Stakeholder Engagement & Communication Policy

PRN-135: Stakeholder Engagement & Communication Policy
Company Name: AI Auto-Tech Ltd
Trading/Business Name: CAREHOPES
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1. Introduction

CAREHOPES (TC) is committed to building strong, ethical, and transparent relationships with all stakeholders. This Stakeholder Engagement & Communication Policy outlines how TC interacts with clients, sponsors, companions, volunteers, affiliates, organisations, regulators, and community partners.

Our approach is rooted in:

- dignity
- respect
- safeguarding
- professional boundaries
- clarity
- accountability
- inclusive communication

This policy ensures that all stakeholders understand how TC communicates, how engagement is managed, and what boundaries companions and volunteers must uphold.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- define stakeholder categories
- establish communication protocols
- protect TC's contractual and safeguarding framework
- ensure companions and volunteers maintain strict boundaries
- prevent unauthorised negotiation or contract discussions

- support consistent, professional engagement
- outline stakeholder analysis and engagement planning
- prepare TC for future e-learning modules on stakeholder communication

3. Who This Policy Applies To

This policy applies to:

- service users (clients)
- individual and family sponsors
- organisational sponsors
- companions and volunteers
- TC staff and administrators
- affiliates and referral partners
- community organisations and councils
- corporate partners
- strategic partners
- auditors and regulators
- governance and board members

4. Stakeholder Categories

TC recognises the following stakeholder groups:

4.1. Primary Stakeholders

- Clients receiving companionship
- Sponsors funding companionship (individuals, families, organisations)

4.2. Secondary Stakeholders

- Companions and volunteers
- Referral partners
- Affiliates and group members
- Community organisations
- Councils and local authorities
- Care homes and supported living providers

4.3. Strategic Stakeholders

- Corporate partners
- Charities
- Health professionals (GPs, social workers)
- Regulatory bodies
- Governance and board members

5. Stakeholder Analysis (Power–Interest Categorisation)

TC uses the **Power–Interest Grid** to analyse stakeholders and determine appropriate engagement strategies.

5.1. High Power, High Interest

Stakeholders with significant influence and strong interest in companionship outcomes.

Examples:

- Organisational sponsors (care homes, councils, supported living providers)
- Family sponsors funding long-term companionship
- TC Board members
- Strategic partners
- Regulatory bodies during active reviews

Engagement Strategy:

- Manage closely
- Provide regular updates
- Maintain transparent communication
- Involve in decision-making where appropriate
- Prioritise safeguarding and risk reporting

5.2. High Power, Low Interest

Stakeholders with significant influence but limited day-to-day interest.

Examples:

- Auditors
- Compliance inspectors
- External regulators (when not actively reviewing)
- Corporate partners with broad sponsorship agreements

Engagement Strategy:

- Keep satisfied
- Provide essential updates only
- Maintain compliance documentation
- Engage formally and professionally

5.3. Low Power, High Interest

Stakeholders with limited influence but strong interest in companionship outcomes.

Examples:

- Clients receiving companionship
- Companions and volunteers
- Referral partners
- Affiliates and group members
- Community organisations

Engagement Strategy:

- Keep informed
- Provide accessible communication
- Offer feedback channels
- Support engagement through TC's official channels
- Maintain professional boundaries

5.4. Low Power, Low Interest

Stakeholders with limited influence and minimal direct interest.

Examples:

- General public
- Non-partner organisations
- External observers
- Non-active affiliates

Engagement Strategy:

- Monitor with minimal engagement
- Provide public information only

- Engage only when interest increases

5.5. Why This Categorisation Matters

This model helps TC:

- allocate communication resources effectively
- maintain safeguarding and professional boundaries
- avoid over-engagement with low-impact stakeholders
- prioritise high-impact relationships
- prepare companions and volunteers for appropriate communication
- support future e-learning modules on stakeholder management

6. Communication Principles

TC's communication approach is guided by:

6.1. Clarity

Information must be clear, accessible, and jargon-free.

6.2. Transparency

Stakeholders receive honest, timely updates.

6.3. Professional Boundaries

Companions and volunteers must not negotiate or define contract terms.

6.4. Safeguarding

Communication must protect vulnerable individuals.

6.5. Respect

All communication must be courteous and culturally sensitive.

6.6. Accessibility

TC provides reasonable adjustments for communication needs.

7. Communication Channels

All communication must occur through **official TC channels**, including:

- TC's official email
- TC's official phone line
- TC's digital platform (if applicable)
- authorised organisational portals

Companions and volunteers must **never**:

- negotiate contracts
- discuss fees, refunds, or terms
- confirm bookings
- alter companionship plans
- provide personal contact details
- act as communication intermediaries

These boundaries protect clients, companions, and TC's safeguarding framework.

8. Companion and Volunteer Communication Boundaries

Companions and volunteers must:

- redirect all contract-related questions to TC
- avoid discussing service terms, fees, or refunds
- avoid making promises on behalf of TC
- avoid accepting direct booking requests
- avoid sharing personal contact details
- avoid engaging in private communication outside TC channels
- maintain professional boundaries at all times

If a client asks about:

- contract terms
- service conditions
- fees
- refunds
- cancellations
- rescheduling
- complaints

the companion must respond:

"Please contact TC directly through the official communication channels. I'm not authorised to discuss contract or service terms."

9. Sponsor Communication Rules

Sponsors must:

- communicate through official TC channels
- avoid negotiating terms with companions
- provide authorised contact persons
- notify TC of changes in risk factors
- support safeguarding procedures
- follow contract terms and communication protocols

Organisations must provide:

- primary and secondary contacts
- escalation contacts
- emergency contact details

10. Stakeholder Engagement Plans

TC develops engagement plans for:

- organisational sponsors
- councils and local authorities
- care homes and supported living providers
- charities and community groups
- corporate partners
- strategic partners

Engagement plans may include:

- communication schedules
- reporting requirements
- risk management strategies
- partnership objectives
- escalation procedures
- feedback mechanisms

11. Communication During Incidents

If an incident occurs:

- companions report it immediately

- TC documents and reviews the incident
- sponsors are notified where appropriate
- safeguarding procedures are followed
- communication is handled by TC, not companions

Companions must not discuss incident details with clients or sponsors.

12. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All stakeholder communication must comply with:

- TC's Privacy Policy
- UK GDPR
- Data Protection Act 2018
- safeguarding requirements

Stakeholders must protect sensitive information and avoid unauthorised disclosure.

13. Engagement Limitations

TC may limit stakeholder engagement due to:

- safeguarding concerns
- environmental risks
- severe weather
- public safety issues
- organisational changes
- relocation outside England and Wales
- breach of contract

TC will communicate limitations promptly.

14. Complaints and Feedback

Stakeholders may submit complaints or feedback through official TC channels.

TC commits to:

- acknowledging complaints
- reviewing concerns within 10 working days
- documenting outcomes
- adjusting engagement processes where necessary

- escalating complex cases to governance or board review

15. Future E-Learning Module

TC will develop an e-learning module covering:

- stakeholder categories
- power–interest analysis
- communication boundaries
- contract protection
- safeguarding communication
- professional conduct
- escalation procedures

This module will be mandatory for companions, volunteers, and staff.

16. Amendments to This Policy

TC may update this policy to reflect:

- operational improvements
- legal changes
- new services
- governance decisions

Updates will be communicated through official TC channels.