

TEES VALLEY

NATURE PARTNERSHIP

Tees Valley Nature Partnership (TVNP) Governance Board – Code of Conduct

1. Purpose of this Code

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected of all members of the TVNP Governance Board.

Its purpose is to ensure the Board operates with integrity, transparency, and professionalism, creating a culture of trust that supports effective leadership of the Partnership and the delivery of its objectives.

2. Core Principles

Board members agree to uphold the following principles:

Integrity: Act honestly and ethically, declaring any conflicts of interest and avoiding situations that compromise impartial decision-making.

Accountability: Take responsibility for decisions made as a collective Board and for fulfilling individual commitments.

Transparency: Support open, clear communication and ensure decisions are recorded and shared appropriately with the wider Partnership.

Respect: Treat all Board and Partnership members with courtesy, valuing diversity of perspective, sector and lived experience.

Collaboration: Work constructively with colleagues, partners, communities, industry and stakeholders to advance the TVNP's mission.

Stewardship: Act in the best interests of the TVNP, ensuring resources, information and influence are used responsibly and for public good.

3. Expectations of Board Members

3.1 Attendance & Participation

- Attend scheduled meetings or submit apologies in advance.
- Be prepared, having read papers and engaged with the issues under discussion.
- Participate constructively, offering insight while supporting collective decision-making.

3.2 Confidentiality

- Respect all confidential, sensitive or commercially restricted information shared during meetings.
- Only share information publicly when authorised and ensure it reflects agreed TVNP positions.

3.3 Conflicts of Interest

- Declare any personal, financial or organisational interests that may influence decision-making.
- Recuse yourself from discussions or decisions where a conflict exists.
- Update your declarations regularly and notify the Chair of any emerging conflicts.

3.4 Conduct in Meetings

- Listen respectfully and allow others to speak without interruption.
- Challenge ideas, not individuals.
- Support the Chair in enabling balanced, inclusive and productive discussion.
- Behave in a manner that reflects the professional standing of the Board and the Partnership.

3.5 Representing the TVNP

- Act as an ambassador for the Partnership and promote its vision, values and work.
- Ensure public statements align with agreed TVNP positions and are respectful of partners.
- Avoid actions that could bring the TVNP into disrepute.

4. Decision-Making

- Decisions should be made based on evidence, partnership need, and the long-term best interests of the Tees Valley.
- Board members must respect collective decisions, even where individual views differ.
- Any challenge or request for clarification should be raised through the Chair.

5. Safeguarding, Equity and Inclusion

Board members will:

- Uphold TVNP's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Actively challenge discriminatory behaviour or language.
- Promote inclusive practice across all Board and Partnership activities.
- Respect safeguarding responsibilities and raise concerns through appropriate channels.

6. Use of Information and Resources

- Use TVNP information, systems, or resources only for legitimate Partnership purposes.
- Protect confidential data in line with agreed policies.
- Avoid personal or organisational gain through access to privileged information.

7. Breaches of the Code

Where concerns arise:

- Issues should be reported to the Chair (or Vice-Chair if the concern relates to the Chair).
- The Chair may conduct a review or convene a small panel to consider the matter.
- Outcomes may include advice, formal warning, or removal from the Board in serious cases.
- The process will be fair, proportionate and respectful of all involved.

8. Commitment

All Board members will be asked to:

- Confirm that they have read this Code of Conduct.
- Commit to upholding its principles.
- Renew their declaration annually or when their membership is reviewed.