



Code of Conduct

Policy Lead	Executive Officers
Audience	Anyone who engages with the Grassroots Trust
Formally endorsed by	Trustees
Last updated	November 2024
Next Review	November 2027

Code of Conduct ('the Code')

At the Grassroots Trust, our intention is for everyone served by or serving in one of the projects we support, to do so while being treated in the way they should be treated.

In this Code we have set out the expectations we have of our people with the aim of showing what it means to serve with the Grassroots Trust. We value and appreciate what you do with our organisation and want the commitment and values of people involved with the trust to inspire everyone with whom they come into contact. We never want anyone to be disappointed by the conduct of those serving with the Grassroots Trust.

The Grassroots Trust is a Christian charity and we expect the conduct of everyone involved to reflect the highest of Biblical Christian standards, ethics and values.

In practice this means that, in the work that we do in the UK and abroad, all of those serving in connection with the Grassroots Trust are expected to act in accordance with this Code.

"Our people" in this Code refers to employees, consultants, volunteers, interns and those working under our name – whether serving in the UK or overseas. We also aim to ensure that organisations and individuals with whom we work reflect our values. Accordingly, the term "our people" also applies to individuals with whom the organisation has a close association, such as staff or volunteers serving with our partners around the world delivering support, advice & help to those in need.

We are committed to doing all we can to provide everyone involved with a safe and collaborative environment. This Code highlights eleven key areas and ensures that we uphold the highest ethical, professional and quality standards in the support we provide to people.

The Code

1. We want our people to demonstrate our values through both their internal and external conduct towards others. We expect everyone's actions and attitudes to be compassionate, kind, humble, courageous and dynamic. Whether or not a person considers themselves a Christian, we still expect them to act towards others in ways that reflect the ethics and values of Biblical Christianity while serving with or for the trust.
2. We expect our people to respect all people equally. We have a Christian, humanitarian, ethical

and legal responsibility to celebrate and respect everyone without regard of their sex, gender, background, economic strength, health, disability/ability, tribe, cast, creed, lifestyle, life choices, sexual orientation, nationality, race or other protected characteristics. We have a zero tolerance policy towards harassment, bullying, abuse, discrimination, exploitation or violence.

3. We have a zero tolerance policy towards all forms of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, or sexual violence. This includes:

- exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including use of sex trade workers, sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour;
- sexual activity with or abuse of an adult who looks to, or benefits from, our services and/or programmes we support; and
- sexual activity with or abuse of anyone under 18 (local laws and/or mistaken belief in the age of a child is not an acceptable defence).

None of our people are permitted to use equipment or IT services to access or distribute pornographic material.

4. We expect all of our people to comply with applicable laws of the United Kingdom, as well as applicable laws in the country in which they are present. This includes laws that relate to the possession or use of prohibited drugs.

5. We expect our people to act ethically. We have a zero tolerance policy towards fraud, bribery and corruption (including money laundering and funding terrorism), and will take action against those who commit or assist anyone committing fraud.

6. We expect our people to declare any gifts or hospitality (over a value that is outlined in the guidelines of each situation or project), and to declare any conflicts of interest and formally withdraw from any decision making where their personal benefit (or that of a family member) is at issue. When making decisions about who can receive help or who can serve in a particular role with the charity, our people should not be influenced by favouritism, nepotism, hope of getting any kind of favour, fear, intimidation or threat.

7. Where there is disagreement this is to be approached with the assumption and attitude that those disagreed with do have good motives and the situation then managed in such a way to value everyone's feelings and ideas, with a good balance of listening and speaking (or the written equivalent) and then respectfully allowing those responsible in the particular situation to make any final decision necessary.

8. We expect all of our people to meet the standards in all of the Grassroots Trust's policies, processes and procedures; in particular in the guidance provided as part of orientation sessions and briefing packs. We expect people serving with us to respect those who serve them in organising or leading the programmes they are part of – taking part with enthusiasm, living within any guidelines or decisions that have been communicated, being friendly and helpful to others involved, trying always to be positive, maintaining standards for health & safety, reducing risk of harm to a minimum and giving feedback in appropriate and helpful ways.

9. We expect all of our people to act in the best interests of the organisation and do all they can to maintain the good reputation of the organisation. We expect our people to use our name and any logos and symbols connected with the trust with respect and in line with the permissions they have received.

10. We expect our people to respect the rights of individuals that they encounter in the context of

their involvement with Grassroots to hold different opinions, beliefs and views to them. Our people also need to recognise that in other countries and cultures that there are some issues that if raised or discussed could negatively impact the ability of team to function effectively. In particular, the sharing of political ideas and views should be handled with great caution.

11. We expect our people to handle all confidential and sensitive information with the greatest care; especially to protect data relating to people who support the charity, receive benefit from the charity or serve with us.

Breaches

We expect our people to report (see below for who to report to) concerns or suspicions regarding any violation by a colleague (ie: anyone regarded as one of “our people”). You will not be at risk of losing your role or suffering any form of reprisal if you report a concern.

Breaches of the Code will be subject to disciplinary measures. These include:

- where there is reason to believe the law may have been broken, we will not hesitate to report the incident to the police or other relevant authorities and act in accordance with the law towards those who are suspected of illegal activity.
- where conduct is not suspected to be illegal but is nonetheless below Biblical Christian ethics or those ethics understood to be good practice in wider society then an appropriate review process will be started and those involved 1) may be suspended from serving with the trust or its partners while the review is proceeding and 2) may need either to receive some retraining, discipline or permanent suspension if the review process decides that is the best way forward.

Who should I reach out to if I want to discuss this code or its application?

If you have any general queries about this Code, in the first instance we would encourage you to reach out to the charity’s executive leaders – Sharon & Hugo Anson. Beyond that, please reach out to those with safeguarding responsibility as follows:

- Andrew Myall – responsible for safeguarding administration
- Dr Catherine Sweatman – external consultant with relevant qualification and experience
- Mark Price – trustee responsible for safeguarding

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