



Trustee Duties

What are the duties of a Trustee?

Trustees have overall control of a charity and are responsible for making sure it's doing what it was set up to do. Trustees are the people who lead the charity and decide how it is run. Being a trustee means making decisions that will impact on people's lives. You will be making a difference to your local community and society as a whole.

Trustees use their skills and experience to support their charities, helping them achieve their aims. Trustees also often learn new skills during their time on the board.

Trustees' 6 main duties:

1. Ensure SCBP is carrying out its purposes for the public benefit

This means:

- Understanding the charity's objects as set out in the memorandum and Articles of Association.
- Setting strategic direction, approving strategic plans and policies to fulfil the objects.
- Appointing, supporting and challenging the chief executive to ensure the operation of the charity is consistent with the strategy set by the board, and SCBP's objectives
- Ensuring the charity is not spending money on activities which are not included in the objects.

2. Comply with SCBP governing document and the law

This means:

- Reading the [governing documents](#).
- Taking reasonable steps to familiarize themselves with legal requirements – particularly charity and company law - reading relevant guidance or taking appropriate advice when needed.
- Raising concerns if they feel the charity is not complying, or at risk of not complying, with its memorandum and articles or the law.

3. Act in SCBP's best interests

This means:

- Making balanced and adequately informed decisions, thinking about the long term as well as the short term, which will best enable the charity to carry out its purposes.
- To uphold all decisions made by the board.
- Avoiding putting themselves in a position where their duty to SCBP conflicts with their personal interests or loyalty to any other person or body.
- Not receiving any benefit from SCBP unless it is properly authorised and is clearly in SCBP's best interest. This applies also to anyone who is financially connected to them, such as a partner, immediate relative or business partner.
- Abide by SCBP policies and [The Seven Principle of Public Life](#)

4. Manage SCBP's resources responsibly

This means:

- Acting responsibly, reasonably and honestly.
- Approving the financial strategy and annual budgets to ensure financial stability
- Ensuring proper investment of funds.
- Setting and overseeing a risk management policy
- Not over-committing SCBP.
- Complying with any restrictions which donors place on spending their donations.
- Ensuring appropriate procedures and safeguards are in place to manage resources responsibly.
- Approving the Annual report and accounts

5. Act with reasonable care and skill

This means:

- Using reasonable care and skill, making use of their skills and experience and taking appropriate advice when necessary.
- Giving enough time, thought and energy to the role.
- Preparing for, attending and actively participating in board meetings and subcommittees.
- Participating in board development processes including governance reviews, appraisals, skills and diversity audits, induction and training.
- Safeguard SCBP's reputation and promote its vision, mission and values

6. Ensure SCBP is accountable

This means:

- Ensuring SCBP is complying with statutory accounting and reporting requirements to the Charity Commission, Companies House, HMRC and other relevant regulators.
- Ensuring appropriate accountability to members and beneficiaries.
- Approving the strategic and business plans, agreeing targets and evaluating performance against them.

For further guidance on the responsibilities of charity trustees please see:

- [Our Constitution](#)
- [The Charity Governance Code](#)
- [The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do](#)
- [The Seven Principle of Public Life](#)
- [NCVO's Charity Ethical Principles](#)