



External Speakers at Charity Events Policy

Date Adopted: 27th May 2026

Next Review Date: 27th May 2027

Policy Review: This policy will be reviewed by the trustees every year or sooner if legal guidance changes.

1. Purpose of This Policy

As a UK charity dedicated to the protection and welfare of badgers and the conservation of their habitats, we recognise the important role that external speakers play in educating, inspiring and engaging our members, supporters and the wider public.

This policy ensures that:

- External speakers reflect and uphold our charitable objectives.
- Events remain lawful, respectful, safe and inclusive.
- Trustees meet their safeguarding and governance duties under Charity Commission for England and Wales guidance.
- The West Kent Badger Group's reputation, beneficiaries and supporters are protected.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Guest speakers at fundraising events
- Educational talks and workshops
- Public meetings and awareness events
- Online webinars and digital events
- Panel contributors and facilitators

It applies whether events are held in person, online, or in partnership with another organisation.

3. Guiding Principles

All external speakers must:

- Support the West Kent Badger Group's mission of badger protection and wildlife conservation.
- Comply with UK law, including equality and safeguarding legislation.
- Respect the principles of inclusion and non-discrimination under the Equality Act 2010.
- Avoid party-political advocacy inconsistent with charity law guidance.
- Avoid promoting products, services or personal causes unless expressly agreed in writing.

4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy aligns with:

- Guidance from the Charity Commission for England and Wales.
- The Charities Act 2011.
- The Equality Act 2010.
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Data protection requirements under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

Trustees retain ultimate responsibility for ensuring events are compliant and in the West Kent Badger Group's best interests.

5. Speaker Selection Procedure

5.1 Identification

Potential speakers may be identified through:

- Trustee or member recommendation
- Reputable wildlife or conservation organisations
- Academic institutions
- Professional bodies
- Established campaigners aligned with wildlife protection

5.2 Due Diligence

Before confirmation, the event lead (or designated trustee) must:

1. Review the speaker's background, qualifications and public profile.
2. Assess alignment with the West Kent Badger Group's objectives.
3. Check for previous controversial statements or conduct that may risk reputational harm.

4. Confirm that content will be lawful and non-defamatory.
5. Where relevant, verify DBS status if working with children or vulnerable adults.

Trustees may decline any speaker if risks outweigh benefits.

6. Invitation and Agreement

All speakers must receive written confirmation including:

- Event purpose and format
- Audience type and expected size
- Agreed topic and scope
- Time allocation
- Expenses (if applicable)
- Fundraising expectations (if any)
- Media and recording permissions
- Behaviour expectations

A simple Speaker Agreement Form should be completed and retained for records.

7. Safeguarding and Conduct

The West Kent Badger Group maintains a zero-tolerance approach to:

- Hate speech
- Discrimination
- Harassment
- Incitement to unlawful activity
- Misinformation about protected wildlife or disease control policies

Where events involve:

- Children
- Young people
- Vulnerable adults

Appropriate safeguarding measures must be implemented in line with the West Kent Badger Group's safeguarding policy.

A trustee or designated event lead must always be present.

8. Political Neutrality

As a registered charity, the West Kent Badger Group must remain politically neutral.

Speakers must not:

- Promote political parties or candidates.
- Encourage voting for or against specific parties.
- Use the platform for party-political campaigning.

Discussion of public policy (e.g., wildlife protection, bovine TB management, habitat law) is permitted where it:

- Directly relates to the West Kent Badger Group's objectives.
 - Is balanced and evidence based.
 - Complies with charity law guidance.
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9. Fundraising and Commercial Activity

External speakers may not:

- Sell products or services at events without prior trustee approval.
- Use the platform primarily for personal commercial gain.
- Misrepresent endorsement by the West Kent Badger Group.

Any fundraising collaboration must be documented in writing.

10. Managing Risk and Complaints

10.1 Risk Assessment

For larger or public-facing events, trustees should complete a simple risk assessment covering:

- Reputational risk
- Public order considerations
- Safeguarding concerns
- Insurance coverage

10.2 Complaints

Concerns about a speaker must be:

1. Raised immediately with the event lead.
2. Documented in writing.
3. Reviewed by trustees.

4. Addressed in line with the West Kent Badger Group's complaints procedure.

Trustees reserve the right to:

- Interrupt or end a presentation.
 - Withdraw invitations.
 - Issue public clarification if necessary.
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11. Online Events

For webinars or digital talks:

- Moderation must be in place.
- Chat functions should be monitored.
- Recording consent must be obtained.
- Security measures (e.g., password access) should be used where appropriate.