



Charitable and Community Support Policy

Overview

Countryside is proud of its charitable and community giving achievements, which bring potential benefits to thousands of people and communities in many parts of the UK.

This charitable and community support policy is necessary to ensure that our selected charity partners meet our values and ethical standards and they conform to charities legislation and regulations. This policy also helps protect our business, employees and the general public from illegal practice, including unscrupulous appeals and the possible misappropriation of funds, to minimise the risk of prosecution, harm to individuals or negative media attention.

Everyone at Countryside is responsible for making sure that they understand and adhere to this policy, which should be applied to any request for charity or community support involving monetary donations, the raising of funds, or gifts in kind.

We only work with registered charities and the communities in which we are active or seek to be, to address local issues key to the interests of those neighbourhoods. This will enhance our reputation as a developer of integrity.

Charitable giving and community support should be focused on causes linked to our business, the communities in which we operate, our business partners and our employees.

Definition

A **charity** is a registered body set up with a sole purpose of giving help to those in need. A charitable donation is defined as a gift to a registered charity where often there is little or no expectation of a financial or promotional return.

Sponsorship is defined as a financial contribution towards a community organisation in support of a community initiative or event in return for the opportunity to build awareness of the Countryside brand, such as the use of our logo on marketing material before, during and after an event or initiative.

Budget

- There will be a corporate budget for charitable activity and community sponsorship that includes donations to staff charities and other charitable events. The budget will be set annually by the Main Board and controlled by the Head of Corporate Communications.
- Each division will also hold its own budget to use as they see fit covering charitable activity and community sponsorship specific to their area of operation. All such activity must adhere to this policy.

Applying for Approval

- An Anti-Bribery and Corruption (ABC) Policy form must be completed for all proposed charitable and sponsorship requests including on behalf of Joint Ventures.
- A divisional Managing Director must sign off all divisional requests. All requests must then be sent for approval to Company Secretary, Gary Whittaker and Head of Corporate Communications, Guy Lambert.

Staff Charities

- Staff will be asked to nominate and vote on charities to support at national and local level (to each office) every financial year. On a selective basis, the Group will endeavour to match fund all monies raised.
- Dress Down Days ahead of each bank holiday will continue and will be match funded by the Group from the Group budget.
- The sponsorship of Group Internal Charitable events such as Tour de Sites will continue and will be match funded as above wherever possible.

Joint Ventures

- Whilst this policy does apply to our joint ventures they are encouraged to set and manage their own charity and community support policy and budget.

Exclusions

- We do not make donations to political parties, organisations or their representatives.
- Only under exceptional circumstances will we support (from the Group budget) non-staff charities that employees or our stakeholders are fundraising for unless we are receiving something in return such as our logo being prominently displayed on a cycle jersey. Managing Directors should sign-off requests of this type.
- We do not support sponsorship requests for individuals, including our own employees.

Finding out more

- For more information, please contact Corporate Communications / Company Secretariat.

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