

Ethical Policy

Policy owner	Head of Development
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1. Purpose of this Policy

In our mission to restore and connect nature across Shropshire we are committed to being an organisation that demonstrates clear ethical principles in how we operate and how we work with others. This means leading by example while inspiring and influencing others to contribute to nature's recovery.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for Shropshire Wildlife Trust (SWT) staff and volunteers within which we can ensure our ethical principles are applied consistently in both the overall strategic direction and the day-to-day operations of the Trust.

We note that the issues of working with some organisations are going to be complex. However, we must always be guided by our ethical principles and the positive impact any relationship can have on the local biodiversity, the wider environment and the decision making of those we choose to work with, so they continue to do the right thing for nature in the future.

This policy influences many other policies governing how we work, and it is supported by internal processes where decision making is particularly complex or challenging.

2. Scope of this policy

This policy covers the following areas of activity:

2.1. Corporate relationships, partnerships and sponsorship, and individual high-value donations:

- Who we work with in the businesses sector and who we accept donations and funding from
- How we use our relationships with businesses to influence their activities towards a positive outcome for nature.
- How we monitor the effectiveness of our corporate partnerships where we are seeking beneficial change.

2.2. Investments:

- How we invest our charitable funds to maximise financial return without compromising our ethical principles.

2.3. Procurement:

- How we procure goods and services for the organisation without compromising our ethical principles.

2.4. Day to day operational decisions:

- How our everyday operations are planned and carried out to always minimise adverse environmental impact.

3. Our Mission

Shropshire Wildlife Trust is the only local organisation dedicated to ensuring Shropshire is a place where abundant wildlife and people can live and thrive together. Guided by a collaborative vision where we all play a part in connecting nature, we provide expert advice and guidance to landowners and managers, making sure the land we look after leads by example, while inspiring and educating people and organisations across the county on what they can do.

By doing this we will create a Shropshire that is full of diverse and abundant wildlife, where nature is at the heart of individual choices, corporate decisions and local economic and policy making. One that helps tackle the ongoing climate emergency, while supporting the health and wellbeing of all who live here.

4. Our Values

Our purpose as an organisation is underpinned by the internal values that we apply to how we work, but most importantly for this policy, our ethical principles too. Among our values are:

- **Passion** - Everything we do is driven by our desire to make the World a better place. Our passion for nature is the prime motivator for our skilled, motivated and dedicated team. We focus our energy on where we are uniquely placed to deliver the most impact for wildlife, enabling us to work with purpose and focus.
- **Respect** - We act with respect for nature, respect for people, and respect for diversity. We work collaboratively and champion inclusion and diversity within our communities, being locally sensitive whilst ensuring that we have impact beyond our borders.
- **Trust** - We seek first to find the common ground. We accept that difference, competition and conflict exist, but we work openly, collaboratively and with tolerance.
- **Integrity** - We are committed to transparency and inclusivity within our actions and projects, co-designing to deliver the greatest impact for nature. We will always uphold our values and beliefs and speak truth to power.
- **Strength in diversity** - We are comprised of 47 independent organisations, that work as one movement, who hold unparalleled knowledge of the wildlife and natural systems within their communities across England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Isle of Man and Alderney. We celebrate our differences and work to our common strengths.
- **Pragmatic activism** - We seek radical change and bold thinking, but we are evidence led and solution-focused and are convinced that working with partners and communities is the way to maximise our impact for nature.

5. Our Ethical Principles

SWT may choose not to engage with organisations or individuals where there are issues of concern that conflict with SWT's mission and values or whose activities pose a reputational risk to the Trust.

SWT will assess any issues of ethical concern when engaging with organisations and individuals on a regular basis.

Issues of concern include:

- Fracking
- New fossil fuel development
- Unsustainable exploitation of natural resources
- Manufacture of chemicals that persist in the environment to the detriment of biodiversity
- Projects which we as a group of Wildlife Trusts are opposed to (e.g. Severn Tidal Lagoons)
- Unsustainable crypto currency mining
- Development projects which negatively impact key wildlife sites including Local Wildlife Sites, Nature Recovery Networks and sites with legal protection
- Badger culling
- Use of neonicotinoids
- Biofuel production
- Serious pollution incidents and other breaches of environmental law
- Animal cruelty
- All organisations who have a demonstrably poor record on EDI and the general treatment of their employees.

6. Working with others

In working with others, we will be guided by the following:

- Our independence and ability to stand up for wildlife is maintained,
- The relationship enhances SWT's reputation,
- We will work collaboratively to agree shared outcomes, and the roles and responsibilities of each partner, in a memorandum of understanding (MoU),
- There is a clear and transparent strategic purpose for a long-term relationship, including review points,
- Any endorsement of an organisation or product is specific, explicit, robust and transparent.

We will work to best apply these principles in all aspects of our operations whilst recognising the complexity of doing so in the real world.

Where the balance between ethical concerns and a potentially positive outcome for nature requires greater scrutiny our decision making will be guided by our internal due diligence process and the SWT due diligence panel to ensure we can make the best judgements against our ethical principles and ethical concerns.

This scrutiny and decision making includes representatives of SWT senior management team and Trustees. The panel may assist SWT staff in evaluating existing and proposed partnerships, contracts, investments, and funding opportunities on a case-by-case basis as required.