**Churches Together in England (CTE)**

**Trustee Code of Conduct**

**1. Introduction**

Churches Together in England is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee, whose objectives (“the Objects”) are defined as the advancement of the Christian Religion in accordance with its statement of faith, the relief of poverty and the advancement of education and any other purposes which are charitable according to the law of England and Wales.

The charity seeks (within its general objectives) to be a visible sign of the churches’ commitment to one another, in obedience to our Lord’s Prayer “that they may all be one. As you, Father are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me”. (John 17:21).

Churches Together in England is the national ecumenical instrument supporting and encouraging churches from a wide range of traditions to work together in unity.

Trustees of Churches Together in England (CTE) play an important role in both governance and advocacy for the English ecumenical instrument. They are legally the body responsible for policy and good governance, and work closely with the CTE Enabling Group which appoints them. The commitment they make in time, experience and expertise is invaluable.

Trustees have responsibilities both under UK company law as directors and under UK charity law as trustees. As part of this, each Trustee is asked to agree to abide by the Code of Conduct set out in this document and to sign the Trustee’s Declaration accordingly. This is to be read in conjunction with the Articles of Association of the Charity.

**2. Purpose**

The Code aims to define the standards expected of CTE 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 staff and members 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 charity as a whole. They should not act in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family, their friends, or the organisation they come from.

**3.2 Integrity**

CTE 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;
* Should adhere to the Anti-Fraud, Bribery, Corruption and Malpractice Policy and avoid accepting gifts and hospitality that might reasonably be thought to influence their judgement. Any gift or hospitality received in any connection to the charity over the value of £25 GBP should be declared to the Board.

**3.3 Objectivity**

In carrying out their role, including making appointments, awarding contracts, recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, or transacting other business, the Trustees should ensure that decisions are made solely on merit.

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

**3.4 Accountability**

CTE Trustees:

* Have a duty to comply with constitutional and legal requirements and to adhere to official organisational policies and best practice in such a way as to preserve confidence in the charity;
* Are accountable to the organisation’s members, represented through the Enabling Group, for their decisions, the effectiveness of the Board, and the performance of the organisation.

**3.5 Openness**

The Trustees should comply with CTE’s Data Protection Policy and 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 Honesty**

The Trustees have a duty to avoid any conflict of interest so far as is reasonably practicable and adhere to CTE’s Conflict of Interest policy. This will be done through the annual declaration of interests or at a time when it is relevant. In particular, they must make known any interest in any matter under discussion which:

* Creates either a real danger of bias (that is, the interest affects him/her, or a member of his/her family, or friends, or organisation, more than the generality affected by the decision); or,
* Which might reasonably cause others to think it could influence the decision.
* He/she should declare the nature of the interest and withdraw from the room and not participate in discussion and decision making, unless the remaining Trustees agree otherwise.

**3.7 Leadership**

The Trustees must:

* Promote and support the principles of leadership by example
* Attend all meetings regularly (unless there are exceptional reasons not to do so), namely, trustee meetings and Enabling Group meetings, ensuring they prepare for and contribute appropriately and effectively, and avoid dominating the contributions of others;
* Bring a fair and open-minded view to all discussions of the Board, maintaining a respectful balance between speaking and listening, treating different views with respect, and ensuring that all decisions are made in the charity’s best interests;
* Respect the authority of the Chairs of the Board, and the chair of any meeting;
* Having given delegated authority to any of their number or to any staff, be careful - individually and collectively - not to undermine it by word or action.
* Accept and respect the difference in roles between the Board and staff, ensuring that the honorary officers, the Board and staff work effectively and cohesively for the benefit of the organisation, and develop a mutually supportive and loyal relationship;
* Respect the roles of staff, and of management arrangements in the staff team, avoiding any actions that might undermine such arrangements;
* Abide by any equal opportunities, diversity, health and safety, safeguarding, bullying and harassment policies and any other policies agreed by the Board;
* Maintain respectful, collegial, and courteous relationships with contacts established in the Board member role;
* When speaking or writing as a Board member, ensure comments reflect current organisational policy even when they might be at variance with personal views;

**3.8 Values and reputation**

CTE Trustees are committed to the purpose, objects and values of the organisation.

They undertake, within the provisions of this Code, to protect the reputation of the organization. In particular, Trustees should:

* ensure that their personal conduct does not compromise CTE’s values and does not impact on or undermine their ability to undertake the role
* when speaking privately (that is, when speaking not as a Board member) make great efforts to uphold the reputation of the charity and those who work in it
* not give interviews or provide information to the media unless specifically authorised to do so.

**4. Breaches of the Code**

In cases where there is a concern that a Trustee has breached this Code, the matter will be reviewed by the Chair and deputy Chair, or the Chair and another Trustee, or two Trustees appointed by the Chairs. They will make a recommendation to the Board. (If a concern has been raised about one of the Chairs, the review will be undertaken by the other Chair and another Trustee).

The Board will decide whether to discuss the recommendation in closed session. Any sanctions will be determined by the Board, up to and including requiring the Trustee concerned to resign from the Board. The Trustee will accept the decision of the Board in such cases.

**5. Trustee’s Declaration**

**I hereby consent to act as a director and trustee of Churches Together in England (‘the Company’). My consent will continue until I either revoke my consent or resign as a director and trustee.**

I declare that:

* I am over age 18.
* I am not an undischarged bankrupt.
* I have not previously been removed from Trusteeship of a UK or overseas charity by a court or charity commission.
* I am not under a disqualification order under the UK Company Directors’ Disqualification Act 1986 or an overseas equivalent.
* I am, in the light of the above, not disqualified by section 72 of the UK Charities Act 1993 as amended by the UK Charities Act 2006 from acting as a charity Trustee.
* I undertake to fulfil my responsibilities and duties as a Trustee of the charity in good faith and in accordance with the law and within the charity’s objects, mission and values.
* I do not have any financial or other interests in conflict with those of the charity (either in person or through family or friends or business connections) except those that I have formally notified in a conflict of interest statement.
* I will make known any interest in any matter under discussion which creates either a real danger of bias (that is, the interest affects me, or a member of my family, or friends, or organisation, more than the generality affected by the decision); or which might reasonably cause others to think it could influence the decision, and withdraw from the room and not participate in discussion or decision making, unless the remaining Trustees agree otherwise.
* I have read carefully and understand CTE’s Code of Conduct and hereby agree to abide by its requirements and commit to upholding the standards of conduct required to support CTE’s aims, values and beliefs.
* In the event of my breaching this Code I am prepared to accept sanction as determined by the Board.

Name:

[please also list below any previous names used in the last 20 years]

Residential address:

Postcode

Country of Residence:

Date of Birth:

Nationality:

Occupation:

Email address:

Phone number (land line or mobile)

**Signature of director / trustee:**

Dated:

This Code will be reviewed annually by CTE.

Approved by the Board of Trustees of Churches Together in England

Signed

Dated

Reference Minute