

TREES FOR DORSET

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI) POLICY

1. Trees for Dorset is committed to celebrating diversity – valuing people from all different cultures, backgrounds and races for the uniqueness that makes everyone an important part of the community. We promote equality of opportunity by ensuring that no one is discriminated against or treated less favourably but also understand that some groups may face additional barriers and that we need to take steps to remove them. Trees for Dorset is committed to developing equal opportunities in all areas of its work and structure, and in particular will take positive action, as the law allows, in the areas of employment and volunteering, service provision and membership. Trees for Dorset aims to be an inclusive organisation with an approach and practice that is about bringing people together. We will do this by providing the conditions for people to be able to participate in the way that they want to, knowing they are welcome regardless of their background. This will involve openness, participation, engagement, responding to community needs, treating people with dignity and respect, and ensuring that barriers to involvement are removed.

2. Trees for Dorset will ensure that no job applicant, employee, volunteer or service user is discriminated against, either directly or indirectly because they have a characteristic that is protected under the Equality Act 2010, i.e.

Age

Disability¹ (including HIV status)

Gender reassignment

Marital status or civil partnership

Race

Religion (or lack of)

Philosophical views or beliefs (or lack of)

Pregnancy and maternity

Sex (including gender identity)

Sexual orientation

3. However Trees for Dorset recognises that there are other characteristics that individuals and/or groups may be discriminated against which are not protected legally by the Equality Act but may have other ways to seek legal redress, including:

Caring responsibilities

Caste

Class

¹ A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. 'Substantial' is more than minor or trivial - e.g. it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed, 'long-term' means 12 months or more - e.g. a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection. See Equality Act Guidance at <http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/docs/wor/new/ea-guide.pdf>

Cultural origins
Current employment status.
Ethnicity
Geographical location
Menopause
Nationality
Political persuasion
Trade Union activity
Unrelated criminal convictions

4. Trees for Dorset recognises the following types of discrimination:

- a) Direct discrimination means treating a person, on the above grounds, less favourably than others are or would be treated in the same circumstances.
- b) Indirect discrimination means applying a requirement or condition which, whether intentional or not, has an adverse effect on one particular group.
- c) Associative discrimination is direct discrimination against someone because they are linked or associated with another person who possesses a protected characteristic e.g. the partner of a disabled person.
- d) Perceptive discrimination is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic, it applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic e.g. discriminating against someone you think is gay when they are not.
- e) Harassment is any behaviour, deliberate or otherwise, which is unwanted, unwelcome, found to be offensive, objectionable, upsetting or embarrassing to the recipient, and which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
- f) Victimisation is treating a person less favourably than others because they have, or is suspected of having, exercised their right under the Equality Act 2010.

5. To ensure that Trees for Dorset not only abides by legislation that protects people and groups from discrimination but also goes beyond any legal minimum, and celebrates diversity and enables inclusion, we will:

- a) Ensure that staff, volunteers and trustees who represent Trees for Dorset commit themselves to the principles of our policy.
- b) Ensure that information produced by Trees for Dorset and the means of communication are accessible to as many people as possible irrespective of location, technology, language, physical and mental ability and financial resources and does not use stereotyping language or images but celebrates diversity.
- c) Make available on request copies of this policy. All Trees for Dorset staff, volunteers, trustees and contractors will be required to sign their agreement to abide by the policy and to demonstrate in their work that they subscribe unreservedly to its principles.

6. The Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility to ensure Trees for Dorset celebrates diversity, promotes equality of opportunity and inclusion. It will:

- a) review this policy annually.
- b) appoint a lead Trustee (whose role is set out in Appendix 1)
- c) delegate responsibilities for implementing this policy to the Chair
- d) receive an annual report from the Chair

7. The Chair will ensure that Trees for Dorset operates in a way that fulfils the commitments in this policy.

8. All employees and volunteers:

- a) are expected to challenge, in an appropriate² way, any discrimination they come across in their working practice.
- b) will be protected from complaints from individuals or organisations about appropriate challenges of discrimination
- c) are expected at whatever level of the organisation to ensure that this policy is effective.

9. The Chair will receive any complaints covered by this policy from employees, volunteers, Trustees, members, service users or other third parties and investigate them thoroughly, however minor they may appear to be at first sight:

- a) Complaints from staff should use the Trees for Dorset Grievance Policy
- b) Complaints from volunteers, Trustees, members, service users and third parties should use the Trees for Dorset Complaints Policy.
- c) Any identified action from a successful complaint will be communicated to those who made the complaint, which may lead to action under the Trees for Dorset Disciplinary Policy.
- d) A successful complaint against a contractor could lead to termination as set out in that contract.

10. The Chair is responsible for actioning and monitoring the implementation of the policy:

Once a year they will compile a report, working with the Lead Trustee, on Trees for Dorset's performance with suggested actions to improve it for the coming year to be presented to the Board of Trustees for discussion and agreement. The report will collate:

- Trustee monitoring
- any complaints or comments made in the past year
- a review of this policy

² Appropriate will differ for different occasions but it should be in a way that helps challenge that person/organisation to rethink its perceptions/prejudices but also does not put staff at risk

11. Relevant law framework:

- a) Equality Act 2010
- b) Human Right Act 1998
- c) Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- d) Part time Workers (Prevention of less favourable treatment regulations 2000)

12. Related policies and procedures:

- a) Disciplinary Procedure
- b) Bullying and Harassment at Work
- c) Communications

This Policy was agreed by the Trustees on 11th MAY 2024..... (date)

Signed on behalf of the Trustees by the Chair of Trees for Dorset

Simon Goldsack..... Simon Goldsack