

The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales

Code of Conduct for Charity Trustees



1. Introduction

Those who serve on the board of trustees of The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales charity have responsibilities under charity law as trustees and the executive board also have responsibilities under company law as directors. In addition, given our aims and objectives, we have a duty to provide a model of best practice. As part of this each trustee is asked to agree to abide by the code of conduct which is set out in this document and to sign the attached declaration accordingly.

2. Purpose of the code

The code aims to define the standards expected of The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales charity's trustees in order to ensure that:

- the organisation is effective, open and accountable;
- the highest standards of integrity and stewardship are achieved; and
- the working relationship with the chief executive and other staff is productive and supportive.

3. Code of conduct

3.1 Selflessness

Trustees have a general duty to act with probity and prudence in the best interest of The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales as a whole. They should not act in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, their friends or the organisation they come from.

3.2 Integrity

The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales' trustees should conduct themselves in a manner which does not damage or undermine the reputation of the organisation, or its staff. More specifically they:

- should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their role;
- must avoid actual impropriety and any appearance of improper behaviour; and
- should avoid accepting gifts and hospitality that might reasonably be thought to influence their judgement.

3.3 Objectivity

In carrying out their role, including making appointments, awarding contracts, recommending individuals for rewards and benefits or transacting other business, The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales' trustees should ensure that decisions are made solely on merit.

In arriving at decisions in areas where they do not have expertise themselves trustees should consider appropriate professional advice.

3.4 Accountability

The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales' trustees:

- have a duty to comply with constitutional and legal requirements and to adhere to best practice in such a way as to preserve confidence in The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales; and
- are accountable to the Trust members and other stakeholders for their decisions, the effectiveness of the board and the performance of the charity.

3.5 Openness

The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales' trustees should ensure that confidential information and material, including material about individuals is handled in accordance with due care; so that it remains confidential.

In addition they should be as open as possible about their decisions and the actions that they take. As far as possible they should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider interest clearly demands.

3.6 Probity

The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales' trustees must:

- promote and support the principles of leadership by example;
- strive to attend all meetings regularly, ensuring they prepare for and contribute appropriately and effectively;
- bring fair and open minded view to all discussions of the board and should ensure that all decisions are made in the charity's best interests;
- respect the role of the chief executive and other staff;
- accept and respect the difference in roles between the board, the chief executive and senior staff, ensuring that the honorary officers, the boards, the chief executive and his/her senior team work effectively and cohesively for the benefit of the Trust, and develop a mutually supportive and loyal relationship; and
- having given the chief executive delegated authority, be careful –individually and collectively-not to undermine it by word or action.

4. Trustee's declaration

I declare that:

- I am over age 18.
- I am not an undischarged bankrupt
- I have not previously been removed from trusteeship of a charity by a court or the charity commissioners.
- I am not under a disqualification order under the Company Director' Disqualification Act 1986
- I am, in the light of the above, not disqualified by the Charities Act 1993 (Section 72) from acting as a charity trustee.
- I undertake to fulfil my responsibilities and duties as a trustee of The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales in good faith and in accordance with the law and within The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales' objectives/mission.
- I do not have any financial interests in conflict with those of The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales (either in person or through family or business connections) except those which I have formally notified in a conflict of interest statement. I will specifically notify any such interest at any meeting where trustees are required to make a decision which affects my personal interests, and I will unless agreed otherwise absent myself entirely from any decision on the matter and not vote on it.
- I will abide by this code of conduct for trustees of The Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales charity

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Name of Trustee: _____