

WESTWHEELS CAR CLUB - EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

- 1.1. WestWheels Car Club strives for high standards both as an employer and as a provider of services. In so doing, we recognise the need for encouraging diversity and wholeheartedly support a policy of equal opportunities in all areas of our work and responsibilities.
- 1.2. This policy provides guidance to enable all who work with or use WestWheels Car Club to comply with anti-discrimination legislation. The policy will also address anti-discrimination issues involving areas that currently fall outside any legislation.
- 1.3. Failure to follow the procedures in the policy may lead to disciplinary or other appropriate action.
- 1.4. WestWheels Car Club's aims and objectives will be achieved through effective monitoring and a willingness to tackle problems where they arise. WestWheels Car Club is committed to reviewing this policy on an annual basis.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. **Equal Opportunities** ensures that policies, procedures and practice within WestWheels Car Club do not discriminate against the people within it. It is about treating people fairly and equally regardless of who they are, their background or their lifestyle.
- 2.2. **Diversity** ensures that all people are valued as individuals and are able to maximise their potential and contribution to WestWheels Car Club and to the community. It recognises that people from different backgrounds can bring fresh ideas and a different approach, which can make the way we work and learn more fun, more creative, more efficient and more innovative.
- 2.3. **Direct Discrimination** occurs when an individual is dealt with less favourably on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin or sex. Also because of, for example, marital status or caring responsibility; sexual orientation; age; physical, sensory or learning disability; mental health; political or religious beliefs; class; HIV status; employment status; unrelated criminal convictions; union activities.
- 2.4. **Indirect Discrimination** occurs when a requirement or condition, which although it applies equally to persons of all groups, is such that only a considerably smaller proportion of a particular group can comply with it.
- 2.5. **Victimisation** occurs when an individual is treated less favourably because that person has asserted rights under the Sex Discrimination Act, the Race Relations Act or the Disability Discrimination Act or acted as a whistleblower on such activity. People must be able to act against unlawful discrimination without fear of reprisals.
- 2.6. **Harassment** means repeated, unreciprocated and unwelcome comments, looks, actions, suggestions or physical contact which is found objectionable and offensive and which might threaten an employee or participant or create an intimidating or uncomfortable environment. Harassment can be sexual, racial, directed against people with disabilities or indeed related to any characteristic exhibited by the individual.
- 2.7. **Positive Action** refers to measures taken to assist employees or learners who have been under-represented in specific areas, to reach a level of workplace knowledge and competencies that is comparable with 'representative' employees. These measures would

normally take the form of additional training. 'Positive discrimination' at the point of selection for work is not permissible.

WestWheels Car Club urges staff and directors to be aware of the less obvious types of discrimination which result from general assumptions and pre-conceptions about the capabilities, interests and characteristics of individuals.

3. Policy Statements

Diversity

- 3.1. WestWheels Car Club will actively encourage diversity to maximise achievement, creativity and good practice and to bring benefit to members and communities.
- 3.2. WestWheels Car Club encourages all people it works with and for to contribute to an environment in which people feel comfortable expressing how they feel and what they need, knowing they will be treated with respect and that their contribution will be valued.
- 3.3. WestWheels Car Club will make reasonable adjustments to working practices, equipment and premises and offer, where appropriate, additional support to directors, staff, members and volunteers to ensure they are able to take a full and active part in WestWheels Car Club 's work.
- 3.4. WestWheels Car Club will endeavour to deliver services in a way that genuinely recognises the importance of an inclusive society that brings opportunities and access, not barriers to individuals.

Equal Opportunities

- 3.5. WestWheels Car Club is an equal opportunities employer and provider of services. No job applicant, employee, volunteer, trustee, member or service user should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin; sex; marital status or caring responsibility; sexual orientation; age; physical, sensory or learning disability; mental health; political or religious beliefs; class; HIV status; employment status; unrelated criminal convictions; union activities. Nor will such person be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable. This principle applies to recruitment, promotion, transfer, training, benefits, facilities, procedures and all terms and conditions of employment.

4. Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the Equality and Diversity Policy are:

- 4.1. To encourage, promote and celebrate diversity in all our activities and services
- 4.2. To ensure equal access to jobs, volunteer opportunities and services
- 4.3. To ensure compliance with legislation on discrimination and equality (Disabled Persons Employment Acts of 1944 and 1958, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and the Race Relations Act 1976, Disability Discrimination Act 1995)
- 4.4. To promote equal opportunities in other areas not currently covered by legislation.
- 4.5. To maximise the use of resources in the best interests of staff, volunteers and service users
- 4.6. To confront and challenge discrimination where and whenever it arises whether it is between colleagues, or in any other area relating to WestWheels Car Club's work.
- 4.7. To ensure, through positive action and so far as is practicable, that all WestWheels Car Club premises and services are accessible to all people

5. Policy Implementation: Expectations

WestWheels Car Club recognises that passive policies do not provide equality and WestWheels Car Club will seek to promote equality and diversity within the following framework of responsibilities.

- 5.1. Responsibility for implementing and developing the policy for equal opportunities and management of diversity is delegated to the Board of Directors. However, WestWheels Car Club believes that all who work with or use the services of the organisation have an individual responsibility: to accept the policy and ensure a personal involvement in its application; to co-operate actively to ensure that the environment we desire is a reality. Therefore:

WestWheels Car Club expects members:

- 5.2. to co-operate with measures introduced by WestWheels Car Club to ensure equality of opportunity, diversity and non discrimination
- 5.3. not to harass, abuse or intimidate any other employee or participant on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin; sex; marital status or caring responsibility; sexual orientation; age; physical, sensory or learning disability; mental health; political or religious beliefs; class; HIV status; employment status; unrelated criminal convictions; union activities
- 5.4. to feel sufficiently confident to inform management if they suspect discrimination is taking place. Therefore:

WestWheels Car Club expects our staff-

- 5.5. to ensure that grievances are dealt with in a fair and consistent manner
- 5.6. to ensure that individuals within their area are aware of their legal responsibilities, and the organisation's Equality and Diversity Policy

The people with responsibility for Equality and Diversity will:-

- 5.7. ensure all Directors/Board of Directors, staff and members are appraised regularly on the state of equal opportunities and diversity within WestWheels Car Club.
- 5.8. ensure that the Equality and Diversity Policy and associated documents are reviewed on an annual basis.
- 5.9. review and approve policies, procedures and practices that impact on equal opportunities and diversity practice.

6. Policy Implementation: Recruitment and Promotion

- 6.1. WestWheels Car Club strives to ensure that our trustees, staff and volunteers reflect the wider community.
- 6.2. Clear and accurate information on vacant posts should be available through advertisement, job descriptions, person specifications and interview. Vacancies should be advertised sufficiently widely to reach the widest possible range of candidates, either internal and/or external.
- 6.3. All recruitment material should not imply any preferred group, unless a genuine occupational qualification exists limiting a post to a particular group.
- 6.4. Applicants will be informed, through all recruitment material of WestWheels Car Club's commitment to Equal Opportunities and Diversity and the existence of this policy.
- 6.5. Line Managers specifications may include 'essential' and 'desirable' requirements that are necessary and justifiable.
- 6.6. Job titles that are discriminatory should be avoided.

7. Policy Implementation: Interviews and Selection

- 7.1. In line with the intentions of this policy, interviewing and selection policies and processes must take care to reflect the gender, disability and ethnic make-up of WestWheels Car Club when selecting the panel.
- 7.2. The shortlisting panel will not select candidates on the basis of the gender, name, possible disability or age of the candidate.
- 7.3. The interview panel must take extreme care not to ask discriminatory questions unrelated to the requirements of the job, eg race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin; sex; marital status or caring responsibility; sexual orientation; age; physical, sensory or learning disability; mental health; political or religious beliefs; class; HIV status; employment status; unrelated criminal convictions; union activities.

8. Policy Implementation: Training

- 8.1. In line with the intentions of this policy, WestWheels Car Club will not discriminate in the provision of training courses/ opportunities wherever possible.
- 8.2. Appropriate training will be provided to enable staff and volunteers to perform their jobs effectively. The training offered will take into account the needs of all people.
- 8.3. Briefing on this policy will form part of the Induction Procedure for trustees, staff, volunteers and Committee members

9. Enforcement

- 9.1. WestWheels Car Club recognises the need for a continuing commitment to genuine equal opportunities and diversity within the organisation. The effectiveness of the policy's aims and objectives can only be judged by how the policy operates in practice.

Policy Enforcement – Grievances

- 9.2. Any staff member or volunteer who feels they have been a victim of unlawful discrimination or unfairly treated in a way contrary to the intention of this policy should raise the issue with WestWheels Car Club's Directors
- 9.3. Any member or service user who feels he/ she has been unfairly treated in a way contrary to the intention of this policy should make a complaint through WestWheels Car Club's Directors
- 9.4. Any job applicant who believes that he/ she may have been treated unfairly and contrary to the intention of this policy should raise the issue with the Directors.
- 9.5. All incidents of direct discrimination are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.
- 9.6. Incidents of indirect discrimination will be investigated to determine whether they should be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.
- 9.7. WestWheels Car Club will not treat lightly or ignore grievances from members of disadvantaged groups on the assumption that they are over-sensitive about discrimination.

Policy Enforcement – Disciplinary Procedure

- 9.8. Any member of staff found to be in breach of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action in line with the Standard Terms of Employment.
- 9.9. Any volunteer found to be in breach of this policy will be counselled on his/her actions and may, where necessary, be removed from WestWheels Car Club's volunteer register.
- 9.10. Any member of any Committee or working group of WestWheels Car Club found in breach of this policy will be counselled on his/her actions and may, where necessary, be asked to leave WestWheels Car Club.

- 9.11. Any service user found in breach of this policy will, where appropriate, be counselled on his/her actions and may, where necessary, be referred back to their organisation or refused future services from WestWheels Car Club.

10. Monitoring

- 10.1. WestWheels Car Club view the collection/analysis of data is vital in informing change and improving performance. Where appropriate, statistics on WestWheels Car Club 's services will be collected and analysed in relation to equality and diversity matters.
- 10.2. The Board of Directors will review annually equality of opportunity relating to WestWheels Car Club services. Recruitment and selection procedures will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Board of Directors.

The Diversity and Equality Policy will be monitored and reviewed as follows:

- 10.3. The policy will be an agenda item at WestWheels Car Club team meetings.
- 10.4. Directors will undertake an annual policy review. All relevant parties will be encouraged to submit comments for consideration.
- 10.5. The review recommendations will be presented to the next Director/Board meeting for their comments and ratification.
- 10.6. Where it appears that there may have been or there is a breach of the policy, Directors will investigate the circumstances and action will be taken to counter any proven breach of policy.
- 10.7. If it is found that the policy is excluding or discouraging the development of directors or staff, Directors should take positive action to re-adjust the policy.

Approved by	Lucy Conway and Sue Hollands
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