

## Equal Opportunities Policy

### **1. Statement & Purpose of Policy**

- 1.1 As a club we are committed to equal opportunities for all members and other persons.
- 1.2 It is our policy that we do not discriminate based on race, ethnic origin or appearance, nationality, national origins, sex, gender, sexual orientation, marital/civil partnership status, pregnancy, maternity, disability, religion/beliefs, age or any other ground whatsoever which it is, or it becomes unlawful to discriminate upon, according to the laws of England and Wales (referred to as "Protected Characteristics").
- 1.3 Our intention is to enable all our members to benefit from an environment which allows them to have fun and fulfil their potential without fear of discrimination, harassment or victimisation. Our commitment to equal opportunities extends to all aspects of our relationship with our members, members of the public and others, including, but not limited to;
  - (i) membership criteria,
  - (ii) access to and participation in competition and events,
  - (iii) access to and participation in social events,
- 1.4 This policy is intended to help the club achieve our diversity and anti-discrimination aims by clarifying the responsibilities and duties of all in respect of equal opportunities and anti-discrimination procedures.
- 1.5 The principals of non-discrimination and equal opportunities also apply to the way in which we treat all other persons who come into contact whilst participating in the club's operations.
- 1.6 This is a statement of policy which forms part of the conditions of membership of and participation with, the club. This policy may be amended at any time by the club both at their absolute discretion and also in order to comply with legislation.

### **2. Who is responsible for equal opportunities?**

- 2.1 Achieving an equal opportunities environment is a collective task shared between all members of the club. This policy and the rules contained within it, therefore applies equally to all persons with any involvement with the club regardless of their status or any responsibilities or office that they hold.
- 2.2 All persons have a personal responsibility to ensure compliance with this policy, to treat others with dignity and respect at all times and to not discriminate against or harass others. In addition, committee members have a special responsibility for leading by example and ensuring compliance.
- 2.3 Committee members must take all necessary steps to;
  - (i) promote the objective of equal opportunities and the values set out in this policy,

- (ii) ensure that any complaints of discrimination, victimisation or harassment (including against themselves) are dealt with appropriately and are not suppressed or disregarded.

### **3. Discrimination**

3.1 Discrimination occurs in different ways, some more obvious than others. Discrimination on the grounds of any of the Protected Characteristics is prohibited by the law, even if unintentional, unless a particular exception applies.

Direct Discrimination;

3.2 Direct Discrimination is less favourable treatment because of one of the Protected Characteristics.

3.3 Direct Discrimination can arise in some cases even though the person complaining does not actually possess the Protected Characteristics but is perceived to have it or associates with persons who do have it.

Indirect Discrimination;

3.4 Indirect Discrimination arises when a person applies an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice which in fact puts individuals with a particular Protected Characteristic at a disadvantage, statistically, and this is unjustified. To show discrimination the individual complaining also has to be personally disadvantaged.

Victimisation;

3.5 Victimisation means treating a person less favourably because they have made a complaint of discrimination or have provided information in connection with a complaint or because they might do one of these things.

Harassment;

3.6 Harassment is;

- (i) unwanted conduct which is related to a Protected Characteristic and which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them, or;
- (ii) unwanted conduct which is of a sexual nature and which has the effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them ("Sexual Harassment"),
- (iii) less favourable treatment because of the rejection of, or the submission to, Sexual Harassment.

3.7 Harassment can arise in some cases even though the person complaining does not actually possess a Protected Characteristic but is perceived to have it.

3.8 Harassment may include;

- (i) the use of insults or slurs based on a Protected Characteristic or of a sexual nature or other verbal abuse or derogatory, offensive or stereotyping jokes or remarks,
- (ii) physical or verbal abuse, threatening or intimidating behaviour because of a Protected Characteristic, or behaviour of a sexual nature,
- (iii) unwelcome physical conduct including touching, hugging, kissing, pinching or patting, brushing past, invading personal space, pushing, grabbing or any other assaults,
- (iv) mocking, mimicking or belittling a person's disability, appearance, accent or any other personal characteristics,
- (v) unwelcome requests for sexual acts or sexual favours, verbal sexual advances, vulgar, sexual, suggestive or explicit comments or behaviour,
- (vi) repeated requests, either explicitly or implicitly, for dates,
- (vii) repeated requests for social contact or after it has been made clear that requests are unwelcome,
- (viii) comments about body parts or sexual preference,
- (ix) displaying or distributing offensive or explicit pictures, items or materials relating to a Protected Characteristic, or of a sexual nature,
- (x) shunning or ostracising someone, for example, by deliberately excluding them from conversations or activities,
- (xi) "outing" or threatening to "out" someone's sexual orientation (ie to make it known),
- (xii) explicit or implicit suggestions that employment status or progression is related to toleration of, or acquiescence to sexual advances, or other behaviour which amounts to harassment.

3.9 Other important points to note about harassment;

- (i) a single incident can amount to harassment,
- (ii) behaviour that has continued for a long period without complaint can still amount to harassment,
- (iii) it is not necessary for an individual to intend to harass someone, for their behaviour to amount to harassment,
- (iv) it is not necessary for an individual to communicate that behaviour is unwelcome before it amounts to harassment, and;

- (v) the onus is on each individual to be certain that their behaviour and conduct is appropriate and is not unwanted and in the case of doubt, you must refrain from such conduct.

#### Disability Discrimination;

- 3.9 This could be direct or indirect discrimination, and in any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

#### Disabled Persons;

- 3.10 Any member who considers that they may have a disability is strongly encouraged to speak with a committee member, particularly if they experience difficulties in participating in any club events because of their disability so that any reasonable adjustments to help overcome or minimise difficulties can be discussed. For these purposes, disability includes any physical or mental impairment which substantially affects your ability to perform day to day activities and has lasted for (or is likely to last for) more than twelve (12) months. Disclosure of this information is however not mandatory (except where Health and Safety legislation requires its disclosure) and any disclosure made will be treated in the strictest of confidence, if you wish it to be, so far as is reasonably practicable and we will do our best to handle matters sensitively and to ensure that you are treated with dignity and with respect for your privacy.

### **4. Encountering Discrimination**

- 4.1 If you believe that you have been the victim of discrimination, you should notify the committee immediately.
- 4.2 Every member has a responsibility to combat discrimination if they encounter it. Any person who observes or is aware of acts that they believe amount to discrimination directed at others are expected to report this to the committee immediately.
- 4.3 Any grievance or report raised about discrimination will be kept confidential so far as is reasonably practicable. We may ask you if you wish us to put your complaint(s) to the alleged discriminator if further action appears to be appropriate. It may sometimes be necessary to disclose the complaint or take action, even if it is not in line with your wishes, but in this event we will seek to protect you from victimisation and, if you wish, we will seek to protect your identity. You should be aware that disciplinary action may be impossible without your co-operation or if you refuse to allow relevant information to be disclosed.

### **5. Non-Compliance**

- 5.1 Any breach of equal opportunities rules or failure to comply with this policy will be taken very seriously and is likely to result in disciplinary action against the offender, which may result in the termination of your membership or any other sanction that the committee may see fit. .
- 5.2 Members should note that;

- (i) in some cases, they may be personally liable for their acts of discrimination and that legal action may be taken against them directly by the victim of the discrimination, and;
- (ii) harassing or discriminating against another person, particularly on the grounds of a Protected Characteristic, may constitute a criminal offence.

## **6. Policy Review**

- 6.1 The club encourages members to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved, or ask any questions if they are unsure about any part of it and how it is being applied, by contacting the committee.

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**For and on behalf of;  
Long Eaton Riding Club**