



# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

## Introduction

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and anyone acting on behalf of the Trust. Equality of opportunity and inclusivity is fundamental to the vision and values of the Trust. The principles of equality and diversity are supported by appropriate policies, procedures and good practice.

Whilst the Equalities Act (2010) does not cover volunteers to ensure that they are protected from discrimination in the same way as a paid employee under contract is protected from discrimination, this policy makes it clear that the Trust is committed to ensuring that volunteers are treated with dignity and respect. We seek to make opportunities and volunteering activities as accessible and inclusive as possible and free from discrimination, harassment and bullying.

This policy takes into account the updated approach to equality by the UK Government as outlined in the *Equality Act (2010)*, as well as the *General Duties of the Scottish Public Sector Equality Duty (2011)*, which requires the Trust to:

- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

The following are Protected Characteristics as defined by the Equality Act (2010):

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity (including Paternity)
- Race (colour, ethnic origin or national background)
- Religion or Belief (including non-belief)
- Sex/Gender
- Sexual Orientation

This policy outlines our commitment across all operations of the Trust with an internal and external focus. Internally we are creating an inclusive working environment where differences are valued and equality of opportunity is advanced. Externally our focus is on continuing to deliver a fair service to our supporters and visitors by meeting the changing needs of global diverse communities.

## **Equality Statement**

The Woodland Trust is fully committed to respect and fair treatment for everyone, eliminating discrimination and actively promoting equality of opportunity and delivering fairness to all.

## **Diversity**

The Woodland Trust values diversity and understands the benefits of a workplace that is inclusive of people from a range of backgrounds who bring together a breadth of experience, insight and knowledge to the work we do. There can be no equality of opportunity if diversity is not valued, harnessed and taken account of

## **Commitment to Equality**

The Equality & Diversity Inclusion Policy outlines the Trust's aims for promoting inclusive environments, which are free from discrimination for all employees, volunteers and anyone associated with the Trust (e.g. visitors, contractors and service providers). The Trust aims to ensure that equality is embedded into all its functions, operations and activities. Initiatives to support the embedding process are facilitated by the Head of HR.

## **Responsibilities and Commitment**

Each individual is responsible for their own behaviour and must accept the principle that there is equality of opportunity and fairness for all staff and anyone associated with the Trust (e.g. visitors, contractors and service providers).

Individuals must ensure that they do not support unfair behaviour by ignoring what is happening around them and must not incite or collude with unfair or unlawful discrimination. This includes using non-discriminatory language and being sensitive to the cultural differences in body language and behaviour.

Any employee of the Trust found to be responsible for inciting, perpetrating or colluding with discrimination or harassment may face disciplinary action.

All staff and anyone associated with the Trust, have a responsibility to adhere to this statement and apply it in their day to day work. The specific responsibilities in relation to this statement are as follows:

1. The Trust, as the employer, is ultimately responsible for ensuring that it fulfils its legal responsibilities for promoting equality and eliminating discrimination, and for making sure that the commitments within this statement are fulfilled, but also actively promotes diversity and inclusion in recruitment and management of all staff and volunteers.
2. The Head of HR is responsible for the implementation of this policy with respect to employees and also for implementing related policies and procedures. The Head of HR will also ensure that all employees receive appropriate equality and diversity inclusion training.
3. The Head of Engagement & Volunteering is responsible for the implementation of this policy with respect to volunteers and also for implementing related policies and procedures.
4. Heads of Department have a responsibility to raise the profile of the policy within their teams and ensure that all staff are fully aware of the commitments within this policy.

They also have a responsibility to promote equality of opportunity and to eliminate discrimination within departments.

5. All employees have a responsibility to promote equality and to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of a protected characteristic. Any act of discrimination or harassment by an employee or anyone associated with the Trust, may result in disciplinary action being taken.

### **Monitoring**

Monitoring will be essential to ensure that the Trust's policy is working effectively. In order to achieve this, the Trust will monitor annually and internally publish details of:

- the profile of the employee population across the 'protected characteristics' (transgender profiles will not be published)
- the number of complaints received regarding harassment and bullying and outcomes of any disciplinary meetings that have taken place in relation to a harassment or bullying complaint

The Trust guarantees that any information gathered for the purposes of monitoring will be used only for monitoring and to improve its equality performance and will be held and processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998).

### **Complaints of Discrimination or Harassment**

1. If an employee feels that they have been discriminated against, the complaint should be raised in accordance with the Trust's [Grievance Procedure](#)
2. If an employee feels that they are being bullied or harassed, the complaint should be raised in accordance with the Trust's [Anti-Harassment and Bullying at Work Policy](#)

Advice on the use of these procedures can be obtained from the HR Team.

### **Review**

A review of this policy will be conducted regularly and in event no less than every three years.

If you have any questions regarding the content of this statement or would like any further information, please contact the HR Team.