



The Code of Conduct and Ethics

The Code of Conduct and Ethics for Rescue: The British Archaeological Trust is a set of fundamental principles, operational principles, and standards to guide the actions and management of the Trust. The Code was formulated by the Rescue Council in 2019. The Code of Conduct and Ethics for Rescue is designed to ensure the Trust is working for the protection of UK archaeology, and its benefit for society as a whole. The aim of this Code of Conduct and Ethics is to systematically identify ethical practices and acceptable standards. The adoption and internal enforcement of a suitable code not only provides an ethical check for Rescue, it also serves as a statement to all stakeholders (i.e. Council members, donors, members and the public) that Rescue takes seriously the importance of maintaining high standards. The Document is to be used as both a checklist and a catalyst for discussion primarily for Rescue Council members to review, reflect, and discuss core principles, standards and ways of conducting services and activities.

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1 Introduction: Rescue Ethical Principles and Core Values

This code of conduct applies to all Rescue Council Officers and Rescue Council Members. It is also the duty of all Officers, Council and Ordinary Members to ensure that the code is upheld when representing Rescue: The British Archaeological Trust. Rescue will apply this code of conduct across all its communications and social media platforms. Where correspondence breaches or is judged to have breached the Code, Rescue reserves the right to remove inappropriate content and make appropriate measures to ensure the code is upheld.

2 Human Rights and Dignity

- Rescue should not violate any person's fundamental human rights, with which each person is endowed. An NGO should recognise that all people are born free and equal in dignity.
- Rescue should be sensitive to the moral values, religion, customs, traditions, and culture of the communities they serve.
- Rescue should respect the integrity of families and support family-based life.
- Rescue should respect religious freedom as stated in the UDHR, Article 18
- All Rescue Council Officers and Members must uphold standards of honesty, integrity, trustworthiness, respect for others, responsibility, accountability, teamwork and commitment to the code.
- Rescue encourages all members to ask questions and raise issues without fear of retaliation and is committed to treating reports seriously and investigating them thoroughly.
- Members should report suspected unethical, illegal or suspicious behaviour immediately to one of its Officers. Rescue does not tolerate retaliation (e.g. unfair exclusion or any other behaviour that singles out a person unfairly) against anyone who makes a report in good faith of suspected misconduct or otherwise assists with an investigation.
- Equal Opportunity. Rescue will not tolerate discrimination based on race, colour, religion, gender, age, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, disability or any other protected class.

3 Harassment and Bullying

- Rescue Council Officers and Members must treat all fellow members and stakeholders with dignity and respect at all times. Any type of harassment, including physical, sexual, verbal or otherwise, is prohibited and can result in disciplinary action up to, and including, termination of Council or individual membership.
- Harassment can include actions, language, written words or objects that create an intimidating or hostile environment, such as:
 - Yelling at or humiliating someone
 - Physical violence or intimidation
 - Unwanted sexual advances, invitations or comments
 - Visual displays such as derogatory or sexually-oriented pictures or gestures
 - Physical conduct including assault or unwanted touching
 - Threats or demands to submit to sexual requests
- Rescue are committed to ensuring that all Council and Ordinary Members volunteer in a safe and respectful environment that is free of bullying. Bullying can include:
 - Spreading malicious rumour or gossip
 - Excluding or isolating someone socially
 - Withholding necessary information or purposefully giving the wrong information
 - Intimidating someone
 - Impeding someone's work
 - Constantly changing work guidelines
 - Sending offensive jokes or emails
 - Criticising or belittling someone constantly
 - Tampering with a person's personal belongings or work equipment

4 Conflict of Interest

- A conflict of interest can occur when a Council or ordinary member's personal activities, investments or associations compromises their judgment or ability to act in Rescue's best interests. Council and Ordinary Members should avoid the types of situations that could give rise to conflicts of interest.
- It is important for volunteers to disclose any relationships, associations or activities that could create actual, potential, or even perceived, conflict of interest to Council.

5 Transparency and Accountability

- Rescue strives for openness and honesty internally and towards all donors and members of the public. We will aim to be transparent in all of our dealings with the government, the public, donors, partners, beneficiaries, and other interested parties, except for personal matters and proprietary information.
- Rescue's basic financial information, governance structure, activities, and listing of officers and partnerships shall be open and accessible to public scrutiny, and we will strive to inform the public about our work and the origin and use of our resources.
- Rescue is accountable for our actions and decisions.

6 Truthfulness and Legality

- Rescue aims to be honest and truthful and respects the laws of any jurisdiction in which we are active.
- Rescue endeavours to provide accurate information
- Rescue does not engage in any activities that are unlawful under UK law and is strongly opposed to, and unwilling to be partner to, corruption, bribery, and other financial improprieties or illegalities.
- Rescue protects the confidentiality of any member that brings evidence to the Rescue Council Officers of misconduct of anyone associated with the organisation.
- Rescue meets all of the UK legal obligations which include fundraising legislation, privacy laws, copyright legislation and so forth.
- Rescue will take prompt corrective action whenever wrongdoing is discovered.

7 Independent Non-Governmental Charity

- As a charity, Rescue ensures that any surplus that is generated through its operations is to be utilised solely to help the organisation fulfil its mission and objectives. No part of the net earnings of Rescue is to be used to the benefit of the officers, members or employees of the organisation, or to any other private persons, except that Rescue may provide reasonable compensation for services provided to the organisation.
- Council members cannot be employed by Rescue; should employment be required for additional services, recruitment must be from the general public, including those with Rescue membership.
- Rescue is not to be part of, or controlled by, government or an intergovernmental agency.
- Rescue is independent. Its policies, vision and activities are not determined by any for-profit corporation, donor, government, government official, political party, or other organisation.
- Rescue governs itself autonomously, according to its Constitution, and it is equipped to control its own activities.

8 Voluntary Organisation

- Rescue is an independent charity formed and administered by the voluntary actions of individuals who have chosen to pursue the shared interest and concerns outlined in Rescue's Policy documents.
- In order to achieve its mission and objectives, Rescue aims to have meaningful contributions on Council, who serve in a voluntary capacity, for no pay but may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses. Rescue reserve the right to pay individuals, organisations or companies not on Council for contracted purposes.

9 Mission and Activities

- The mission and policy of Rescue is set out in its Policy Statement Document. This document clearly sets forth why Rescue exists and what it hopes to accomplish.
- Each member of Council fully understands and supports the mission of the organisation.
- The Policy Statement has been made available to all stakeholders, including council officers and members, and members of the public in general.

- The Policy Statement Document is to be reviewed periodically (every 5 to 7 years) to determine if it is still relevant. Among issues to evaluate are: (a) whether any Rescue mission has been fulfilled; (b) whether the Statement should be revised to reflect societal changes; or (c) whether there is a new need which should be added to the Statement.
- Activities should be consistent with Rescue’s mission and policies. Rescue should try, where appropriate, to seek feedback and critically evaluate its efficiency.
- Rescue shall carry out activities with professionalism.

10 Governance Structure

- Rescue has a governance structure outlined in its Constitution which best allows it to fulfil its mission and reflect the core values and standards of the Trust. Democratic principles are to be used where appropriate and applicable.
- Conduct of the Governing Body is outlined in Rescue’s Constitution.

11 Public Advocacy

- Accuracy and in context. Information that the Trust chooses to disseminate to the media, policy makers or the public must as far as possible be accurate and presented with proper context. This includes information presented by Rescue with respect to any legislation, policy, individual, organisation, or projects it opposes, supports, or is discussing. Forward-looking projections are to be presented clearly as such, and not as fact.
- Verbal and written statements. Rescue must have clear guidelines and approval processes for the issuing of verbal and written statements.
- Disclosure of bias. Rescue must present information in a fair manner.
- Rescue will not improperly assume the authority of the community it serves.

12 External Communication on Behalf of Rescue

- All communication on behalf of Rescue must be authorised by at least two Rescue Officers (i.e. the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer).
- Only Rescue Officers are authorised to represent Rescue unless a Rescue Council or Ordinary Member has been authorised to do so by at least two Rescue Officers
- Social Media. Rescue respects the right of Council to use social media for its professional purposes, however individuals are accountable for any information they publish online, and must not speak on behalf of Rescue in a manner which is in conflict with the Code of Conduct, or in a manner that harms Rescue.
- RESCUE welcomes these discussions online and occasionally highlights topics that continue to be unresolved and heavily disputed. During these dialogues, it is asked that those posting refrain from harassment, intimidation or threat when such discussions are taking place within our platforms. RESCUE’s [policy statements](#) outline what we as a registered charity support and campaign for. Any other areas which are discussed on RESCUE’s platforms should not be seen as representing our official position nor seen as an endorsement by Rescue.

13 Legal Compliance

- Laws and regulations. Rescue’s activities, governance, and other matters shall conform to the laws and regulations of the UK and its constitution.
- Rescue may seek to advocate towards changing laws and regulations, if such activity is consistent with its mission as indicated in its Policy Statement Document.

14 Confidentiality and Privacy

- Rescue is committed to information confidentiality which includes non-public information.
- Rescue complies with the requirements of the UK’s privacy laws.
- Rescue Council must store all personal information securely, mark it as confidential and store it only for as long as it is needed for the purpose for which it was collected.
- When providing personal information, Council limits access only to those with a clear need for the information.
- Council is required to report any breaches of privacy, including the loss, theft of or unauthorised access to personal information, to the Rescue Chair and Vice Chair.

15 Use of Funds

- Use of contributions. Rescue will ensure that contributions are used as promised or implied in fundraising appeals or for the purposes intended by the donors.
- Donor consent for changes. Rescue may alter the conditions of a gift or grant only by obtaining explicit consent of the donor.
- Efficient and effective use. Rescue will ensure efficient and effective use of grants and charitable contributions.
- Rescue will produce annual reports of the use and management of funds. It will keep its books, records, accounts and financial statements in a complete, fair, accurate, understandable, detailed and timely manner.

16 General Principles of Partnership and Collaboration

- Mission consistency. Rescue will collaborate with other entities only if the relationship is consistent with the mission of Rescue or the benefit of archaeology and heritage.
- Shared values. Rescue will collaborate on the basis of shared values, common ground, for the good of society, and benefit of the heritage resource.
- Mutual benefit. Rescue will collaborate on the basis of equitable and genuine mutual benefit to each organisation involved.
- Transparency. Rescue collaboration will allow financial transparency and a two-way flow of information, ideas, and experiences.
- Adaptive to change. Collaborations are to be adaptive to change. Changes in the collaborative relationship are to be developed through cooperation, and not forced by one or the other organisation.
- Appropriate and mutually beneficial. Rescue will seek dialogue and cooperation with government and intergovernmental agencies when such cooperation would be both appropriate and mutually beneficial and could increase Rescue's effectiveness in dealing with issues and priorities in its agenda.
- Political Favour. Rescue is a non-partisan charity and will not change its policies or non-partisan nature in order to curry political favour, nor from pressure by any of its members.
- Rescue will not make any political financial contribution.