**WATER WITNESS CODE OF CONDUCT**

**(DRAFT November 2020)**

### INTRODUCTION

1. Water Witness expects its staff (including temporary, interim, contractors, consultants, Trustees, partner and voluntary staff) to reflect the highest levels of integrity, ethical conduct and honesty in all affairs relating to the organisation, its work and their role within it. All staff also bear a responsibility as employees to act as ambassadors for Water Witness in terms of their general conduct both within and outside the organisation. This policy outlines the responsibilities of all staff.
2. This document sets out in Part 1: the responsibilities of employees under Common Law; in Part 2., the responsibilities to reflect the organisational values of Water Witness, and in Part 3. The specific responsibilities with regard to safeguarding of children and vulnerable people. This code of conduct also requires compliance with Water Witness’s wider set of current policies and procedures as set out in the Employee Manual.
3. All staff will agree to this Code of Conduct, evidenced by a signature.
4. These standards of conduct are intended to underpin and clarify standards required by the Company of its employees and form a fundamental part of the employment contract. Staff who fail to comply with this Code of Conduct could be subject, following full investigation, to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. If through their actions or omissions staff are found to be in contravention of either this Code or, indeed, their legal responsibilities then the Company reserves the right to take legal action if it deems it to be necessary to do so.

### PART 1: GENERAL DUTIES

The duties of an employee are embodied in Common Law and built on by Statute.

1. Under Common Law the duties of an employee are as follows:
* to be ready and willing to work;
* to offer their services personally: for example they must not subcontract the work for which they are employed;
* to take reasonable care in the exercise of that service, including the duty to be competent at work and to take care of the Company’s property;
* to not wilfully disrupt the Company’s business;
* to obey reasonable orders as to the time, place, nature and method of service;
* to work only for the Company in the Company’s time;
* to disclose information to the Company relevant to the Company’s business: for example that they might know or discover;
* to hold solely for the Company the benefit of any invention relevant to the business on which the Company is engaged;
* to respect the Company’s trade secrets;
* in general, to be of good faith and do nothing to destroy the trust and confidence necessary for employment;
* to account for all benefits – monetary or in kind - received in the course of employment;
* to not give or receive bribes or otherwise act corruptly
* to indemnify the employer for loss caused by the employee.
1. United Kingdom Statute places further responsibilities on individual employees in regard to their own behaviour and their behaviour towards other employees.

### STANDARD OF CONDUCT REQUIRED BY THE COMPANY

#### Bribery and Other Corrupt Behaviour

1. Water Witness has a strict anti-bribery and corruption policy in line with the Bribery Act (2010). A bribe is defined as: giving someone a financial or other advantage to encourage that person to perform their functions or activities improperly or to reward that person for having already done so.
2. If an employee bribes (or attempts to bribe) another person, intending either to obtain or retain business for the company, or to obtain or retain an advantage in the conduct of the company's business this will be considered gross misconduct. Similarly accepting or allowing another person to accept a bribe will be considered gross misconduct. In these circumstances the employee will be subject to formal investigation under the Company’s disciplinary procedures, and disciplinary action up to and including dismissal may be applied.

#### Gifts and Hospitality

1. In addition to the duties placed on employees by Civil and Statute Law. Water Witness requires its employees to ensure that gifts and hospitality offered by suppliers and potential suppliers of goods and services to the Company are declined. This applies, whether the gifts or hospitality are offered within, or outside normal working hours. The only exceptions to this are trivial gifts with a nominal value of less than £10 such as a calendar, diary, chocolates or mugs can be accepted. All other gifts must be politely refused or, if received through the post, returned to the donor with a suitably worded letter signed by your line manager.

#### Transaction of Private Business

1. Employees having official dealings with contractors and other suppliers of goods or services must avoid transacting any kind of private business with them by any means other than the Company’s normal commercial channels. No personal favours or transactions should be sought or accepted.

#### Visits to Conferences, Demonstrations etc

1. The Company intends that when it is necessary for employees to visit conferences, demonstrations and similar occasions, it should bear the travelling and subsistence expenses itself unless otherwise approved by a senior manager.

#### Attendance at Luncheons, Receptions etc

1. Where it is evident that the work of Water Witness will be facilitated, invitations to attend receptions, luncheons etc. may be accepted under the following rules:
2. no employee may accept an invitation without first obtaining the approval of their line manager;
3. in exceptional circumstances, where it is not possible to seek prior approval, the facts should be reported immediately afterwards;
4. if addressed personally, such an invitation may not be transferred to another employee, except with the consent and approval of a senior manager as above and with the concurrence of the party issuing the invitation;
5. invitations involving attendance outside normal working hours may be accepted only on the authority of the line manager;
6. as a general rule, any employee who has any doubts about the wisdom of accepting any hospitality should decline the offer.
7. NB The important difference between, for example, attendance in an official capacity at a function organised by the Company and the acceptance of hospitality from a private individual or firm should be recognised.

#### Identification

1. Employees who have been issued with identity badges should wear or carry these whilst carrying out their duties.

#### Confidentiality

1. At all times confidentiality must be maintained. No information can be released to unauthorised persons or organisations. The Executive Director or other Senior Managers of the Company will inform employees of those authorised to receive information.
2. If doubt exists as to the validity of an organisation or individuals to receive information, this must be checked with your line manager.

#### Personal Relationships

1. If a personal relationship between two employees develops within the working environment, the onus is on the senior employee concerned to bring this to the attention of his or her manager to confirm that there is no conflict of interest, nor will a conflict of interest arise. The Company reserves the right to move one of the employees concerned if it deems it necessary to do so.

#### Outside Interests and Employment

1. Outside interests include directorships, ownership, part ownership or material shareholdings in companies, business or consultancies likely to seek to do business with the Water Witness. These should be declared to the individual’s line manager as should the interests of a spouse / partner or close relative.

#### Political and civic activities

1. It is not the intention of Water Witness, or this policy, to dissuade employees from participating actively in public duties. It is important, however, that by doing so there is no suggestion to a third party that the employee is acting on behalf of, or with the support of, Water Witness. To avoid any misunderstanding, no Company employee should permit his or her company affiliation to be noted in any outside organisation's materials or activities without the express written approval of a member of senior management.

#### General Conduct

1. Employees should at all times conduct themselves in such a way as to enhance the reputation of the Company.
2. Water Witness will support employees who become aware of and are willing to report breaches of this policy or who genuinely believe that a breach is occurring, has occurred or is likely to occur within the business. Employees should raise the issue internally with their manager or supervisor or in accordance with the Company’s Policy on Disclosing Information (‘Whistleblowing’).

**PART 2. ORGANISATIONAL VALUES**

1. Water Witness expects all staff and associated individuals to reflect its organisational principles as follows (further details and examples to guide this behaviour are provided in the Employee Manual and performance management guidance notes):
* **Team Working** – Works effectively with others within own team and across the wider organisation to achieve results in the job, team goals and organisational objectives.
* **Relationships with Colleagues** – Builds and maintains productive and harmonious working relationships within own team and across the wider organisation.
* **Relationships with Partners** – Builds and maintains productive and harmonious working relationships with partners, recognising their strengths.
* **Communication** – Effectively communicates appropriate information through a range of mechanisms to ensure clarity and understanding and achieve organisational objectives.
* **Commitment to Social Justice** – Ensures that social justice is at the core of Water Witness’s work and is thought through and provides a meaningful core in all of our work.
* **Responsibility** – Takes personal responsibility for your own decisions and development.
* **Commitment and Motivation** –Demonstrates self-motivation and commitment towards achieving results and applying yourself in a positive manner to the work of the organisation.
* **Adaptability/Willingness to change** – Understands need for appropriate change, willing to change working practices
* **Planning and Personal Organisation** – Maximises efficiency, prioritising workload appropriately and focusing on the right areas to ensure the achievement of own/team and organisational objectives.
* **Building & Application of expertise** – Develops and maintains a high level of job and professional knowledge/skills and using these to provide an excellent service and achieve organisational objectives.
* **Quality of outputs** - Sets and keeps high professional and personal standards
* **Productivity/ Efficiency** - Able to work alone and with others to deliver quality work in a timely way
* **Continuous Learning** - Demonstrates commitment to continuous professional development and organisational learning.
* **Efficient use of Resources** - Aims for optimal spend and value for money in Water Witness’s work
* **Problem Solving and Decision-Making** – Analysing problems and evaluating options and risks to identify most appropriate solutions and taking effective action through sound judgement.

Additional Behaviours for Managers

* **Managing Objectives** – Making the best possible use of your resources at work, prioritising appropriately, consulting with others and ensuring resources and efforts are focused on key organisational objectives and goals.
* **Managing People –** Effectively leading and managing a team, dealing with team and individual problems, counselling and coaching others to achieve results and encouraging and supporting the team in their activities.

**PART 3: Safeguarding of children and adults at risk**

1. The Safeguarding Code of Conduct contains the essential principles and rules that reflect the behaviours and standards that Water Witness expects of staff, volunteers and representatives in promoting our values and to protect its reputation. It is the responsibility of us all individually and collectively to ensure our behaviour is consistent as set out in this Code of Conduct.
2. The basic values of Water Witness require that we observe the laws, customs and traditions of the countries where we work or are visiting. In cases where such laws, customs or traditions contravene the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child or the UN Declaration of Human Rights, then the latter two shall prevail. They are founded on the conviction that all children and adults are of equal value, children have special rights and everyone has a responsibility to uphold those rights.
3. For staff, representatives and third parties, this Code of Conduct covers behaviour in and outside of working hours and sets an ethical framework which applies **24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year**.
4. Children and adults at risk are not the direct beneficiaries of Water Witness’s work. Therefore, Wayer Witness representatives should not, in the course of their normal employment, come into contact with children / adults at risk in a non-public setting, or without the supervision of a teacher / parent / guardian.
5. All representatives of WWI **must not**:

• Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children or adults at risk;

• Develop physical/sexual relationships with children or adults at risk;

• Develop relationships with children or adults at risk, which could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive.

• Place themselves in a position where they could be accused of sexually abusing a child, young person or adult at risk, i.e. holding or hugging a child, young person or adult at risk, or physically touching children, young persons or adults at risk in a way that could be considered abusive in ways described in this document.

• Spend time alone with children or adults at risk - wherever possible in the context of delivering work duties. I will plan activities so that more than one person is present or, at least, other people are within sight and hearing. Wherever possible ensure that another adult is present to supervise the activity.

• Take children/adults at risk alone in a car, even on short journeys, wherever possible in the context of delivering work duties.

• Act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child or adult at risk at risk of abuse.

• Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive.

• Offer benefits such as food, favours, clothes, jobs, money in exchange for sexual favours

• Show favouritism to any individual for sexual favours in return.

• Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children or adults at risk, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse.

1. All representatives of WWI **must:**

• Treat everyone with respect, recognising their right to personal privacy.

• Be aware of situations that may present risks and manage these.

• Plan and organise events so that safeguarding risks are minimised.

• Avoid being drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour, such as tantrums or crushes.

• If a residential event is being planned, ensure that adults and children have separate sleeping accommodation. Never sleep in the same room or bed as a child or adult at risk with whom they are working.

• Remember that someone else may misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.

• Adults should avoid being placed in a compromising or vulnerable position. The adult is always considered responsible even if a child behaves seductively.

1. For employees, abuse to children or adults at risk will be considered as gross misconduct. Allegations of child abuse / abuse of adults at risk made against an employee or any representative of WWI will be thoroughly investigated under the organisation’s disciplinary policy; for employees it may lead to disciplinary action being taken against the employee while other representatives will have their services terminated immediately. A report will be sent to the police and statutory bodies for further action to be taken.

**Any staff found to be in contravention of any of the above will be subject to Water Witness’s disciplinary procedures as detailed in the Employee Handbook. Failure to adhere to this code by consultants, partners, contractors, volunteers and other third parties may lead to termination of contracts or agreements and any relationship with Water Witness. Other visitors, such as funders, will be reported to the appropriate authorities.**

**Declaration**

I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ fully understand and agree to abide by the Water Witness Code of Conduct. I understand that any breaches of the Code of Conduct will be reported to the Executive Director of Water Witness and appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the relevant policies and procedures.

 I have read this document and all associated documents.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Definition of terms**

**‘Bullying’** is behaviour that hurts someone else. It usually happens over a lengthy period of time and can harm a child both physically and emotionally. Bullying includes:

* verbal abuse, such as name calling
* non-verbal abuse, such as hand signs or glaring
* emotional abuse, such as threatening, intimidating or humiliating someone
* exclusion, such as ignoring or isolating someone
* undermining, by constant criticism or spreading rumours
* controlling or manipulating someone
* racial, sexual or homophobic bullying
* physical assaults, such as hitting and pushing
* making silent, hoax or abusive calls.

Bullying can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. When bullying happens online it can involve social networks, games and mobile devices. Online bullying can also be known as cyberbullying.

‘**Child**’ is anyone under the age of 18 years old.

‘**Child abuse’** consists of anything which individuals, institutions or processes do, or fail to do, which directly or indirectly harms children or damages their prospect of safe and healthy development into adulthood. The main categories of abuse are defined by WHO as Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Harassment, Neglect and Negligent treatment, Sexual Abuse and Exploitation. An annex detailing how to recognize signs of child abuse is attached.

‘**Child labour’** is work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. It is work that:

* is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and
* interferes with their schooling by:
* depriving them of the opportunity to attend school;
* obliging them to leave school prematurely; or
* requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

If a young person, under the age of 18 is part of an apprenticeship scheme within the statutory law of the country and does not meet any of the above, this would not be considered by Water Witness as child labour. However, any contractor or sub-contractor must inform Water Witness of the name of any apprentice who will be directly involved with our work.

For Water Witness it is not acceptable for any staff or representatives to engage anyone under the age of 18 to work as domestic help in their place of work or at home.

**‘Child safeguarding’** is the responsibility of organisations to make sure their staff, operations and programmes do no harm to children or expose them to abuse or exploitation.

**‘Child sexual exploitation’** is a type of sexual abuse. Young people in exploitative situations and relationships receive things such as gifts, money, drugs, alcohol, status or affection in exchange for taking part in sexual activities. Young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They often trust their abuser and don't understand that they're being abused. They may depend on their abuser or be too scared to tell anyone what's happening. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol before being sexually exploited. They can also be groomed and exploited online. Some children and young people are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Child sexual exploitation can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults and involve multiple perpetrators.

**‘Child trafficking’** is child abuse. It involves recruiting and moving children who are then exploited. Many children are trafficked from one part of a country to another, or from a completely different country. Children are trafficked for:

* child sexual exploitation
* benefit fraud
* forced marriage
* domestic servitude such as cleaning, childcare, cooking
* forced labour in factories or agriculture
* criminal exploitation such as cannabis cultivation, pickpocketing, begging, transporting, drugs, selling pirated DVDs and bag theft.

**‘Emotional abuse’** is persistent and, over time, it severely damages a child’s emotional health and development. It involves:

* humiliating, putting down or constantly criticising a child
* shouting at or threatening a child or calling them names
* mocking a child or making them perform degrading acts
* constantly blaming or scapegoating a child for things which are not their fault
* trying to control a child’s life and not recognising their individuality
* not allowing them to have friends or develop socially
* pushing a child too hard or not recognising their limitations
* manipulating a child
* exposing a child to distressing events or interactions such as drug taking, heavy drinking or domestic abuse
* persistently ignoring them
* being cold and emotionally unavailable during interactions with a child
* never saying anything kind, positive or encouraging to a child and failing to praise their achievements and successes.

**‘Female genital mutilation’ (FGM)** is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision or cutting. Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM. However, FGM is child abuse. It's dangerous and a criminal offence. There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM. It doesn't enhance fertility and it doesn't make childbirth safer. It’s used to control female sexuality and can cause severe and long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.

**‘Neglect’** is persistently failing to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs usually resulting in serious damage to their health and development. Neglect may involve a parent’s or carer’s failure to:

* provide adequate food, clothing or shelter
* supervise a child (including leaving them with unsuitable carers) or keep them safe from harm or danger
* make sure the child receives appropriate health and/or dental care
* make sure the child receives a suitable education
* meet the child’s basic emotional needs – parents may ignore their children when they are distressed or even when they are happy or excited. This is emotional neglect.

**‘Physical abuse’** is the non-accidental use of physical force that deliberately or inadvertently causes a risk of/ or actual injury to a child. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing non-accidental physical harm to a child. Physical harm can also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness or temporary, permanent injury or disability of a child.

**‘Sexual abuse’** is forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. It doesn’t necessarily involve violence and the child may not be aware that what is happening is abuse. Child sexual abuse can involve contact abuse and/or non-contact abuse. Contact abuse happens when the abuser makes physical contact with the child.

‘**Sexual exploitation’** means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from sexual exploitation or another.

**‘Sexual harassment’** is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, which has the purpose, or effect of violating the dignity of a person and of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Such conduct may take place on a single occasion or on several occasions. Sexual harassment may take the form of unwelcome physical, verbal or nonverbal conduct, which may include, but is not limited to, the following: (a) Unwanted physical contact, ranging from touching to sexual assault and rape. (b) Verbal forms of sexual harassment including unwelcome innuendoes, suggestions and hints, sexual advances, comments with sexual overtones, sex related jokes or insults or unwelcome graphic comments about a person’s body made in their presence or directed toward them, unwelcome and inappropriate enquiries about a person’s sex life, and sexual orientation, directed at a person or group of persons. (c) Non-verbal forms of sexual harassment including unwelcome gestures, whistling, indecent exposure, or the unwelcome display of sexually explicit pictures or objects. (d) Unwelcome messages of a sexual nature that are sent via email, SMS, skype, voice messages and other electronic means, whether using Water Witness devices or personal mobiles/equipment. (e) Sexual harassment that is linked to recruitment/employment opportunities, promotion, training or development opportunities, and the offer of salary increments or other employee benefits in exchange for sexual favours.

**‘Vulnerable community’** is any community in which Water Witness is operating.