

SPAB GUARDIAN AGREEMENT & CODE OF CONDUCT revised 2021

The SPAB is both a charitable company and a members' organisation. The Charity's work is achieved through collaboration between committed members and a small staff. The SPAB's 'Guardians' are those members who, through election or co-option, have an especially strong link with the Society and its work as well as a formal status within its charitable structure. This status places some obligation upon a Guardian to devote time voluntarily to the Society and to assist staff; in turn, it places an obligation on the Society to value and utilise the Guardian's input, and hold realistic expectations about the time that a Guardian can offer as a volunteer.

The SPAB and its staff undertake to:

- Treat Guardians with courtesy at all times and respect their commitment and expertise
- Keep its Guardians informed of and involved in the organisation's work
- Seek input from Guardians through committee meetings, conferences and consultations to contribute to operations and planning
- Manage the appointment of Guardians through annual elections and committee reviews to allow opportunities for new Guardians to participate
- Promote a democratic governance structure including a Board of Trustees composed principally of members of Guardian sub-committees
- Recognise that Guardians are volunteers who have other demands on their time
- Reimburse expenses in line with the Society's policy

Guardians are expected to:

- Understand the Society's aims and strategy
- Understand the Terms of Reference of committees and contribute to their work
- Treat staff with courtesy at all times and respect their professional expertise
- Respond to requests for assistance from staff, act in consultation with them, and support them in their work
- Promote the SPAB, its ideas and the reasons for becoming a member to the wider world
- Assist with fundraising and other activities that support the SPAB
- Keep their own membership subscription up to date

Equal Opportunities

Guardians should adhere to the SPAB's equal opportunities policy which states that there should be no discrimination, harassment, less favourable treatment or victimisation

For meetings, Guardians should:

- Attend all meetings but send timely apologies where absence is unavoidable (missing three meetings in a row may lead to a request to stand down)
- Prepare by reading the minutes, agenda, papers and emails before the meeting
- Contribute positively to discussions, treating each other, and staff, with respect
- Respect confidentiality
- Draw attention to all potential conflicts of interest and withdraw from all discussions where a conflict exists



- Fulfil any responsibilities agreed at a meeting and be prepared to report back on progress at the next
- Understand that decisions made at a meeting are the collective responsibility of all members and should be supported outside the committee

Disciplinary Process

The Society recognises that Guardians give their time and expertise willingly, as volunteers. This is welcome and valued, but in exceptional circumstances action may be unavoidable if a Guardian acts in a way that is incompatible with the expectations of Guardianship, as outlined above.

Where a fellow Guardian, the Chair of a Guardian committee, the Chair of the SPAB, the Director or another member of staff believes that an elected or co-opted individual has breached the expectations of Guardianship, the first step will be a discussion between the Guardian concerned and the SPAB Chair, Committee Chair, and Director. This may result in a dismissal of the complaint, an informal warning, or a formal written warning. In an extreme case a recommendation can be made to the Board that it should consider expulsion of the Guardian from their committee and the Society. The Guardian has a formal right to be heard by the Board should this be recommended (*details of this process can be supplied on request*).

A Guardian may also make a complaint against a member of staff, should this be felt warranted. A Guardian's complaint would result in action under the existing staff disciplinary process, should it be accepted by the Chair and Director (*a copy of this policy can be supplied on request*).

Payment

The Society is not prevented from paying Guardians to act as consultants, or to provide other services that support the charity's work. However, circumstances where Guardians are paid are the exception and the normal expectation is that Guardians will contribute to the SPAB's work voluntarily, for the good of the cause.

Guardian's signature of agreement

Name.....

Signed.....

Director's signature for the SPAB