Corporate Responsibility Policy

Policy Reviewed: March and April 2023

Next updated: October 2024

Next updated: January 2025

Last Reviewed: February 2026

Next Review: February 2027 (or sooner if significant changes in legislation, guidance, or organisational activities occur)

Reviewed by: Laurence Clark

Approved by: CEO

Main Contact for Queries: info@pathwaysassociates.co.uk

1. Introduction and Commitment

Pathways Associates CIC is a Community Interest Company dedicated to enabling disabled people to live the lives they choose as equals in their local communities.

Our corporate responsibility is embedded in our mission, vision, and values. We integrate social, environmental, and economic considerations into our decisions and activities to create positive impact for disabled people, their families, our colleagues, associates, partners, stakeholders, and the wider community.

We are committed to:

- Operating transparently and accountably
- Upholding the highest standards of integrity, fairness, and inclusion
- Continuously listening to feedback from disabled people with lived experience, colleagues, and stakeholders
- Complying with (and where possible exceeding) relevant legislation, including CIC reporting requirements, equality law, safeguarding duties, health and safety, and data protection

Our Board of Directors is ultimately responsible for this policy, ensuring adequate resources and regular review. However, every colleague, associate, contractor, and partner shares responsibility for putting these commitments into practice.

2. Our Core Principles

We are guided by the following values in all we do:

- **Led by lived experience** — Decisions and practices are shaped by disabled people and families
- **Inclusion and equity** — We promote equality, diversity, and accessibility in everything we do
- **Partnership and collaboration** — We build respectful, open relationships with stakeholders
- **Integrity and transparency** — We act honestly and are accountable for our actions

- **Wellbeing and safety** — We prioritise physical, emotional, and mental safety for all
- **Sustainability** — We minimise environmental harm and support long-term community benefit

3. Key Areas of Responsibility

3.1 Social Responsibility and Safeguarding

We shall:

- Ensure everyone who comes into contact with Pathways Associates is safe, respected, and free from abuse, neglect, harassment, or discrimination
- Comply fully with our **Safeguarding Adults Policy**, **Child Protection Policy** (where relevant), and related procedures
- Report any concerns promptly and follow statutory guidance
- Embed trauma-informed, disability-inclusive safeguarding practices
- Promote positive wellbeing for colleagues, associates, disabled people we support, and partners
- Treat all individuals with dignity and respect, free from any form of physical, emotional, verbal, or mental harm

3.2 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

We shall:

- Operate an active **Equal Opportunities Policy** that applies to employees, associates, clients, partners, suppliers, and service users
- Challenge discrimination and promote accessibility in line with the Equality Act 2010
- Ensure our workforce and Board reflect the diversity of the communities we serve, including disabled people
- Provide fair terms of employment, equal pay, flexible working, and opportunities for learning and development

3.3 Environmental Responsibility

We shall:

- Minimise our environmental impact through our **Environmental Policy** and **Carbon Reduction Policy**
- Promote sustainable practices in operations, events, travel, procurement, and waste management
- Publicise key environmental actions and progress (e.g., via our website or annual CIC report)

3.4 Ethical Business and Stakeholder Relationships

We shall:

- Manage risks effectively while maintaining high standards of performance
- Treat clients, partners, suppliers, and stakeholders with respect and fairness
- Respond to queries, feedback, and complaints promptly, professionally, and transparently
- Encourage suppliers and contractors to adopt responsible and ethical practices
- Avoid unfair business practices and conflicts of interest

3.5 Governance and Accountability

We shall:

- Recruit and maintain a Board that reflects our values, mission, and community demographics
- Review Board performance, skills, and diversity regularly
- Prevent and manage conflicts of interest
- Keep policies and procedures under review for legal compliance and effectiveness

- Fulfil all CIC Regulator duties, including filing the annual **CIC34 Community Interest Company Report** which details:
    - Activities and community benefit
    - Stakeholder engagement and consultation
    - Director remuneration and benefits
    - How we have met our community interest objectives

3.6 Financial Responsibility and Transparency

We shall:

- Maintain accurate, up-to-date financial records and file accounts on time
- Use external professional review (e.g., accountant) of our accounts
- Ensure financial information is transparent and accessible where appropriate
- Have robust processes to prevent and detect fraud or misuse of funds
- Manage resources responsibly to maximise community benefit

3.7 Modern Slavery and Human Rights

We shall:

- Have zero tolerance for modern slavery, human trafficking, or forced labour
- Assess risks in our operations and supply chains
- Take reasonable steps to prevent these issues (proportionate to our size and resources)
- Include a statement on our website if required or as good practice (note: mandatory only if annual turnover exceeds £36 million)

4. Implementation, Monitoring, and Review

- This policy is communicated to all colleagues, associates, and relevant partners
- Progress is monitored through regular feedback, policy reviews, and the annual CIC34 report
- We welcome suggestions and concerns at any time
- The policy is reviewed at least annually or following significant changes