Trustees of Wis (the Committee members) are bound by Charity Law. Below are two examples of scenarios trustees may face which could go against Charity Law, along with suggested solutions.

**What does Charity Law mean for a Trustee?**

Under Charity Law, the income, funds and property of a WI must only be used to further the WIs objectives, to advance the education of women and girls for the public benefit in all areas.

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As part of this, trustees are not allowed to benefit directly from the WIs funds nor be perceived to do so. This means no trustee – or person connected to a trustee – can receive any payment from the WI for work relating to it. Any benefits gained by a trustee ( without proper legal authority – with reference to the Charity Commission ) must be repaid to the WI.

**Conflicts of Interest:**

1. **Scenario**: The trustee of a WI is also a member of the local village hall Committee, which is the same hall the WI uses for its monthly and ancillary meetings / events.

**Conflict**: The trustee is unlikely to have a personal financial interest in renting the hall to the WI. However, there is a potential conflict of loyalty between the trustee’s position on the WI Committee and her position on the village hall Committee.

**Solution**: Appropriate conflicts of interest procedures should be observed, but these could sensibly involve a simple declaration by the trustee herself. There should be no problem with a procedure that allows her to vote on issues concerning the village hall, should she wish to.

1. **Scenario**: A WI Committee decides to set up a website. A trustee’s husband is a website designer and offers to design a website at a cut-price rate.

**Conflict**: The constitution doesn’t allow a payment from a WI to a connected person, and there is a conflict of interest between the interests of the trustee and those of the WI.

**Solution**: The husband cannot be paid, but his expenses can be covered. By contrast, if the son of a trustee offers to design the website and he is neither living at home nor financially dependent of his mother (nor she of him) there is no difficulty in paying him for the same work.

**General Advice for Trustees**:

Either situation is clearly a potential conflict of interest for the trustee. In both cases, she should declare her interest, not vote and not play any part in the WI Committee’s final decision. She should also leave the room for the duration of the discussion unless asked to stay to inform the debate.

**Paying Independent Financial Examiners (IFEs):**

Federation Trustees cannot be paid for activities. If applicable they can be re-imbersed for travel and out-of-pocket expenses. The fee for an IFE ,who is also a Federation Trustee, must be made payable to the Nottinghamshire Federation of WIs via your assigned IFE (see issued invoice), who will control the assignment to termination.