



Horsham Matters

Helping to make a difference

**Horsham Matters Ltd
Policy Handbook**

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Section 1: General /Introduction

About Horsham Matters Ltd

Horsham Matters Ltd (HML) is a charity /social enterprise that was set up in 2009 by Horsham Churches Together to enable the member churches to demonstrate God's love and concern for the local community in practical ways.

Horsham Matters' first venture is the Horsham Community Charity Centre (HCCC) in Guildford Road, Horsham, which accepts donated goods from local residents and offers them for sale at reasonable prices for anyone to purchase.

Horsham Matters seeks to use the money it raises from HCCC to provide new services for local residents, particularly the more vulnerable members of the community. HML will also support appropriate local initiatives by making grants and donations.

Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of Horsham Matters Ltd are:

- i. the advancement of the Christian religion by providing resources that enable churches and individual Christians to work together and by other appropriate means.
- ii. the provision of relief, support and care to individuals suffering from mental, emotional or physical need.
- iii. the provision of biblical education and training to strengthen individuals in their relationships & family life and in all matters of the Christian faith.
- iv. to promote and support other charitable causes and organisations deemed to be in keeping with the ethos of the company.

Services provided

Horsham Matters Ltd aims to provide a range of services. The intention is to provide services that people want and can't get elsewhere, at a price they can afford and delivered in a way that provides others with prospects for employment, training and work experience. Horsham Matters Ltd is looking to expand the services currently available to create more opportunities in the future.

Horsham Community Charity Centre (HCCC)

Based in Tanfield Garage, Guildford Road, Horsham, Horsham Community Charity Centre (HCCC) offers good quality second hand furniture, white goods and household items at reasonable prices for anyone to purchase. A range of discounts are available to anyone who is unable to provide for themselves. HCCC provides an opportunity to re-use furniture and goods that are no longer required, thereby reducing the need for items to go to waste. Local residents can donate unwanted goods – all goods offered to us need to be in a good clean condition with appropriate safety labels. HCCC focuses primarily on household items and some goods, eg clothes, are passed on to other charity shops and social enterprises.

House Clearance

This service works in tandem with HCCC and for a modest charge, HCCC will empty the contents of a house. Any suitable goods will either be taken to HCCC for sale or offered to other charity shops; the remainder will be disposed of.

Loft Clearance

This service is yet to be implemented but the intention is for it to be offered primarily to older residents who may be eligible for grants towards loft insulation but who are unable to take advantage due to them being unable to clear their loft. HML will work with these residents to go through the contents of their loft, helping them decide what they want to keep and what they no longer need. HML will then assist in emptying the loft and disposing of any unwanted contents.

Although any suitable goods can be accepted by HCCC, the principal aim of this service is not to be a conduit for identifying goods that can be sold by HCCC but to work sensitively with residents and provide practical help in determining what to do with what may be treasured possessions.

Downsizing Service

This service again is yet to be implemented but the intention is also that it will be offered primarily to older residents, particularly those who wish or may need to move into sheltered accommodation but have difficulty in deciding what to do with the contents of their homes. HML will work with these residents to go through their possessions and then assist in taking away any unwanted items.

As with the loft clearance service, although any suitable goods can be accepted by HCCC, the principal aim of this service is to work sensitively with residents and provide practical help in assisting them through a potentially difficult time in their lives.

Youth Advocacy

This is another service yet to be implemented, the aim will be to provide trained advocates to assist young disadvantaged people in cutting through the bureaucracy that surrounds everyday life, for example helping the homeless in dealing with the council to find accommodation, helping the jobless find a work placement or training scheme and assisting in obtaining grants and benefits where appropriate.

Training and Work Experience (TWE) Program

In conjunction with the Youth Advocacy service, HML is aiming to offer training and /or work experience to young disadvantaged people to help prepare them for future employment. This may involve for example voluntary and /or paid work in HCCC where the individuals on the program will undergo coaching and assessment to enable them to achieve the standards expected by outside employers. Specific training will also be provided where needed, which may be a combination of on-the-job and external training.

Other services

HML will also assist other appropriate groups with grants and donations, for example the Debt Advice Service or Oasis pregnancy counselling services for teenage mums-to-be. For

more details see the grants policy

Purpose of this Handbook

This Handbook has been put together to provide the policies and guidelines for staff that are necessary to:

- achieve HML's aims and objectives;
- provide appropriate levels of protection for potentially vulnerable clients;
- meet legal requirements in relation to Employment, Health & Safety, Data Protection, etc;
- safeguard HML's assets, including goods and financial assets (ie cash);
- ensure the efficient running of HML's operations;
- communicate to customers and supporters how the profits from the shop are utilised.

All staff, whether paid or voluntary, and Trustees must adhere to these policies and guidelines. Failure to do so could have implications for HML as a provider of services and for its reputation. Serious violation of these policies could lead to disciplinary action or a volunteer being asked to leave.

HML will provide regular training and updates to ensure that staff have read, understood and are following these policies and procedures.

Glossary of Terms

A number of terms used throughout this document have specific meanings in the context of this Handbook and are defined here to avoid confusion:

Horsham Churches Together (HCT) – is the community of Christian Churches in Horsham who work together to achieve common aims and who have set up the Horsham Matters Ltd charity

Horsham Matters Ltd (HML) – is the charitable trust set up by HCT to achieve the aims set out at the beginning of this Handbook

Horsham Matters Trading Ltd (HMTL) – is a trading company set up by HML to operate the Horsham Community Charity Centre

Horsham Community Charity Centre (HCCC) – is the shop based in Tanfield Garage, Guildford Road, Horsham, which accepts donated goods from local residents and offers them for sale at reasonable prices for anyone to purchase

Staff – includes everyone who works for HML and HMTL, whether paid or voluntary; staff includes paid staff, volunteers and individuals on the Training and Work Experience (TWE) program

Volunteers – are those people who work for HML or HMTL without being paid

Training and Work Experience Program (TWE) – are those people who work for HML or HMTL and who are on the TWE program

Third party volunteers – are those people who work for companies operating similar

training programs for young people and who are sub-contracted to HML or HMTL

Directors – comprise the group of people who form the Boards of HML and HMTL

Operational Management Group – are the group of people with day-to-day responsibility for running HCCC; they comprise the Shop Manager, the Deputy Shop Manager, the Warehouse Manager and the Chief Executive of Horsham Matters Trading Ltd

Management – comprises Directors and the Operational Management Group

Clients – are those people who receive services from HML; clients may also be staff, eg those enrolled on the Training and Work Experience Program

Customers – are those people who come into HCCC and purchase items; customers may also be clients, e.g. those on benefit who receive discounts in HCCC.

Section 2: Customer and Client Care Policies

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

People seeking advice or other help should feel safe and be able to trust Horsham Matters Ltd. Those who work with them in any capacity therefore have a responsibility to safeguard clients and the wider community, particularly children and vulnerable adults, from harm and abuse of all kinds.

Judgements relating to client protection will err on the side of protecting clients from possible risks or perceptions of risk which may deter someone in need from using the service.

Children

Within this policy a child is defined as anyone aged under 18.

Adults

Within this policy, a vulnerable adult is defined as anyone who has reached the age of 18 and either:

- is in residential accommodation;
- is in sheltered housing;
- receives domiciliary care;
- is detained in lawful custody;
- is under supervision by virtue of an order of a court;
- receives welfare service of a prescribed description;
- receives payments (personally or via a third party) under the Health and Social Care Act 2001;
- requires assistance in the conduct of their own affairs;
- requires assistance due to age, health, physical or mental disability or substance abuse.

General Principles

Horsham Matters Ltd recognises that client welfare is paramount, that children and vulnerable adults, regardless of gender, ethnicity, sexuality or beliefs, have the right to be protected from any potential form of abuse. Horsham Matters Ltd is committed to ensuring that children and vulnerable adults are thus protected whilst using our services.

Horsham Matters Ltd will take all allegations of abuse against a child or vulnerable adult very seriously.

Recruitment

Horsham Matters Ltd will ensure that sound practices are in place to ensure that anyone considered to be a risk to children or vulnerable adults is not recruited to a role where they have regular or individual contact with children or vulnerable adults. The detailed

procedures are included in the Human Resources section of this Handbook under Recruitment & Selection.

Protecting children and vulnerable adults from abuse and protecting staff/volunteers from allegations of abuse

HML will seek to ensure that no situation arises where abuse or allegations of abuse can occur. Accordingly during the course of their work no member of Horsham Matters Ltd staff will:

- visit a child in their home unaccompanied;
- visit a vulnerable adult in their home unless on an official pre-arranged visit;
- transport a child or vulnerable adult in their car unless prior arrangements have been made with a manager or in case of a medical emergency;
- make any comments with sexual overtones, even in humour, or partake in any "horse play" with a child or vulnerable adult;
- allow a child or vulnerable adult into their home;
- engage in rough physical games – apart from structured sports activities which may be part of a community event etc;
- engage in sexually provocative games;
- allow or engage in inappropriate touching in any form;
- allow children or vulnerable adults to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or vulnerable adult, even in fun;
- let allegations that a child or vulnerable adult makes go unchallenged or unrecorded;
- do things of a personal nature for children or vulnerable adults that they can do themselves;
- take photographs of a child without parental consent;
- lend money to or borrow money or possessions from a vulnerable adult; not agree to make any purchases, or undertake any financial transactions, on behalf of the client.

Procedures following allegation or suspicion of child or vulnerable adult abuse

Where allegations of abuse against a child or vulnerable adult are made, these will be reported to the Chief Executive.

A member of staff might have reason to believe or suspect that a child or vulnerable adult is subject to emotional, physical, sexual abuse or neglect. If an allegation of abuse is made by a child, a vulnerable adult or a third party, the member of staff will:

- make a note of the time and date that the allegation was made, who made the allegation and the nature of the allegation;
- record only the facts, preferably in the language/words used by the person

making the allegation, and will not ask any questions which may seem to be 'leading';

- Report the allegation to the Chief Executive immediately – the person making the allegation will be made aware that this will happen. They will also be made aware that whilst the Chief Executive will not automatically report the allegation to the authorities, this may be a possibility.

Horsham Matters Ltd will not participate in any form of 'investigation' ie will not start a process of 'fact finding'. If Horsham Matters Ltd is subsequently required to take part in a criminal investigation, the Chief Executive will be responsible.

In the case of a child, with the child's permission (or the permission of the person making the allegation) Horsham Matters Ltd will contact social services or the police. If the child refuses permission (or it is not possible to get permission) it will be explained that the seriousness of the situation is such that we will need to consider breaching our principle of confidentiality. The Chief Executive will immediately contact the national NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000 where experts will advise on the most appropriate course of action to take.

In the case of a vulnerable adult, in the majority of cases Horsham Matters Ltd will offer to support the person making the allegation and make them aware of the options that are available to them i.e. contacting the local social services or police. If, however, there is a clear and immediate danger to an individual then confidentiality will be broken, and priority given to the safety of that individual.

Regular review of policies and procedures

Horsham Matters Ltd's child and vulnerable adult protection policies and procedures will be reviewed annually. Necessary changes that are identified in the interim period, for example as a result of amendment to legislation or local children and families procedures, will be made as required.

Equality and Diversity

Horsham Matters Ltd is committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination and to promoting equality and diversity throughout the organisation. This applies to its Human Resources policies and procedures and to all dealings with customers, clients, staff, Directors, trustees and all third parties.

'Equality' protects people from being discriminated against or unfairly treated on the grounds of sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion, belief or age.

'Diversity' is a broader term than 'equality' or 'equal opportunities' or 'equality of opportunity'. Diversity policies encompass all individuals by recognising that everyone has different characteristics which make us unique and that organisations benefit from taking these into account when offering services or employing people. In contrast to equal opportunity, diversity is not about treating people equally but rather it is about recognising and responding to different needs, experiences and aspirations and acting accordingly. Diversity is complementary to equality of opportunity.

Definitions of other key terms can be found in Appendix 1.

General Principles

We shall treat everyone equally and with the same attention, courtesy and respect regardless of:

- sex (including marital status, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity and paternity);
- sexual orientation (including civil partnership status);
- race or racial group (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins);
- religion or belief;
- age;
- caring responsibility;
- disability.

We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that we and our staff do not unlawfully discriminate under any of the Equality and Diversity Legislation.

We will also, wherever possible, take steps to promote equal opportunity in relation to access to the services that we provide, taking account of the diversity of the communities that we serve.

All those who work for or act on behalf of Horsham Matters Ltd are expected to pay due regard to the provisions of this policy and are responsible for ensuring compliance with it when undertaking their work or representing Horsham Matters Ltd.

Acts of unlawful discrimination on any of the forbidden grounds by employees or directors of Horsham Matters Ltd will result in disciplinary action. Failure to comply with this policy will be treated in a similar fashion. The policy applies to all who volunteer for or who are employed by Horsham Matters Ltd and to all Directors.

Complaints of Discrimination

Horsham Matters Ltd will treat seriously all complaints of unlawful discrimination on any of the forbidden grounds made by staff, directors, clients or other third parties and will take action where appropriate. All complaints will be investigated in accordance with Horsham Matters Ltd's Grievance and Complaints Procedure and the complainant will be informed of the outcome.

Monitoring

Horsham Matters Ltd may record and monitor equal opportunities information about staff and directors on the basis of age, gender, ethnicity and disability. This equal opportunities data will be stored as confidential personal data and access to this information will be restricted. Equal opportunities information will be used exclusively for the purposes of equal opportunities monitoring and will have no bearing on opportunities or benefits.

Review

Horsham Matters Ltd will review the operation of this policy not less than once a year as part of the annual review cycle (or more regularly if we identify any non-compliance or problem concerning equality and diversity issues with clients or personnel). We will take remedial action if we discover either non-compliance under this policy or barriers to equal opportunities.

Data Protection

Horsham Matters Ltd is registered under the Data Protection Act and seeks to comply in all respects with the eight principles of the Act, which are:

1. Personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully and, in particular, shall not be processed unless:
 - (a) at least one of the conditions in Schedule 2 of the Act is met, and
 - (b) in the case of sensitive personal data, at least one of the conditions in Schedule 3 of the Act is also met.
2. Personal data shall be obtained only for one or more specified and lawful purposes, and shall not be further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose or those purposes.
3. Personal data shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose or purposes for which they are processed.
4. Personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
5. Personal data processed for any purpose or purposes shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes.
6. Personal data shall be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under the Act.
7. Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data.
8. Personal data shall not be transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.

All members of staff who have access to the personal data of clients and /or customers are expected to understand and comply with the above principles. It is a criminal offence to breach the conditions of the Data Protection Act and Horsham Matters Ltd will take any such incident very seriously.

Definitions of key terms can be found in Appendix 2.

Confidentiality of Customer and Client Information

Horsham Matters Ltd has a duty of care to maintain the confidentiality of customer and client information that it receives in the course of its business but may not fall under the Data Protection Act, for example addresses and phone numbers to arrange delivery of items.

Under no circumstances should any of this information be used other than for the purpose for which it was obtained and on no account should any member of staff disclose this information to third parties.

Sale of Goods

Trading Standards

General Principles

Horsham Matters Trading Ltd must comply with all legal requirements relating to Sale of Goods and Trading Standards. The aim of the trading standards service is to protect consumers and businesses from unfair trading: unsafe goods can put consumers at risk and take business away from law-abiding competitors.

Furniture

Used furniture must meet the same standards as new furniture on sale in shops. The safety provisions require that upholstery must pass the cigarette test, fillings must be fire retardant and the covers must pass the match test. In addition, furniture must be safe in all other respects, eg free from sharp edges and splinters.

Upholstered furniture that meets these legal requirements will normally carry a permanent label with the heading 'Carelessness Causes Fire' and stating compliance with BS 7177.

Furniture made before 1st January 1950 is excluded from the requirements.

Additional details can be found in the Trading Standards leaflet on Selling Safe Used Furniture issued by West Sussex County Council, see Appendix 3.

Electrical Items

Horsham Matters Trading Ltd will only sell goods:

- that on visual inspection do not appear to be in any way damaged or have some kind of dubious repair;
- that pass a PAT (portable appliance testing) test; goods that have been successfully PAT tested will be labelled with the date tested and the initials of the tester;
- where we have carried out a brief functional test to ensure the item is working, although we do not carry out an exhaustive test (ie we do not test every single function).

Toys

Horsham Matters Trading Ltd will only sell toys that meet the legal standards, ie containing any relevant instructions or warnings, and have been checked for any obvious faults. A toy is defined as any product or material designed or clearly intended for use in play by children of less than 14 years of age.

Some toys must come with warnings and instructions about precautions that need to be taken to ensure safe use. Special warnings are required as follows (and where specific instructions are required, further advice should be sought by referring directly to the Regulations):

- Toys that are not suitable for children under 3 require a warning to this effect (stating the reason why, e.g. choking hazard).
- Swings, slides and similar toys require instructions for assembly and for periodic

checks and maintenance.

- 'Functional' toys (i.e. those which are used in the same way as, and are often scale models of, appliances or installations intended for adults) require the following marking: "Warning: to be used under the direct supervision of an adult". They also require specific safety instructions and an indication that they must be kept out of the reach of very young children.
- Toys containing inherently dangerous substances or preparations, such as chemical toys, require specific safety instructions, a statement of a minimum age limit for use and a statement that the toy is to be used under adult supervision. Where appropriate, additional requirements as to labelling and packaging may apply under the Chemicals (Hazard Information and Packaging for Supply) Regulations 2002.
- Toys such as skateboards or skates require specific instructions and the following marking: "Warning: protective equipment should be worn".
- Toys for use in the water, such as rubber rings, require the following marking: "Warning! Only to be used in water in which the child is within its depth and under supervision".

TV Licensing

Horsham Matters Ltd must notify the TV Licensing Authorities of any TV, Video or DVD Recorder that is sold. This is done by completing a standard form, located by the till, with the customer's details (name, address, etc) which is then sent to the TV Licensing Authorities.

Exceptions are stand-alone DVD players, eg car stereos.

Pricing

HMTL aims to sell goods at reasonable prices, bearing in mind that the higher the profits, the more funds are available for the other services offered by HML. Pricing is determined by a range of factors:

- the potential value of the goods;
- the length of time the goods have been in stock;
- ensuring a range of goods are available and affordable for those on low incomes to purchase.

To ensure these factors are balanced, pricing of goods must initially be done by the Shop Manager, Deputy Shop Manager or another authorised member of staff.

However, every member of staff has the option to negotiate with customers up to a maximum of 10% off the marked price. In doing so, staff should use their judgment, taking into account the above guidelines and also the total amount the customer is proposing to spend; a discount should not be given solely because a customer has requested it.

Discounts

Client Purchases

The following discounts will apply to all items not specifically marked as “Non-Discountable”.

For those with low incomes – 25%

- working tax credit
- housing benefit
- council tax benefit
- carers allowance
- child tax credit

For those with higher level benefits – 50%

- income support
- income based jobseekers allowance
- incapacity benefit
- employment and income-based support allowance
- new deal programmes
- guaranteed pension credit

For those referred by a partner agency – we will aim to provide specifically identified goods at a price the client can afford

- Horsham Churches Together
- Horsham District Council
- West Sussex County Council
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Horsham Partnerships for Older People
- Age Concern
- Carers Support Services
- Registered Social Landlords
- other recognised charities

In the case of a referral we must have a clear description from the referring organisation of the items that are required (either by phone or e-mail) prior to the client visit.

Anyone requesting a discount under one of these schemes must be seen by a member of the Operational Management Group.

Staff Purchases

Staff are welcome to purchase goods from HMTL. The principles applying to staff purchases take into account a number of factors:

- maximising profits in order to fund the other services offered by HML;
- respecting the assumed intentions of the people who have kindly donated goods (that they are giving to charity, not to the volunteers);
- the need to set an example to any volunteers on the Training and Work Experience program.

The principles applying to staff purchases are therefore:

- staff are automatically entitled to a discount of 10% when the goods are first placed in the shop; this will increase to 20% after the first week and until they are reduced by the Shop Manager;
- staff should generally not be shopping for goods when they are 'on duty';
- purchases should be made either at the close of business or first thing the next morning;
- goods may be reserved for 24 hours in the same way as for external customers on payment of a deposit;
- staff should not reserve goods that are waiting to be sorted /priced, they should wait until the item is available for sale.

Any variations to these principles must be agreed by the Shop Manager or Deputy Manager.

Grants

Horsham Matters will create a Community Fund (HMCF) to distribute sums of between £500 and £10,000 for community projects within the Horsham District. The Community Fund will be funded out of the amount set aside from takings each year to finance charitable activities.

Successful applications will meet all of the following criteria:

- The project must be for the benefit of vulnerable people
- The project must come from a charitable body / not for profit organisation
- The project must fulfil a gap in local services

In addition, successful projects will fulfil at least one of the following:

- The project must benefit residents of Horsham district
- The project can demonstrate how it will work in partnership with other organisations and projects
- The project provides education and or training that leads to an improved life
- The project is short in length and has a high impact
- The project will involve the wider community and boost community cohesion

HMCF will not fund:

- Animal welfare and medical charities (except where these are providing direct relief to the suffering)
- Political organisations or groups whose sole purpose is to lobby or apply political pressure on government or other authorities
- National organisations UNLESS the project is locally orientated
- Vehicle purchases
- Private companies
- Sport, music, drama and the arts which do not have a learning objective linked to our priorities
- Debts, fines or other such applications

Section 3: Supporters

Donated Goods

General Principles

HML relies on the local community to donate goods for HCCC to sell and we are extremely grateful for their generosity. It is important therefore that we treat their goods with care and respect and are seen to be doing so.

However we are not able to sell all the goods that are offered to us, eg those not meeting Trading Standards requirements or goods for which there is no demand. Goods that we either can't sell or have difficulty selling have to be passed on to other charity shops, stored in our warehouse or taken to the tip; given our limited resources, we would prefer not to accept some of these goods in the first place.

The principles we apply in relation to the goods offered to us aim to balance these factors.

Acceptability of donated items

- In addition to goods that don't meet Trading Standards requirements, other goods that we would prefer not to accept are listed on the white board in the office, eg large TVs.
- We will generally accept goods that are brought in personally, although if a supporter raises a question, we will explain our limitations and talk to them about possible alternative arrangements.
- If supporters phone up to offer goods we will explain our limitations and request that they make alternative arrangements for any goods that we're not able to sell.

Sorting of donated goods

Goods that have just been donated need to be sorted and priced /taken into stock. It's important that this is not done in front of the supporter who donated the items as it may be distressing for them to see or hear their ex-possession being valued and /or commented on.

Cash Donations

When customers offer more than the priced amount for an item in the shop the offered amount should be rung into the till and a receipt given in the normal way. If a customer offers the change back after a transaction has been put through the till they should be asked if they are happy for it to be put into the charity tin.

Certain goods are placed on the forecourt as free for anyone to take, although donations are welcome if the customer feels it's appropriate. These donations can be placed into the charity tin on the desk.

Gift Aid

In certain circumstances Horsham Matters Ltd can secure additional income by reclaiming

tax under the Gift Aid scheme. This applies to both cash donations and donated goods.

If a customer wishes to register under the Gift Aid scheme, they should be directed to the Chief Executive.

Section 4: Administration, Finance and Office Policies

Health and Safety

It is HML's policy to safeguard the health and safety of its staff whilst carrying out work-related duties and the safety of all visitors to its premises. This includes providing adequate office accommodation and equipment for staff and visitors and maintaining the interior and exterior of the building in accordance with the requirements of Health and Safety standards. Each new member of staff will be given clear instruction in these areas as part of their induction.

The main principles are:

- Safety is everyone's responsibility.
- Management is responsible for the prevention of occupational injuries and illnesses.

The Board of Directors has overall responsibility for Health and Safety at Horsham Matters Ltd. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that systems and procedures are agreed and implemented.

Health & Safety Committee

The Health and Safety Committee will consist of:

- The Chairman of the Board of Directors;
- The Chief Executive;
- Up to two co-opted members of staff.

The Health and Safety Committee will receive and investigate reports of accidents and matters of concern relating to Health and Safety. Remedial action will be taken as appropriate.

The Health and Safety Committee will:

- carry out risk assessments of working procedures and review these assessments when necessary;
- ensure that means of access at the premises are designed, constructed, maintained and used with due regard for health and safety;
- identify, quantify and assess possible hazards at work and eliminate or reduce them to an acceptable level by making appropriate provisions;
- provide instruction, training and supervision in health and safety matters, particularly for new staff or when staff are employed for the first time on an unfamiliar activity;
- ensure that there is someone available to provide first aid treatment for minor injuries occurring on the premises;
- adopt appropriate fire prevention measures, equipment and evacuation procedures as required by the relevant regulations and as recommended by the local Fire Officer;

- require that hazardous materials be stored in a safe and proper manner;
- operate effective accident investigation reporting and analysis to enhance the accident reduction policy;
- operate an effective management system to monitor safety on the premises;
- obtain whatever expert advice and services as may be necessary to maintain high standards of health and safety;
- encourage staff to comply with specified rules, procedures and codes of practice and to co-operate with management in implementing health and safety measures.

Health & Safety Policy

All statutory requirements of health and safety or welfare provision will be complied with. These provisions can and will be exceeded when it is necessary to meet the spirit of this policy.

Horsham Matters Ltd seeks to:

- promote a healthy and safe working environment and control the risk of injury and damage to people, equipment, furniture and fittings;
- secure compliance with legal obligations in relation to health and safety;
- require others who carry out work or visit or provide services to adopt similar standards in relation to health and safety when working in Horsham Matters Ltd.

Management recognizes the need to involve staff in the creation and maintenance of a safe and healthy working environment and staff members at all levels are expected to co-operate to ensure this policy becomes a reality.

All staff members must take full and personal responsibility for working in a safe manner. No staff member must knowingly endanger themselves, their colleagues, employees of other organizations or the general public by their own actions or omissions.

Horsham Matters Ltd will provide:

- safe equipment and systems of work;
- safe use and storage of materials, articles, and substances;
- all necessary safety equipment;
- notices and instructions in all appropriate places.

Staff should normally raise issues relating to Health and Safety directly with the Shop Manager or Warehouse Manager, who will notify the Health and Safety Committee and deal with the matter as soon as practicable. Any matter that cannot be resolved should be referred to the Board of Directors.

The Health and Safety Policy will be reviewed annually when the Health and Safety Committee will carry out an inspection of the premises and will review emergency procedures as necessary. The report will be presented to the Board of Directors.

Responsibilities of all staff

All staff are responsible for actively co-operating in the application of this health and safety policy and particularly for:

- following safe working procedures at all times and ensuring as far as possible that others do so;
- not endangering their own health and safety;
- not putting others at risk;
- informing their supervisor or manager of any hazardous situation which comes to their notice;
- reading all Health & Safety instructions prepared by Management.

Managers and Supervisors are responsible for organising their day-to-day work in compliance with this health and safety policy:

- ensuring that safe working procedures are followed and that safe working conditions are maintained;
- ensuring that employees are trained and instructed in safe working methods and then follow them;
- investigating accidents and taking steps wherever possible to prevent a recurrence;
- ensuring all accidents are recorded in the accident book kept in the main office.

Health & safety for customers and clients whilst on premises

Horsham Matters Ltd is covered by a Public Liability Policy. Every attempt will be made to ensure that the premises are safe for customers and clients. To avoid accidents, parents with children will be requested to discourage them from standing and walking on chairs. Parents will be encouraged to take charge of their children, not to leave them alone or allow them to run wild. No dogs, other than guide dogs, will be allowed inside Horsham Matters Ltd. Bicycles or carriages, except prams and disabled carriages, will be expected to be left outside.

First Aid Facilities

A First Aid Box is located within the main office. When an item is used from the box, it must be reported to the Shop Manager who will ensure that restocking is carried out.

Only very minor injuries will be dealt with on the premises. Any other eventuality is to be immediately referred to a medical practitioner. The most senior member of staff present is nominated to call for trained medical support in the event that an injury is other than very minor.

Horsham Matters Ltd keeps details of personal physicians and next of kin details appended to staff records. Staff /volunteers should inform management of any changes to ensure records are always up-to-date. To conform with Data Protection legislation, staff records will be kept in a locked filing cabinet.

Staff should also provide details of special instructions that have to be followed in cases of,

say diabetes or allergies to certain antibiotics.

Accident Reporting

The Accident Book is to be kept with the First Aid Kit. It is the responsibility of the individual suffering the injury and the most senior member of staff present to ensure that every accident is recorded in the Accident Book. All accidents, injuries and near misses must be reported to a member of the Health and Safety Committee as soon as is practicable. The Chief Executive will report accidents to the Board at least quarterly. To conform with Data Protection legislation, the completed accident forms will be kept in a locked filing cabinet.

Care of Premises

It is expected that workplaces will be kept in a clean state by staff. The premises will be cleaned as regularly as may be required. Care is to be taken to ensure that trailing leads and stock items do not cause a trip hazard. Dirt or refuse should not be left to accumulate in working areas but should be regularly disposed of in the waste bins or other facilities provided for waste disposal.

Floors, passages, gangways, stairs and steps are to be kept free from any obstruction and, so far as is reasonably practicable, from substances that may cause slipping.

Goods and materials that are displayed on the forecourt during opening hours but brought into the shop overnight must also comply with these procedures and in particular must not obstruct walkways – even though the shop may be shut, other members of staff may still be on the premises.

Glazed windows used to provide natural lighting are to be kept clean inside and out, as far as is reasonably practicable. Artificial lighting is to be maintained to an adequate and suitable standard at all times. Guards and devices on equipment are to be properly secured and adjusted and must always be in position.

Handling and Storage of Goods and Materials

Staff must not move, carry or lift any load so heavy as to cause injury to themselves and goods must not be handled in a manner that is likely to cause injury to other persons.

Staff should familiarize themselves with the recommendations for correct lifting and moving of loads. They should also:

- know their own limitations because there are no general weight limits that can be applied to everyone;
- have an emergency plan in case something goes wrong;
- identify and use any equipment that might help, eg trolleys;
- ensure they have a good grip before lifting;
- get help from others when lifting heavy loads;
- avoid repeating the same task over and over again.

Goods and materials must be securely stacked or located in a situation where they will cause neither obstruction nor danger to any person. Particular care should be taken when

moving goods, eg shifting one item in order to get access to another. In general, the moving of goods for whatever reason should only be done by the warehouse staff or other members of staff who have undergone the appropriate induction training relating to handling of goods.

All shelving and racking intended for the storage of goods must be adequately constructed and suitable for the use intended, and be properly braced and secured to a suitable structure.

Fire Precautions

A person or persons will be designated as Fire Warden(s) to ensure that in the event of a fire, all rooms are evacuated and that everyone exits the building.

Staff must familiarise themselves with the Fire Instruction Notices displayed in the main office, together with exit routes and the assembly point. They must also sign in the register when they arrive and leave.

Fire escape routes are to be kept free from obstruction and the contents of workplaces are not to be arranged so as to obstruct these escape routes. Fire doors are not to be wedged open.

In case of fire, staff must escort any customers and visitors to safety through the nearest exits and assemble in front of the bungalow on the forecourt. The Fire Warden(s) will ensure that all rooms are evacuated and that everyone has left the building. The Shop Manager will take a register of staff at the assembly point. Staff should not return to the building until permitted by the appropriate authorities.

The detailed fire evacuation procedures can be found in Appendix 4.

Electricity

Electricity can be dangerous. All electrical appliances, plugs, switches, sockets and cables should be treated with respect. All defects should be reported immediately to the Warehouse Manager.

Leads of portable equipment should not be allowed to trail in water, come into contact with sharp edges or become a trip hazard. Whenever possible, electrical leads should be carried overhead, out of harms way. Electrical appliances should never be lifted by their leads.

The Chief Executive will arrange periodic electrical safety inspections.

Vehicle Usage

HML will take whatever steps are necessary to ensure the safety of its staff whilst they are driving on work-related business. In particular, HML will:

- assess the suitability and experience of members of staff before permitting them to drive on company business;
- hold copies of driving licences on file for any member of staff who may be required to drive as part of their duties;
- remind staff that they are expected to follow the Highway Code at all times, including adhering to speed limits;

- ensure that staff take appropriate breaks as needed and do not drive if they are taking any medication which could have adverse effects, eg by causing drowsiness;
- train staff in the correct procedures for loading goods into the van, ensuring that all items are securely held in place and that the load is distributed correctly;
- maintain all company vehicles in a roadworthy condition;
- monitor and record all work-related road incidents.

If a member of staff has any concerns regarding their safety whilst driving they should contact the Warehouse Manager in the first instance, who will notify the Health & Safety Committee and take steps to rectify the situation.

Use of Horsham Matters Ltd's IT facilities

General Principles

Horsham Matters Ltd provides information technology (IT) facilities to increase the effectiveness of running its business. Staff should ensure that any use of HML's IT facilities:

- complies with current legislation;
- is done in an acceptable way;
- supports Horsham Matters Ltd's business and does not undermine the company or create any business risk.

Hardware and Software

The Chief Executive must approve all purchases of hardware or software.

No software (including public domain software) should be installed on equipment owned and /or operated by Horsham Matters Ltd without permission from the Chief Executive.

Personal (non-Horsham Matters Ltd) files should not be stored on Horsham Matters Ltd's PCs without permission from the Chief Executive.

Security

Equipment, data or software must not be taken off-site by staff without written approval from a member of the Operational Management Group or the Chief Executive.

No staff should attempt to gain unauthorised access to information or facilities. If staff do not have access to information resources they need they should contact the Chief Executive.

Personal system passwords or other security details should not be disclosed to other staff, or external agents. Staff should not use anyone else's log-in; this compromises the security of Horsham Matters Ltd.

If a member of staff leaves their PC or workstation unattended without logging off, they are responsible for any misuse of it while they are away. Logging off is especially important where members of the public have access to the screen.

No staff or client personal data should be held on a pen drive unless it is suitably encrypted.

Email and Internet Use

Use of email and the internet by the staff of Horsham Matters Ltd is permitted and encouraged where such use supports the goals and objectives of the business. Such use however is expected to fall within accepted standards of behaviour.

Unacceptable behaviour

In particular the following is deemed unacceptable use or behaviour by staff:

- visiting internet sites that contain obscene or pornographic material or downloading, distributing or storing such material;
- downloading, distributing or storing materials that might be considered discriminatory, offensive or abusive, in that the context is a personal attack, sexist or racist, or might be considered as harassment or bullying;
- using copyrighted information in a way that violates the copyright;
- using the computer to perpetrate any form of fraud, or software, film or music piracy;
- hacking into unauthorised areas;
- introducing any form of computer virus into the company network;
- broadcasting personal views on social, political, religious or other non-business related matters;
- transmitting unsolicited commercial or advertising material;
- personal use of Chat Rooms, Instant Messaging, Social Networking or Webmail (e.g. Hotmail, MSN, Google Mail);
- personal use of the internet that impacts on the resources needed for business use.

Financial

Cash Handling

Introduction

These guidelines are mainly concerned with general principles and standards of good practice that should underlie cash handling procedures. Most are common sense measures, which the majority of people follow when dealing with their own finances.

In the context of this Handbook, 'cash' means notes and coins, although in practice cheques are usually received and processed alongside cash. The term 'cash handling' generally involves the collection, receipting, reconciliation and banking of income.

The importance of following proper cash handling procedures cannot be stressed too highly. Following good practices greatly reduces the risk of cash going missing and provides protection for staff should there be any apparent loss of funds.

Accountability

One of the key principles of cash handling is that proper accountability is maintained at all times in the cash handling process. It must be possible, at every stage of the process, to establish which member of staff is responsible for accounting for monies under their control. In the event that monies are found to be missing it should be possible to identify which member of staff was responsible for the cash at the time it was 'lost'.

Basic security

Managers must make clear to staff that they are accountable for cash and cheques under their control and are responsible for ensuring that monies are held securely at all times. No other staff should have access to these monies - not even for brief periods. Cash should never be left unattended, for however short a period of time.

In the event of any loss being discovered, the circumstances must be reported to the Chief Executive.

Use of the till

The till should generally not be left unattended, even for short periods. If the till operator needs to leave the till, good practice requires that they transfer full responsibility for the till to another trained member of staff or remove the key and ask another member of staff to remain by the till during their absence.

Use of the safe

All cash, including floats, should be kept in the safe when not in use. The toy department float should be stored in a separate cash box within the safe. Cash must not be kept in drawers, desks or filing cabinets etc.

Only the Chief Executive and the members of the Operational Management Group will have access to the pin code for the safe and the keys will be kept in the key cupboard, which must be kept locked at all times when not in use. The pin code must not be given to any other members of staff and the Chief Executive must be informed if it becomes apparent that this has occurred.

If a large amount of cash (over £1,000) is taken at the till during any one day, good practice requires that a minimum of £500 is transferred to the safe.

Handling of income

Cash and cheques received should be kept safely and paid into the bank at the earliest opportunity. The accumulation of large sums should be avoided, as this may exceed insurance limits and attract criminals.

Whenever possible, at least two people should take significant sums of cash to the bank. A routine should not be established of going at exactly the same time each day, and trips with cash should not become common knowledge. You never know who is listening.

Cash and cheques must never be sent in the post.

Transporting cash

The movement of cash involves risks, both to the safety of staff and our funds. Our insurance policy stipulates the following requirements whenever cash is being carried off

the premises:

- a minimum of one able bodied person is required to carry amounts of up to £2,500 in total;
- a minimum of two able bodied people are required to carry amounts between £2,500 and £10,000;
- amounts above £10,000 must be carried by a security company.

Taking of payment

All cash payments for goods or services (eg collection or delivery) must be taken on the till. Under no circumstances should any member of staff take cash for later payment at the till. All goods for delivery must be paid for in full before being delivered and no cash should be taken on the van. In exceptional circumstances where this is unavoidable, and only with the prior approval of a member of the Operational Management Group, cheques may be accepted on delivery.

Payment methods

Our preferred method of payment is cash for sales under £10 and the Electronic POS machine for sales of £10 and over. If neither of these methods are possible then cheques can be accepted but only up to the maximum shown on the cheque guarantee card (shown on the William Shakespeare hologram on the reverse of the card) and provided all the relevant information is recorded on the reverse of the cheque.

NOTE The cheque guarantee system is being withdrawn from June 2011 and we will no longer accept cheques with effect from this date.

Counterfeit notes

There are forged bank notes in general circulation and we can incur losses through the acceptance of counterfeit bank notes. These tend to be mainly £10 and £20 notes but other denominations may be found.

A number of simple checks can be carried out by staff when bank notes are tendered for payment. These are detailed in a leaflet issued by the Bank of England entitled "Know your Bank Notes". This information is also available on the Bank of England's website at: <http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/banknotes/index.htm>.

Staff should exercise vigilance when accepting bank notes. In the event of a counterfeit bank note being detected when it is tendered for payment, the strict legal position is that the note should not be passed back to the person tendering it - the counterfeit note should be retained by the member of staff and the incident reported to the police. It is a serious crime to deliberately tender a forged note.

Receipts for payment should not be issued until bank notes have been examined and confirmed as being genuine, as identification of a counterfeit note after receipting will result in us having to bear the loss.

Operating the till

Till management

One member of staff should be appointed as till supervisor on a daily basis. This member of

staff will be responsible for checking the float at the start of the day, taking payment for all goods sold during the day and cashing-up at the end of the day.

Operations such as taking Z readings, checking the cashing-up and authorising refunds or 'no-sales', should be undertaken by a member of the Operational Management Group or other authorised member of staff.

No other members of staff should be involved.

Refunds and 'No Sale'

All refunds must be recorded in the Refund Receipt Book when made and included in the reconciliation at close of business; the reason for the refund should also be written on the refund till receipt and retained with the original receipt in the till drawer. The Shop Manager or Deputy Shop Manager must approve all refunds over £20. This also applies to refunds that are made to correct keying errors on the till.

In addition, a record should be made of any occasion when 'no sale' is used to open the till by writing the reason on the till receipt and retaining it in the till drawer.

Deductions

With the exception of properly authorised refunds to customers, no cash should be removed from the till at any stage. Similarly, at the cashing-up stage, all takings must, without any deductions, be transported to the bank. The only exception is the till float, which should equal that received at the start of business.

Cash must never be deducted to replenish the petty cash float, reimburse expenses or for any other purpose.

Cashing-up

Cashing-up must be done as soon as possible after the close of business each day. The cashing-up process will normally involve the following:

- removal by the till supervisor of the cash drawer from the till to a secure place, eg the Chief Executive's office;
- taking a Z reading and taking the Z receipt and the audit roll with the cash drawer;
- taking a reading of the debit /credit card transactions from the POS machine;
- counting the takings and reconciling them to the total received as recorded by the Z reading and audit roll.

Once the cashing-up is completed the total must be verified by a member of the Operational Management Group and placed in the safe until being banked.

Financial Records

The actual and recorded takings, any discrepancy ('unders /overs'), and the Z reading number (i.e. the number of Z readings taken) should be recorded on the Daily Till Record. The Z reading number should be checked against the previous day's reading to ensure there is no gap. Both members of staff who counted the takings must sign the Daily Till Record.

Where takings are divided between cash, cheques and debit /credit cards, the total paid using the various types of payment method should be recorded separately.

The Daily Till Record, Z reading receipt and audit roll should all be stored safely. These are permanent financial records and must be retained for at least three years.

Discrepancies

Whenever discrepancies are found, eg till 'unders /overs' or Z number discrepancies, the till supervisor should inform the Shop Manager. The Shop Manager should inform the Chief Executive immediately should s/he have reasonable grounds to suspect a financial irregularity or fraud or that the incident is not isolated in nature.

Petty Cash

Petty cash should be operated on an imprest system, where the total of cash plus receipts in the petty cash box always equals a pre-agreed fixed amount, currently £20.

Receipts should be provided where possible for petty cash expenditure; if a receipt is not available a petty cash chitty should be completed instead with the person's name and amount to be reimbursed.

The petty cash box should be topped up as needed by completing an expense claim form and attaching the relevant petty cash receipts.

Expenses

Expenditure on behalf of HML or HMTL must be authorised in advance, i.e. prior to the expenditure being incurred, by the appropriate Authorising Manager.

Expenditure approval limits and details of the authorising managers can be found in Appendix 5.

To obtain reimbursement, an expense claim form should be completed and given to the authorising manager together with the appropriate receipts. Once authorised, the expense claim will be passed to the Finance Director for payment.

Travel Expenses

For paid staff, travel expenses may be claimed if they are required to travel to somewhere other than their normal place of work on behalf of Horsham Matters Ltd.

In the case of volunteers, who give their time and skills free of charge and upon whom Horsham Matters relies for much of the work it does, they may also claim reimbursement for travelling to and from work.

All staff are expected to make use of public transport where it is available, unless its use results in considerable inconvenience, expense or if it is not a viable option due to a disability. The following traveling expenses will be reimbursed:

- Rail, bus and underground fares: standard class fares can be claimed for any journeys on behalf of Horsham Matters. A note should be made on the claim form to make it clear as to what the journey relates to.
- Taxi fares: these will only be reimbursed where there is no other means of transport or the urgency of the journey warrants it.

Where public transport is not a viable option, staff may use their cars for authorised journeys and can be reimbursed at the current published rate.

Subsistence Expenses

Reasonable out of pocket expense for subsistence (food and beverages whilst on Horsham Matters' business) may be claimed. This would not normally include lunch when working away from the office.

Resource Expenses

Any expense for resources for use by Horsham Matters should normally be approved in accordance with Appendix 5. It is anticipated that these expenses will normally be incurred by Management.

Section 5: Human Resources Policies

Equality and Diversity

Horsham Matters Ltd will treat all volunteers, employees and job applicants equally and fairly and will not unlawfully discriminate against them. This will, for example, include arrangements for recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment, access to training opportunities, access to promotion and transfers, grievance and disciplinary processes, demotions, selection for redundancies, dress code, references, work allocation and any other employment-related activities.

Volunteers

Horsham Matters Ltd is committed to the principle of voluntary staffing. The management will therefore be clear in setting out what the volunteers can expect from Horsham Matters Ltd and what, in turn, it expects from its volunteers. Horsham Matters Ltd will give volunteers all the support needed and where appropriate provide training in order to develop skills and knowledge.

Training and Work Experience Program

One of the services provided by HML is the Training and Work Experience (TWE) Program, designed to help young disadvantaged people in preparing for and finding permanent work.

Under this program, volunteers or other young people meeting the defined criteria will be offered a TWE placement for up to 6 months. During this time they will become paid employees of HMTL and receive appropriate training and coaching. At the end of their placement they will be encouraged to find alternative employment in order to free up their placement for another candidate. They will however be free to continue as an unpaid volunteer if they so wish.

Selection, training and assessment of TWE candidates will be in line with HML's standard HR policies.

Recruitment and Selection

General Principles

Horsham Matters Ltd recognises the benefits of having a diverse workforce and will take steps to ensure that we recruit from the widest pool of qualified candidates practicable. Opportunities are open and accessible to all on the basis of their individual qualities and personal merit. We will not unlawfully discriminate on the grounds of sex (including marital status, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity and paternity), sexual orientation, race, age, disability, or religion or belief, other than in those instances where Horsham Matters Ltd is exercising permitted positive action or a permitted exemption.

Applicants for management roles will need to demonstrate an understanding and acceptance of the Christian principles behind the work of the charity.

Paid staff and volunteer management roles

If a recruitment exercise is required, a working party will, in conjunction with the Chief

Executive, carry out the following actions:

- nominate from its members a selection committee of no less than two people; this committee will, if appropriate, include the Chief Executive and a member of the Trustee Board;
- draw up a job description which includes an accurate title, the management chain and a summary of the responsibilities, duties and any special features such as the need to travel;
- draw up a person specification which lists the skills and abilities required; these must be both reasonable and directly related to the job, neither must they create unnecessary barriers nor perpetuate patterns of discrimination.

All new posts will be advertised. Minor posts may be advertised internally on staff notice boards only. Positions which have greater requirements of responsibility /skills and offering greater monetary value will be advertised internally and externally, as widely as possible.

A recruitment pack will be sent to all applicants. This will include an outline of Horsham Matters Ltd, a job description and a person specification, closing dates for return of application forms, the interview date /time and any arrangement for paying expenses.

All applications will be treated as confidential. A short list may have to be drawn up by the selection committee; a record will be kept of the reasons for not short-listing a candidate.

Interviewing and assessing

The selection committee will agree on a panel of no less than two interviewers. The panel will:

- ensure that their questions are relevant to the post to be filled and that all aspects are covered;
- ensure that the conditions attached to the job, rate of pay (if applicable) and expenses are covered;
- allow time for the candidate to ask questions;
- inform the candidate how the decision will be notified.

After each interview the panel should discuss how the particular candidate met the essential requirements – a simple scoring system may be appropriate. Comparisons should wait until the end of all the interviews. A summary of the interview notes should be kept for twelve months.

Once selected, the person will be informed and an oral acceptance sought. The offer and acceptance should be confirmed in writing, subject always to satisfactory references being provided.

Unsuccessful candidates will also be told and will be given an opportunity to receive feedback on their performance.

Contracts of Employment and Volunteer Agreements

The Board of Directors will provide either a Contract of Employment for paid staff or a Volunteer Agreement for volunteer roles, together with a Staff Statement of Terms and Conditions of Service to take into account its legal duties and its policies and procedures.

Other volunteer roles and TWE placements

Volunteer recruitment procedures

Volunteer opportunities and TWE placements will be featured on Horsham Matters Ltd's website and advertised through local churches and the Horsham Volunteer Bureau.

A recruitment pack will be available to all potential applicants. This will include an outline of Horsham Matters Ltd and a brief description of the opportunities. An application form will be sent to any applicant who expresses an interest in volunteering.

All applications will be treated as confidential. Where there are multiple applications for limited roles, a short list may have to be drawn up by the selection committee; a record will be kept of the reasons for not short-listing a candidate.

Role Descriptions

All volunteer roles and TWE placements will have a role description outlining the duties and responsibilities of the staff member.

Interviewing and assessing

When there are multiple applications for a specific role, the interview and assessment process will follow the same format as for paid staff and volunteer management roles.

Volunteer and TWE Placement Agreements

The Board of Directors will provide either a Volunteer Agreement or Contract of Employment and a Staff Statement of Terms and Conditions of Service to take into account its legal duties and its policies and procedures.

Prevention of abuse in relation to children and vulnerable adults

Horsham Matters Ltd will ensure that sound practices are in place to ensure that anyone considered to be a risk to children or vulnerable adults is not recruited to a role where they have regular or individual contact with children or vulnerable adults. The following precautions will reduce this risk:

- anyone applying to work for Horsham Matters Ltd should be interviewed and asked to provide two references from former employers;
- if an applicant is unable to provide employer references, they should provide references from a community leader or similar;
- anyone who is selected for interview or to begin training within Horsham Matters Ltd will be asked to disclose details of any unspent convictions;
- thorough induction training must be provided to ensure that staff are aware of the Company's values;
- staff will be given regular supervision and have training needs assessed;
- all new staff, whether paid or volunteer, who have unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults must be CRB-screened.

Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check

Conducting a CRB check is one of a range of policies that Horsham Matters Ltd operates to

ensure that clients are safe from harm. All staff with access to specific client groups for a significant part of their role must be screened as part of the recruitment process.

CRB checks are required for all staff being recruited to work with children (ie young people under 18) or vulnerable adults in specific settings (eg in residential and nursing homes, hospitals, etc) or those who are home visitors. Anyone in a role that has day-to-day supervisory responsibility for a post that requires screening should also undergo a CRB check.

Administrative staff who have access to client records only and Directors do not need to be screened.

It should be made clear to all potential candidates for such roles at the start of the recruitment process that Horsham Matters Ltd will require a CRB check. When the job is offered to the successful candidate they should be told "It is a condition of your appointment that a disclosure is obtained from the Criminal Records Bureau. A criminal record will not necessarily mean you are unsuitable for the job. However if you have been convicted of a sexual offence against a child or a vulnerable adult you will not be able to perform this role in Horsham Matters Ltd and the job offer will be withdrawn or your probationary period ended. Other offences will be treated as matters of discretion depending on various factors."

Information about CRB checks must be kept confidential. As per guidance from the CRB, only one person in Horsham Matters Ltd should deal with processing the CRB applications; this person will be the Chief Executive. Once the result is received it must be stored for six months. Once the six months has expired the certificate should be destroyed by shredding it. Horsham Matters Ltd will keep a record of who has been checked when the application was submitted and when it was received. The results must not be recorded.

Sexual offences against children and vulnerable adults are a bar to being appointed to certain roles in Horsham Matters Ltd. If other offences are revealed then this will be a matter of judgement for the recruitment panel who will undertake a risk assessment.

Ongoing Management and Development

Terms and Conditions of Service

Horsham Matters Ltd will treat all staff equally and create a working environment which respects the diverse backgrounds and beliefs of employees. Terms and conditions of service for staff will comply with anti-discrimination legislation. This includes the provision of benefits such as flexible working hours, maternity and other leave arrangements, performance appraisal systems and dress code.

Induction

When a new member of staff joins Horsham Matters Ltd he or she will be welcomed by the appropriate Manager or another member of staff who has been given this responsibility, shown round the office premises and introduced to other members of the team. The new member of staff will be shown the appropriate Induction Check List and they will need to review this Policy Handbook. The briefing will also include details of the confidentiality policy, sickness, expenses, leave, hours of attendance, security arrangements and training.

The induction procedure must begin within two months of the individual joining Horsham

Matters Ltd (unless justifiable reasons have been recorded). A record confirming the content and the date of the individual's induction must be kept on the individual's personnel file.

Training Plan

Training Plans will apply primarily to paid staff, volunteer management roles and TWE placements. Other volunteer roles may also carry Training Plans if deemed necessary by the Operational Management Group or the Chief Executive.

For all relevant roles, Horsham Matters Ltd will identify training needs and draw up a Training Plan to address these as appropriate to the staff member's responsibilities. The plan will include details of the sort of training that will be provided and when training will take place. The Training Plan will be discussed and agreed with the staff member either by their manager or the person designated within HML as being responsible for training.

Support and Supervision

Where appropriate, members of staff will have support and supervision meetings with their Manager. For paid members of staff, volunteer management roles and TWE placements, support and supervision meetings will be held on a regular basis. For other volunteer roles, they will take place as deemed necessary by their Manager.

The purpose of support and supervision meetings is to enable both the member of staff and their Manager to discuss and progress work-related matters and to resolve any issues that may have occurred.

Volunteer Involvement

All volunteers are welcome to get involved with the effective running of HMTL in addition to their other duties. Where appropriate, Volunteer Involvement Groups will be formed to address specific issues. Any volunteers wishing to become more involved in this way should inform their manager.

Promotion and Career Development

Promotion within Horsham Matters Ltd will be made without reference to any of the unlawful grounds and will be based solely on merit. All employees will have equal access to training and other career development opportunities appropriate to their experience and abilities.

Appraisals for paid staff and volunteer management roles

All paid members of staff and those in volunteer management roles will receive regular bi-annual appraisals undertaken by their identified manager. The aim of appraisals is to discuss with individual staff the effectiveness of their work. They should involve objective setting and be tailored to the skills of the individual. Appraisals are also used to record training and development needs. Summaries of the actions proposed as a result of these discussions are to be recorded for future reference.

The appraisal procedure is not to be used for disciplinary purposes, however where there are areas for development, these should be identified and remedies worked out. It is very important during these discussions that the member of staff is able to put across their point

of view and express any differences of opinion they may have. It must be stressed however that actual or perceived difficulties should be aired as soon as possible and never wait to be raised during a performance review.

Appraisal for the Chief Executive

It is a requirement for the Chairman, on behalf of the Board of Directors, to carry out the appraisal of the Chief Executive. The Chairman will record the results and retain a record.

Appraisals for TWE placements

Members of staff who are on a TWE placement will receive regular monthly appraisals undertaken by a member of the Operational Management Group. The purpose and format of these appraisals is as for paid staff and volunteer management roles.

Managing volunteer performance

Horsham Matters Ltd aims to ensure that all its volunteers are adequately supervised and supported to work to the performance and behavioural standards required. Horsham Matters Ltd is committed to addressing any issues in performance, behaviour or attitude via support and supervision. The management of volunteers within Horsham Matters Ltd will be fair, transparent, objective and respectful.

Although formal appraisals will not be carried out, reviews may take place from time to time with volunteers to ensure that any issues are being surfaced and addressed and also to solicit their input on any areas for improvement in the running of HMTL.

Performance Management

Should any problems arise with staff performance, they will be dealt with under the process outlined below and the member of staff will be made aware in writing of the particular issue and of each stage of the process, what it will entail and who will be involved. In the case of volunteers this is not a disciplinary process, but should a member of staff be believed to have acted in a manner that has affected or could seriously affect Horsham Matters Ltd or its service to clients, Horsham Matters Ltd will follow the process outlined below.

A member of staff can be accompanied to any meeting by someone from Horsham Matters Ltd (either a paid staff member or volunteer) at any stage of the process, but their role will be as a supporter, not an advocate.

Throughout the performance management process, details of the issue will only be shared with the relevant people in Horsham Matters Ltd. This will include the person to whom the member of staff reports and may also include anyone in a volunteer support role. At no time will details be shared more widely within Horsham Matters Ltd. This is particularly relevant to the Directors, as they need to remain independent in case the member of staff later wishes to raise a complaint to the Board.

Throughout the process, the member of staff will be given reasonable notice of any meetings and clear information about what is to be discussed, and will be able to put over their point of view. Each meeting should be properly minuted and the minutes agreed by both parties.

At the start of each step, the senior person involved should review the situation and

confirm that the member of staff has been dealt with properly and fairly so far.

Informal Reviews

In the first instance problems will be picked up during regular support and supervision meetings with the member of staff concerned. These meetings will be undertaken by the person to whom the member of staff reports. Many 'problems' are simply due to a lack of skills or knowledge, or a lack of support, inappropriate roles and so on, and will be relatively easy to put right. Consideration should be given to any special requirements the member of staff may have and reasonable adjustments made.

A written record of any supervision and support meetings will be kept. Action agreed by both parties should be followed up within an agreed and appropriate timescale.

Sometimes, a member of staff may be unaware that they are doing something wrong. It is important to communicate to the member of staff what is expected of them and to feed back on their progress. They cannot be expected to improve or alter the way they work unless the need for change is brought to their attention and discussed so that they understand the problem.

Informal methods of resolution may include coaching, shadowing or training, other forms of learning, one-to-one support, or even a change of role. Horsham Matters Ltd will consider other suitable roles for its members of staff where appropriate.

Formal Reviews

Where informal measures do not resolve the problem, the member of staff will be invited to a formal meeting with the person to whom they report and a senior manager. The aim of the meeting is to agree an action plan to remedy the problem and improve performance or behaviour, with appropriate timescales. The member of staff will be reminded what the problem is and what standards they need to achieve. The member of staff will be able to present their point of view and explain the situation from their perspective.

If the issue is not resolved within the agreed timescale, a meeting involving the member of staff, the person to whom the member of staff reports and a senior manager will be called at reasonable notice (not less than one week). This meeting may result in an employee having their contract of employment terminated or a volunteer being asked to leave.

Exceptionally poor performance and behaviour

If a member of staff is believed to have behaved in a manner that has or could have seriously affected Horsham Matters Ltd they can be immediately removed from their duties while the matter is investigated by the person to whom they report. They will be notified in writing. The investigation will be completed within 20 working days.

If, after a thorough investigation, it is decided that the member of staff's performance or behaviour is sufficiently damaging to Horsham Matters Ltd, they will either have their contract of employment terminated (for employees) or be asked to leave (in the case of a volunteer). This decision will not be taken lightly and the member of staff will be given written reasons, the opportunity to consider the outcome of the investigation and a chance to put their case forward at a mutually convenient meeting with the Chief Executive prior to the final decision being made.

Examples of exceptionally poor performance or behaviour are as follows:

- Theft
- Bullying / harassment of other member of staff or clients
- Violence
- Consistently breaching policies
- Bringing Horsham Matters Ltd and the service it provides into disrepute (e.g. by going to the press or contacting funders)
- Acting in a way that conflicts with the interests of Horsham Matters Ltd

If the member of staff is not happy with the decision, they can ask for a review by the Chairman or another Director. The review will take place within 15 working days.

The Chairman or Director will review the performance management process and how decisions were made. This may include speaking to the individuals involved. They will ensure that a proper process was followed, that any decisions reached were made fairly, were reasonable and that no issues were left outstanding. If they agree that the performance management process was undertaken fairly and properly, they will explain this in writing to the member of staff and include their reasoning. If they disagree, they will ensure it is undertaken again to resolve the issues which need to be resolved and will agree a timescale for doing so.

Grievance and Complaints

HML aims to resolve problems as they arise through support and supervision meetings. However if a member of staff wishes to raise a formal complaint or grievance, the following procedure should be followed.

Before using the grievance procedure it is expected that an employee will try to resolve their complaint informally if at all possible. The formal stage of the procedure should only be used when the informal stage has failed to resolve the issue or is not making progress at reasonable speed.

Informal stage

If an employee has a complaint that involves another member of staff, they should first of all try to resolve the matter by direct approach to the member of staff involved. If the matter remains unresolved, the employee may request a meeting with their own Manager who will provide assistance in resolving the issue. The meeting should be held within 10 working days of the submission of the request.

If, after any action to resolve the grievance taken by the Manager, the member of staff is still dissatisfied, they may proceed to the formal stage of the procedure.

If the complaint is against the Manager or there is another reason why the member of staff does not wish to raise it with their Manager they should approach the Chief Executive.

Formal stage

If the complaint has not been resolved at the informal stage, the member of staff may proceed to the formal stage and set out in writing the nature of their complaint and the reasons why they are dissatisfied with the outcome of the informal stage. The member of

staff should explain how they think it should be settled. This must be submitted to the Chief Executive who will conduct an investigation into the matter. The investigation will be completed within 15 working days.

A panel will be appointed consisting of the Chief Executive and another Manager or Director to review the grievance. A hearing will be held within 10 working days of the investigation being completed.

The decision of the panel, the reasons for their decision and any redress will be communicated to the member of staff who has raised the grievance within 3 days of the hearing.

Right of appeal

If the member of staff is not happy with the decision reached by the panel, they can ask for a review by the Chairman or another Director. The review will take place within 15 working days.

Appendix 1: Equality and Diversity Glossary of Terms

'Equal opportunities monitoring' is the collection and analysis of information about a person that is used in order to check that a policy or procedure does not have an adverse impact on a particular group of people or amount to unlawful discrimination. Information may be collected on race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief.

'Unlawful discrimination' includes 'direct discrimination', 'indirect discrimination', 'victimisation' and 'harassment'.

'Direct discrimination' occurs where a person is treated less favourably on the grounds of race, racial group, colour, ethnic or national origins, sex, pregnancy, marital status, disability, sexual orientation or religion or belief.

'Indirect discrimination' occurs where an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice would put a substantially higher proportion of the members of one group of people, eg the members of one sex, at a particular disadvantage compared with other persons unless that provision, criterion or practice is objectively justified by a legitimate aim and the means of achieving that aim are appropriate and necessary.

'Victimisation' occurs where a person is treated less favourably because she or he has made a complaint of discrimination. This also applies to individuals who may have assisted or supported the complainant, for example, as a witness or by showing sympathy.

'Harassment' occurs when unwanted conduct takes place with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, offensive or humiliating environment. Harassment may involve physical acts or verbal & non-verbal communications and gestures. This will include physical, verbal and non-verbal acts.

'Positive action' is where the participation of or access to services for members of under-represented groups is encouraged, e.g. running special training for women to encourage them to apply for senior management posts. Positive action is not to be confused with positive discrimination, e.g. the appointment of a woman to a senior post solely on the basis of her gender would be an example of positive discrimination and would be unlawful.

'Positive discrimination' is where a decision is made in someone's favour because of his or her particular characteristic, e.g. race, gender or disability. Positive discrimination is usually unlawful, unless it falls within one of the very limited exceptions contained in the anti-discrimination legislation in relation to disability or as a genuine occupational requirement.

'Genuine occupational requirement' is an express exemption to positive discrimination on a particular ground. There are some very limited circumstances in which it may be lawful to discriminate on grounds such as race, gender, disability, sexual orientation or religion, for example, where being of a particular racial or religious origin is an essential requirement for the job, or for reasons of decency or privacy.

Appendix 2: Data Protection Act

Personal data means data which relates to a living individual who can be identified from that data or from that data plus other information which is in the possession of, or is likely to come into the possession of, the data controller (HML). It includes any expression of opinion about the individual and any indication of the intentions of the data controller or any other person in respect of the individual.

Sensitive personal data means personal data consisting of information as to:

- (a) the racial or ethnic origin of the data subject,
- (b) his /her political opinions,
- (c) his /her religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature,
- (d) whether he /she is a member of a trade union (within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992),
- (e) his /her physical or mental health or condition,
- (f) his /her sexual life,
- (g) the commission or alleged commission by him /her of any offence, or
- (h) any proceedings for any offence committed or alleged to have been committed by him /her, the disposal of such proceedings or the sentence of any court in such proceedings.

Processing, in relation to information or data, means obtaining, recording or holding the information or data or carrying out any operation or set of operations on the information or data, including –

- (a) organisation, adaptation or alteration of the information or data,
- (b) retrieval, consultation or use of the information or data,
- (c) disclosure of the information or data by transmission, dissemination or otherwise making available, or
- (d) alignment, combination, blocking, erasure or destruction of the information or data.

Schedule 2 of the Act requires that, unless a relevant exemption applies, at least one of the following conditions must be met whenever you process personal data:

- The individual has consented to the processing.
- The processing is necessary in relation to a contract which the individual has entered into, or because the individual has asked for something to be done so they can enter into a contract.
- The processing is necessary because of a legal obligation that applies to you (except an obligation imposed by a contract).
- The processing is necessary to protect the individual's "vital interests". This condition only applies in cases of life or death, such as where an individual's medical history is disclosed to a hospital's A&E department treating them after a serious road accident.
- The processing is necessary for administering justice, or for exercising statutory, governmental, or other public functions.

- The processing is in accordance with the “legitimate interests” condition.

Schedule 3 of the Act requires that at least one of several other conditions must be met before processing sensitive personal data:

- The individual who the sensitive personal data is about has given explicit consent to the processing.
- The processing is necessary so that you can comply with employment law.
- The processing is necessary to protect the vital interests of:
 - the individual (in a case where the individual’s consent cannot be given or reasonably obtained), or
 - another person (in a case where the individual’s consent has been unreasonably withheld).
- The processing is carried out by a not-for-profit organisation and does not involve disclosing personal data to a third party, unless the individual consents. Extra limitations apply to this condition.
- The individual has deliberately made the information public.
- The processing is necessary in relation to legal proceedings; for obtaining legal advice; or otherwise for establishing, exercising or defending legal rights.
- The processing is necessary for administering justice, or for exercising statutory or governmental functions.
- The processing is necessary for medical purposes, and is undertaken by a health professional or by someone who is subject to an equivalent duty of confidentiality.
- The processing is necessary for monitoring equality of opportunity, and is carried out with appropriate safeguards for the rights of individuals.

Appendix 3: Trading Standards

1. Selling Safe Used Furniture issued by West Sussex County Council
- 2.

Appendix 4: Fire Evacuation Procedure

In the event of the fire alarm sounding, staff should vacate the building as quickly as possible by the nearest accessible fire exit ensuring that all in their particular area customers have also vacated.

The duty Shop Manager and Warehouse Manager will be responsible for ensuring that the building is empty before vacating and once out of the building that the rear gate is unlocked.

All staff and customers should gather at front of the forecourt adjacent to Guildford Road.

Main Showroom

Exits from the main show room are either through the main shop door (2), rear door to the yard (5) or through the Bric-a-Brac showroom (1).

Bric-a-Brac Showroom

The main exit is through the door on the forecourt (1). Alternative exits are through the main door (2) or rear door (5).

Front Showroom

The main exit is the main door (2). Alternative exits are through the Bric-a-Brac showroom (1) or rear door (5).

Warehouse

Exits from the warehouse are either through the door to the right of the roller door at the front (3), or through the delivery bay to the rear (4). The delivery bay roller door (7) can also be used when open.

Fabrics Store

The main exit is the main door (2). Alternative exits are through the Bric-a-Brac showroom (1) or rear door (5).

General Office

The main exit is the rear door (5). Alternative exits are through the Bric-a-Brac showroom (1) or main door (2).

Bric-a-Brac Sorting Room

The nearest exits are through the main door (2) or through the warehouse (3). The rear roller door (8) is also available as an exit when open.

Main Store

The nearest exits are through the main door (2) or through the warehouse (3). The rear roller door (8) is also available as an exit when open.

Mezzanine Store

If working in the mezzanine store, the rear roller door (8) must be opened and can then be used as an emergency exit. No one may work in this area unless the roller door is opened.

Delivery / PAT Testing

The main fire exit is through the rear door (4) or through to the warehouse exit (3). The delivery bay roller door (7) can also be used when open.

Rear Store

The main exit is the rear door (5). Alternative exits are through the Bric-a-Brac showroom (1), which should be accessed through the door from the toilet corridor (9) or through the main door (2).

Toilets

The main exit is through the Bric-a-Brac showroom (1), which should be accessed through the door from the toilet corridor (9) or the rear door (5). The alternative exit is the rear door (5).

Upstairs

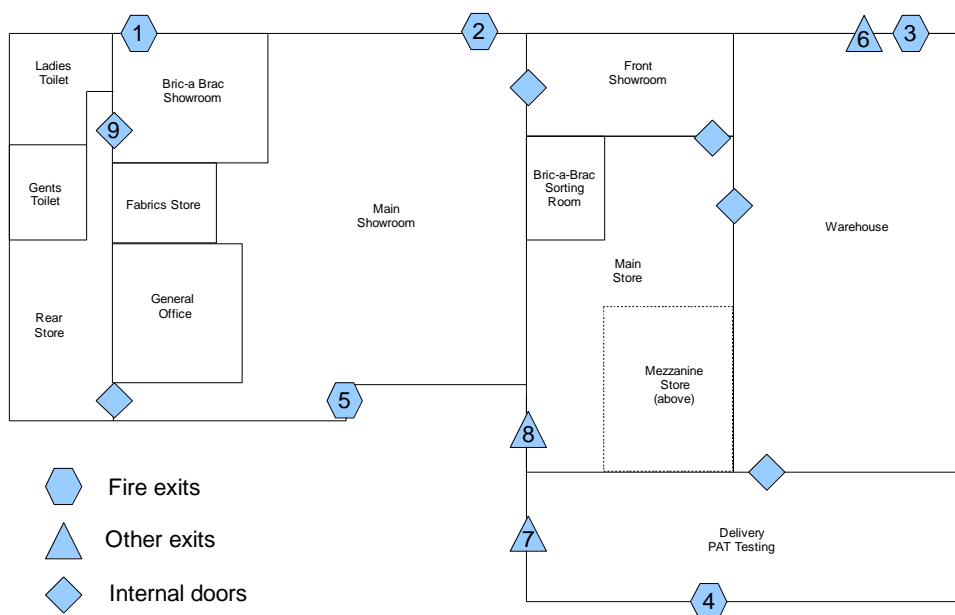
When upstairs the main exit is always the stairs to the rear of the building unless the fire is in the yard when the main door (3) should be used.

General Information

Fire exits must be kept clear and free from obstruction at all times not only during working hours. Routes from fire exits to the assembly point must also always be kept accessible. Particular attention should be paid to the route through the yard from the delivery bay exit (4).

During opening hours the main door must be unlocked at all times. The keys for all non push doors (3, 4 and 9) must be in place at all times and must normally be secured to the door via a chain.

After hours the key to the main door must be left in the door until the building is empty to ensure that this can continue to be used as an exit.



Appendix 5: Financial approvals

Expenditure approval limits are as follows:

Transaction value	Approvals
Up to £100	One director
Over £100 and up to £500	Two directors
Over £500	The Board

Authorising managers for expenses are:

Group	Authorising Manager
Members of the shop staff	Shop Manager
Members of the warehouse staff	Warehouse Manager
Operational Management Group	Chief Executive Officer
Chief Executive Officer and other Directors	Chairman
Chairman	Chief Executive Officer