

Government response: Charity Commission responds to draft Charity Code of Ethics

The Charity Commission has submitted feedback to the National Council for Voluntary Organisations' [consultation on its draft Charity Code of Ethics](#). The code aims to support charities in recognising and resolving ethical issues and conflicts.

In responding to the draft, the Commission said:

We welcome this sector-led response to recent high profile safeguarding incidents, and its broader view of ethical issues and their potential implications.

Our research [Trust in Charities, 2018](#) highlighted the importance for charities of following ethical principles and reflecting their values in every aspect of their work. This is a key element of trustworthiness. The public rightly have high expectations of charities' conduct and behaviour because of the importance of the work they do, their unique status and the vulnerability of some of their beneficiaries.

As recent events have shown, ensuring that charities live up to their purpose and the public's high expectations is about more than compliance with minimum legal requirements. Changes need to be rooted in organisational culture and what is considered acceptable in terms of individual attitudes and behaviour. We welcome the statement that "all charities should proactively champion ethical behaviour and reflect their charitable ethos in every activity they undertake, going beyond legal and regulatory requirements." Voluntary codes set by the sector should promote higher standards than regulators can expect or require.

The scope and focus of this Code may need to be more explicitly defined. The section on 'Integrity' has a broad application and highlights different areas where ethics are a consideration. These are described in the bullet points, starting from relationships with people but also encompassing probity, resources and environmental impact. The section on 'Openness' deals with accountability and transparency in its widest sense. But the sections on 'Beneficiaries first' and 'Right to be safe', together with the bullet points in the introduction, position the code as being about relationships with people. Emphasising the understandable public concern about safeguarding might seem out of balance with the wider points about ethics.

If the Code is intended to apply to a very broad range of ethical issues, some themes may need to be drawn out more explicitly. For example, where the section on integrity touches on resources, if it is intended to encompass social and ethical investment, it would benefit from clearer statements to that effect. We would also welcome stronger statements about moral

leadership, and the importance of a proactive approach to inclusion. Risk and risk appetite may also need to be considered. For example, clearly, a good safeguarding culture is needed and charities must do all they can to prevent abuse or mistreatment. However, we also need to recognise the nature of the environment and risks that many charities operate within.

We note that this Code has been developed through a consultative process involving a range of charities of different sizes and with different purposes. Is NCVO satisfied that it has been sufficiently tested in terms of ease of practical application by this broad range of charities? How will this Code be promoted, implemented and its adoption monitored?

One minor related point: the definition of a 'charity's purpose' makes reference to 'the charity's article of association'. Not all charities are set up with articles of association. This might unintentionally convey the sense that the code is only for certain types of charity.

We welcome the statement that the Code is complementary to the Charity Governance Code. We would like to see close alignment and mutual support between these two codes, to make it straightforward for charities to follow both. We note the suggestion from the Chair of the Charity Governance Code that, in time, the Charity Governance Code could be developed to encompass the key elements of the Code of Ethics.

The Commission's updated guidance on safeguarding will enshrine the principle that charities should ensure the safety of any individual who engages with them.

Ends.

Notes to editors

1. The Charity Commission is the registrar and regulator for charities in England and Wales. We are an independent non-ministerial government department accountable to Parliament. For more information see the [About Us](#) page on GOV.UK.

[Press release: Government launches new collaboration with Barnardo's to support care leavers into work](#)

The collaboration will provide care leavers with opportunities to gain high quality work experience placements in [Barnardo's](#) high street shops, to help them get the necessary skills to move into employment.

The placements will help young people learn practical skills in the workplace, whilst also allowing them to develop their 'soft skills' – all within a supportive Barnardo's real working environment, alongside trained staff and volunteers.

Just over 12,000 young people aged 16 to 18 leave care in England each year and the number is rising. Many care leavers have complex needs and are at risk of long-term unemployment.

That's why, in addition to the support already provided in line with the cross-government strategy for care leavers, children's charity Barnardo's will be providing work experience opportunities in their high street shops.

This work will help build people's confidence and employability skills, while making them more attractive to potential employers.

DWP and Barnardo's are also exploring options for a longer-term partnership, which would deliver a broader range of support for care leavers to help them thrive in the workplace.

Barnardo's has worked with children and young people for over 150 years. They run over 1,000 services across the UK, working with over 300,000 children, young people, parents and carers each year. This includes employment and skills training for young people and care leavers.

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Esther McVey, said:

Barnardo's are a wonderful charity and we are very proud to be working with them on this important initiative. We want to ensure that whatever your background you are able to fulfil your ambition and develop a career. I hope this will be a long-term partnership helping care leavers on their career path.

Javed Khan, Chief Executive of Barnardo's, said:

Barnardo's is really proud to be at the forefront of this innovative scheme. Sadly too many young people leaving the care system miss out on the opportunities they deserve, and face a future without hope.

This new partnership gives care leavers valuable experience in Barnardo's innovative high street shops, and helps them get ready to move into paid employment or further training. We are also exploring how we can work with jobcentres and employers to improve care leavers' access to a wider range of support, aimed at developing their practical skills and resilience.

As well as the direct benefits to care leavers, working in our stores will also help generate income to boost the charity's frontline – so we can continue to transform the lives of vulnerable

children and families across the UK. It's a win-win situation.

People involved with the pilot will be able to gain a variety of employability skills that are transferable into any workplace. Successful completion will provide the care leaver with concrete work experience that could be included on their CV.

Many people struggle with the transition from care into employment, with those first steps onto the career ladder often being the hardest. This scheme will help boost people's chances of securing fulfilling employment, enabling them to access the benefits that work can bring.

Follow DWP on:

[News story: New Independent Monitor for the disclosure and barring system](#)

The Home Office has announced today that Julia Wortley will take over as the Independent Monitor for the disclosure and barring system for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

She replaces Simon Pountain, whose successful tenure in the role ended on 30 September.

Julia Wortley said: "I feel delighted and privileged to be appointed as the new Independent Monitor for the disclosure and barring system."

The independent monitor plays an important role in making sure that the police information disclosed from criminal records checks is appropriate and proportionate, striking the right balance between public protection and the rights of individual applicants.

Launched in 2012, the Disclosure and Barring Service issues around 4 million criminal records checks every year. Its disclosure service enables employers and voluntary organisations in England and Wales to make informed recruitment decisions, using information from police records and other sources.

The independent monitor provides a fully independent element to the disclosure of police information for enhanced criminal records certificates.

[Press release: Citizens Advice to provide support to Universal Credit claimants](#)

The support scheme will help claimants through every step of making a [Universal Credit](#) claim. It will offer people the comprehensive and practical support they need to get their first payment on time and be ready to manage it when it arrives.

[Universal Support](#) provides advice and assistance to help claimants manage their Universal Credit claim, with a focus on budgeting advice and digital support. Since 2017, Universal Support has been delivered by individual local authorities, funded by grants from DWP.

From April 2019 [Citizens Advice \(England and Wales\)](#) and [Citizens Advice Scotland](#) will take on the responsibility for delivering a strengthened Universal Support service, a move which will ensure a consistent and streamlined service for claimants across the country.

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Esther McVey said:

Since becoming Secretary of State in January, I have listened to the concerns of claimants, constituents, charities, welfare organisations and colleagues and I have made significant changes to the system, like extra support for those with mental health conditions, more support for vulnerable young people and more support for families who look after other family members' children.

I have always said we will steer a new direction and work with partners to deliver vital services, and get Universal Credit right. The state cannot, and should not work in isolation and must reach out to work with independent, trusted organisations to get the best support to vulnerable people.

This brand new partnership with Citizens Advice will ensure everyone, and in particular the most vulnerable claimants, get the best possible support with their claim that is consistently administered throughout the country.

Citizens Advice are an independent and trusted organisation, who will support people as we continue the successful rollout of Universal Credit.

Gillian Guy, Chief Executive of Citizens Advice, said:

We offer independent and confidential advice to millions of people

every year, and have already helped nearly 150,000 people with Universal Credit. We've seen first-hand what can happen when people struggle to make a claim and their payments are delayed.

We welcome the opportunity to provide even more people with the help they need with Universal Credit, and deliver a consistent service through the Citizens Advice network across England and Wales.

Delivering this service will give us even greater insight into the Universal Credit system. We'll continue to share our evidence with the government to help make sure Universal Credit works for everyone.

Derek Mitchell, CEO of Citizens Advice Scotland, said:

In person through local CAB, by phone and online, our network offers top quality advice and support to people applying for Universal Credit in Scotland. This announcement brings an opportunity to further enhance the support we provide, and we are pleased that the impact Universal Credit has on potential applicants – and on local CAB services in Scotland – has been recognised.

We expect the numbers of people in need of independent advice on Universal Credit applications will continue to increase, and delivering this service will help us as we do all we can to meet that need. We will continue the work that the Citizens Advice network in Scotland has always done: supporting individuals to resolve the problems they face, and advocating nationally to address the root causes of those problems.

Universal Credit means monthly payments and housing costs are paid directly to claimants and requires people to be responsible for managing their monthly payments and bills.

Universal Support currently helps with digital support, such as using a computer to make or maintain their claim, and assistance in budgeting and managing their finances.

DWP will enter into the new partnership with Citizens Advice immediately, and they will run their developing service alongside local authorities until 31 March 2019, when they will deliver the full service solely from April 2019.

DWP will provide £39 million of funding from April 2019 to Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland to provide this service. DWP will fund Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland a further £12 million to set up delivery in the run up to April 2019 to ensure a smooth transition to the new delivery model. This funding is from Universal Support's £200 million budget, which was launched in 2015.

Last year, the Citizens Advice network in England and Wales helped more than 2.6 million people through their face-to-face, phone and online advice services. They are located in over 2,500 locations and have over 29,000 trained volunteers and paid staff. Citizens Advice Scotland helped over 295,000 people, has over 3,200 staff and volunteers, and operates from almost 300 locations.

Follow DWP on:

[Press release: New legislation to ensure tips and gratuities go to employees](#)

While most employers act in good faith, in some sectors evidence points towards poor tipping practices, including excessive deductions being made from tips left by customers.

New legislation, to be introduced at the earliest opportunity, will set out that tips must go to the workers providing the service.

Unemployment is at its lowest since the 1970's and wages are rising. This legislation will ensure workers get the tips they deserve and give consumers reassurance that the money they leave in good faith to reward good service is going to the staff, as they intended – ensuring that hard work is rewarded.