

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy

Tower Hamlets Friends & Neighbours

Document control

Policy title	Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy
Organisation	Tower Hamlets Friends & Neighbours (THFN)
Charity number	1099403 (Charitable Incorporated Organisation)
Version	0.1
Status	Approved
Author	Rita Chadha, Chief Executive
Approved by	THFN Board of Trustees — 1.07.2026
Date adopted	1.07.2026
Next review date	Annually, or sooner if law, guidance or tools change materially
Applies to	All trustees, staff, sessional workers, volunteers and contractors

Contents

1. Purpose 3

2. Scope..... 3

3. What we mean by AI 3

4. Our principles for using AI 4

5. Acceptable use 5

6. Restricted and prohibited use..... 5

7. Human oversight and accuracy 5

8. Data protection and confidentiality 6

9. Protecting the people we support..... 6

10. Bias, fairness and accessibility..... 7

11. Transparency and intellectual property..... 7

12. Approved tools 7

13. Roles and responsibilities..... 7

14. Training and support 8

15. Reporting concerns and breaches..... 8

16. Monitoring and review 8

17. Related policies..... 8

1. Purpose

Tower Hamlets Friends & Neighbours (THFN) brings people together to reduce isolation and build friendly, supportive neighbourhoods, with a particular focus on older and housebound residents. Artificial intelligence tools can help a small charity like ours work more efficiently — organising operational activity, creating promotional materials, analysing data, drafting documents, summarising information and freeing up time — but they also carry risks around confidentiality, accuracy and fairness.

This policy sets out how AI may and may not be used in our work. Its aim is to let us benefit from these tools while protecting the people we support, the people who work and volunteer for us, and the reputation of the charity. The policy is based on recommendations made by the Charity Code of Digital Governance.

2. Scope

This policy applies to everyone who works on behalf of THFN, including:

- trustees;
- employed staff and sessional workers;
- volunteers; and
- contractors and consultants where their work for us involves AI.

It covers all use of AI tools in connection with THFN's work, whether on THFN devices and accounts or personal ones, and whether the tool is paid for by THFN or freely available.

3. What we mean by AI

In this policy, “AI” means software that generates content, predictions, recommendations or decisions in response to a prompt or data. The most common examples in our work are:

- **Generative AI assistants** — tools that produce text, images or summaries, such as chatbots and writing assistants.
- **AI features built into everyday software** — for example summarising, drafting or transcription features inside email, document, design and meeting tools.
- **Translation and transcription tools** — software that converts speech to text or text between languages.

The policy applies to all of these, including AI features that are switched on by default inside tools we already use.

4. THFN principles for using AI

All use of AI at THFN is guided by seven principles.

Principle	What it means in practice
People first	AI is used to free up time for the human relationships at the heart of our work, never to replace contact with the people we support.
Human oversight	A named person always reviews and takes responsibility for anything AI helps produce. AI advises; people decide.
Confidentiality	The personal information of our members, volunteers and staff is protected and is never entered into AI tools without a lawful basis and appropriate safeguards.
Accuracy	AI output is checked for errors and bias before it is used or shared. We do not assume it is correct.
Transparency	We are open about where and how we use AI, with each other and with the people we support.
Fairness	We are alert to bias and make sure AI use does not disadvantage any group, particularly older, disabled or digitally excluded people.
Proportionality	We use AI where it genuinely helps and avoid it where the risk outweighs the benefit.

At a glance

Generally fine	Get approval / treat with caution
• Drafting and improving general text (leaflets, web copy, social posts) • Summarising public documents or your own notes • Brainstorming ideas, plans and structures • Translating general, non-personal content • Tidying spreadsheets and formatting • Learning or explaining a topic	• Anything involving members' names or personal details • Decisions about a person's support, safeguarding or eligibility • New AI tools not already approved • Recordings or images of the people we support

The sections below explain this in more detail.

5. Acceptable use

Used carefully and with the principles above in mind, AI can support tasks such as:

- drafting and improving leaflets, letters, web copy, newsletters and social media posts;
- summarising long documents, guidance or your own meeting notes;
- generating ideas and structures for plans, projects and campaigns;
- first drafts of routine internal documents and templates;
- translating general, non-personal information for our diverse community;
- tidying, formatting and analysing non-personal data; and
- helping you learn about or explain an unfamiliar topic.

In every case, a person must review the output before it is used, relied on or shared (see section 7).

6. Restricted and prohibited use

6.1 You must not

- enter members', volunteers' or staff personal or sensitive information (names, addresses, contact details, health, care needs, safeguarding concerns) into any AI tool unless it is an approved tool with appropriate data protection in place;
- use AI to make or appear to make a decision about a person's support, safeguarding, eligibility or wellbeing — these decisions are always made by people;
- rely on AI output as fact without checking it;
- present AI-generated text as the original work of a named person where that would be misleading; or
- use AI in any way that is unlawful, discriminatory, or contrary to our values and other policies.

6.2 Get approval first

Before using AI for any of the following, speak to the Chief Executive (AI Lead):

- introducing a new AI tool, or a paid AI subscription, for THFN work;
- any task that necessarily involves personal or confidential information; or
- funding applications, monitoring returns or anything containing financial figures — these may be drafted with AI support, but every fact, figure and claim must be verified against source records before submission.

7. Human oversight and accuracy

AI tools can produce text that sounds confident but is wrong, out of date, or invented. They can also reflect biases in the data they were trained on. For THFN this matters because errors in a funding bid, a public statement or advice to a resident can cause real harm.

Therefore:

1. A named person is always responsible for any AI-assisted output. AI is a starting point, not the final word.
2. Check facts, figures, names, dates and quotations against reliable sources before use.
3. Read for tone and fairness, and edit so the final piece reflects THFN's voice and the realities of our community.
4. Never copy and send AI output unchecked, especially anything that is public-facing or sent to funders or partners.

8. Data protection and confidentiality

THFN must comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Many AI tools store, process or learn from the information typed into them, sometimes on servers outside the UK, so they can pose a real risk to the personal information we hold.

To protect that information:

- Do not enter any personal or special-category data into an AI tool unless it is approved for that purpose and covered by an appropriate agreement and a lawful basis.
- Where you need AI help with something based on real data, remove or replace names and identifying details first.
- Treat anything a member or volunteer has told us in confidence as off-limits to AI tools unless approved.
- Report any accidental entry of personal data into an AI tool as a data breach, following our data protection / breach procedures, without delay.

This policy sits alongside, and does not replace, THFN's Data Protection and Confidentiality policies. Where they are more restrictive, they take precedence.

9. Protecting the people we support

Many of the people we work with are older, may be digitally excluded, and may be more vulnerable to confusion or mistrust where technology is involved. We therefore take extra care:

- Human contact remains central. AI is never a substitute for a friendly visit, call or conversation.
- Where AI is used to help produce information that members will read or rely on, it is reviewed for accuracy, plain language and accessibility.
- We are honest with members and volunteers about how we use AI if they ask, and we never use it in ways that could deceive or pressure them.
- Safeguarding concerns are always handled by people, in line with our safeguarding policies.

10. Bias, fairness and accessibility

AI tools can reproduce stereotypes or work less well for some groups, languages and accents. To keep our use fair:

- be alert to bias in AI output, particularly around age, disability, race, faith, gender and language, and correct it;
- check that AI-assisted materials are accessible and easy to understand for our community, including people with low digital confidence or limited English; and
- make sure no one is disadvantaged in how we deliver services or recruit volunteers because of how a tool works.

11. Transparency and intellectual property

We are open about our use of AI internally, and with members, funders and partners where it is relevant. We do not claim AI-generated work as wholly original where doing so would mislead.

On intellectual property and copyright:

- do not paste in large amounts of copyrighted material (for example whole articles or reports) and pass the output off as ours;
- do not assume AI-generated images or text are free of third-party rights; check before using them publicly; and
- anything created for THFN with AI support remains the property of THFN, in line with our normal arrangements for work produced for the charity.

12. Approved tools

THFN keeps a short list of AI tools approved for use, together with any conditions (for example, which may be used with personal data and which may not). The Chief Executive maintains this list.

If you would find a new tool helpful, ask the Chief Executive before using it for THFN work, so that its data protection, cost and reliability can be checked. The current approved list Co-Pilot, tenanted version. Claude (subscription version)

13. Roles and responsibilities

Who	Responsibility
Board of Trustees	Owns this policy, approves it, and assures itself that AI is being used safely, lawfully and in line with our charitable purpose.
Chief Executive	Acts as AI Lead: maintains the list of approved tools, handles questions, oversees training, and reports any significant issues to the Board.
Staff	Follow this policy, use only approved tools, protect confidential information, and check AI output before relying on it.

Who	Responsibility
Volunteers	Follow this policy in any task they do for THFN, and ask the staff team if they are unsure.
Contractors and suppliers	Are made aware of this policy where their work for THFN involves AI, and are expected to meet equivalent standards.

14. Training and support

No one is expected to be an AI expert. THFN will offer simple guidance and the chance to ask questions, and this policy will be shared as part of induction for new staff and volunteers. If you are ever unsure whether something is allowed, do not guess — ask the Chief Executive first.

15. Reporting concerns and breaches

If you think this policy has been broken, or that AI use has caused or risked a problem — for example personal data being entered into a tool, or inaccurate AI content being sent out — tell the Chief Executive as soon as possible. Where personal data is involved, our data breach procedure must also be followed.

Concerns will be handled supportively. The priority is to put things right and learn from them, not to apportion blame for honest mistakes. Deliberate or repeated misuse may be dealt with under our disciplinary or volunteer procedures.

16. Monitoring and review

AI tools and the law around them are changing quickly. The Board will review this policy at least once a year, and sooner if there is a significant change in the tools we use, the law, or regulatory guidance (including from the Charity Commission and the Information Commissioner's Office).

17. Related policies

This policy should be read alongside THFN's:

- Data Protection / Privacy Policy;
- Confidentiality Policy;
- Safeguarding (Adults) Policy;
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy;
- Acceptable Use / IT Policy; and
- Staff and Volunteer Codes of Conduct.

Approval

This policy was approved by the Board of Trustees of Tower Hamlets Friends & Neighbours.

Signed: (Chair of Trustees)

Name: Anne Worlledge

Date: 1.07.2026