

INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE BASE

COMMUNICATION

- Chapter 16 -

	Page
16. Communication	
16.1 Introduction	2
16.2 Communication with Residents	2
16.3 Specific Mediums	3
16.4 Topics and Themes to be communicated	3

“Without music life would be a mistake” – Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche

- Chapter 16 -

COMMUNICATION

16.1 Introduction

It is of cardinal importance to continuously keep all stakeholders in the picture about the governing body and related matters. Expect no sympathy from members if things get demanding and the governing body only then tries to communicate and ask for the necessary member support.

All stakeholders in the governing body must be identified and each one's communication plan needs to be specified as a different approach is needed for each stakeholder. The use of newsletters, notices, emails, feedback meetings, staff meetings, functions and meeting representatives of the stakeholders are all possibilities to be considered.

The governing body should as a minimum have an appealing website but also consider using Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and other technologies to improve the overall communication drive of the governing body.

The levels of authority as to who can say what and when, must be defined.

16.2 Communication with Residents

The following actions will improve the relationships between the governing body and the residents:

- Inform members of the projects that are planned for the year with implementation dates and report on progress.
- Arrange for a monthly newsletter to be distributed.
- Inform members of what resulted from the governing body board meetings and when the next meeting is going to take place, so members can attend on request to state their concerns.
- Invite members to the meetings if they would like to raise issues of concern.
- Have a website where the information is posted with all other relevant documents such as the rules and regulations of the governing body. The use of Facebook and WhatsApp are other possibilities.
- Arrange an informative get together like a 'bring and braai' to meet and chat with members or use existing venues.

- Encourage owners to attend general meetings and remind them of their responsibilities to attend and to propose for election, members who are qualified to serve as members of the governing body closer to such meetings.
- Use WhatsApp to send residents critically important messages such as security, power outages etc.

16.3 Specific Mediums

- The website should be continuously modified and made user friendly. The information on the website must continuously updated and information that can serve as a reference for stakeholders should be loaded and maintained as well.
- Notices to stakeholders can be sent via different electronic media and these can consist of general but also emergency and security related issues. Displaying notices at critical points, canteens, libraries, and other areas must be considered.
- The printed media can be useful to convey a message to the public. The communication can be both proactive informative and reactive to questions raised.
- App-driven visitors booking-in systems are widely used these days and these apps can be used to convey short notices to target groups.
- Newsletters must be interesting, colourful, and worthwhile to read. They can be on paper, or readers can be mailed an electronic version.
- Staff communication is neglected in many governing bodies. The newsletter for residents can be expanded to include personnel-related matters. Staff member of the month, promotions, new appointments etc. are all interest matters for the newsletter. Staff meetings and functions are to be used to communicate matters of the governing body to employees, and the attendance of senior management and members of the governing body is a must.
- Communication with donors must not be forgotten. The better they are informed the more involvement with the governing body you can expect.

16.4 Topics and Themes to be Communicated

The following topics, themes, matters and ideas should be communicated to stakeholders. These are not in sequence of importance.

- The rules and regulations of the retirement facility.
- Staff matters like staff member of the month, promotions, new appointments, departures, and other interesting information.
- Green practices and environmental-related matters including pollution.
- Risk management issues such as dolomite-related issues.
- Policies and procedures and changes and updates thereto.

- Resident information like departures, new arrivals, and special events.
- Aesthetic rules and regulations.
- Care matters. Information snippets, clinic hours and theme of the month, frail care activities, changes, and upgrades, etc.
- Garden and garden-related matters like improvements, changes etc.
- Security matters including perimeter and access control, visitors booking-in and other security risk matters.
- Building, construction, renovation, alterations, and maintenance issues.
- Canteen, laundry, library, and other residential facilities on the premises.
- Events and upcoming events like bazaars, church services, special lunches etc.
- Advertisements of suppliers and events taking place on and off the premises.
- Surroundings and what is happening in the area.
- Annual general and special member meetings and all the matters connected thereto.
- Changes in the composition of the governing body.
- Important governing body decisions.
- Finances – budgets and management accounts.
- Association for Senior Communities matters.
- Information from any other forum the governing body belongs to.
- Member-related snippets written by residents themselves.
- Office matters.
- Transport and changes thereto.