



West Somerset Railway Association

Code of Conduct for Association Trustees and Promotions Board Members

Introduction

1. To pursue the objects of the WSRA we must act within company and charity law and in concert with other organisations associated with the West Somerset Railway, and the other communities of which we are part, including the West Somerset Railway as a whole, the Somerset community, heritage railways, and the charity sector, our members, railway staff, volunteers and supporters.
2. In doing this we should be seen to set and lead standards of behaviour. Others have trusted us with positions of responsibility and we should live up to that trust in all that we do, whether that be private or public conversations, documents or more modern methods such as social media. We should ask ourselves whether anything we do, be it directly as a Trustee or Director or when apparently acting personally, is, and will be seen as, in the best interests of the WSRA and our communities.

Responsibilities

3. It is the RESPONSIBILITY of trustees / board members to:
 - Act within the Articles of Association and the law – being aware of the contents of the organisation's governing document and the law as it applies to the WSRA.
 - Act in the best interest of the WSRA as a whole – considering what is best for the organisation and its beneficiaries and avoiding bringing the WSRA into disrepute.
 - Manage conflicts of interest effectively – registering, declaring and resolving conflicts of interest. Not gaining materially or financially from any association or connection with the WSRA unless specifically authorised to do so.
 - Respect confidentiality both in conversations with individuals or groups, in person or modern means such as social media – understanding what confidentiality means in practice for the WSRA, such as avoiding sharing board conversations with outsiders until a decision has been reached and limiting discussion of decisions made to the accounts in the public minutes.
 - Have a sound and up-to-date knowledge of the WSRA and its environment – understanding how the WSRA works and the environment within which it operates, particularly its relationship with the other members of the WSR “railway family.”
 - Attend meetings and other appointments or give apologies – considering other ways of engaging with the organisation if unable to attend trustee meetings.

- Prepare fully for meetings and all work for the WSRA – reading papers, querying anything not fully understood and thinking through issues in good time before meeting. Actively engage in discussion, both face-to-face and by e mail, debate and voting in meetings – contributing positively, listening carefully, challenging sensitively and avoiding conflict or belittling other member’s views.
- Work considerately and respectfully with all – respecting diversity, different roles and boundaries, and avoiding giving offence.
- Act jointly and accept majority decisions – making decisions collectively and standing by them publicly once made.

Communications

4. Trustees/board members are REMINDED of the harm that has been done to the Railway by the history of conflict between WSR organisations, and by negative publicity generated through social or other media. Statements by any trustee / Board member may be interpreted as statements by the organisation. For those reasons, public communications, including internal and external Press Releases, articles and the like, will be agreed where possible and issued in accordance with agreed procedures.
5. Also, for those reasons, trustees / board members are specifically reminded to AVOID:
 - Public comment (by whatever means) detrimental to any West Somerset Railway body, or any directors/employees/volunteers of that body or other persons associated with that body.
 - Negative comments about any West Somerset Railway body or individual in face-to-face communication with individuals or groups.
6. Trustees are expected to honour the CONTENT and SPIRIT of this code.

I have received and will abide by a copy of this code

Signed

Name

Date