

The Role of the Trustees for The Association for Cultural Exchange

About The Association for Cultural Exchange

The Association for Cultural Exchange is both a charity registered with the Charity Commission (registered charity number 279567) and a company limited by guarantee (registered company number 604757). It was founded in 1958 by Philip Brooke Barnes, a pioneering journalist who wished to promote international understanding through cultural exchange.

The Charity is run by a board of Trustees, who are also the directors of the company. The Trustees are legally responsible for the oversight and administration of the Charity to ensure the Association complies with its regulatory obligations. The Trustees, each of whom are volunteers, are supported by an experienced executive team and other employed staff.

The Charity owns and operates Stapleford Granary, an award-winning educational centre for the arts, design and music which is located in the village of Stapleford 4 miles south of Cambridge. Most of the public benefit output of the Charity is undertaken under the name Stapleford Granary. In addition to courses in arts and music, Stapleford Granary hosts concerts by musicians from all genres, art exhibitions and other cultural activities. It is also the headquarters for ACE Cultural Tours Limited, which has provided tours for the culturally curious led by expert tour directors for more than 60 years.

Subsidiary Companies

The Charity owns 100% of two trading subsidiary limited companies that are material to its activities.

ACE Cultural Tours Limited: Is a specialist travel company providing a range of tours in Britain, Europe and worldwide. It has developed a unique brand of cultural travel designed for those who wish to learn something new and engage with other cultures. Tours are mostly for small groups of 15-25 participants and are orientated towards a particular subject interest including art, history, music, archaeology, nature, houses and gardens. All tours are led by a subject expert to maximise the cultural and educational content. Profits generated by the travel company are mostly gift-aided to the Charity to further its public benefit output. Please see

www.aceculturaltours.co.uk for more detailed information.

Stapleford Granary Limited: Operates an ancillary café on the site of Stapleford Granary which supports the activities of the Charity that take place on the site. It also acts as a showcase for the work of the Charity, attracting people to the site an

Objectives and Activities

The objectives of the Charity are to advance the education of the people of the United Kingdom and elsewhere in the fields of general history, music, art, architecture, design, archaeology, literature, environmental studies, and the theory of education. The latest Articles of Association of the Charity can be reviewed by selecting the: [Resolution of Memorandum and/or Articles of Association of 14th February 2013](#)

The Charity fulfils its objectives by delivering public benefit through its wide range of activities fostering and promoting cultural exchange; whether directly through its activities at Stapleford Granary or more widely through ACE Cultural Tours.

The Responsibilities of the Trustees

The Trustees of the Association for Cultural Exchange meet as a board 4-6 times per year. A Trustee can serve a maximum of two three-year terms. The agenda and supporting papers for meetings are generally prepared by the General Secretary of the Charity. In addition, a formal Annual General Meeting is held to approve the financial statement of accounts of the Charity including its subsidiaries as well as the re-election of Trustees as required by the Articles. The Trustees carry out their responsibilities in accordance with the six principles in Charity Commission publication CC3 outlined below:

1 *Make sure your charity is carrying out its purpose for the public benefit:* At each meeting a report on the activities of Stapleford Granary is received and discussed. From this the Trustees gain a sound understanding of the public benefit output as well as future plans. The trading positions of subsidiary companies are also discussed.

2. *Comply with your charity's governing document and law:* We consider how any proposals comply with the objectives of the Charity. We aim to comply fully with any legal requirements and take advice from our lawyers and accountants as required.

3. *Act in your charity's best interests:* When decisions are required, we debate and decide what the Trustees consider to be in the best interests of the Charity – and minute the decision-making process.

4. *Manage your charity's resources responsibly:* The Trustees will consider the

human and financial resources available in assessing future proposals.

5. *Act with reasonable skill and care:* Trustees have backgrounds in professions or trades and bring this experience into their deliberations – being careful to manage any risks to the charity.

6. *Make sure your charity is accountable:* Trustees keep in mind many aspects of accountability especially to the public served by the Charity and the staff of the Charity and its subsidiaries.

Further general information can be found in the Charity Commission document The Essential Trustee: [CC3](#)

The Financial Position

The Charity has a strong balance sheet with all the buildings at Stapleford Granary owned and free of any charges. It also has an investment portfolio managed by Cantab Asset Management. The pandemic adversely impacted on the financial position of the Charity and of ACE Cultural Tours Limited. The Trustees took appropriate steps to mitigate that adverse impact. They are confident that the Charity is on course to return to profitability and to build a platform for future further success. The latest published accounts and Annual Trustees' Report can be viewed [here](#)

The Current Trustees (as at September 2022)

Please refer to the link below for a brief background concerning the current Trustees:

<https://www.staplefordgranary.org.uk/keeping-in-touch/stapleford-granary-team>