

**WETHERSFIELD VILLAGE HALL CIO**  
**Registered Charity 1171017**  
**The Green, Wethersfield, Essex CM7 4BS**

**Policies and Procedures**

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**Mission Statement**

This Wethersfield Village Hall is held in Trust for the use of the inhabitants of the Parish of Wethersfield and the neighbourhood in the County of Essex. Its use is for meetings, education, recreation and leisure activities with the object of improving the quality of life in the above area of benefit.

The Charity: The Hall is a registered charity (Charity Registration Number 1171017) and is vested with the Official Custodian of Charities. The Management Committee (Trustees) are responsible for the running of the organisation.

The Trustees: These consist of elected, representative, and co-opted members.

Meetings are held monthly, with an AGM generally in February each year.

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**Finance Policy**

1. The Trustees will manage the assets of the charity in accordance with the Wethersfield Village Hall Trust Deed dated 1st March 2001.
2. The Trustees will insure the Trust Property with a reputable Insurance Company on an 'All Risks' basis for its full rebuild value; the sums insured shall be reviewed at each policy renewal.
3. Financial records will be kept to ensure that Wethersfield Village Hall meets its legal and other obligations under Charity Law, Revenue and Customs and common law.
4. The financial year will end on 31st December and accounts for each financial year will be drawn up and approved by the Trustees prior to being presented to the Annual General Meeting held in February.
5. The accounts will be independently examined by an auditor or examiner of accounts appointed by the AGM.
6. The Trustees will approve an income and expenditure budget prior to the start of each financial year and monitor financial performance at every meeting.

7. The Trustees shall approve a Reserves Policy and determine the extent and nature of reserves designated as Restricted Funds.
8. All funds will be held in accounts in the name of Wethersfield Village Hall at such banks and on such terms as the trustees shall decide. All cheques and transfer documents shall require the signatures of two or three Trustees authorised by minute of a Committee Meeting.
9. The Treasurer shall present a financial report to every meeting of the Trustees: the format and content of the report to be decided by the Trustees.
10. All expenditure shall be properly authorised and documented; all income shall be paid into the bank without delay.

The Trustees will undertake a financial risk assessment of all trust activities and review it annually.

## **Financial Procedures**

### **1) Financial Records**

The Treasurer shall keep the following records up to date:

- a) A cashbook analysing all the transactions in the Wethersfield Village Hall bank account (s)
- b) A petty cash book if cash payments are being made.
- c) Inland Revenue deduction cards P11 and Schedule D numbers for freelance workers.

### **2) Payment Procedure**

- a) The Treasurer will be responsible for holding the cheque book (unused and partly used cheque books), which should be kept under lock and key.
- b) Blank cheques will NEVER be signed.
- c) The relevant payee's name will always be inserted on the cheque before signature and the cheque stub will always be properly completed.
- d) No cheques should be signed without original documentation

### **3) Income Procedure**

- a) All income will be paid into the bank without deduction
- b) Cash is to be counted by the person collecting it and placed in a bag with a pay-in slip showing source, date, amount and signature of collector; the cash to be handed to the Treasurer who should count the cash in the presence of the collector (or other person if collector not present) and confirm the amount.
- c) Hiring agreement forms showing conditions of hire, date, purpose of hire, the rate per hour and total due must be signed by the hirer on

booking. An invoice will be given to the hirer with copy to Treasurer who will collect the outstanding balance and account for the income.

#### **4) Payment Documentation**

- a) An original invoice will evidence every payment out of the bank accounts. The cheque signatory should ensure that it is referenced with the cheque number; Date cheque drawn; Amount of cheque and who signed the cheque.
- b) The only exceptions to cheques not being supported by an original invoice would be for such items as advanced booking fees for a future course, deposit for a venue, VAT etc.

## **Financial Regulations**

These Financial Regulations were adopted by the Charity at its meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

### **1. General**

1.1. These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the Charity and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Charity. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the Charity's other policies and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts.

1.2. The Charity is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective, and that the Charity has a sound system of internal control.

1.3. The Charity's accounting control systems must include measures:

- for the timely production of accounts.
- that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of money.
- to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
- identifying the duties of trustees.

1.4. These financial regulations demonstrate how the Charity meets these responsibilities and requirements.

1.5. At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Accounts, the Charity must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.

1.6. Trustees are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice others to breach them.

1.7. The Treasurer shall be appointed by the Trustees.

1.8. The Treasurer.

- acts under the policy direction of the Charity.

- administers the Charity's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices.
- determines on behalf of the Charity its accounting records and accounting control systems.
- ensures the accounting control systems are observed.
- maintains the accounting records of the Charity up to date in accordance with proper practices.
- assists the Charity to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
- produces financial management information as required by the Trustees.

1.9. The accounting records determined by the Treasurer shall be sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and to enable the Treasurer to ensure that any income and expenditure account and statement of balances, or record of receipts and payments and additional information, as the case may be, or management information prepared for the Charity from time to time.

1.10. The accounting records determined by the Treasurer shall in particular contain:

- entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the Charity and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments account relate.
- a record of the assets and liabilities of the Charity; and
- wherever relevant, a record of the Charity income and expenditure in relation to claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.

1.11. The accounting control systems determined by the Treasurer shall include:

- procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the Charity are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible.
- procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records.



- identification of the duties of trustees dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those trustees in relation to significant transactions.
- procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the Charity for approval to be written off except with the approval of the Treasurer and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records; and
- measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.

1.12. In addition, the Charity must determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all Charity bank accounts.

## **2. Accounting and audit**

2.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the Charity shall be determined by the Treasurer in accordance with appropriate guidance and proper practices.

2.2. At each financial year end, a member other than the Chairman shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the Treasurer. The member shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification.

2.3. The Treasurer shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the Charity contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them and report thereon to the Charity.

2.4. The Charity shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Any Trustee shall make available such documents and records as appear to the Charity to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the Charity, supply the Treasurer or external auditor with such information and explanation as the Charity considers necessary for that purpose.

2.5. The external auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the Charity in accordance with proper practices.

2.6. The external auditor shall:

- be competent and independent of the financial operations of the Charity.
- report to Charity in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year.
- to demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
- has no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the Charity?

2.7. External auditors may not under any circumstances:

- perform any operational duties for the Charity.
- initiate or approve accounting transactions; or
- direct the activities of any Trustee.

2.8. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to external audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.

2.9. The Treasurer shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all Trustees any correspondence or report from external auditors.

### **3. Annual estimates (budget) and forward planning**

3.1. The Treasurer must each year, by no later than February, prepare detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year in the form of a budget to be considered by the Charity.

3.2. The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

## **4. Budgetary control and authority to spend**

4.1. Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:

- the Charity for all items over £5,000.
- a duly delegated committee of the Charity for items over £100; or
- the Treasurer, in conjunction with Chairman for any items below £100.

Such authority is to be evidenced by a minute or by an authorisation slip duly signed by the Treasurer, and where necessary also by the appropriate Chairman.

Contracts may not be disaggregated to avoid controls imposed by these regulations.

4.2. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure other than by resolution of the Charity, or duly delegated committee.

4.3. Unspent provisions in the revenue or capital budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year.

4.4. No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the Charity is satisfied that the necessary funds are available.

4.5. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the Charity's financial regulations relating to contracts.

4.6. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by the Charity as part of the budgetary control process.

## **5. Banking arrangements and authorisation of payments**

5.1. The Charity's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the Treasurer and approved by the Charity. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency.

5.2. The Treasurer shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring authorisation. The approved schedule shall be ruled off and initialled by the Chairman. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of a contract of employment) may be summarised.

5.3. All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the Treasurer to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the Charity.

5.4. The Treasurer shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The Treasurer shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted, and which are in order.

5.5. The Treasurer shall have delegated authority to authorise the payment of items only in the following circumstances:

- a) If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled Meeting of Charity, where the Treasurer certifies that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment.
- b) An expenditure item authorised under 5.6 below (continuing contracts and obligations)
- c) fund transfers within the Charity's banking arrangements up to the sum of [£10,000.

5.6. For each financial year the Treasurer shall draw up a list of due payments which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation (such as but not exclusively) Salaries, PAYE and NI, Superannuation Fund and regular maintenance contracts and the like for which Charity may authorise payment for the year provided that the requirements of regulation 4.1 (Budgetary Controls) are adhered to.

5.7. A record of regular payments made under 5.6 above shall be drawn up and be signed by two Trustees on each and every occasion when payment

is authorised - thus controlling the risk of duplicated payments being authorised and / or made.

5.8. The Charity will aim to rotate the duties of Trustees in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.

5.9. Any changes in the recorded details of suppliers, such as bank account records, shall be approved in writing by a Member.

## **6. Instructions for the making of payments**

6.1. The Charity will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.

6.2. Following authorisation under Financial Regulation 5 above, the Charity or Treasurer shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.

6.3. All payments shall be affected by cheque or other instructions to the Charity's bankers.

6.4. Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule as presented to Charity shall be signed by two Trustees in accordance with a resolution instructing that payment. A Trustee who is a bank signatory, having a connection by virtue of family or business relationships with the beneficiary of a payment, should not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to the payment in question.

6.5. To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.

6.6. Cheques or orders for payment shall be reported to the Charity at the next convenient meeting.

6.7. If thought appropriate by the Charity, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates may be made by variable direct debit provided that the instructions are signed by two Trustees and any payments are reported to Charity as made. The approval of the use of a variable direct debit shall be renewed by resolution of the Charity annually.

6.8. If thought appropriate by the Charity, payment for certain items (principally salaries) may be made by banker's standing order provided that the instructions are signed, or otherwise evidenced by two Trustees are retained and any payments are reported to Charity as made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be renewed by resolution of the Charity annually.

6.9. If thought appropriate by the Charity, payment for certain items may be made by BACS or CHAPS methods provided that the instructions for each payment are signed, or otherwise evidenced, by two authorised bank signatories, are retained and any payments are reported to Charity as made. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the Charity annually.

6.10. If thought appropriate by the Charity payment for certain items may be made by internet banking transfer provided evidence is retained showing which Trustees approved the payment.

6.11. Where a computer requires use of a personal identification number (PIN) or other password(s), for access to the Charity's records on that computer, a note shall be made of the PIN and Passwords and shall be handed to and retained by the Chairman in a sealed dated envelope. This envelope may not be opened other than in the presence of two other Trustees. After the envelope has been opened, in any circumstances, the PIN and / or passwords shall be changed as soon as practicable. This will not be required for a member's personal computer used only for remote authorisation of bank payments.

6.12. No employee or Trustee shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the Charity or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the Charity or a duly delegated committee.

6.13. Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely away from the computer in question, and preferably off site.

6.14. The Charity, and any trustees using computers for the Charity's financial business, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall

software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.

6.15. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the Treasurer shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate approved by the Charity shall identify a number of Trustees who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts. The bank mandate will state clearly the amounts of payments that can be instructed by the use of the Service Administrator alone, or by the Service Administrator with a stated number of approvals.

6.16. Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page (which may be saved under "favourites"), and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved passwords facilities must not be used on any computer used for Charity banking work. Breach of this Regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.

6.17. Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written hard copy notification by the supplier and supported by hard copy authority for change signed by Treasurer. A programme of regular checks of standing data with suppliers will be followed.

6.18. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Treasurer and the Chairman and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £500 unless authorised by Charity in writing before any order is placed.

6.19. The Treasurer may provide petty cash to trustees for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses.

- a) The Treasurer shall maintain a petty cash float of a minimum of £50 and a maximum of £300 for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses.

- b) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on accounts.

## **7. Payment of salaries**

7.1. As an employer, the Charity shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salary rates shall be as agreed by Charity, or duly delegated committee.

7.2. Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be required to be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to the next available Charity meeting, as set out in these regulations above.

7.3. No changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the Charity.

7.4. An effective system of personal performance management should be maintained.

7.5. Any termination payments shall be supported by a clear business case and reported to the Charity. Termination payments shall only be authorised by Charity.

7.6. Before employing interim staff, the Charity must consider a full business case.

## **8. Loans and investments**

8.1. All borrowings shall be affected in the name of the Charity, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Charity as to terms and purpose.

8.2. All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Charity and shall be for a set period in accordance with Charity policy.



8.3. The Charity shall consider the need for an Investment Strategy and Policy which, if drawn up, shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the Charity at least annually.

8.4. All investments of money under the control of the Charity shall be in the name of the Charity.

8.5. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the Treasurer.

8.6. Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in accordance with Regulation 5 (Authorisation of payments) and Regulation 6 (Instructions for payments).

## **9. Income**

9.1. The collection of all sums due to the Charity shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the Treasurer.

9.2. Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered, or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the Charity, notified to the Treasurer and the Treasurer shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the Charity.

9.3. The Charity will review all fees and charges at least annually, following a report of the Treasurer.

9.4. Any sums found to be irrecoverable, and any bad debts shall be reported to the Charity and shall be written off in the year.

9.5. All sums received on behalf of the Charity shall be banked intact as directed by the Treasurer. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the Charity's bankers with such frequency as the Treasurer considers necessary.

9.6. The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.

9.7. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Charity.

9.8. Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the Charity, the Treasurer shall take such steps as are agreed by the Charity to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

## **10. Orders for work, goods and services**

10.1. An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained.

10.2. Order books shall be controlled by the Treasurer.

10.3. All Trustees are responsible for always obtaining value for money. The treasurer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de minimis provisions in Regulation 11.1 below.

10.4. A Trustee may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the Charity.

10.5. The Treasurer shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order.

## **11. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations**

11.1. It shall be the duty of the Charity to review the Financial Regulations annually. The Treasurer shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the Charity of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these Financial Regulations.

11.2. The Charity may, by resolution of the Charity duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of Charity, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that

an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all Trustees of the Charity.

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**Equal Opportunities Statement Of Intent**

The Wethersfield Village Hall Committee acknowledges that the United Kingdom is diverse in culture, race beliefs and religion and believes that no individual or group of people should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, age, colour, race, nationality, racial or national origins, cultural heritage, disability, marital status, social background, sexual orientation or geographical location.

The purpose of this statement is to set out clearly and fully the positive action that The Wethersfield Village Hall Committee intends to take to combat direct and indirect discrimination in employment policy, management of the organisation, relationships with other bodies, and the services it provides to the community, community organisations and individuals.

The Wethersfield Village Hall Committee is committed to providing equality of opportunity in all areas of its work. It aims to overcome discrimination on the grounds mentioned above. The Equal Opportunities Policy will be implemented ensuring equality of provision in representation, service provision, appointment of staff and their conditions of service and access.

**The Aims of the Committee**

Our aim is to ensure that we become aware of discrimination and the problem it causes.

The Wethersfield Village Hall Committee will challenge practices, legislation and institutions, which seek to discriminate against or deny the rights of individuals or groups in any form.

The Wethersfield Village Hall Committee will seek to take positive action to address the inequalities in our committee.

The Wethersfield Village Hall Committee is committed to the equal opportunities policy set out in this document and will work to develop, improve and monitor it.

### **The Equal Opportunities Policy and Code of Practice**

The Wethersfield Village Hall Committee acknowledges the definitions of various groups of people who are vulnerable to discrimination as set out in the Equality Act 2010. The committee will support and implement the legislation and will work to ensure that no person protected by the legislation is discriminated against unlawfully, and that any positive obligations and duties are performed.

The committee gives the following specific commitments.

The Wethersfield Village Hall Committee will:

- Where reasonably practical improve accessibility by removing barriers which make it difficult for people with disabilities to use the hall.
- Provide facilities for people with disabilities where reasonable, to enable them to participate in activities e.g. the installation of an entrance ramp.
- Ensure that the design of publicity and information take account of the needs of people with disabilities e.g. Language used, print size.
- Deal with any complaints of discrimination promptly, impartially, thoroughly and confidentially.
- Ensure all staff, hirers and committee members are aware of the hall's policy on equality.
- Ensure that the equal opportunities policy is monitored and reviewed annually.
- Challenge racism in any form and encourage its users to do the same.

- Challenge age discrimination in policies, procedures and attitudes
- Support the right of each individual to his or her own religious belief or the absence of a belief.
- Encourage people from under represented groups to attend and participate in the activities of the hall.

## **The Code of Conduct**

1. People will be treated with dignity and respect regardless of the group to which they belong.
2. People's feelings and views will be valued and respected. Language or humour that people find offensive will not be used or tolerated, e.g. racist jokes or derogatory terminology.
3. No one will be harassed, abused or intimidated. Such incidents will be taken seriously and the committee will undertake investigations of any complaints quickly, impartially, thoroughly and confidentially.

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## **Hiring Policy**

Any part of the building is available for hire for any lawful purpose excluding gambling within the objects of the charity, however, the Management Committee reserves the right to refuse a hiring without giving any reason. No one under the age of 21 can hire the hall or any part thereof.

All hire is subject to the rules set by the Management Committee in the hiring agreement and terms and conditions pertaining to the public entertainments licence. It is the responsibility of the hirer to ensure compliance with child protection legislation during the hiring period. A copy of these conditions of hire will be given to all hirers and also displayed in the Hall.

A deposit on booking of 25% must be made in advance and an additional refundable deposit of £100.00 against damage is required. The management reserves the right to waive payment for an event or require payment in full for late cancellations.

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## **Health & Safety Policy**

Our policy is to:

- a) Provide healthy and safe working conditions, equipment and systems of work for our employee(s), volunteers, committee members and hirers.
- b) Keep the village hall and equipment in a safe condition for all users.
- c) Provide such training and information as is necessary for staff, volunteers and users.
- d) To ensure appropriate and legally required Risk assessments and surveys are undertaken including Fire Risk Assessment, Asbestos survey, Electrical wiring and PAT Testing, amongst others.

It is the intention of Wethersfield Village Hall Management Committee to comply with all Health and Safety legislation and to act positively where it can reasonably do so to prevent injury, ill health or any danger arising from its activities and operations.

Wethersfield Village Hall Management Committee considers the promotion of the health and safety of its employees at work and those who use its premises, including contractors who may work there, to be of great importance. The management committee recognises that the effective prevention of accidents depends as much on a committed attitude of mind to safety as on the operation and maintenance of equipment and safe systems of work. To this end, it will seek to encourage employees, committee



members, volunteers and users to engage in the establishment and observance of safe working practices.

Employees, hirers and visitors will be expected to recognise that there is a duty on them to comply with the practices set out by the committee, with all safety requirements set out in the hiring agreement and with safety notices on the premises and to accept responsibility to do everything they can to prevent injury to themselves or others.

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**Child and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy**

This statement of policy and procedures applies to users of, and activities in, Wethersfield Village Hall and any ancillary activities, which are the responsibility of the Charity Trustees.

This policy is in place to protect all children and vulnerable adults regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, bullying, religion or faith. The welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is paramount and is the responsibility of all Trustees.

All children and vulnerable adults have the right to protection from abuse whether physical, verbal, sexual, bullying, exclusion or neglect. All people associated with the village hall and its use has a responsibility for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. The Charity Trustees will endeavour to keep the premises safe for use.

No member of the trustees, outside contractors, hirers or volunteers will have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults unless in possession of appropriate clearance such as a DBS.

The Trustees will ensure that all hirers/users of the hall are aware that any safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults is the responsibility of the hirers. Hirers need to be aware that facilities such as the toilets might be shared with other groups and that appropriate supervision/arrangements should be made.

The Trustees require that hirers are made aware of their obligations under The Licensing Act 2003 to ensure that alcohol is not sold to those under the age of 18 and that no children may be admitted to films or shows when they are below the age classification for the film or show.

In the event of a child or vulnerable adult not being collected after an event, the responsibility of dealing with the situation rests solely with the hirer, who if necessary must seek advice or involvement from the authorities or police.

Any allegations of any incident that take place on the hall site that are made to the committee will be reported to the relevant authorities. The committee will not carry out any investigation, but will refer the matter to the police.

Acceptance of the Wethersfield Village Halls safeguarding policy is part of the agreed contract taken out on hiring the hall. A copy of this policy is available on the village hall website and will be displayed for the attention of all on the hall notice board. This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis.

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## **Safeguarding Policy**

### **1. Purpose**

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect.**

This policy defines how Wethersfield Village Hall operates to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

We have a duty of care and are committed to the protection and safety of everyone who enters our premises including children, young people and adults at risk involved as visitors and/or as participants in all activities and events. We also have a duty to safeguard and support our trustees, volunteers, and staff.

### **2. Definitions**

**Children and young people** are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old. This policy will apply to all staff, contractors and volunteers and will be used to support their work.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health and development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

#### **Adult at risk of abuse or neglect**

For the purposes of this policy, adult at risk refers to someone over 18 years old who, according to paragraph 14.2 of the Care Act 2015:

- has care and support needs

- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- as a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

If someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service, they may still be an adult at risk.

### **3. Persons affected**

- All trustees, volunteers, and staff
- All those attending any activity or service that is being delivered from the village hall charity property
- All visitors and contractors

### **4. Policy principles**

There can be no excuses for not taking all reasonable action to protect adults at risk of abuse, exploitation, radicalisation, and mistreatment. All citizens of the United Kingdom have their rights enshrined within the Human Rights Act 1998. People who are eligible to receive health and community care services may be additionally vulnerable to the violation of these rights by reason of disability, impairment, age, or illness.

Wethersfield Village Hall charity has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse.

Wethersfield Village Hall charity recognises that under the Care Act 2014, it has a duty for the care and protection of adults who are at risk of abuse. It also recognises its responsibilities for the safety and care of children under the Children Act 1989 and 2004.

Wethersfield Village Hall charity is committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and to responding effectively if concerns are raised.

Wethersfield Village Hall charity is aware of the work of their local safeguarding Board/Partnership and other support organisations on the development and implementation of procedures for the protection of adults vulnerable from abuse. The policy is about stopping abuse where it is happening and preventing abuse where there is a risk that it may occur.

Wethersfield Village Hall Committee is committed to the following principles:

- The welfare of the child, young person or adult at risk is paramount
- All children, young people and adults at risk have the right to protection from abuse
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part; and
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse must be properly reported to the relevant internal and external authorities and dealt with swiftly and appropriately.

## **5. Procedures**

- a. All members of the committee will have signed the Trustee Statement of Eligibility form\* for trustees which includes a declaration that they have no convictions in relation to abuse.
- b. All members of the committee will familiarise themselves with safeguarding responsibilities, undertake training on safeguarding issues including whistleblowing where it is available and offered by their local safeguarding board/partnership or other local support organisation **and** ensure that they understand the principles set out in this policy see 3,
- c. All members of the committee will work together to promote a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting welfare to be addressed.
- d. All members of the committee, helpers or other volunteers will not have unsupervised access to children or adults at risk unless appropriately vetted.
- e. The hall committee will follow safe recruitment practices.
- f. A member of the committee will be appointed to be responsible for child and adult at risk safeguarding matters. This person will have responsibility for reporting concerns that arise, as a matter of urgency, to the relevant safeguarding agency.

The named person is Debbie Brignull-Harvey

Until policy review March 2022

g. All suspicions or allegations of abuse against a child or adult at risk will be taken seriously and dealt with speedily and appropriately. The appointed person will know who to contact and where to go for support and advice in relation to an allegation a concern about the quality of care or practice or a complaint. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children or adult at risk who has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child or adult at risk or may have harmed a child or adult at risk.
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or adult at risk; or
- behaved towards a child or children or adult at risk in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

h. The Wethersfield Village Hall Committee will ensure that all hirers of the hall have signed a hiring agreement. This will require all hirers who wish to use the hall for activities which include children and adults at risk, other than for hire for private parties arranged for invited friends and family, to produce a copy of their Safeguarding Policy and evidence that they have carried out relevant checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

i. The Wethersfield Village Hall Management Committee will carry out an annual review of this policy.

**WETHERSFIELD VILLAGE HALL CIO**  
**Registered Charity 1171017**  
**The Green, Wethersfield, Essex CM7 4BS**

**Complaints Policy**

**Introduction**

This document aims to help you understand the complaints procedure managed by: Wethersfield Village Hall Committee.

**What can you complain about?**

If you think we have failed to provide a satisfactory standard of service, please let us know. Your complaint may be about the quality of the facilities, safety of the users, the handling of a particular situation or issue or any other matter. We are committed to equal opportunities and take complaints about discrimination very seriously.

**Who will deal with your complaint?**

All complaints should be sent to Jon Birks who will address the issue and respond in writing. If you are not happy with the response, then you will be invited to address your complaint to the whole committee, who will listen to your concerns, consider the issues and discuss whether Jon Birks actions were appropriate. The committee will then decide on any further actions.

We will take every complaint seriously and we will treat everyone who complains with respect and courtesy.

**When will you hear from us?**

We will let you know that we have received your complaint within ten working days. We will write to you, email or telephone you.



In most cases you will receive a full written response to your complaint within twenty working days. If we cannot give a full reply in this time, we will write to you and let you know why and how we are dealing with your complaint.

If the complaint is complex, we aim to let you have a full reply within twenty-five working days.

Any safety concerns that would endanger a Wethersfield Village Hall user would be dealt with immediately notice is received.

**WETHERSFIELD VILLAGE HALL CIO**  
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**Control of Substances Hazardous To Health Policy**  
**(COSHH)**

**Policy Statement**

Wethersfield Village Hall Committee (WVH) is committed to maintaining the Health and Safety of its service users by providing guidance to users through the production of Wethersfield Village Hall Health and Safety policies and procedures. These policies can be found on the Wethersfield Village Hall website and also in the Manual in the Village Hall.

WVH follows the guidance issued by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) on the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health. This COSHH policy supports the Health and Safety policies and is intended to be an important guidance in the area of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health. In this endeavour WVH will as far as is reasonably practicable:

1. Identify substances in use by the official cleaners, which are hazardous to health by considering:

- What they use that involves hazardous substances
- How these can cause harm
- How they can reduce the risk of harm occurring

2. Provide advice on ways to prevent exposure at source. For example where practicable:

- Avoid using a hazardous substance or use a safer process e.g. using water- based rather than solvent based products

- Substitute it for something safer – e.g. swap an irritant cleaning product for something milder, or using a vacuum cleaner rather than a brush/broom
- Use a safer form e.g. use a solid rather than a liquid to avoid splashes or a waxy solid instead of a dry powder to avoid dust

3. Minimise the risk by:

- Using control equipment e.g. total enclosure, partial enclosure, adequate storage systems
- Controlling procedures e.g. ways of working, supervision and training if necessary, maintenance
- Providing guidance on good work behaviour. Ensuring the official cleaners are aware of the control measures.

Other Users/Contractors of the Hall who bring their own cleaning materials or any other substances that could be Hazardous to Health are responsible for completing their own COSHH assessments for the substances and for ensuring their safe usage.

**WETHERSFIELD VILLAGE HALL CIO**  
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**The Green, Wethersfield, Essex CM7 4BS**

**POLICY ON PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE**  
**(Whistle Blowing Policy)**

**Introduction**

The Wethersfield Village Hall Committee is committed to ensuring the highest possible standards of care and the highest possible ethical standards in delivering the services it provides. This policy demonstrates the Committee's commitment to recognise and take action in respect of malpractice, illegal acts or omissions by the Committee members, Hall users and/or volunteers. It is the responsibility of all committee members and volunteers to ensure that if they become aware that the actions of other committee members, Village Hall users or volunteers might compromise this objective, they will be expected to report the matter in the safe knowledge that this matter will be treated seriously and sensitively.

**Scope of The Policy**

The policy applies to all Committee members, Village Hall staff and volunteers.

Situations may arise when it is not appropriate or the “concerned” person feels unable to report incidents to the most “available” committee member.

These may include:

- Malpractice or ill treatment of a child, young person and/or vulnerable adult.
- Suspected fraud.
- A criminal offence is, has or likely to be committed.

- Disregard for legislation e.g. health and safety legislation.
- Damage to the environment.

This list is not exhaustive.

## **Procedure for Reporting**

1. All committee members and volunteers who reasonably believe they have concerns as described on the complaints form, are encouraged to discuss them with the person(s) involved.
2. In certain cases it is recognised that individuals may be reluctant to voice their concerns, particularly if the conduct or action of a colleague is involved. If this situation is applicable, the person is requested to discuss their concerns with the chairman of the Village Hall committee.
3. The Committee will do its utmost to ensure that a "concerned" person feels able to raise such concerns confidentially and without fear of subsequent action being taken against them.
4. In all cases, the "concerned" person has the right to discuss their concerns with the chairman of the Village Hall committee.
5. All committee members and volunteers are reminded of their obligations with regard to confidentiality and to only discuss concerns on "a need to know basis".

## **Committee Responsibilities**

These are as follows:

1. Take the concern seriously
2. Consider the issues fully and sympathetically

3. Recognise that raising a concern can be a difficult experience for some
4. Seek advice where necessary
5. Treat the matter confidentially
6. Reassure the “concerned” person about protection in the event of possible reprisals or victimisation.

The “concerned” person will receive an initial written response within five working days, including details of any further action to be taken, and a full written response within seven working days of the completion of the investigation.

If the “concerned” person is not satisfied with the outcome, the committee recognises the right of individuals to pursue the matter further. The full committee would be called together to consider the concerns. Confidentiality is a priority in such sensitive situations.

Concerns about the committee Chairman – if the concerns were about the Chairman, the deputy Chairman or secretary would consider the complaint.

**WETHERFIELD VILLAGE HALL CIO**  
**Registered Charity 117107**  
**The Green, Wethersfield, Essex CM7 4BS**

**Policy for Recruiting Staff/Committee Members**

It is the Management Committee's policy to comply with its own Equal Opportunities Policy and make sure that any staff vacancy is open to all to apply.

It is further the committee's policy to recruit members who represent the groups or organisations that use the hall or can offer specific skills or experience that can fill gaps in the committee's knowledge or capability. All new members are provided with a welcome document that outlines the duties and responsibilities of Trustees.

When directly employing a member of staff, the hall committee will follow safe recruitment practices including DBS checks where necessary.

**WETHERSFIELD VILLAGE HALL CIO**  
**Registered Charity 1171017**  
**The Green, Wethersfield, Braintree, Essex CM7 4BS**

## **Data Protection Policy**

We are committed to a policy of protecting the rights and privacy of individuals. We need to collect and use certain types of Data in order to carry on our work of managing Wethersfield Village Hall (WVH). This personal information must be collected and handled securely.

**The Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)** govern the use of information about people (personal data). Personal data can be held on computers, laptops and mobile devices, or in a manual file, and includes email, minutes of meetings, and photographs.

The charity will remain the data controller for the information held. The trustees, staff and volunteers are personally responsible for processing and using personal information in accordance with the Data Protection Act and GDPR. Trustees, staff and volunteers who have access to personal information will therefore be expected to read and comply with this policy.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to set out the WVH commitment and procedures for protecting personal data. Trustees regard the lawful and correct treatment of personal information as very important to successful working, and to maintaining the



confidence of those with whom we deal with. We recognise the risks to individuals of identity theft and financial loss if personal data is lost or stolen.

The following are definitions of the terms used:

**Data Controller** - the Trustees who collectively decide what personal information WVH will hold and how it will be held or used.

**Act means the Data Protection Act 1998 and General Data Protection Regulations** - the legislation that requires responsible behaviour by those using personal information.

**Data Protection Officer** – the person responsible for ensuring that WVH follows its data protection policy and complies with the Act. [WVH is not required to appoint a DPO].

**Data Subject** – the individual whose personal information is being held or processed by [WVH] for example a donor or hirer

**‘Explicit’ consent** – is a freely given, specific agreement by a Data Subject to the processing of personal information about her/him.

Explicit consent is needed for processing “sensitive data”, which includes:

- (a) Racial or ethnic origin of the data subject
- (b) Political opinions
- (c) Religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature
- (d) Trade union membership
- (e) Physical or mental health or condition

(f) Sexual orientation

(g) Criminal record

(h) Proceedings for any offence committed or alleged to have been committed

**Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)** - the ICO is responsible for implementing and overseeing the Data Protection Act 1998.

**Processing** – means collecting, amending, handling, storing or disclosing personal information.

**Personal Information** – information about living individuals that enables them to be identified – e.g. names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses. It does not apply to information about organisations, companies and agencies but applies to named persons, such as individual volunteers.

## **The Data Protection Act**

This contains 8 principles for processing personal data with which we must comply.

### **Personal data:**

1. Shall be processed fairly and lawfully and, in particular, shall not be processed unless specific conditions are met,
2. Shall be obtained only for one or more of the purposes specified in the Act, and shall not be processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose or those purposes,
3. Shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to those purpose(s),

4. Shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
5. Shall not be kept for longer than is necessary,
6. Shall be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under the Act,
7. Shall be kept secure by the Data Controller, who takes appropriate technical and other measures to prevent unauthorised or unlawful processing or accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal information,
8. Shall not be transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal information.

### **Applying the Data Protection Act within the charity**

We will let people know why we are collecting their data, which is for the purpose of managing [the hall], its hiring's and finances. It is our responsibility to ensure the data is only used for this purpose. Access to personal information will be limited to trustees, staff and volunteers.

### **Correcting data**

Individuals have a right to make a Subject Access Request (SAR) to find out whether the charity holds their personal data, where, what it is used for and to have data corrected if it is wrong, to prevent use which is causing them damage or distress, or to stop marketing information being sent to them. Any SAR must be dealt with within 30 days. Steps must first be taken to confirm the identity of the individual before providing information, requiring both

photo identification e.g. passport and confirmation of address e.g. recent utility bill, bank or credit card statement.

## **Responsibilities**

[WVH] is the Data Controller under the Act, and is legally responsible for complying with Act, which means that it determines what purposes personal information held will be used for. The management committee will take into account legal requirements and ensure that it is properly implemented, and will through appropriate management, strict application of criteria and controls:

- a) Collection and use information fairly.
- b) Specify the purposes for which information is used.
- c) Collect and process appropriate information, and only to the extent that it is needed to fulfill its operational needs or to comply with any legal requirements.
- d) Ensure the quality of information used.
- e) Ensure the rights of people about whom information is held, can be exercised under the Act. These include:
  - i) The right to be informed that processing is undertaken.
  - ii) The right of access to one's personal information.
  - iii) The right to prevent processing in certain circumstances, and
  - iv) The right to correct, rectify, block or erase information which is regarded as wrong information.
- f) Take appropriate technical and organisational security

measures to safeguard personal information,

g) Ensure that personal information is not transferred abroad without suitable safeguards,

h) Treat people justly and fairly whatever their age, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation or ethnicity when dealing with requests for information,

i) Set out clear procedures for responding to requests for information.

All trustees, staff and volunteers are aware that a breach of the rules and procedures identified in this policy may lead to action being taken against them.

**The Data Protection Officer on the management committee is:**

**Name : Deborah Brignull - Harvey**

**Contact Details : Telephone: 07763 802551**

**The Data Protection Officer will be responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented and will have overall responsibility for:**

a) Everyone processing personal information understands that they are contractually responsible for following good data protection practice

b) Everyone processing personal information is appropriately trained to do so

c) Everyone processing personal information is appropriately supervised

- d) Anybody wanting to make enquiries about handling personal information knows what to do
- e) Dealing promptly and courteously with any enquiries about handling personal information
- f) Describe clearly how the charity handles personal information
- g) Will regularly review and audit the ways it holds, manages and uses personal information
- h) Will regularly assess and evaluate its methods and performance in relation to handling personal information.

This policy will be updated as necessary to reflect best practice in data management, security and control and to ensure compliance with any changes or amendments made to the Data Protection Act 1998.

In case of any queries or questions in relation to this policy please contact [the Data Protection Officer].

### **Procedures for Handling Data & Data Security**

[WVH] has a duty to ensure that appropriate technical and organisational measures and training are taken to prevent:

- unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data
- unauthorised disclosure of personal data
- accidental loss of personal data

All trustees, staff and volunteers must therefore ensure that personal data is dealt with properly no matter how it is collected, recorded or used. This applies whether or not the information is

held on paper, in a computer or recorded by some other means e.g. tablet or mobile phone).

Personal data relates to data of living individuals who can be identified from that data and use of that data could cause an individual damage or distress. This does not mean that mentioning someone's name in a document comprises personal data; however, combining various data elements such as a person's name and salary or religious beliefs etc. would be classed as personal data, and falls within the scope of the DPA. It is therefore important that all staff consider any information (which is not otherwise in the public domain) that can be used to identify an individual as personal data and observe the guidance given below.

## **Privacy Notice and Consent Policy**

The private notice and consent policy are as follows: The Secretary in a securely held electronic or paper file will store consent forms.

## **Operational Guidance**

### **Email:**

All trustees, staff and volunteers should consider whether an email (both incoming and outgoing) would need to be kept as an official record. If the email needs to be retained it should be saved into the appropriate folder or printed and stored securely.

Remember, emails that contain personal information no longer required for operational use, should be deleted from the personal mailbox and any "deleted items" box.

## **Phone Calls:**

Phone calls can lead to unauthorised use or disclosure of personal information and the following precautions should be taken:

Personal information should not be given out over the telephone unless you have no doubts as the caller's identity and the information requested is innocuous.

If you have any doubts, ask the caller to put their enquiry in writing. If you receive a phone call asking for personal information to be checked or confirmed be aware that the call may come from someone impersonating someone with a right of access.

## **Laptops and Portable Devices:**

All laptops and portable devices that hold data containing personal information must be protected with a suitable encryption program (password).

Ensure your laptop is locked (password protected) when left unattended, even for short periods of time.

When travelling in a car, make sure the laptop is out of sight, preferably in the boot.

If you have to leave your laptop in an unattended vehicle at any time, put it in the boot and ensure all doors are locked and any alarm set.

Never leave laptops or portable devices in your vehicle overnight.

Do not leave laptops or portable devices unattended in restaurants or bars, or any other venue.



When travelling on public transport, keep it with you at all times, do not leave it in luggage racks or even on the floor alongside you.

### **Data Security and Storage:**

Store as little personal data as possible on your computer or laptop; only keep those files that are essential. Personal data received on disk or memory stick should be saved to the relevant file on the server or laptop. The disk or memory stick should then be securely returned (if applicable), safely stored or wiped and securely disposed of.

Always lock (password protect) your computer or laptop when left unattended.

### **Passwords:**

Do not use passwords that are easy to guess. All your passwords should contain both upper and lower-case letters and preferably contain some numbers. Ideally passwords should be 6 characters or more in length.

### **Protect Your Password:**

- Common sense rules for passwords are: do not give out your password
- do not write your password somewhere on your laptop
- do not keep it written on something stored in the laptop case

### **Data Storage**

Personal data will be stored securely and will only be accessible to

authorised volunteers or staff.

Information will be stored for only as long as it is needed or required by statute and will be disposed of appropriately. For financial records this will be up to 7 years. For employee records see below. Archival material such as minutes and legal documents will be stored indefinitely. Other Correspondence and emails will be disposed of when no longer required or when trustees, staff or volunteers retire.

All personal data held for the organisation must be non-recoverable from any computer, which has been passed on/sold to a third party.

### **Information Regarding Employees or Former Employees**

Information regarding an employee or a former employee will be kept indefinitely. If something occurs years later it might be necessary to refer back to a job application or other document to check what was disclosed earlier, in order that trustees comply with their obligations e.g. regarding employment law, taxation, pensions or insurance.

### **Accident Book**

This will be checked regularly. Any page which has been completed will be removed, appropriate action taken and the page filed securely.

## **Data Subject Access Requests**

We may occasionally need to share data with other agencies such as the local authority, funding bodies and other voluntary agencies in circumstances, which are not in furtherance of the management of the charity. The circumstances where the law allows the charity to disclose data (including sensitive data) without the data subject's consent is:

- a) Carrying out a legal duty or as authorised by the Secretary of State Protecting vital interests of a Data Subject or other person (e.g. child protection)
- b) The Data Subject has already made the information public
- c) Conducting any legal proceedings, obtaining legal advice or defending any legal rights
- d) Monitoring for equal opportunities purposes – i.e. race, disability or religion

We regard the lawful and correct treatment of personal information as very important to successful working, and to maintaining the confidence of those with whom we deal.

We intend to ensure that personal information is treated lawfully and correctly.

## **Risk Management**

The consequences of breaching Data Protection can cause harm or distress to service users if their information is released to inappropriate people, or they could be denied a service to which they are entitled. Trustees, staff and volunteers should be aware that they could be personally liable if they use customers' personal data inappropriately. This policy is designed to minimise

the risks and to ensure that the reputation of the charity is not damaged through inappropriate or unauthorised access and sharing.



