



# **The Devonshire Association**

## **Policies document**

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## **Policies**

The following policies, subject to annual review, have been approved by the Executive Committee:-

- 1) Conflicts of Interest
- 2) Risk Management
- 3) Complaints
- 4) Vulnerable Beneficiaries
- 5) Pay Policy
- 6) Investment
- 7) Volunteer Management
- 8) Data Privacy

Nick Wells  
Hon. Secretary  
June 2017

# 1. Conflict of Interest Policy

Approved June 2017  
Last reviewed and amended April 2023  
Next review April 2024

The policy forms part of the Association's governance arrangements. The policy explains the Association's approach to conflicts of interest and documents the responsibilities of the Executive Committee (who are also the Trustees). While this policy is subject to annual review by the Executive Committee, conflicts of interest are addressed as they arise.

The Association understands the importance of reporting conflicts of interest as this is an important safeguard to protect the interests of the Association. The Executive Committee will strive to avoid any conflict of interest between the interests of the Association on the one hand, and personal, professional and business interests on the other. This includes perceived as well as actual conflicts.

The purpose of this policy is to protect the integrity of the Association's decision-making process, to enable members and others to have confidence in our integrity, and to protect the reputation of Executive Committee members. The risk of such conflicts arising is currently assessed to be low. The most significant potential conflicts lie in the granting of contracts to third parties such as publishers, printers or venue providers. Such potential for conflicted interests is managed by:-Executive Committee members are required to notify a conflict of interest to the Committee should such arise, in advance of or during a meeting, and to stand aside from decisions made on matters where they are conflicted. Typically, Executive Committee members will be asked to leave the room for discussion of the item and the minutes will record who was present for the discussion and decision.

With effect from February 2017, in line with good practice, there is a standing agenda item for members to declare any conflicts of interest, at the start of the meeting.

With effect from June 2017, a register collating Executive Committee interests will be compiled drawing on declarations of interests made with such declarations to be held on file by the Registrar.

Upon election or co-option, each Executive Committee member will make a full, written disclosure of interests, such as relationships, and posts held that could potentially result in a conflict of interest. Such disclosure will be included in the register referred to above subject to compliance with the Association's Privacy Policy and GDPR guidelines.

Decisions committing the Association to expenditure above modest limits require authorisation (the expenditure limits are set and reviewed by the Executive Committee from time to time). When entering into a new financial commitment more than one quote should be obtained, unless the expenditure is under £1,000. For repeat arrangements, we seek to ensure expenditure is broadly at the same cost as previously, as well as broadly in line with the market.

The Policy will be shared with Branches and Sections so that they can develop an approach in line with this policy.

## 2. Risk Management Policy

Approved	May 2017
Reviewed	June 2023
Next review	June 2024

The policy forms part of the Association's governance arrangements.

The policy explains the Association's approach to organisational risk management and documents the responsibilities of the Executive Committee (who are also the Trustees). While this policy is subject to annual review by the Executive Committee, risks to the good governance of the charity, its objectives and members are addressed as they are identified.

The Executive Committee understands the importance of identifying and mitigating risk as unmanaged risk can impact the Association's ability to meet its aims and at its worst lead to closure. The Executive Committee will endeavour to assess risks fully and act prudently to mitigate or eliminate identified risks.

The Executive Committee has responsibility for overseeing organisational risk management and in communicating its approach to risk. The Executive Committee determines what types of risk are acceptable and which are not. Major risks have been identified, taking into account the list of risks set out on the Charity Commission website (CC26 - Charities and Risk). These risks are monitored.

The Officers of the Association's Sections and Branches are encouraged to assess in advance the likelihood and the severity of possible hazards when organising and running events including visits, site tours and talks.

The Executive undertakes risk workshops periodically. Risks identified relate to physical, people, premises, IT, and financial integrity. Reasonable endeavours are taken to identify hazards, risks and solutions for their mitigation and these are kept under periodic review.

An open approach to mitigating identified risks is adopted by the Executive Committee. Risks are openly discussed and solutions are put forward for evaluation. When presenting significant plans and proposals, such as for events, Executive Committee members are asked to show the total financial commitment on a worst-case basis as well as a realistic budget. Typically, 'what if' scenarios are examined. The varied skills and experience of the Executive are brought to bear.

### **3. Complaints Handling Policy**

Approved May 2017

Last reviewed September 2023

Next review October 2024

The policy forms part of the Association's governance arrangements.

The policy explains the Association's approach to handling complaints and documents the responsibilities of the Executive Committee (who are also the Trustees) and the Registrar. This policy is subject to annual review by the Executive Committee.

The Association accepts that from time to time it will receive complaints. With limited resources, including one part-time employee and otherwise reliance on volunteers, the service expected by some members and other contacts may exceed what is reasonable.

All expressions of dissatisfaction whether written, by phone or in person, will be reported by the Registrar or Executive Committee member to the Vice Chair or to a Nominated Trustee if the Vice Chair is the subject of, or is associated with, the complaint or complainant. A written record will be kept. The Vice Chair or nominee will be responsible for determining the response to complaints. The Vice Chair or nominee will inform the Executive Committee about the complaint and action taken.

Complainants will be responded to politely. A response will be provided immediately where possible and no later than 20 working days after receipt.

Should the response not resolve the complaint, the Vice Chair or nominee will escalate the complaint to a panel of three trustees appointed by the Nominated Trustees and a further response will be made.

Should this not resolve the complaint, the Association will respond to say that it has exhausted its procedures and that it has recorded the failure to agree. The written response will include reference to an arbitration service, a Regulator or to the Charity Commissioners as appropriate and as a last resort. In some circumstances, it may be appropriate to end the relationship by return of the current year's annual membership subscription.

## 4. Vulnerable Beneficiaries Policy

Approved	May 2017
Last reviewed	February 2023
Next review	February 2024

The policy forms part of the Association's governance arrangements.

The policy explains the Association's approach to vulnerable beneficiaries and documents the responsibilities of the Executive Committee (who are also the Trustees). This policy is subject to annual review by the Executive Committee.

Vulnerable beneficiaries are defined by the Charity Commission in their Policy Paper on this topic published on the internet, as children and persons under the age of 18 and adults who are in receipt of a regulated activity. Regulated activities are further defined as the provision of healthcare, relevant personal care, and/or social work; assistance with general household matters and/or in the conduct of the adult's own affairs; and /or an adult who is conveyed to, from, or between places, where they receive healthcare, relevant personal care or social work because of their age, illness or disability. It is the responsibility of charity Trustees to safeguard such individuals from maltreatment and to prevent impairment of health.

As membership of the Association is open to the general public, and non-members may attend the Association's events, it is possible that vulnerable beneficiaries could participate in the Association's activities. However, without a screening process, which may be regarded by members and attendees as intrusive and inappropriate, this vulnerability may not always be evident.

In order to mitigate potential problems, the Trustees therefore require the following actions to be taken:

1. Those running meetings or events should as a matter of course pay close attention to the safety of all those attending. Access for disability should always be considered and where possible, provision made.
2. Those aged under 18 attending the Association's activities may only do so in the company of a responsible adult. That adult will be responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of the child or young person.
3. The Registrar will notify the Committee of any members, or those seeking to join, aged under 18, and a relevant responsible adult will be contacted to advise what is necessary in order for the child or young person to attend meetings or events.

## 5. Pay Policy

Approved May 2017

Last reviewed June 2023

Next review June 2024

The policy forms part of the Association's governance arrangements. The policy explains the Association's approach to paying its one employee. The employee, our Registrar, works part-time.

The Association understands the need to pay its employees at a level which supports their retention and provides appropriate motivation. The level of base salary is benchmarked by reference to an internet search, for example, of salaries offered under live charity vacancies in the South West. Base Annual Salary is reviewed each year on the anniversary of the Registrar's commencement of employment, currently September.

The Review will not necessarily lead to an increase in the level of pay. Increases in responsibility and in the cost of living are taken into account when reviewing the level of pay. Any increase in Base Annual Salary is recommended by the Hon. Secretary, who is the Registrar's line manager, for approval by the Chairman and Treasurer. Details of the revised salary amount should be provided to the Executive Committee. The current level of pay exceeds the National Living Wage.

Where the employee works, by mutual agreement, hours additional to those contracted, pay is at the standard hourly rate. Pension contributions are made in line with current Government legislative requirements relating to pensions auto-enrolment.

## 6. Investment Policy

Approved	December 2017
Revised	November 2020
Last reviewed	November 2022
Next review	November 2023

The policy, which forms part of the Association's governance arrangements, explains the Association's investment objectives and how it seeks to achieve them. It is subject to annual review by the Executive Committee.

The scope of the Association's investment powers is set out in Rule 3 vi) of the Rules, 2004: 'the Association may invest the monies of the Association in such investments or securities as may be authorised by law for the investment of charity funds'.

The Honorary Treasurer is encouraged to ensure that cash required for day-to-day purposes is held, where possible and practicable, in interest-bearing bank accounts.

The Association's long-term investments are to be invested in the stock market subject to advice received from our appointed Financial Advisers, who specialise in private clients. Our Advisers are to be authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and will be a member of the London Stock Exchange. Our Financial Advisers are to provide an Advisory Managed service to the Association, recommending changes to the investment portfolio. The final decision on such changes rests with the Trustees. In this regard, the Executive Committee has nominated the Finance Working Group to act on their behalf, so that it is not necessary to bring all Trustees together to make a decision. The Finance Working Group is composed of at least four trustees, one of whom is the Honorary Treasurer. Decisions may be made by the Honorary Treasurer and no less than two of the other members of the Finance Working Group. As well as contact by phone and email, face-to-face meetings will take place periodically with the person in the Financial Adviser's team who is responsible for our portfolio.

Investment income is an important part of the Association's funding. Accordingly, the primary investment objective is balanced return, that is, a balance between capital growth and income, subject to a medium level of risk. This appetite for a medium level of risk is considered appropriate in view of the intended long-term nature of our investments.

Instructions will be given to our Financial Adviser that as changes are made to the investment portfolio, future purchases are not made into funds with known holdings in the tobacco, alcohol, and defence/firearms industries.

The Trustees require the Financial Adviser to provide written statements of portfolio performance at least twice per year. Investment performance will be reviewed at least annually by the Trustees when reviewing the annual Accounts. Ad hoc performance reports can be provided at the request of a single Trustee.

This policy is communicated by inclusion with other policies on the Association's website.

## 7. Volunteer Management Policy

Approved	April 2018
Reviewed and approved	April 2021
Next review	April 2022

The policy, which forms part of the Association's governance arrangements, explains the Association's volunteer policy. The policy helps define the role of volunteers and how they can expect to be treated. It is subject to annual review by the Executive Committee.

The policy has the following objectives:

- To define the role of volunteers in The Devonshire Association and to distinguish their role from that of Trustees and the Registrar;
- To ensure volunteers are treated equally and fairly;
- To allow volunteers to know where they stand, and where they can turn to for support.

### **The Devonshire Association's volunteers**

The Registrar is the sole employee of the Association. The Devonshire Association is a federal organisation with a central organising Executive Committee comprised of the Trustees; Branches located across the county and Sections which explore specific topics of interest in the county.

Those actively managing the Association are not paid, other than reimbursement for out of pocket expenses. Volunteers fall into three categories:

- 1) Trustees, who sit on the Executive Committee, and direct the affairs and finance of the Association. Trustees' details are held on the Charity Commission website. The Executive Committee also organises an Annual Conference and President's Symposium; publishes an annual volume of Report and Transactions as well as *DA News*, and manages the Association's website.
- 2) Individuals who sit on the committees of the Association's Branches and Sections. These persons typically organise an annual programme of lectures, visits, field meetings and social and other events.
- 3) Others who, while not sitting on a committee, may take responsibility for running an event or activity, or arrange publicity, or provide other support.

This policy is intended to cover volunteers under 2) and 3) above. Trustees have well-defined responsibilities set out by the Charity Commission. Refresher training is provided periodically regarding these responsibilities.

The basis of the relationship between the Association and its volunteers is one of reasonable hopes and expectations rather than obligations. Officers are usually voted in for a period of one year at the Branch or Section AGM with the expectation that they will serve for that period.

### **Recruitment of volunteers, including equality and diversity**

The Association welcomes existing and new members becoming more involved in organising activities. Anyone aged 18 or over may participate as a volunteer. Recruitment is typically by word of mouth at DA events. Typically, individuals do not put themselves forward and so it is necessary to approach a person and let them know their involvement would be welcomed. It is important that this is done in a way which does not discriminate in terms of equality or diversity. The

Association recognises that its members have a diverse range of talents and interests which can be applied to take forward the Association's objectives of celebrating and exploring the county of Devon.

If any member feels such standards of behaviour are not being achieved then they should contact the Hon. Secretary in the first instance.

### **Induction**

Induction of volunteers takes place under the auspices of the relevant Branch and Section.

Typically, this will be by taking on a role and learning over time, supported by more experienced members of the Branch or Section.

Executive Committee members or the Registrar will, upon request, attend Branch and Section Committees to provide advice on officer posts and committee succession.

### **Expenses**

Each Branch and Section has an Hon. Treasurer who manages the income and expenditure of that Section and reports to the Association's Hon. Treasurer annually on the financial position by 14 February each year. Such reports must be verified by two persons from within the Branch or Section OR one person from the Branch or Section and one person from the wider membership of the Association, who may or may not be an independent examiner.

Hon. Treasurers reimburse volunteers' out of pocket expenses, against receipts, incurred in relation to the Association's activities.

### **Supervision and Support**

The Association is organised on a federal basis and supervision of volunteers is primarily undertaken by the Branch and Section Committees themselves.

Branches and Sections must operate under the Rules of the Society and in particular those numbered 48 to 59 in the Association's Rules 2004. Any rules that a Branch or Section may make for its governance shall not become operative until they have received the Executive Committee's approval (Rule 53). Guidance in this regard can be obtained from Hon. Secretary.

More general support is available in the first instance from the Registrar who can be contacted by telephone and email. The Registrar reports requests for support to the Hon. Secretary and items are escalated to the Chairman and/or Executive Committee, where appropriate.

## 8. Data Privacy

Approved	April 2018
Last reviewed	June 2019 and amended September 2020
Next review	June 2020

The Association's Data Privacy policy comprises this Privacy Notice and a separate privacy policy relating to the use of our website, available at <https://devonassoc.org.uk/privacy/>.

### PRIVACY NOTICE

This Privacy Notice sets out the basis upon which the Devonshire Association processes personal data. More details about the Association can be found on our website [www.devonassoc.org.uk](http://www.devonassoc.org.uk).

#### Data Controller

The Devonshire Association (DA), registered charity no. 252468, is the Data Controller for the purposes of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018. The Association's Registrar can be contacted at our offices, Unit 10, Chitterley Business Centre, Silverton, Exeter, EX5 4DB; Tel 01392 860456; email [registrar@devonassoc.org.uk](mailto:registrar@devonassoc.org.uk).

#### Personal data held

The personal data held by the DA is obtained from the completion of forms (paper or electronic):

- Membership application form: name, address, telephone number, email address, occupation
- Gift Aid form: name, address, signature
- Annual Conference application form: name, address, telephone number, email address
- Symposium application form: name, address, telephone number, email address
- DA Publications: name, address, telephone number, email address
- Use of the Contact the Registrar form on our website: name and email address
- Registration for discussion forums on our website: chosen username and email address.

#### Lawful basis of processing

The Association's lawful basis of processing the personal data that it holds is two fold:

**1. Contract.** Most of our processing is necessary to maintain the contracts that the DA has with its members. This processing consists of:

- the secure storage of data in a database and in paper form
- dealing with enquiries of all types from members
- dealing with membership payments, including applications for Gift Aid
- sending publications by post - an annual copy of *Report and Transactions*, our magazine "DA News", and event programmes sent by Branches and Sections to which the member is joined
- event bookings - the Annual Conference, the President's Symposium, the events organised by Branches and Sections which the member has elected to join, and any other events that the DA may from time to time organise for its members' benefit
- communications between members of committees, including the Executive Committee

Where possible we use email for communication.

**2. Legitimate interests.** We rely on our legitimate interests to do the following:

- sending messages to members that include content about Branches/Sections which they have *not* elected to join
- sending messages to members that include information about events etc. that are arranged by other organisations that share similar interests and objectives as the DA and its members
- replying to enquiries from non-members by post or (where provided) by email.

### **Sharing with third parties**

The DA uses third party providers to deliver part of the services it provides. The following third parties are currently used:

- WebCollect – hosts our membership database. Its privacy policy can be read at <https://webcollect.org.uk/help-topic/privacy-notice>
- GoCardless – processes direct debit payments for WebCollect
- Lloyds Bank – processes payments made to the DA
- The publisher of the DA's *Report and Transactions* – provided with name and address labels to enable issue by post
- The printers of DA News – provided with name and address labels to enable issue by post
- Our website hosting platform – holds contact details for selected members of the Association

The DA will never sell, rent, lease or give away its members' information to third parties, nor does it knowingly transfer data outside the UK.

### **Retention of and access to personal data**

Members' records are held during membership and for a period of twelve months after it ceases. Forms submitted to apply for attendance at the Annual Conference or the President's Symposium are destroyed not more than 30 days after the event has taken place. The names of those attending are held on the database. Personal data used to issue the DA's publications is held for six months after publication.

If you wish your personal data to be erased more quickly than this, you should contact the Registrar in writing. If you would like to access the information the DA holds about you (called a Subject Access Request), or to change the information held, or to cancel membership, please contact the Registrar in writing.

### **Technical and security measures**

Paper membership application forms are held securely at the Association's offices. Any personal data held on the Association's computer equipment is securely backed-up and access to the computer equipment is protected and restricted to named individuals.

Relevant member details are currently shared with a representative of each Branch and Section, and this information can be held by them either electronically or in paper form.

### **Children**

We treat the personal data of anyone under 18 years old to the same high standard of privacy as the rest of our membership. No special provisions are necessary under GDPR since we do not rely on consent to process personal data.

**Breaches**

Data protection breaches will be reported by the DA to the Information Commissioner's Office in line with the requirements of that office. Should a breach occur an investigation would take place to identify the root cause and to put in steps to avoid recurrence.

**Your rights**

These include a right to object to our use of your personal data on grounds relating to your particular situation and the right to lodge a complaint with a supervisory body. If you wish to make a complaint about how the DA has processed your personal data, you may contact the Chairman of the Board of Trustees at the address above in the first instance. If you do not receive a reply within 30 days you may complain to the Information Commissioner's Office.