

Engaging Public Speakers and Protection From Abuse for Extremist Purposes Policy and Procedures

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedures is to support Suffolk Artlink's trustees and staff to discharge their legal duties under charity law, manage the risks and ultimately protect Suffolk Artlink from being used or abused for extremism, terrorism or illegal activity.

The policy recognises the starting principle of free speech. It reinforces the notion that, whilst ensuring the Suffolk Artlink's staff, volunteers and beneficiaries are protected, we will provide an environment that allows for a range of views to be expressed, discussed and debated within the law.

It could be a criminal offence if Suffolk Artlink is connected to or supports a proscribed organisation. Even indirect or informal links with a proscribed terrorist organisation pose unacceptable risks to Suffolk Artlink's property and its proper administration. This may be an association with someone who is a known supporter of a proscribed organisation, or allowing a member of a proscribed organisation to influence the activities of the Suffolk Artlink.

As a charity that occasionally hosts or holds events at our or others premises, uses speakers at events or distributes literature (whether or not produced by the Suffolk Artlink) to further our organisation's purposes through the promotion and exchange of views and ideas, this policy and procedure highlights:

- some of the challenges we may encounter and some practical tips as to how to manage them
- how to avoid problems in the first place
- what to do if there are concerns about a speaker, an event or literature
- Everyone has the right to freedom of expression under UK law. This is true even where such views or opinions may offend, shock or disturb others. In the vast majority of circumstances, it should be possible for speech to go ahead.

- However, freedom of expression is not an absolute right, and can be limited by law where necessary, for example, to prevent crime, in the interests of national security or to protect the rights of others. Promoting certain views would be a criminal offence, for example, if these encourage terrorism. This includes publishing statements that glorify terrorist acts.

Related legislation includes, The Human Rights Act 1998, Equalities Act 2010, The Terrorism Act 2000, The Care Act, The Children Act 1989

2. Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all staff, volunteers, visitors, beneficiaries, contractors and members of the public who may be present on the premises or at events organised by the Suffolk Artlink.

3. Definitions

‘Extremism’ on 14 March 2024 the UK Government published a new definition of extremism, which defines extremism as:

Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance that aims to:

- negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or
- undermine, overturn or replace the UK’s system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or
- intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in (1) or (2).

Radicalisation: the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

Radicaliser: an individual who encourages others to develop or adopt beliefs and views supportive of terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.

Radicalising materials: these include literature or videos that are used by radicalisers to encourage or reinforce individuals to adopt a violent ideology. Some of this material may explicitly encourage violence. Other materials may take no avowed position on violence but make claims to which violence is subsequently presented as the only solution.

Terrorism: is defined under UK law in the Terrorism Act 2000 (TACT 2000). In summary this defines terrorism as an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

4. Policy

We will comply with UK law and will not support terrorism or other illegal conduct, such as hatred on the grounds of race, religion or sexual orientation.

Suffolk Artlink's name, premises or money will not be used to promote extremist or other activities that are inappropriate under charity law, for example because they are in breach of equalities legislation.

Trustees fulfil their legal obligations including managing risks to protect the Suffolk Artlink, act lawfully, and maintain public trust and confidence in the Suffolk Artlink.

The policy and procedures aims to help Suffolk Artlink trustees navigate any situations which require challenging judgements and ensure that the risk of criticism of our actions is minimised whilst also enabling us to comply with our legal duties.

Suffolk Artlink will follow in this area, to comply with legal responsibilities, run the Suffolk Artlink effectively and avoid difficulties. We will decide how best to apply the practice to our circumstances.

Trustees will fulfil their legal duty to manage the Suffolk Artlink's resources responsibly. They will make sure that its assets, people, beneficiaries and reputation are not exposed to undue risk. This includes any risk from becoming drawn into or involved in extremism because this would also involve a breach of criminal law/illegality.

Managing the risks of extremist or terrorist abuse also forms part of protecting people and safeguarding, which is a governance priority for Suffolk Artlink.

We will not run an event or publish material which glorifies terrorism or incites hatred on the grounds of race, religion or sexual orientation; if this happens this will be a criminal matter.

Trustees and other charity representatives will remain professional and follow the code of conduct. They may also be at risk of committing a criminal offence in carrying out their role where, for example, they express ideas, views or policies that are promoted by and closely associated with terrorist groups.

This document is to be read in conjunction with safeguarding policies and procedures, Finance policies and procedures and IT/ social media policies and procedures.

5. Procedures

5.1 Safeguarding and extremism

Protecting people and safeguarding responsibilities are a governance priority for Suffolk Artlink. It is a fundamental part of operating as a charity for the public benefit. As part of fulfilling trustee duties, all trustees will take reasonable steps to protect from harm people who come into contact with Suffolk Artlink.

Trustee decision-making principles as set out in the Commission's guidance [It's your decision: charity trustees and decision-making](#).

Trustees will be alert to a range of safeguarding risks including extremism and radicalisation and should act quickly when incidents or allegations arise

Trustees of Suffolk Artlink will always ensure they have effective oversight and accountability of the management and consideration of the risks that are likely to arise and what steps can reasonably be taken to mitigate them.

We will identify beneficiaries, staff that may be at risk of radicalisation. Trustees will ensure that they know what to do when there are concerns about an individual.

Trustees, staff and volunteers will know how to identify and report views, such as inciting religious hatred, that may be a criminal offence and/ or a breach of human rights and equality laws.

If we are concerned that an individual within Suffolk Artlink, or connected to it, is being radicalised, we will act quickly and follow our safeguarding policies and procedures.

If necessary via the Designated Safeguarding Leads, we will call the national police Prevent advice line in confidence on 0800 011 3764 to share concerns.

In the event of a Serious Incident this will be reported to the Charity Commission in line with the Charity Commission's [Serious incident reporting guidance](#). Specifically, with respect to terrorism or extremism, given the serious risk to the ORG that such concerns pose, we will immediately make a report if we become aware of allegations being made or have evidence to suspect that there are concerns.

5.2 Organising events

- Suffolk Artlink will complete proportionate and measured risk assessments of events and or speakers that could pose a higher risk of promoting extremist views. Identify the risks and actions taken to mitigate those risks so that the event or speech can take place in line with advancing of the Suffolk Artlink's best interests.
- Complete appropriate background checks and assess the risks when working with other organisations or groups to host an event. We will check prospective speakers and partner organisations against the Home Office [Proscribed terrorist groups or organisations](#) list and the Office for Financial Sanctions Implementation (OFSI), part of HM Treasury, [Financial sanctions: consolidated list of targets](#) list of all designated persons and entities whose assets have been frozen in the UK - as part of our routine due diligence and risk management procedures.
- be able to demonstrate that we have processes in place to satisfy us that literature distributed or made available by Suffolk Artlink is consistent with our charitable objects and does not place the Suffolk Artlink at undue risk from harm
- ensure that we have taken reasonable steps to avoid the Suffolk Artlink's premises, assets, staff, volunteers or other resources being used for activities inappropriate for a charity
 - Trustees need to be satisfied that hosting a specific event, or inviting a particular speaker, is in the best interests of Suffolk Artlink.
 - If a speaker or author breaks the law, they will be culpable. However, in some instances, if trustees knew, or ought to have known, that the speaker or author would break the law, they may also find themselves liable or otherwise in breach of their legal duties.

- If we allow another organisation to use our premises for an event but we believe, or have reasonable cause to suspect, that this may result in an illegal activity, we will immediately report your concerns to the police and take steps to stop the event.
- We will take immediate steps to make it clear that it does not support violent or terrorist activity, or terrorist ideology, if our activities might appear to suggest otherwise.
- We will ensure that the risks associated with promoting material including via electronic media or literature - books/ flyers et c. are assessed and that appropriate risk assessment of measures that are to be put in place to mitigate against those risks

5.3 Social Media and IT

All staff, volunteers and trustees will follow our 'Acceptable use of IT' and social media policies to ensure they are used appropriately and legally.

We will report concerns about illegal or harmful online content (information, videos and pictures) to the police at the Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit (CTIRU), through the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) website.

If the inappropriate content involves THE ORG's own material, or is connected to the charity, we will take the necessary steps to remove the material and deal with the incident promptly.

5.4 Finance

We will follow the Suffolk Artlink's Finance policies and procedures.

We will fulfil our financial responsibilities knowing it is a criminal offence for a person (including the designated person) to deal with funds or economic resources belonging to, owned by or held by a designated individual or entity. It's also a criminal offence to make funds, economic resources or financial services, available directly or indirectly, to or for, the benefit of a designated individual or entity.

5.5 Further Information

We will follow the Charity Commission's guidance

[Protecting charities from harm: Chapter 1 - Charities and terrorism. The essential trustee: what you need to know \(CC3\)](#)

[Compliance Toolkit - Protecting charities from harm:](#)

[Chapter 1: Charities and terrorism](#)

[Chapter 2: Due diligence, monitoring and verification of the end use of funds](#)

[Charities and risk management \(CC26\)](#)

[Speaking out: guidance on campaigning and political activity by charities \(CC9\)](#)

See also Commission guidance update on [Charities, elections and referendums](#)

[Public benefit: rules for charities](#)

The UK government's [Prevent strategy](#)

The UK government's [Counter Extremism strategy](#)

[ACT - Action Counters Terrorism](#)

6. Monitoring and Review

The Board of Trustees will review this policy every three years or after any serious incident.

Date approved or amended	Signed	Role
20/07/2026	Alistair Winch	Company Secretary on behalf of the Board of trustees