# Trustees Code of Conduct Guide

# When should you consider having a code of conduct?

The Charity Governance Code provides for recommended practices that trustees should follow. One such recommendation is that all charities adopt and adhere to a suitable code of conduct that sets out expected standards of probity and behaviour. It is therefore good practice for all charities to undertake a periodic review of their governance arrangements and to consider whether a code of conduct is appropriate.

In considering whether to adopt a code of conduct, charities will need to give thought to their governing documents, and ensure that the code of conduct adequately reflects the trustees’ powers therein. In the event of a conflict between a code of conduct and the charity’s governing documents, the governing documents will preside

What does a code of conduct cover?

A code of conduct may include:

* an outline of the role and function of trustees
* standards of conduct
* acting within the charity’s governing document and the law
* acting in the charity’s best interests
* acting with integrity and honesty
* confidentiality
* trustee benefits and conflicts of interest
* attending board meetings.

A code of conduct can also include examples of behaviour that should assist trustees in making good decisions that further the charity’s objects.

A code of conduct is a useful document to assist charities in deciphering appropriate behaviour. Whilst a code of conduct is not in itself a legal requirement, some of its contents may include legal requirements. It is worth considering whether a code of conduct is appropriate for your charity to ensure greater transparency, accountability and responsibility.