

Northumberland Wildlife Trust Limited Guidelines on Receipt of Gifts and Hospitality

1 Introduction

The acceptance of gifts, services and hospitality is related to the issue of conflicts of interest and can leave an organisation vulnerable to accusations of unfairness, partiality or deceit. The risk of this happening in the Trust is low because the level of gifts and hospitality, both offered and received, is minimal. These guidelines aim to provide a framework within which judgements about the receipt of gifts and hospitality can be made.

2 Parameters

These guidelines apply to all staff and Trustees.

3 Hospitality

The Trust does not prohibit normal and appropriate hospitality (given and received) to or from third parties. Typically, this would include provision of meals at a conference, or providing refreshments to third parties at a meeting.

4 Receipt of Gifts

The receipt of gifts is not prohibited, if the following requirements are met:

- The gift is not made in implicit or explicit exchange for favours or benefits
- The gift is not made with the intention of obtaining, retaining or rewarding business from a third party
- The gift complies with local law
- The gift is given in the Trust's name, not the Trustee's or employee's name
- The gift does not include cash or a cash equivalent (such as gift certificates or vouchers)
- The gift is appropriate in the circumstances (for example a calendar or chocolates at Christmas from a regular supplier)
- The gift is given openly, not secretly
- The gift is declared in the Trust's register of gifts, which is lodged with the Director of Finance and Central Services, if its notional value is deemed to be more than £50

If a Trustee or member of staff is offered a gift which does not appear to comply with the above guidelines, the matter should be referred either to the CEO or to the Chair for advice.

5 Giving of Gifts

The Trust is a charity and is required by law to use its funds for charitable purposes. In the normal course of events, therefore, the Trust should not be making any gifts to third parties.

Specifically, the giving, offering or promising to give a payment, gift or hospitality is prohibited in the following circumstances:

- with the expectation or hope that an advantage would accrue to the Trust as a result.
- to a government official, agent or representative to facilitate or expedite a routine procedure

It is acceptable for the Trust to give occasional modest gifts which are specifically intended as a thank you for outstanding service or commitment by either staff or volunteers.

Last reviewed: January 2020

Next review: January 2022