



Birdsedge Village Hall Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

Introduction

Birdsedge Village Hall is community owned, administered by trustees and run by an elected committee of unpaid volunteers, which exists for any member of the village and the surrounding area to make use of via clubs, social groups, events and gatherings run by both the hall committee and by independent groups. It is also available for hire to groups and individuals.

Scope

This policy applies to everyone associated with Birdsedge Village Hall.

Purpose

Birdsedge Village Hall and its volunteers and supporters are committed to valuing and promoting diversity in the provision of the facility and all the events organised in the Village Hall to benefit members of the community.

The Management committee will work towards an environment that is based on inclusiveness, where all users can benefit from the facility and the organised events to their full potential, irrespective of their race, gender, marital status, age, disability, religious belief, political opinion, or sexual orientation.

Philosophy

Managing diversity is an effective way of dealing with equal opportunities issues. It emphasises the benefits to the community that accrue from valuing the differences between people, in addition to complying with the law.

As a charity (Birdsedge Village Hall) we grasp the additional benefits generated by encouraging diversity. We are far more likely to enjoy new users from within the village and the wider community and encourage representatives to attend committee meetings and share in the running and management of the hall and to subsequently benefit by continuing to maintain the facility and provide events and initiatives locally.

Why is Diversity important?

- It is essential that we attract people to benefit from our facility and its associated events for the positive rewards for the community and the future of the Village Hall.
- The UK is an increasingly diverse society. In order to maximise the opportunities we can offer we should reflect and value that diversity in our planning and organisation, promotional activity and events delivery.
- There are a number of laws that set out how people should act. Relevant and important ones are:
 - Sex Discrimination Act 1975
 - Race Relations Act 1976 - as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
 - Disability Discrimination Act 1995

- Equality Act 2006

Implementation

Committee Members and Village Hall Representatives - their Responsibility

- To value diversity in society as a means of broadening our user group and management committee, achieving the maximum we are able to for the Village Hall and the local community.
- To not tolerate unacceptable behaviour, and foster an environment in which all users and committee members are confident to raise concerns and have them dealt with quickly, sensitively and effectively.
- To identify the various forms of behaviour and barriers that discrimination can take, and understand the negative effect these can have on the reputation of the Village Hall and the community.
- To monitor the application of this Policy, preventing any discriminatory practices which may be limiting the Village Hall's ability to achieve its' aims, thereby enhancing our reputation as a fair and responsible provider and organiser in the eyes of its users and suppliers.
- Individual Committee members, have a responsibility to support the aims of the Policy, and to ensure that the principles of Diversity are applied in their behaviour and dealings with others. Deliberate breaches of this policy will be addresses by the committee at the next scheduled committee meeting.
- To comply with the letter and spirit of this policy.

Village Hall User's (included events organised by the Village Hall) - their Responsibility

- To be aware of the various behaviours and barriers that discrimination can take, and understand the negative impact these can have on the Village Hall's reputation and its user's.
- To be sensitive to the potential impact of their own behaviour on other users.
- To seek clarification form a member of the Management Committee is they are unsure.
- To co-operate with members of the management committee in the prevention of any discriminatory practices that may be identified.
- To comply with the letter and spirit of this policy

Procedure

The benefits and requirements of adopting the spirit of this policy should be seen in the following areas:

- Facilities provided by the Village Hall
- Planning of events
- Promotion of events
- Delivery of events

Every effort should be made to attract users from all sections of society.

Complaints

If any user or committee member believes that they have been unfairly discriminated against they should make a complaint to the Chairperson of the Management Committee who will take the allegation very seriously and conduct a thorough investigation. A complaint relating to the Chairperson should be made to a Trustee (contact information can be obtained for the Management Committee Secretary).

Monitoring

The Management Committee will maintain relevant minutes of decisions taken in the running of the Village Hall and events.

It is the responsibility of all users and committee members to apply and monitor the application of the Diversity Policy on a day by day basis.

Following a full investigation the Management Committee will review any potentially discriminatory practices identified and take what action they are able to to prevent them going forward.

Alterations and Amendments to this Policy

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis at the general meeting and amended where appropriate.

A successful Diversity Policy requires the genuine commitment of all persons associated to Birdsedge Village Hall.