



**South Wye Community Association
Belmont Community Centre
Eastholme Avenue, Belmont, Hereford HR2 7UQ
Registered charity No 700471**

Equality and Diversity Policy

This is South Wye Community Association (SWCA) Equality and Diversity Policy and it forms a core part of our ethos.

All Volunteers are bound by its contents.

1. Equality and Diversity statement
2. Management issues and delivery mechanisms
3. Volunteer practices
4. Service Delivery
5. Monitoring and evaluation
6. Harassment and Dignity at work
7. Review of this policy

1. Equality and Diversity Statement

- 1.1 South Wye Community Association (SWCA) aims to promote equality and diversity as a volunteer and resource centre at Belmont Community Centre (BCC), and seeks to ensure that principles of equality and of appreciation of diversity underpin all areas of the centre's work and service provision.
- 1.2 SWCA recognise that many people and groups suffer discrimination and face serious barriers when trying to fulfil their true potential. It also recognises that not all forms of unreasonable and unfair discrimination are the subject of legislation. It is the aim of this organisation to take positive steps to redress discrimination, to improve quality of opportunity and to combat any unreasonable or unfair treatment which places people at a disadvantage for any reason not directly related to their ability to do a job for this organisation or to their eligibility to get involved at BCC.

- 1.3 In most cases it is unlawful to discriminate against people because of their gender or gender assignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic and national origin, sexuality/sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, or because they are disabled, married or in a civil partnership, or because they can only do a limited number of hours volunteering. It is also unlawful to discriminate against people either because they are perceived to have a certain characteristic or because they associate with someone who has a certain characteristic.
- 1.4 However, we recognise that people may suffer discrimination for many additional social, educational and economic reasons such as their language, health, caring responsibilities, where they live, how they speak. This policy will apply equally to all these circumstances.
- 1.5 SWCA will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimisation or abuse of people who all volunteer, or any person connected with SWCA's activities.

2. Management Issues and Delivery Mechanisms

- 2.1 SWCA's board of trustees has ultimate responsibility for compliance with the legal elements of the equality and diversity policy. It is also the requirement of the board of trustees to implement, monitor and evaluate the diversity policy in terms of volunteer coordination, service delivery and any changes to legislation.

It is the responsibility of all volunteers to report any discrimination of which they become aware.

- 2.2 The trustees will ensure that all volunteers are informed of this policy that is in operation and that they are bound to comply with these requirements. This policy will be made known to all funding agencies and volunteer applicants at BCC.
- 2.3 The Equality and Diversity Statement above shall be readily available in the office, accessible to all volunteers and visitors. The trustees are to be made aware of their duty to read and understand this policy upon their appointment as a trustee. To ensure that they know when it has been updated and modified and to make all volunteers aware of this also.
- 2.4 SWCA's Grievance Policy and or/ Disciplinary Policy will be used to deal with any complaints about discrimination, harassment or bullying involving volunteers or any person attending the centre.
- 2.5 Complaints from any organisation using the centre will be dealt with through SWCA's complaints procedure.
- 2.6 SWCA seeks a broad and representative board of trustees.
- 2.7 It is expected that when any volunteer or trustee represent SWCA on the committee of any other agency they will endeavour to ensure that the principles and practices to support equality and appreciation of diversity are adopted by those agencies.

3. Volunteer Practices

- 3.1 SWCA aims to promote equality and diversity throughout the enrolment of volunteers and to ensure that no applicant receives less favourable treatment or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable within the context of this policy.
- 3.2 SWCA regards discrimination, harassment, abuse, victimisation or bullying of other volunteers, BCC users or others, in the course of their work as disciplinary offenses that could be regarded as gross misconduct. Condoning such behaviour could also be treated as a disciplinary offence. As well as disciplining the perpetrator(s), we will give appropriate support to the person(s) who complain of harassment.
- 3.3 Recruitment and training practises will be subject to regular review to ensure they always comply with the equality and diversity policy.
- 3.4 SWCA recognises that as an organisation we are obliged under the Equality act of 2010 to make all reasonable adjustments to accommodate the disabled person. SWCA will ensure that they are able to carry out their duties without unnecessary difficulty. SWCA will make adjustments that are reasonable for all volunteers.
- 3.5 SWCA accept that our obligation not to discriminate against any applicant on the basis of their religion or belief. SWCA will try to accommodate any volunteers religious beliefs in any way compatible with the work of the centre and to allow payer time should it be necessary within the scope of their volunteering hours. SWCA will ensure that all volunteers have a place to eat or store food should it become necessary within their volunteering hours. To ensure that any volunteer is given the right not to work on a religious holiday/ festival coinciding with their beliefs.
- 3.6 To ensure that a dress code is not enforced that would go against the religious beliefs of any volunteer.
- 3.7 SWCA will not discriminate on the grounds of age in the recruitment of any volunteer.
- 3.8 SWCA will undertake to ensure that a positive approach to recruiting volunteers covers a very broad spectrum of people.

4. Service Delivery

- 4.1 SWCA will seek to ensure that its activities and services are accessible to all sections of the community served by SWCA. In particular, SWCA will seek to remove barriers which may prevent those most at social, economic or educational disadvantage accessing our activities. SWCA will also ensure that annual impact assessment in our local community drives our strategic priorities.
- 4.2 SWCA will make public its commitment to combating discriminatory attitudes where these are encountered.
- 4.3 SWCA will attempt to ensure that none of its policies discriminate either directly or indirectly against any group or individual.
- 4.4 SWCA will operate a complaints procedure that will include its objectives with regard to equality and diversity.
- 4.5 SWCA will attempt to find ways of making our services and activities available and accessible to everyone, including people whose first language is not English, people with hearing or sight impairment, and people who live in remote rural areas and who cannot travel easily.
- 4.6 SWCA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that its activities are carried out in premises which are accessible to people with mobility difficulties.
- 4.7 SWCA will be sensitive to the particular needs of participants wherever possible. In the preparation of events and supply of food to be aware of any dietary needs.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 5.1 SWCA will regularly monitor and evaluate its services and the effectiveness of this policy.
- 5.2 Monitoring may be carried out by SWCA to provide data for this regular evaluation. As an instance
- 5.3 SWCA may ask clients, volunteers using our centre for information about ethnic origin, disability, age or other personal information. This would only be done for a specific purpose such as collecting statistical data for funders or ensuring that our policy is performing to its utmost.
- 5.4 SWCA will have regard to a person's rights and GDPR will be adhered to at all times. All monitoring information will be securely logged and stored and anonymity adhered to at all times.

6. HARASSMENT AND DIGNITY AT WORK

- 6.1 The South Wye Community Association's (SWCA) objectives will be best served if staff work in harmony with each other. Each member of staff should respect other members of staff and realise that behaviour which they may find acceptable may not be that of others and their feelings are important to good harmony.

Peer managers will act and react towards each other in a manner which respects their dignity. They shall work to ensure all volunteers they work with are guided to act in a similar manner in their relationship with each other. Harassment in any way is totally unacceptable and each member of staff carries the responsibility for their own actions and behaviour under this policy.

- 6.2 The equality act of 2010 defines harassment as unwanted conduct which has the purpose of or effect of violating a person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.
- 6.3 Harassment because of sex, Age, disability, gender assignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, maternity and pregnancy are prohibited by the Equality Act. Harassment at work in any form is entirely unacceptable to SWCA, whether or not it is because of a characteristic protected by law.
- 6.4 It is unlawful to harass someone or discriminate against them on the grounds of a characteristic they are perceived to have and it does not matter whether they actually possess that characteristic.
- 6.5 The law also protects someone who is associated with another person who has a protected characteristic, for instance their partners race or colour or because their parent is disabled.
- 6.6 Harassment may be persistent or an isolated incident. Actions or comments which are demeaning or unacceptable to the recipient can amount to harassment, regardless of the intention of the perpetrator. In extreme or repeated situations, harassment may amount to bullying or abuse.

EXAMPLES OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR INCLUDE

- Spreading malicious rumours, or insulting someone (particularly on grounds of any of the protected characteristics)
- Copying memos that are critical about someone to others who do not need to know.
- Ridiculing or demeaning someone.
- Picking on someone or setting them up for a fall.
- Exclusion or victimisation.
- Unfair treatment.
- Overbearing micromanagement outside of usual peer management process.
- Misuse of power to undermine decisions of an individuals work agreed upon through the collective model.
- Unwelcome sexual advances - touching, standing too close, display of offensive material.
- Making threats or comments about job security without foundation.
- Deliberately undermining a competent worker by overloading and / or constant criticism.

6.7 Preventing individuals progressing by intentionally blocking their learning and development opportunities.

6.8 Bullying and harassment are not necessarily face to face, they may be by written communications, visual images (for example pictures of a sexual nature or embarrassing photographs of colleagues), email, phone and automatic supervision methods - such as computer recording of downtime at work, or recording of telephone conversations - if these are not universally applied to all volunteers.

7. Review of this Policy

- 7.1 SWCA’s commitment to equality and diversity is an active one. This document will be amended on a regular basis as part of our active commitment.
- 7.2 SWCA’s equality and diversity policy will be reviewed as and when required and in line with changes in legislation.
- 7.3 SWCA will also seek to keep abreast of new developments in practise to support equality and diversity and actively seek information on this topic.



Signed:

Name: Adrian Bridges

Position: Chairman & Trustee Of South Wye Community Association

Date agreed by (Board of Trustees) 23rd May 2024

Review date: 05th May 2024