Trustee Code of Conduct

A code of conduct is an agreement determined by the trustee board that outlines the standards of behaviour and conduct expected of individual trustees.

A model trustee code of conduct is attached which can be used as a guide for a trustee board to agree its own standards.

# Model Trustee Code of Conduct

As a trustee of Mothers' Union in the diocese of .................................., I promise to abide by the fundamental values that underpin all the activity of this organisation. These are:

Our values

## Accountability

Everything Mothers' Union does will be able to stand the test of scrutiny by the public, the media, charity regulators, members, stakeholders, funders, parliament and the courts.

## Integrity and honesty

These will be the hallmarks of all conduct when dealing with colleagues within Mothers' Union and equally when dealing with individuals and institutions outside it.

## Transparency

Mothers' Union strives to maintain an atmosphere of openness throughout the organisation to promote confidence of the public, stakeholders, staff, charity regulators and parliament.

Additionally, I agree to the following points:

## Law, mission, policies

* I will act within the governing document of Mothers' Union in the diocese of ……………………… and abide by the policies and procedures of the organisation.
* I will not break the law or go against charity regulations in any aspect of my role of trustee.
* I will support the vision, mission and aims of Mothers' Union and act as their guardian and champion.
* I will develop and maintain an up-to-date knowledge of Mothers' Union and its environment.

## Conflicts of interest

* I will always strive to act in the best interests of Mothers' Union as a whole and not as a representative of any group, considering what is best for Mothers' Union in the diocese and its present and future beneficiaries.
* I will declare any conflict of interest, or any circumstance that might be viewed by others as a conflict of interest, as soon as it arises.
* I will submit to the judgment of the board and do as it requires regarding potential conflicts of interest.

## Person to person

* I will not break the law, go against charity regulations or act in disregard of organisational policies in my relationships with fellow trustees, members, staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, contractors or anyone I come into contact with in my role as trustee.
* I will strive to establish respectful, collegial and courteous relationships.
* Where I also volunteer with the organisation, I will maintain the separation of my role as a trustee and as a volunteer.

## Protecting the reputation of Mothers' Union

* I will not speak as a trustee of Mothers' Union to the media or in a public forum unless authorised by the board of trustees to do so. In the event that authorisation has not been obtained beforehand, I will inform the diocesan president as soon as possible.
* When I am speaking as a trustee of Mothers' Union, my comments will reflect current organisational policy and not my personal views.
* When speaking as a private citizen I will strive to uphold the reputation of Mothers' Union and those who work in it.
* I will respect organisational, board and individual confidentiality.

## Personal gain

* I will not personally gain materially or financially from my role as trustee, nor will I permit others to do so as a result of my actions or negligence.
* I will use organisational resources responsibly. I will document expenses and seek reimbursement according to procedure.
* I will not accept gifts or hospitality without prior consent of the diocesan president or trustee board.

## In trustee meetings

* I will strive to embody the principles of leadership in all my actions and live up to the trust placed in me by the members of Mothers' Union.
* I accept my responsibility to ensure that Mothers' Union is well run and will raise issues and questions in an appropriate and sensitive way to ensure that this is the case.
* I will abide by board governance procedures and practices.
* I will strive to attend all board meetings, giving apologies ahead of time if unable to attend.
* I will study the agenda and other information sent me in good time prior to the meeting and be prepared to debate and vote on agenda items during the meeting.
* I will respect the role of the diocesan president as chair of the trustee board.
* I will engage in debate and voting in meetings according to procedure, maintaining a respectful attitude toward the opinions of others while making my voice heard.
* I will accept a majority board vote on an issue as decisive and final.
* I will maintain confidentiality about what goes on in the board unless authorised by the board to speak of it.

## Enhancing governance

* I will participate in induction, training and development activities for trustees.
* I will continually seek ways to improve board governance practice.
* I will strive to identify good candidates for trusteeship on the basis of merit.
* I will support the diocesan president in his/her efforts to improve his/her leadership skills.

## Leaving the board

* I understand that substantial breach of any part of this code may result in my removal from the trustee board.
* Should procedures be put in motion that may result in my being asked to resign from the board, I will be given the opportunity to be heard. In the event that I am asked to resign from the board, I will accept the majority decision of the board and resign at the earliest opportunity.
* Should I resign from the board I will inform the diocesan president in advance in writing, stating my reasons for resigning.

*Based on a sample Code of Conduct in the KnowHow section of the NCVO website.*