

Bevan Foundation

Statement on Independence and Political Neutrality

The Bevan Foundation is independent of all political parties in everything it does, and endeavours to ensure that it is perceived to be independent by the general public. From time to time it campaigns and engages with the political arena in pursuit of its charitable objectives, always doing so in a balanced way.

The Trustees are committed to ensuring that the Bevan Foundation demonstrates independence and neutrality in everything it does and recognise that the public needs reassurance that charities, including the Bevan Foundation, are politically independent.

The name of the charity

The Bevan Foundation bears the name of Aneurin Bevan because he is a national figure who developed innovative solutions to poverty, inequality and injustice. His name is also borne by public bodies, buildings, streets and even public houses throughout Wales. Though the Bevan Foundation shares an interest in innovative solutions to poverty, inequality and injustice, use of his name does not mean that the Bevan Foundation reflects or endorses any specific views, policies or statements of Aneurin Bevan.

Election of Trustees

The Bevan Foundation's Trustees are responsible for the charity. Trustees are elected by members of the Bevan Foundation for a four year term. Trustee vacancies are advertised widely, specifying the skills and expertise sought and the process to be followed and encouraging individuals of all political affiliations and with no political affiliations to submit nominations.

Any individual can seek election as a Trustee. We consider that an individual's current and previous political views and affiliation if any are private matters, and do not ask prospective Trustees about them other than to identify potential conflicts of interest. We do not take any political affiliation into account in putting forward prospective Trustees to the membership and do not maintain records on trustees' political views and affiliations.

All Trustees declare their interests annually and a declarations of interest register is maintained. In addition Trustees declare any potential conflicts of interest at each board meeting.

Political activity

The Bevan Foundation develops new ideas that change Wales and improve people's lives. The Bevan Foundation engages in the political arena in order to raise understanding and awareness of its ideas and encourage changes in policy and / or legislation. Its engagement in the political arena includes seeking to influence politicians, political parties, decision makers and public servants and responding to consultations. The Bevan Foundation also makes public comment on social, economic and political issues that relate to its past, current or forthcoming work and its interests as a charity.

Political activities which might help to achieve its charitable purpose include:

- Inviting contributions to its events and publications from politicians, parties and candidates.
- Speaking at events or writing for publications organised by politicians, parties or candidates.
- Responding to consultations.
- Engaging in public comment and debate about issues relevant to the Bevan Foundation's work.
- Providing its expertise to individual politicians, parties or candidates.
- Supporting specific policies of a political party if these further the Bevan Foundation's charitable purpose.
- Opposing specific policies of a political party if these further the Bevan Foundation's charitable purpose.

In undertaking this activity, the Bevan Foundation will:

- Not, under any circumstances, lend its general support to any political party, politician or candidate.
- Will not permit a political party, politician or candidate to claim the Bevan Foundation's general support.
- Always state its political independence and neutrality.
- Invite input to its events and publications by politicians, parties and candidates that is consistent with the Bevan Foundation's charitable purposes.
- In inviting input, the Bevan Foundation will seek to ensure that it is not used as a platform for the party political messages of any single party.
- Ensure that contributions from politicians, parties and candidates reflect the political balance in Wales.
- Offer its expertise and insights to all political parties and politicians on an equal basis.
- Will use fair and balanced language, avoiding terms associated with one political party.
- Only comment, respond or make statements on matters that are wholly within its charitable purpose.
- Base any statements, consultation responses or media comment on robust evidence.
- Publish on its website any consultation responses, papers, submissions or presentations made to any political party, politician or candidate.
- Maintain a register of meetings with politicians, political parties, candidates and senior (deputy director level or above) government officials.

Trustees will consider carefully the benefits and risks to the Bevan Foundation's reputation of its engagement in political activity. They will review on a regular basis the Bevan Foundation's political activity to ensure that it is ancillary to its charitable purpose, is not dominated by a single party, and has clear benefits.

Funding

Making donations

The Bevan Foundation is not a grant-making organisation. The Bevan Foundation will never give financial support or resources to a political party, politician or candidate. This includes:

- Providing advice, expertise or other activity that does not further the Bevan Foundation's charitable purpose.
- Providing advice, expertise or other activity from which a political party, politician or candidate might make a financial gain.
- Undertaking joint fund-raising activities with a political party, politician or candidate.
- Buying tickets or making a donation to party political fund-raising events.

Accepting donations

The Trustees of the Bevan Foundation have a duty to act in the best interests of the charity and this includes accepting all reasonable donations, including any donations made by politicians, candidates or political parties. The Bevan Foundation will refuse donations which Trustees consider are not in the best interests of the charity, including donations which:

- attach conditions which are contrary to its charitable purpose or divert its priorities.
- attach conditions which are unreasonable or which cannot be complied with.
- are offered in a manner which is not cost-effective to accept.

Contracts and Fees

The Bevan Foundation generates some of its income by trading that is consistent with its charitable purpose, usually research and public speaking. It has a wide range of clients and funders in the public, private and third sectors. From time to time it may undertake activities consistent with its primary purpose on a fee-earning basis for politicians, political parties and candidates subject to the following conditions:

- the project is remunerated at the current Bevan Foundation rates.
- the subject of the work is consistent with the charitable purpose of the Bevan Foundation;
- the methods to be used and the conclusions and recommendations reached are determined solely by the Bevan Foundation;
- the methods are based on good research practice and the conclusions and recommendations are based on sound evidence;
- the output of the work is of public benefit;
- the output of the activity is made publicly available by the Bevan Foundation;
- the client undertakes not to claim that the Bevan Foundation supports a particular political party or politician;
- the client undertakes not to use the output to generate political support.

Work for political parties or politicians will be considered on a case-by-case basis. In considering whether to undertake a specific piece of work the Trustees will have regard to how the work might be perceived and any risks to the Bevan Foundation's reputation.

Partners

The Bevan Foundation works with a range of public, private and third sector organisations who have shared aims. Trustees will consider the appropriateness of working with organisations on a case-by-case basis, but will not work with organisations which threaten the independence or perception of independence of the Bevan Foundation.

General, Assembly and European elections and referenda

The Bevan Foundation influences public opinion but does not seek to influence how people vote. In addition to the arrangements set out above, the Trustees will take the following specific steps during election periods:

- In any advocating any policies to achieve its charitable purpose, Trustees will ensure that it is clear that the Bevan Foundation is independent from any political party or candidate which advocates the same or a similar policy.
- Trustees will ensure that the Bevan Foundation does not compare the views of political parties favourably or unfavourably with its own, although it may make factual statements on the range of policies.
- Trustees will ensure that any changes called for by the Bevan Foundation during an election period, e.g. in a Manifesto, do not seek to influence voter behaviour.
- In no circumstances will the Bevan Foundation agree to a political party referring to it in a manifesto or in election material – any request to claim our support will be refused.
- The Bevan Foundation will not support any individual candidate, nor allow the charity to be used by a candidate to support their campaign.

The Bevan Foundation may, if it considers it appropriate to its charitable purpose:

- organise meetings at which a representative cross-section of candidates may present or discuss their views;
- publish a Manifesto of its proposals to persuade political parties to adopt them or to raise awareness of issues amongst the public;
- publish a list of questions to candidates.

Nothing in these activities will imply support for a political party or seek to influence how people vote.

The Trustees of the Bevan Foundation do not consider that the Bevan Foundation undertakes campaigning activities as defined in the Lobbying Act. It regularly reviews its position and if it changes will register with the Electoral Commission as a third party campaigner.

3rd February 2015