

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Widcombe Community Hall CIO

Date Approved: 23rd March 2026

Review Date: March 2027

1. Purpose and Commitment

This policy sets out the charity's commitment to promoting equality, valuing diversity, and ensuring inclusion across all activities. The charity aims to create an environment where everyone is treated fairly, with dignity and respect, and where discrimination, harassment, or victimisation are not tolerated.

The charity recognises its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and is committed to ensuring that trustees, volunteers, beneficiaries, supporters, and members of the public are treated equitably.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Trustees
- Volunteers
- Beneficiaries and service users
- Contractors and partners
- Anyone acting on behalf of the charity

It covers all charity activities, including events, fundraising, governance, service delivery, and public engagement.

3. Our Principles

- Everyone is valued for their contribution and treated with respect.
- Opportunities to participate in the charity's work are open and accessible.
- Decisions are made fairly and transparently.
- Discrimination, harassment, and victimisation are not tolerated.
- Barriers to participation are identified and reduced wherever possible.
- Diversity is recognised as a strength that improves the charity's work.

4. Legal Framework

The charity will comply with the Equality Act 2010, which protects individuals from discrimination based on the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

While not a protected characteristic under the Act, the charity also recognises that socioeconomic factors can create significant barriers to participation, particularly in a rural community. The charity is committed to ensuring that cost, transport, and digital access do not prevent people from using or benefiting from the hall.

5. Responsibilities

Trustees hold overall responsibility for ensuring the charity meets its legal and ethical obligations.

Volunteers are expected to treat others with respect and follow this policy in all charity activities.

The Chair or a nominated trustee will act as the EDI lead, ensuring the policy is implemented and reviewed.

6. Preventing Discrimination and Promoting Inclusion

The charity will:

- Ensure recruitment of volunteers is fair, transparent, and based on skills and suitability.
- Make reasonable adjustments to enable participation by people with disabilities.
- Provide information in accessible formats where possible.
- Consider equality impacts when planning events, services, or projects.
- Challenge discriminatory behaviour or language promptly and appropriately.
- Ensure the hall's pricing, booking arrangements, and programming encourage use by a wide cross-section of the community.
- Keep the hall's physical accessibility under review, including step-free access, signage, lighting, and toilet facilities, and make improvements where reasonably practicable.

7. Training and Awareness

The charity will ensure that trustees and regular volunteers are offered basic EDI awareness as part of their induction. This may include informal guidance, signposting to online resources, or attendance at relevant training sessions.

The EDI lead will keep up to date with good practice and share relevant updates with the board as appropriate.

8. Reporting Concerns

Anyone who experiences or witnesses discrimination, harassment, or exclusion should report it to the Chair or EDI lead.

If the concern involves the Chair or EDI lead, it should be raised with another named trustee. Contact details for all trustees will be displayed in the hall and on the charity's website or noticeboard.

Concerns will be handled as follows:

- The complaint will be acknowledged within seven days.
- The matter will be investigated by the EDI lead (or another trustee if there is a conflict of interest), who will speak with all relevant parties.
- A written response will be provided within 28 days, setting out the findings and any action to be taken.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, they may request a review by the full board of trustees, whose decision will be final.

No one will be treated unfairly for raising a concern in good faith.

9. Monitoring and Review

The trustees will review this policy annually to ensure it remains effective and relevant.

Feedback from volunteers, beneficiaries, and partners will be considered as part of the review.

Where improvements are identified, the trustees will take reasonable steps to implement them.

10. Statement of Commitment

The charity is committed to fostering an inclusive culture where everyone feels welcome, valued, and able to contribute. This policy supports that commitment and guides how we work together to achieve it.

Version Control – Approval and Review

Version	Approved By	Approval Date	Main Changes	Review
1.0	Board	Oct 2023	Initial draft approved	Annually
2.0	Board	Mar 2026	Revised: added complaints procedure, training, socioeconomic inclusion, safeguarding contacts	Annually