



VALEWAYS

Equal Opportunities Policy

Valeways is committed to taking positive steps to promote and sustain equal opportunities in all areas of its work and in the services it provides. No one will be treated less favourably on the grounds of their race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, physical or other impairment, political or religious beliefs, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, language, HIV status, age or any other conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justified.

In adopting the above statement and this policy Valeways fully accepts the statutory requirements laid down in the Equality Act 2010. The Act precludes anyone from discriminating against or treating anyone differently on the grounds of colour, ethnic origin, nationality, age, political or religious beliefs or disability. This policy forms part of Valeways' 'Recruitment Procedures'.

Trustees' Responsibility

The Trustees have a duty to promote and sustain equality of opportunity by:

- Ensuring that all members and service users are aware of this policy.
- Precluding direct or indirect discrimination or harassment of any form.
- Taking prompt action to stop discrimination or harassment of any kind.
- Ensuring that there is an easily accessed procedure for reporting incidents of discrimination or harassment.
- Establishing and maintaining an environment free from harassment.

Individual Responsibility

Every individual connected with Valeways and its services has a responsibility to:

- Be aware of his or her behaviour towards others.
- Treat everyone equally and with dignity and respect.

- Ensure that they do not act in any way which can be regarded as discriminatory, offensive or harassing.
- Avoid using language or humour which people might find offensive such as sexist, racist or homophobic jokes.
- Refrain from using terminology which may be seen as offensive by someone with impairment.
- Challenge discrimination whenever it occurs and it is appropriate to do so.

Implementation

All trustees and volunteers will be made aware of this policy as part of their induction and will be made aware of its contents and requirements.

Action

Where it is apparent that not everyone is being offered equality of opportunity or there is evidence of discrimination the Trustees have a responsibility to act immediately to address the matter and amend this policy if necessary.

Definitions

- Direct discrimination occurs when an individual is, for example, treated differently because of race, colour, sexuality or impairment and where such treatment is less favourable than he or she would otherwise have received.
- Indirect discrimination occurs where an unnecessary requirement or condition is imposed which, although applied to everyone, is more difficult for some people to meet than others.
- Harassment is defined as unwanted, abusive or insulting behaviour towards another individual which causes that individual to feel threatened, humiliated or harassed. Harassment may occur on a number of grounds including race, colour, age, sexuality or physical impairment. (Please refer to Valeways Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy, which also covers this important subject).

Policy Review

The Trustees have a responsibility to review this policy every two years.

Copies of all other Valeways policies are available on the website.

Adopted August 2021

Reviewed December 2023