

Citizens Advice South Somerset

Code of Conduct for Trustees

This Code incorporates the Nolan principles of standards in public life and the Organisation's Values Statement. It aims to ensure that all trustees observe the highest standards of propriety and act in the best interests of the organisation and the Citizens Advice service.

Our organisation's Core Values apply equally to every individual in the organisation (staff, volunteers and trustees) and inform all aspects of our work; how we behave, how we support each other and how we work with clients, partners and other agencies. Together we ensure that our values are brought into our everyday behaviours so that we can offer the best possible service to our clients, colleagues and communities. The Core Values are:

Accessible

We respect and appreciate one another; this means we welcome people from all walks of life and backgrounds and that our culture is free of bullying, intimidation and negativity. We recognise personal qualities and skills and we respect our differences.

We treat one another as equals; this means that everyone in our organization is of equal value regardless of their role, title or area of responsibility.

We accept the fluidity of organizational membership; this means that the principles that we agree together remain the same whoever is in the team.

Professional

We trust each other as professionals and as people; this means that each member of the organization will accept responsibility for their actions and decisions. We honour our commitment to confidentiality so that we may speak openly and freely among ourselves.

We work hard to create a friendly and professional work environment; this means that we are welcoming, supportive and positive towards one another, clients, partners and other agency staff.

We take individual ownership for our own performance and we show consideration for each other's needs; this means that we follow through on our promises, listen to each other and work together to problem solve. We co-operate and we think as a team.

We are committed to working together to improve our services; this means that we welcome fresh ideas and new ways of working and that we take time to gather feedback on our performance and to learn and improve.

Trustworthy

We practice open and honest communication; this means that we behave constructively and assertively to address any difficulties as they arise. We will work in an inclusive way with openness and transparency.

We are committed to spending time together and to developing our skills and knowledge; this means that we will attend meetings and training and that we will take time to keep everyone informed of our whereabouts and key activities.

Board of Trustees Code of Conduct

Equality and diversity

Trustees' behaviour and attitudes are consistent with the values of the Citizens Advice Service Aims and Principles and the agreed equality and diversity strategy.

Respect

Trustees must treat each other, members of staff and all others they come into contact with when working in their role with respect and courtesy at all times.

Commitment

Trustees must devote sufficient time preparing for and attending meetings to ensure they add value to the Board's work.

No Personal Gain

Trustees must not benefit from their position beyond what is allowed by the law and what is in the interests of the Organisation. Trustees should take decisions solely in terms of the Organisation's best interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends

Conflicts of interest

Trustees should promptly declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts affecting them. They must absent themselves from any discussion where there is any such conflict.

Probity

Trustees must comply with any rules agreed by the Board including those relating to the acceptance of gifts and hospitality and the avoidance of activities which might compromise Citizens Advice's political neutrality.

Openness and accountability

Trustees must be open, responsive and accountable to each other, members of staff and other stakeholders about their decisions, actions and work, including their use of resources.

Trustees must disclose anything in their past which could bring the organisation's service into disrepute e.g. removal from any previous governance role or membership of organisations which may conflict with the aims, principles and values of the Citizens Advice Service.

Confidentiality

Trustees must respect the status of confidential issues they read and discuss. They are bound to maintain the status of this material and any discussions.

Integrity

Trustees are required to use their knowledge, expertise and experience to take the best decisions they can in the interests of the charity. They are equally responsible for all decisions of the Board. Trustees must also promote and support the principles of good governance by leadership and example and should act in an individual capacity and not as a representative of any other group or organisation.

The Trustees commit to upholding this Code of Conduct in full. A substantial breach of any part of this code may result in removal from the Trustee Board. Where a Trustee considers that the Code has been breached he or she will inform the Chair. The Chair will convene a meeting to investigate the matter and will facilitate an appropriate resolution.