



THE WARREN HOUSE GROUP AT DARTINGTON

CENTRE FOR SOCIAL POLICY

CONSTITUTION (Final 17 Mar 2021 Version)



Preamble

1. The Centre for Social Policy (“**CSP**”) was established in 1995 to provide support and facilitating services to the activities of The Warren House Group (Charity number 1099202 and Company Limited by Guarantee 04610839) (“**WHG**” or the “**Charity**”). It was also a resource for people who have left posts connected to established organisations, work independently, hold senior posts in welfare agencies and/or are retired or approaching retirement. It is a facility to be used as they wish but it provides them with a link to a multi-disciplinary peer group and enables them to keep up-to-date with current issues. When joining, they are known as CSP Fellows.

Administrative Structure

2. Its legal status is that of a committee within WHG. It will be run by a Management Board (the “**Board**”) comprising the chair, secretary/treasurer, a WHG trustee, the CEO of the WHG / Director of the Dartington Service Design Lab (the “**Lab**”) and other members co-opted as necessary to ensure a representative and equitable gender balance.
3. The Board will meet quarterly to review and plan the work of the CSP, consider nominations for new Fellows and take other decisions relevant to the work of the CSP in support of the Lab and Charity. In addition to this, there will be an annual AGM for current Fellows.
4. The CSP’s accounts will be a separate cost centre within the WHG accounts and are subject to the rules, procedures and audits that apply to the Charity’s administration. Fellows will have no access to the charity’s funds without approval of the CEO and Trustees of the WHG.
5. The Management Board will have the power to:
 - 5.1. establish new processes and documentation to serve governance and membership arrangements;
 - 5.2. consider new applications and nominations of Fellows;
 - 5.3. arrange speakers and programmes for seminars;
 - 5.4. consider any requests to submit grant applications made through the charity;
 - 5.5. consider and respond to any complaints or breaches of codes of conduct.
6. It will be supported by the CSP secretary/treasurer and the Lab Operations team who assist in the organisation of events, manage the finances and report against budgets as well as maintain the database of Fellows and associated information governance.

Details and obligations of Fellowship

7. New Fellows may either contact the CSP to request consideration for joining or be nominated by existing Fellows, Lab staff or WHG Trustees. They will be asked to provide a CV containing essential details requested by the Board and complete an application form. Once the Management Board has

unanimously agreed to an application, Fellows, Lab staff or WHG Trustees will be informed and asked for any observations. In the light of these comments, the Board has the power to reverse its original acceptance decision. If concerns are not resolved, the Management Board will pass the information to the WHG Board of Trustees who will make the final decision.

8. The eligibility criteria for membership are:
 - 8.1. a well-established career in social policy, research or practice (children's services and beyond as the CSP is multi-disciplinary) and
 - 8.2. holding a senior/executive position or retired.
9. Fellows are required to:
 - 9.1. pay an annual subscription (currently £60) or a lifetime membership fee/donation (£500+);
 - 9.2. agree to provide up to three days pro-bono advice/consultancy to the Dartington Service Design Lab ("Lab"); and, if asked,
 - 9.3. to join any standing groups, such as the WHG Ethics Committee, or working parties set up by the Charity.
10. The Management Board may choose to waive subscription fees for Fellows who can no longer participate in activities due to age or infirmity but whose contribution is valued, and for people in other countries whose formal affiliation to the Lab facilitates its international work. These would be classed as 'Honorary Fellows'.
11. Fellows are required to comply with conditions of membership which in addition to the above are:
 - 11.1. not to disrupt the work of the Charity, the CSP or of other Fellows in any way, and
 - 11.2. to use and specify their status as a CSP Fellow only if it is:
 - 11.2.1. relevant to what is being done,
 - 11.2.2. refers to social or welfare issues,
 - 11.2.3. does not bring the Charity or CSP into disrepute or damage the Lab's or CSP's work in any way.
 - 11.2.4. must accept that discussion at CSP seminars are subject to the Chatham House rule (i.e. they can use the information received but not reveal the identity or affiliation of the speakers.)
12. Any report or complaint of a Fellow's conduct or behaviour allegedly breaching the code of conduct (Annex A) will be considered under the procedure set out at Annex B.
13. Individuals may be removed from the register of Fellows if after a reminder they have not paid their membership fee beyond three months of its due date.
14. These criteria will be reviewed annually by the Management Board and WHG Board of Trustees.

Dissolution

15. In the event of the dissolution of the CSP, the Board then in office shall remain in office until the affairs of the organisation have been properly terminated. Any funds remaining after payment of debts and obligations shall be transferred to the WHG.

Annex A

Code of Conduct - Standards and Key Principles of the CSP

1. Fellows' behaviour is guided by those in public office:

1.1.1 SELFLESSNESS

Fellows should act solely in the interests of the Charity.

1.1.2 INTEGRITY

Fellows must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

1.1.3 OBJECTIVITY

Fellows must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

1.1.4 ACCOUNTABILITY

Fellows are accountable to the Management Board for their decisions and actions when supporting the CSP and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

1.1.5 OPENNESS

Fellows should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

1.1.6 HONESTY

Fellows should be truthful.

1.1.7 LEADERSHIP

Fellows should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs. Set out below are the standards of behaviour expected from our Fellows:

- i. Act professionally in your dealings with colleagues and those outside the organisation with whom we work. Treat colleagues with fairness and courtesy – treat them as individuals and show sensitivity to their needs.
- ii. Consider others in the carrying out of your duties. Express your point of view without being aggressive or overbearing.
- iii. Listen to what others say and respect their point of view.
- iv. Keep in mind the limitations of your own experience and value others' perspectives and knowledge.
- v. Try to find solutions and work through disagreements.
- vi. Endeavour not to discriminate unlawfully or put pressure on others to discriminate.
- vii. Act if you witness, or are made aware of, any improper conduct, including any act of harassment or discrimination, or any significant security incident or weakness.
- viii. Challenge attitudes which demean or denigrate other people and develop self-awareness of the impact of your own behaviour.
- ix. Ensure that your behaviour whilst representing the Charity does not cause embarrassment or offence to the organisation, or reflect negatively in a way that would bring the reputation of the organisation into disrepute or cause a loss of public confidence in its work.
- x. It is not possible to list every type of activity where you must be particularly aware of observing the highest standards of conduct. The aim of the Code of Conduct is to highlight the areas, which are of particular importance to the CSP and WHG.

- xi. Fellows are trusted to rely on their own judgment in the proper performance of their fellowship with the CSP. If, in a certain situation, you are unsure of the course of action to take, you should always seek advice from the Management Board.
- 2. The CSP, in line with the Charity, does not discriminate on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability or age.

Annex B

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH THE ALLEGED MISCONDUCT OF FELLOWS

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The CSP is committed to creating an environment where all Fellows and WHG staff are able to perform to their best ability and achieve job satisfaction. The CSP also recognises that there will be occasions when behavioural, disciplinary and/or performance problems arise. The purpose of these Procedures is to ensure that if such problems do arise, they are dealt with fairly and consistently. It sets out the action that will be taken when incidents occur.
- 1.2 The Charity's Articles of Association provide for the making of rules and regulations to govern committees. The Constitution of the CSP incorporates these Procedures. Such Procedures will have regard where appropriate to principles of human rights and natural justice.

2 Formation and remit of the Review Committee

- 2.1 The CSP Management Board has responsibility for overseeing and implementing these procedures. Where an incident is brought to the attention of the Management Board, the Board will form a sub-committee of three members to consider the matter ("**Review Committee**").
- 2.2 The role of the Review Committee will be to:
 - a) act at all times in a manner which it considers at its reasonable discretion to be timely, fair and proportionate, while dealing with the case and any evidence presented in the strictest confidence;
 - b) examine all cases of alleged misconduct by Fellows referred to them according to the Procedures as set out in Section 3 below, where necessary conducting independent examination of the evidence;
 - c) where necessary, to arrange for and conduct a formal hearing into any matter brought to its attention;
 - d) assess the extent to which the alleged misconduct is likely to be harmful to the interests and welfare of the CSP and the WHG;
 - e) decide whether the matter constitutes a breach of the Code of Conduct, and, if there has been a breach, to decide on an appropriate remedy or penalty to be imposed;
 - f) communicate its findings and any remedy or penalty to be imposed to the Fellow or Fellows concerned, to the Management Board and, where considered appropriate, to any other interested person (such as a complainant); and
 - g) implement the decision, in accordance with the powers delegated to it, by making such directions to the Management Board, as are appropriate to each case.
- 2.3 The Review Committee shall take all decisions by a simple majority and may decide matters in person, in a meeting, or in writing. In all other respects, subject to these Procedures, the Review Committee may organise and regulate its proceedings as it sees fit, provided it deals promptly with all cases referred to it. The composition of any Review Committee assigned by the Board to any specific complaint shall take account, so far as practicable, of any protected characteristics of the complainant if, in the Chair's view, that is relevant to the complaint.
- 2.4 The Review Committee may delegate any matter, including investigation of facts and communications with third parties, to such person or persons, on such terms and conditions, and to such extent, as it sees fit, provided that the Review Committee shall at all times remain responsible for reaching its own decision on any case of alleged misconduct, deciding any remedy or penalty to be imposed, and communicating its decision to the Fellow or Fellows concerned, to the Management Board, WHG Trustees and, where considered appropriate, to any other interested person (such as a complainant).
- 2.5 No committee member shall participate in the consideration or determination of any case of alleged misconduct in which they have a personal interest or could reasonably be perceived as having a personal interest. All committee members must declare any such real or perceived personal interest and cease to participate in any such case as soon as reasonably practicable upon discovery of the

personal interest.

- 2.6 Additional members may also be co-opted to join the Review Committee in order to ensure the specialist representation required for any specific case.

3 Steps for the Investigation and Determination of Misconduct

- 3.1 In considering possible misconduct, the Review Committee shall:
- a) decide the matter at its sole discretion;
 - b) be cognisant of the need to act fairly and proportionately, including giving due opportunity to make representations on the matter in person or by other means to the Fellow who is the subject of the allegation and, where the committee members consider it appropriate, to others who are directly affected by the matter; and
 - c) give due consideration to such representations before taking its decision.
- 3.2 The following steps, set out the usual way in which the CSP shall apply the duties above and will respond when allegations or evidence of misconduct by Fellows arise.
- 3.3 For the avoidance of doubt, a Fellow who is the subject of an investigation by the Review Committee will be expected to provide reasonable assistance to the Review Committee to enable its members to reach a decision. Refusal to do so may be considered as failure to comply with the Code of Conduct.
- 3.4 In the event that a Fellow under investigation by the Review Committee resigns from the CSP, it shall be left to the Review Committee to determine whether or not it is in the interests of the CSP or WHG to continue the investigation and reach a decision.
- 3.5 The Management Board will review the Procedures at least every three years.

Step 1 - Receipt of initial evidence or allegations

- 3.6 On receipt of an allegation about the misconduct of a Fellow, the Chair of the Management Board shall consider whether the allegation, if found to be justified, would be likely to constitute a breach of the Code of Conduct. Such an allegation will not be accepted and acted on if it is received anonymously. The Chair may also consider information that comes to the CSP's attention in any way, where no specific allegation has been made, that might indicate a significant breach may have occurred.
- 3.7 If the matter relates personally to the Chair, the allegation will be sent to the WHG People Sub-Committee Chair, who will consider whether the allegation, if found to be justified, would constitute a breach of the Code of Conduct.
- 3.8 If it is clear that the allegation does not relate to a breach of the Code of Conduct, the Chair of the Board or WHG People Sub-Committee Chair (depending on the person to whom the allegation was sent for assessment) shall inform the complainant that the matter is dismissed with a brief statement of reason. The Management Board shall be notified of this and the reasons for the dismissal of the complaint.
- 3.9 Should a complaint or other information indicate a potential breach of the Code of Conduct, the Chair shall inform the complainant (where there is a complainant) and the Fellow concerned that the potential breach will be investigated and assessed. A Review Committee will then be formed. The complainant and the Fellow concerned shall be informed of the composition of the Review Committee which is to consider the complaint and may make representations to the Chair about the Review Committee's composition. The Chair shall consider any such representations, but the Chair's decision is final. At no time may the complainant or the Fellow concerned contact, or seek to influence, committee members outside Review Committee proceedings.
- 3.10 A written record of all allegations received will be kept for 10 years whether or not they are referred to a Review Committee, with details of the decision and the actions taken.

Step 2 - Investigation and assessment

- 3.11 The Review Committee shall consider the matter, including any supporting evidence and determine what, if any, further evidence or fact-finding may be required. The Review Committee may investigate the matter as it sees fit, including by seeking such assistance from third parties, and, provided they have no personal interest in the matter, the Chair may assist the Review Committee. The Fellow who is the

subject of a complaint has the right to present their side of the case and to address the Review Committee in person, along with a supporting friend (who could, but need not, be a Fellow), if they so wish.

- 3.12 When the Review Committee considers that it possesses sufficient information, including representations from interested parties, it shall determine whether or not the evidence provided constitutes a breach of the Code of Conduct, or whether no such determination is possible for any reason.
- 3.13 If the Review Committee concludes that a breach has not been established, the Chair of the Review Committee shall write to the complainant (where there is a complainant) and to the Fellow as soon as is practically possible confirming that no breach has been established and that the decision is final.
- 3.14 If the Review Committee concludes that a breach has occurred, it may impose any of the following sanctions, including any combination of them, as follows:
 - a) a formal reprimand and/or warning letter may be sent to the Fellow; or
 - b) the Fellow may be suspended for up to a maximum period of 12 months during which period the Fellow has to pay his/her subscription fee but will not have access to any services or benefits; or
 - c) where in the Review Committee's reasonable opinion the Fellow's conduct or continued Fellowship is likely to be detrimental to CSP or WHG, the Fellow may be permanently removed from Fellowship.
 - d) Where the matter concerns safeguarding, then on advice from the charity's designated safeguarding officer, the matter should be disclosed to Designated Officer Local Authority (DOLAS)(where that incident occurred) or equivalent for devolved administrations.
- 3.15 In each case, the Review Committee may direct the Management Board to take such action as may be necessary to give effect to the sanctions.
- 3.16 The Chair of the Review Committee shall inform the Fellow in writing of its determination, including the reasons for that determination and to confirm the availability of and process for an appeal.

Step 3 – Appeal

- 3.17 ***In the event of a decision by the Review Committee to sanction a Fellow, the Fellow shall be given the opportunity to*** appeal in writing within 28 full days after receiving the notice of sanction (an "Appeal").
- 3.18 The grounds on which an Appeal may be made are that:
 - a) ***there has been a*** material failure to follow the procedures set out in this document; or
 - b) the decision was perverse and could not reasonably have been reached by the Review Committee, based on the evidence seen; or
 - c) the Fellow can now provide significant evidence not previously made available to the Review Committee and the Appeals Panel (below) is satisfied that the Fellow has provided a good reason why this was not previously made available.
- 3.19 An Appeals Panel, convened by the Chair of Trustees of WHG and consisting of at least three WHG Trustees (all of whom shall have no personal interest in the matter and shall not have participated in the original investigation and the recommendation it made) shall then be temporarily constituted, for the purpose and duration of considering the appeal, in accordance with these Procedures.
- 3.20 The Appeals Panel may, on reviewing the grounds for Appeal, determine that the basis for an Appeal, set out in 3.18 above, has not been met and reject the Appeal without hearing it. If the Panel accepts that an Appeal is validly made, after reviewing the case, it may:
 - a) confirm the Review Committee's determination and sanction(s); or
 - b) amend or rescind the Review Committee's determination and sanction(s); or
 - c) issue any determinations or sanctions set out in paragraph 3.11 above, or any combination of these.
- 3.21 The findings of the Appeals Panel are final.

3.22 A Fellow who is suspended or removed will deliver to the CSP, for cancellation or retention as the case may be, any certificate referring to such Fellowship or any other designation previously issued and will cease to use any letters or designations relating to the CSP or WHG.