



Purpose and scope

This Policy contains our commitment to equality of opportunity of trustees, members and those who supply services, with the aims of ensuring that all are treated fairly and equally to support the objective of providing an environment that is free from all forms of discrimination.

The policy is regularly reviewed and may be changed at any time.

Policy statement

We are fully committed to providing equality and all opportunities will be afforded to individuals fairly and irrespective of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race including colour, ethnic or national origins and nationality, religion or belief or sexual orientation (“the protected characteristics”). We aim to create an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment in any form, in which all are treated with dignity and respect.

We will not unlawfully discriminate in the arrangements we make for members or others in the opportunities afforded for any benefit. All decisions will be made fairly and objectively. We aim, as far as reasonably practicable, to ensure that all our practices are applied fairly and consistently and, where necessary, we will take reasonable steps to avoid or overcome any disadvantage these may cause and to promote equality.

Specific Responsibilities

We have overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and associated legislation and for observing relevant Codes of Practice.

The trustees are responsible for monitoring and reviewing the policy and for ensuring that all procedures and practices adhere to this policy.

All have a responsibility not to discriminate or harass others and to report any such behaviour of which they become aware to the committee.

Forms of discrimination

The following are forms of discrimination that this policy aims to avoid:

Direct Discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic that they either have or are thought to have. Direct discrimination can also occur by way of association, which is when a person is treated less favourably because, for example, their spouse or partner or other relative has the protected characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied equally to everyone, but has a disproportionately adverse effect on people who share a particular protected characteristic. A person with the protected characteristic who is disadvantaged in that way has the right to complain.

To be justified the provision, criterion, or practice must be necessary for legitimate reasons in circumstances where less discriminatory alternatives are not available.

Victimisation occurs where someone is treated unfavourably because they have raised a complaint under this policy or taken legal action, in relation to any alleged act of unlawful discrimination, against the management committee or because they have supported someone else in doing this.

Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates an individual's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Harassment can take many different forms and may involve inappropriate actions, behaviour, comments, emails or physical contact that causes offence or are objectionable.

Harassment may involve a single incident or persistent behaviour and can occur even if someone did not mean to cause offence. It also means that a person can be subjected to harassment by behaviour that is not aimed at them directly but which they nonetheless find unpleasant.

Harassment is always unacceptable and where it relates to a protected characteristic it will amount to an unlawful act of discrimination.

Discrimination arising from Disability - In addition to the above, it is unlawful to treat a person unfavourably because of something that is the result, effect or outcome of their disability, unless the treatment is necessary and can be objectively justified. Furthermore, employers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled applicants, employees or other workers are not disadvantaged.

Recruitment and selection

Recruitment and selection procedures will be free from bias or discrimination. Recruitment procedures will be conducted objectively and will be based upon specific and reasonable criteria. Decisions regarding an individual's suitability for a particular role will be based on aptitude and ability.

We will consider making appropriate reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled applicants are not disadvantaged.

Terms and conditions

Our terms and conditions of service will be applied fairly, and benefits and facilities will be made available to all who should have access to them, as appropriate.

Contractor policies and practices

We aim to ensure that our policies and practices, including any rules or requirements, do not directly or indirectly discriminate and are applied in a non-discriminatory manner. We will consider making appropriate reasonable adjustments to the environment or any arrangements that would alleviate any substantial disadvantage these cause disabled people.

Working environment

All individuals have a right to be treated with dignity and respect and we take reasonable steps to protect all from discrimination, bullying or harassment and, in the event of a complaint, we will take appropriate action to prevent, as far as possible, a further occurrence.

All are encouraged to report any incidents of inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour on or off the premises, including at events involving trustees, members or those who supply services (paid or on voluntary basis) to the Society.

Equal Opportunities Monitoring

We will monitor the effectiveness of this policy to ensure it is achieving its objectives.

- the composition of the membership
- the impact of our policies
- dismissals and other terminations

Information collected for monitoring purposes will be treated as confidential and will not be used for any other purpose.

Raising a complaint of discrimination

If you believe you have been discriminated against, you should contact the trustees.

Any person who is found to have committed an act of discrimination, or has breached this policy in any way, will be subject to action. Formal action, depending on the circumstances, may involve terminating membership and any contract or agreement. We will also take seriously any malicious or, in its opinion, unwarranted allegations of discrimination and will take appropriate action, disciplinary or otherwise, where necessary.

For more details, please address any questions, comments and requests about our equal opportunities practices to our Trustees at info@ipswichgands.co.uk