Code of Conduct

The South West Baptist Association (SWBA) is a family of around 90 churches covering Cornwall, Devon, south Somerset and a small part of Dorset. SWBA churches come in all shapes and sizes, and are found in city centres, housing estates, suburbs, villages, rural and coastal areas.

We are a diverse family, but what we have in common is the broad Baptist basis of our church life, and the desire to share the gospel message with our local communities.

Our churches are there to tell people the good news that Jesus changes lives. Our primary goal SWBA is to support, encourage and enable them as they pursue their own distinct vision and calling to the local communities in which they're based.

As part of Baptists Together we adhere to the BUGB Declaration of Principle and expect all our staff and volunteers to agree to it.

- That our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, is the sole and absolute authority in all matters pertaining to faith and practice, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and that each Church has liberty, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to interpret and administer His laws.
- That Christian Baptism is the immersion in water into the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, of those who have professed repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ who 'died for our sins according to the Scriptures; was buried, and rose again the third day'.
- That it is the duty of every disciple to bear personal witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to take part in the evangelisation of the world.

We also share the same values and seek to have them influence all that we do:

- Seeking to be a Spirit led organisation - ensuring that everything we do is underpinned by prayer; seeking God's will in everything
- Working as One team – our Trustees, Committees and Staff teams along with our Network Ministers working together to fulfil our vision; ensuring that everyone feels valued, included and listened to
- Embracing adventure – being willing to step out in faith when we hear God's call; earnestly seeking wisdom in all decisions made through prayer
- Inspiring others – motivating ministers and church leaders to lead churches that play an active part in God's mission in their local communities
- Sharing a hunger for God's coming Kingdom – actively proclaiming the Gospel through all that we do; encouraging and assisting ministers and churches to express God's purpose for His creation in practical action

It is understood that while every member of staff is vulnerable to behaviour which contravenes that laid out in Scripture, our desire as an organisation is to inspire, encourage and build one another up in the faith in order to honour, obey and glorify God in our work. This Code of Conduct sets out standards of behaviour that are consistent with these values and the Declaration of Principle and staff and

volunteers are expected make every effort to meet these standards of personal conduct and working practice both in and out of work.

We will always carry out our work professionally, with complete honesty and integrity and with the specific aim of helping the churches we serve and those we work with. If we need to, we will go the "extra mile" to be of help and to further the work of the Gospel.

We will treat everyone equally, with the same attention, courtesy and respect, regardless of gender, age, sexual orientation, race, religion, belief or disability. We are committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination and to promoting equality and diversity throughout the Association.

Our Policy Handbook provides specific details of the approach we will take in managing different situations and the conduct we expect from all members of staff. All Association Staff will be made aware of the Policy Handbook and a copy is posted on our website.

We also expect certain behavioural standards of our staff:

- a willingness to give an account of their faith within an appropriate context in light of their particular responsibilities;
- regular commitment and participation in the life of a local Church
- to strive to be patient and generous in all our dealings with those we support and with each other – treating everyone with grace, respect, courtesy, politeness, forgiveness and Christian love
- not to make judgements about others.
- not to boast or be proud about our own achievements.
- to endeavour to think more about others than about ourselves and will not lose our temper when things irritate us.
- to take pleasure in honesty and the truth.
- to look for the best, never look back and never give up.