCC blue/red badge, first aid training, safeguarding training will be deducted from any money owing to you from the Society, or invoiced if applicable.

If you leave without giving notice and without the Society's agreement, you are in breach of your contract, and you may forfeit some or all of any salary due to you.

Before leaving, you must hand over to your manager all articles belonging to Woking Community Transport Ltd including your ID badge and any documents, equipment and computer software used at home. Documents and software include (but are not limited to) correspondence, diaries, address books, databases, files, reports, plans, records or any other medium for storing information. You should not retain any copies, drafts, reproductions, extracts or summaries of documents and software.

If you have received a uniform, this must be returned in its entirety to the Society; signed documentation of this will be required.

After you have left the Society, you must not:

- Solicit or seek to entice away any Society staff.
- Use or divulge any confidential information relating to the business of Woking Community Transport to any person or organisation.

Should you be dismissed for reasons of gross misconduct, your employment will be terminated immediately without the benefit of notice or payment in lieu of notice.

### **d. Retirement**

In line with current legislation Woking Community Transport Ltd does not have an age where it expects employees to retire.

## **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. Woking Community Transport has a duty to ensure the safety and protection of vulnerable groups (children and/or adults) who receive a service from us. As such, we ask our staff to be vigilant of any possible risk of harm to others. We urge any staff member with concerns about the safety of a child and/or adult to act on those concerns. All Driver's and PA's will receive training and guidance on Safeguarding; a full Safeguarding policy is available from HR or the Administration Manager.

## Whistleblowing

Woking Community Transport is committed to the highest standards of integrity and accountability. An important aspect of accountability and transparency is a mechanism to enable staff and other members of the Society to voice concerns responsibly and effectively. It is a fundamental term of every contract of employment that an employee will faithfully serve their employer and not disclose confidential information about the employer's affairs. Nevertheless, where an individual discovers information that they believe shows serious malpractice or wrongdoing within the organisation, this information should be disclosed internally without fear of reprisal. There is a process to enable this to be done independently of line management (although in relatively minor instances, the line manager would be the appropriate person to be told).

The Public Interest Disclosure Act gives legal protection to employees against being dismissed or penalised by their employers due to publicly disclosing specific serious concerns. The full Whistleblowing policy is available from HR or the Administration Manager.

## Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

### Scope

The Society Disciplinary Procedure will be used only when necessary and as a last resort. Where possible, informal and/or formal counselling or other good management practice will be used to resolve matters prior to any disciplinary action being taken. The procedure is intended to be positive rather than punitive but takes cognisance of the fact that sanctions may have to be applied in some circumstances.

An employee can discuss any part of this policy with HR or their Line Manager. They can help clarify an employee's rights as well as give guidance and support where it may be needed. Every individual has the right to representation from a work colleague at any point during the disciplinary process.

### Suspension

Suspension is not disciplinary action. The purpose of suspension can be used when it is necessary to remove a member of staff from the workplace pending an investigation for example, to allow time for a 'cooling down period' for both parties, for their own or others protection, to prevent them influencing or being influenced by others or to prevent possible interference with evidence. Only the CEO and Chairman have the authority to suspend an individual.

### Performance Related Plan

PRP is an attempt to correct a situation and prevent it from getting worse without having to use the disciplinary procedure. Where improvement is required, the employee must be given clear guidelines as to:

- what is expected in terms of improving shortcomings in conduct or performance
- the time scales for improvement

- when this will be reviewed
- the employee must also be told, where appropriate, that failure to improve may result in formal disciplinary action

A record of the PRP should be given to the employee and a copy retained in their personnel file. It is imperative that any PRP should be followed up and improvements recognised and recorded. Once the PRP objectives have been met, any record of the PRP will be removed from the employee's file.

If during PRP it becomes clear that the matter is more serious, then the discussion should be adjourned and pursued under the formal disciplinary procedure.

### **Procedure for Formal Investigation**

Formal investigations should be carried out by HR or the most appropriate manager who is not directly involved with the incident being investigated. This manager may involve others to assist with the investigation process. All the relevant facts should be gathered promptly as soon as is practicable after the incident. Statements should be taken from witnesses at the earliest opportunity.

A report should be prepared which outlines the facts of the case. This should be submitted to the appropriate senior manager / Director, who will decide whether further action is required. Where appropriate, this report may be made available to the individual and their representative.

In most circumstances where misconduct or serious misconduct is suspected, it may be appropriate to set up an investigatory hearing. This would be chaired by the appropriate Senior Manager / Director, who another manager would accompany. The investigating manager would be asked to present their findings in the presence of the employee who has been investigated. If applicable, witnesses should be called at this stage, and the employee allowed to question these witnesses. The employee has a right to representation at this hearing.

Following the full presentation of the facts, and the opportunity afforded to the employee to state his side of the case, the hearing should be adjourned. Management will discuss the case and decide which of the following option was appropriate:

- 1 take no further action against the employee
- 2 recommend training for the employee
- 3 proceed to a disciplinary hearing

### **Disciplinary Hearing**

- The employee has been informed by letter that the investigation may turn into a disciplinary hearing and that they have the right of representation
- they have been told in advance what the nature of the complaint is, and had time to consult with a representative
- all the facts have been produced at the investigatory hearing. The manager/director is in a position to decide on disciplinary action.

- The manager should inform the employee and their representative that the hearing would now become a formal disciplinary hearing and invite them to say anything further in relation to the case.
- Full disciplinary policy/procedure is available from HR or the Administration manager.

Should anyone who is subject to disciplinary action resign during the course of it, the action will cease unless there are extenuating circumstances that require its continuance. The subject of the discipline may also request that the disciplinary action continue.

## **Warnings**

### **Examples of Minor Misconduct**

Below are listed examples of misconduct that may warrant either a Verbal Warning or a First Written Warning. However, it is stressed that this list is not exhaustive and that on all occasions, a full and proper investigation must take place prior to the issue of a warning.

- Persistent lateness and poor time-keeping.
- Absence from work, including going absent during work, without valid reason, notification or authorisation.
- Failure to work in accordance with prescribed procedures.
- Incompetence.
- Unreasonable standards of dress or personal hygiene.
- Failure to observe Society regulations and procedures.

### **Verbal Warning**

A Verbal Warning is appropriate when the manager in charge must take action against an employee for any minor failing or minor misconduct.

### **First Written Warning**

A First Written Warning is appropriate when:

- a verbal warning has not been heeded, and the misconduct is either repeated or performance has not improved as previously agreed
- an offence is of a more serious nature for which a written warning is more appropriate
- the recurrence or accumulation of an offence/offences, if left, will lead to more severe disciplinary action

### **Example of Gross Misconduct**

Listed below are examples of misconduct that may be considered to be Gross Misconduct and may warrant a Final Warning or Dismissal. However, it is stressed that this list is not exhaustive and that on all occasions, a full and proper investigation must take place prior to issuing a Final Warning or Dismissal.



- Theft, including unauthorised possession of Society property.
- Breaches of confidentiality, prejudicial to the interest of the Society,
- Being unfit for duty because of the misuse/consumption of drugs or alcohol.
- Refusal to carry out a management instruction which is within the individual's capabilities and which would be seen to be in the interests of the Society.
- Breach of confidentiality/security procedures.
- Bribing or attempting to bribe another individual, or personally taking or knowingly allowing another person to take a bribe
- Physical assault, breach of the peace or verbal abuse.
- False declaration of qualifications or professional registration.
- Failure to observe Society rules, regulations or procedures.
- Wilful damage of property at work.
- Incompetence or failure to apply sound professional judgement.
- Smoking on or around any society vehicle, including vaping and any form of e-cigarette.
- Safeguarding offences

### **Final Written Warning**

A Final Written Warning is appropriate when:

- an employee's offence is of a serious nature falling just short of one justifying dismissal
- an employee persists in the misconduct which previously warranted a lesser warning

### **Dismissal**

Dismissal is appropriate when:

- an employee's behaviour is considered to be Gross Misconduct
- an employee's misconduct has persisted, exhausting all other lines of disciplinary procedure

### **Time Scales for the expiry of Warnings**

Warnings issued to employees shall be deemed to have expired after the following periods of time.

- Verbal Warnings: 3 months
- First Written Warnings: 6 months
- Final Written Warnings: 12 months (or as agreed and recorded at the hearing)

These time scales remain provided that no further warnings have been issued during that period in respect of the employee's conduct.

### **Letter of Warnings**

All Warnings must contain the following information:

- The nature of the offence and, where appropriate, that if further misconduct occurs, more severe disciplinary action will be taken.
- The period of time given to the employee for improvement.

- The employee's right to appeal to the manager directly above that of the one issuing the Warning.
- A copy of the Warning and any supporting documentation must be attached to the individual's personnel file.
- The employee must also receive a copy of the Warning, which in the case of any written warning will be sent to their home address by recorded delivery if not handed to them in person.
- In the case of a final written warning, reference must be made to the fact that any further misconduct will lead to dismissal, and that the employee has the right of appeal, and to who they can make that appeal.

The letter confirming dismissal will contain the following information:

- The reason for dismissal and any administrative matter arising from the termination of their employment.
- To be confirmed in writing within twenty-four hours of the hearing.
- The employees right of appeal and to whom they should make that appeal.

### **Appeals**

Every employee has the right to appeal against the outcome of a disciplinary hearing. The basis of an appeal should normally relate to one of the following areas:

- that the Society's procedure had not been followed correctly
- that the resulting disciplinary action was inappropriate
- that the need for disciplinary action was not warranted
- that new information regarding disciplinary action has arisen

An appeal should be put in writing in the form of a letter. The employee or their representative may construct the letter of appeal. The letter should contain the grounds for appeal and should be lodged within 5 days of receipt of the warning/dismissal letter.

An appeal will be arranged within 20 working days of receipt of the appeal letter.

#### **Appeals against Verbal and First Warnings**

In the case of verbal and first warnings, the appeal will be heard by the Fleet Manager.

#### **Appeals against Final Warnings and Dismissal**

The hearing and determining of appeals against final warnings and dismissal will be heard by the Chairman or nominated Executive Director. They may also involve another Director not previously involved with the case.

When dealing with an appeal against a Final Warning or Dismissal, written statements of the case must be submitted no later than 2 days prior to the date of Appeal Hearing.

No additional written evidence will be admitted on the date of the Hearing.

Either party may require witnesses at an appeal hearing, dependent upon the circumstances and nature of the case. However, there is no specific obligation on either party to produce a witness. Either party must give 5 days prior notice that they

intend to call specific persons involved or associated with the case under consideration.

It is the responsibility of the management representative and for the complainant to each arrange for the availability and attendance of any witness they wish to call.

*N.B. This Disciplinary process may not apply if you are under two years of service with WCT.*

Procedure for formal disciplinary action:

|                         | Action By        | Appeal                      |
|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| Verbal Warning/Recorded | Any/Line Manager | Fleet Manager               |
| First Written Warning   | Any/Line Manager | Fleet Manager               |
| Final Written Warning   | CEO              | Chairman/Nominated Director |
| Dismissal               | CEO              | Chairman/Nominated Director |

A copy of the Full Disciplinary Flowchart is available from the HR or Administration Manager.



## Woking Community Transport

### Grievance Procedure

If a staff member wishes to raise a grievance, the grievance should be satisfactorily resolved as close to the individual and their line manager as possible. However, it is understood that this is not always possible and that a formal procedure is required to ensure the swift and fair resolution of matters that aggrieve the Society's employees.

Time scales have been fixed to ensure that grievances are dealt with quickly. However, these may be extended if both parties agree upon it.

This procedure is not intended to deal with:

1. Dismissal or disciplinary matters which are dealt with in a separate procedure.
2. Disputes, which are of a collective nature and which are dealt with in a separate procedure.

#### Stage 1

An employee who has a grievance should immediately raise the matter with his manager, either verbally or in writing. If the matter itself concerns the employee's immediate manager, then the grievance should be taken to their superior.

#### Stage 2

If the manager is unable to resolve the matter at that time, then a formal written grievance letter should be submitted to the CEO. The CEO will investigate the grievance; for further guidance, please refer to the full grievance procedure which you can get from HR or the Administration Manager.

Where a grievance is raised against the CEO, then the grievance will be heard by the Chairman.



## Appendix 1 - Contacts

| Name                 | Designation                      | Telephone    | Email                                     |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|---|
| Guy Padfield-Wilkins | CEO & Managing Director          | 01483 744803 | Guy.Padfield-Wilkins@wokingbustler.org.uk |
| Neal Glass           | Fleet Manager                    | 01483 744809 | Neal.glass@wokingbustler.org.uk           |
| Mark Hartland        | Transport Manager                | 01483 744804 | Mark.hartland@wokingbustler.org.uk        |
| Mark Wiggins         | Finance & Administration Manager | 01483 744805 | Mark.wiggins@wokingbustler.org.uk         |
| Debbie Clarke        | HR & Office Manager              | 01483 744802 | Debbie.clarke@wokingbustler.org.uk        |

This handbook only contains general information and guidelines. It is not a binding legal contract and does not act as a contractual right to remain employed by the Society.



## Appendix 2 - Confirmation of Receipt of Handbook Form

Woking Community Transport Ltd

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>Name:</b>         |  |
| <b>Role:</b>         |  |
| <b>Line Manager:</b> |  |

I confirm I have received a copy of the Woking Community Transport Ltd Staff Handbook and that I have read and understood the contents.

I also confirm that I have sought clarification from my line manager on any areas outlined in the handbook which I am not clear about.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form duly completed and signed to the HR & Office Manager.