

Conflict of Interest Policy

Status:	Published	Version:	1
Audience:	Staff and volunteers		
Owner:	Clare Radlett	Author:	Clare Radlett
Date Approved:	06/02/2023	Next Revision Date:	06/02/2025

1. Purpose and Scope

All staff, volunteers, and Trustees of ADCH will strive to avoid any conflict of interest between the interests of the Organisation on the one hand, and personal, professional, and business interests on the other. This includes avoiding actual conflicts of interest as well as the perception of conflicts of interest.

The purposes of this policy are to protect the integrity of ADCH's decision-making process, to enable the public and public bodies to have confidence in our integrity, and to protect the integrity and reputation of volunteers, staff and Trustees.

ADCH is presented with an additional challenge in that our volunteers and Trustees are very often comprised of organisations that can directly benefit from ADCH membership.

2. Policy/ Procedure

Trustees

Those who serve on the ADCH Board of Trustees have responsibilities both under Company Law as directors and under Charity Law as Trustees. As part of this each Trustee is asked:

- To agree to abide by the Code of Conduct
- To declare their other interests at the commencement of their term and advise of any changes during their term (using the form at [Annex A](#))
- To advise the Chair of any potential conflicts with any agenda items at the commencement of each meeting

The Declaration of Interests form at [Annex A](#) should be completed to declare any direct or indirect involvement, interest or employment (including self-employment, consultancy and volunteer work) with any other organisation. When considering what to declare please err on the side of caution. Two common types of conflict are related to loyalty, or financial in nature. If unsure about declaring any interests please contact the Secretary for confidential guidance. Please complete and return this form to the Secretary. This information will be held on ADCH's secure CRM system. Changes of circumstances should be communicated to the Secretary.

ADCH may require you to abstain from specific discussions and decisions or stop such involvement/s, if you or a member of close family have an interest which impacts, or could have the perception on reputation of the charity, or otherwise impacts on your ability to undertake your role of Trustee for ADCH effectively.

In event of the Board having to decide upon a question in which a Trustee has an interest, assuming the conflict has been identified from the agenda or papers provided for the meeting the interest should be declared at the outset of the meeting. If the conflict has not been identified prior to the meeting the trustee should declare their interest as soon as it becomes apparent. The Trustee should then:

- Withdraw from the meeting, unless expressly invited to remain in order to provide information
- Will not be counted in the quorum for that part of the meeting
- Withdraw during any vote on the matter and take no part in the vote
- The minutes of the meeting will clearly record the nature and extent of the conflict of interest and the action taken to manage the conflict

Where a Trustee benefits from the decision, this will be recorded in the annual report and accounts in accordance with the Charities Statement Of Recommended Practice. All payments and benefits in kind to Trustees will be fully disclosed in the charity's accounts and annual report

Assessors

Assessors are appointed to undertake assessments against ADCH's Minimum Welfare and Operational Standards of members and potential members. It is vital that their assessment and statements of findings of the rescue's operations are unbiased and factual. Assessors will not be appointed to assess a rescue:

- Where they have been a member of staff or volunteer in the last three years
- Where either they, or someone else in their organisation, has acted as a referee when assessing an applicant for membership
- In the case of RSPCA or CP branches, assessors who work or volunteer for a branch may not assess another branch
- Or if they have any other connections with a rescue which could give the perception of affecting their impartiality. Examples may include where the rescue is run by individuals who have previously been part of the assessor's employing organisation.

In these cases, the Assessor will not be asked to be involved in the assessment of the rescue.

Assessors will be asked to complete the Declaration of Interest form at [Annex A](#) when they are appointed as assessors. This information will be held against their records of ADCH's secure CRM system.

Central team (staff and volunteers)

Staff and volunteers in the Central team should complete a Declaration of Interest form at [Annex A](#) when they are appointed declaring any other forms of paid employment, or volunteer positions held. This information will be held on ADCH's secure CRM system.

Committee members

Committee Members should complete a Declaration of Interest form at Annex A when they are appointed declaring any other forms of paid employment, or volunteer positions held. This information will be held on ADCH's secure CRM system.

All

In the event that anyone in ADCH in a staff or voluntary role believes that an interest has not been declared (intentionally or unintentionally) they should notify the Chair/Vice Chair/Secretary or Chair of Governance Committee.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Trustees

Trustees should always:

- Strive to act in the best interests of the organisation.
- Declare any conflict of interest, or any circumstance that might be viewed by others as a conflict of interest, as soon as it arises.
- Submit to the judgment of the board and do as it requires regarding potential conflicts of interest.

As a Trustee you are required to act with integrity in a fair, transparent and impartial basis in the best interests of the charity, and with clear avoidance of any real or perceived conflict of interest that might place ADCH's property, funds, assets or reputation at undue risk. Conflicts of interest may apply where

an individual's personal or family interests and/or loyalties conflict with those of the charity. Such conflicts may:

- Inhibit free discussion
- Result in decisions or actions that are not in the interests of charity
- Risk the impression that the charity has acted improperly.

Assessors

Assessors are responsible for ensuring that the information they provide at their initial appointment, and through regular monitoring, is accurate. They should also consider each assessment they are appointed to before commencement of the exercise.

Records of declarations will be held and managed by the Standards and Operations Officer.

Central team (staff and volunteers)

Central team staff and volunteers are responsible for updating their declaration with any changes in-year.

Committee members

Committee members are responsible for updating their declaration with any changes in-year.

4. Monitoring

Trustees

To ensure the process for registering interests remains effective Trustees will be asked to complete the declaration annually (in February) and to ensure any changes to their interests are notified when they occur.

Assessors

To ensure the process for registering interests remains effective assessors will be asked to complete the declaration annually (in February) and to ensure any changes to their interests are notified when they occur.

Central team (staff and volunteers)

To ensure the process for registering interests remains effective Central team staff and volunteers will be asked to complete the declaration annually (in February) and to ensure any changes to their interests are notified when they occur.

Committee members

To ensure the process for registering interests remains effective Committee members will be asked to complete the declaration annually (in February) and to ensure any changes to their interests are notified when they occur.

5. Further Information

[ADCH Constitution](#)

Further general information for Trustees is available in the Charity Commission's operational guidance A Guide to Conflicts of Interest for Charity Trustees. Further general information for Trustees is available in the Charity Commission's operational guidance [A Guide to Conflicts of Interest for Charity Trustees](#).

Version History

Version	Changes Made	Date	Made by
1	First Release	06/02/2023	Clare Radlett

Annex A
Register of Interests form

Name:	
Role:	
Date:	
Interest 1 <i>(please give details of the organisation(s) involved, dates of involvement, and any links/relationships that impact this interest):</i>	
Interest 2 <i>(please give details of the organisation(s) involved, dates of involvement, and any links/relationships that impact this interest):</i>	
Interest 3 <i>(please give details of the organisation(s) involved, dates of involvement, and any links/relationships that impact this interest):</i>	
Declaration:	
Signed:	

Please return to the Secretary of ADCH (secretary@adch.org.uk)