

SEWELL BARN THEATRE SOCIETY – POLICY PAPER 8

Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedures

This policy applies to members of the Management Committee and Trustees of the Sewell Barn Theatre Society, both hereafter considered as Committees.

A real or potential ‘conflict of interest’ arises when the best interests of an individual Committee member are, or could be, different from the best interests of the Sewell Barn Theatre Society itself; for example, arising either from financial considerations or personal conflicts of loyalty.

It is necessary to manage these potential conflicts in order to protect both the Society and the Committee member from any impropriety or appearance of impropriety.

Policy

Sewell Barn Theatre Society is committed to ensuring its decisions and decision-making processes are, and are seen to be, free from personal bias and do not unfairly favour any individual connected with the Sewell Barn Theatre Society. It is therefore the policy of the Society to:

- Ensure all Committee members understand what constitutes a conflict of interest and that they have a responsibility to recognise and declare any conflicts that might arise for them.
- Document the conflict and the action(s) taken to ensure that the conflict does not unfairly or improperly influence the decision-making of the Society.

Procedures

The agenda circulated in advance of each meeting by the Secretary of the Management Committee will include a reminder of the need for members to identify any potential conflict of interest relevant to the discussions and decisions of the meeting.

When a Committee member identifies that there is a potential conflict of interest, the affected individual must:

- declare that potential conflict to the Secretary and/or Chair as soon as they become aware of it, following the guidance for a written or oral declaration given in the Appendix to this policy.
- not take part in any Committee discussions or decision-making relating to the matter, leaving the room while related discussion and decision-making is taking place (unless there is good reason for them to stay)
- not be counted in the quorum for decision-making related to the matter.

It is then the responsibility of the Secretary to ensure that:

- the conflict is appropriately minuted, with the Minutes stating
 - the declared conflict
 - that the Committee member left the room, or the reason they were asked to stay.
 - that the Committee member took no part in discussion or decision making on the matter.
 - that the meeting was quorate (not counting the affected Committee member).
 - any other actions taken to manage the conflict.
- the conflict is entered into the Conflict of Interests Register (example format given in Appendix)

- both those records indicate whether it is a one-off conflict or an ongoing conflict of a longterm nature
- the Conflict of Interest Register is maintained and made readily accessible to the Chair.

If a Committee member is unsure what to declare, they should err on the side of caution and discuss the matter with the Chair of the Committee for confidential guidance.

Policy review

The policy will be reviewed every three years by the Policies Subcommittee and any significant amendments will be referred to the Management Committee for ratification. It may also be reviewed in response to changes in relevant legislation, good practice, or in response to an identified failing in its effectiveness.

Policy initially drafted and adopted: April 2019

Policy last reviewed: October 2023

Next review due: Autumn 2026

APPENDIX

1. Declaration of conflict

The information provided in a declared conflict of interest (written or oral) should include:

- Date
- Name of Committee member
- Details of conflict. For example:
 - being paid to carry out work or services for Sewell Barn Theatre Society
 - being the direct or indirect beneficiary of a contract entered into by Sewell Barn Theatre Society (e.g. your partner works for the charity)
 - other directorships or trusteeships which could create a conflict of loyalty (e.g. trustee of a community building used for rehearsals)
 - being the recipient of a gift in excess of £50
- Who the conflict relates to e.g. self, connected person (please specify).

For additional Charity Commission's guidance, see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conflicts-of-interest-a-guide-for-charity-trustees-cc29/conflicts-of-interest-a-guide-for-charity-trustees>

2. Conflict of Interest Register for Sewell Barn Theatre Society: Example format

Date identified	Name of Committee member	Details of conflict	Who does it relate to?	How notified*	Action taken**	Follow up needed? (Y/N)	End date conflict/current	Reason for resolution***
1 June 2016 [Example]	Ann Person	Person connected to Committee (partner) is being paid to for providing service of leaflet design	Brian Person	Written declaration by Anne Person; also discussion at meeting	Ann Person withdraws from any discussion and decision-making relating to this agenda item	N	1 August 2016	Engagement with connected person to provide a service ended
1 Sep 2016 [Example]	Chris Example	Trustee is paid for services to the charity	Chris Example	Verbal discussion at meeting	Trustee withdrawn from relevant discussions and decision making processes	N	Current	

*e.g. Verbal declaration at Committee meeting, written declaration etc.

**e.g. Trustee withdrawing from a decision making process: disclosure in Annual Report to members etc.

***e.g. Conflict of interest ceased, member resigned or end of term etc.