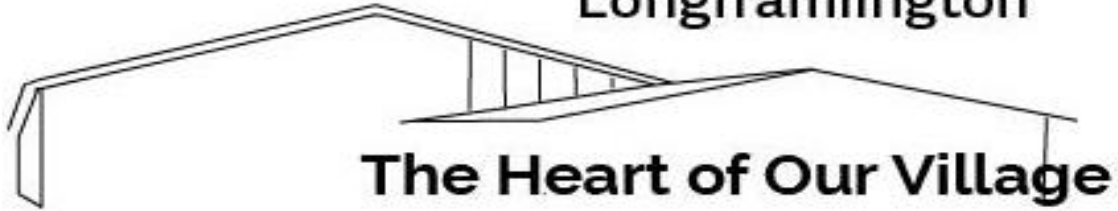


The Memorial Hall

Longframlington



The Heart of Our Village

Equal Opportunities Policy

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1 Statement on Equal Opportunities, Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

1.1 Our Statement on Equal Opportunities

The purpose of this policy statement is to set out clearly and fully the positive action that the Trustees intend to take to combat direct and indirect discrimination in the management of the Longframlington Memorial Hall (the Hall), its organisation, employment policy, relationships with other bodies, and the services it provides to the community, community organisations and individuals. This policy demonstrates that we will not tolerate behaviour that contradicts the letter or spirit of this equalities policy statement.

The Trustees understand that equality is about making sure people are treated fairly and given equal access to opportunities and resources. Equality is not about treating everyone in the same way. It is about treating everyone fairly and with respect, and it recognises that people from different backgrounds may have needs that are met in different ways. Our committee also values difference, and recognises the value that the different backgrounds, skills, outlooks and experiences of our committee members, volunteers, service users and other community organisations bring.

The Trustees acknowledge that the United Kingdom is diverse in culture, race, beliefs, and religion and believe that no individual or group of people should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation or identity, nationality, racial or national origins, cultural heritage, disability, marital status, social background or geographical location. We therefore understand that discrimination exists in society (whether protected by law or not) and acknowledge that members of these groups are often under-represented, exposed to prejudice and stereotyping, and suffer various disadvantages within our society.

1.2 Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

The Trustees are committed to providing equality of opportunity in all areas of our work by implementing and promoting equal opportunities in the activities, services and practices carried on at and in relation to the Hall. The Trustees believe discrimination prevents potential and ability from being realised in young people and others. Therefore, the Trustees will work to ensure that no person protected by current legislation is discriminated against unlawfully, including but not restricted to discrimination on the basis of:

- Race
- Colour
- Gender
- Sexual orientation or identity
- Ethnic or national origin
- Disability
- Partnership status or home responsibility
- HIV or AIDS status
- Age
- Political or religious belief
- Socio-economic background

- Refugee or asylum seeker status

The Trustees will also:

- Encourage use of the Hall by minority groups in the community where possible.
- Endeavour to ensure that those supported by its activities are representative of the local community.
- Promote equality of opportunity

As a provider of a service to the community, the Trustees accept the responsibility to promote equal opportunities and challenge discrimination wherever it occurs.

2 Our Responsibilities

1. The Trustees, acting by its Management Committee, have overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy. However, all volunteers and service users also have a duty as part of their involvement with the Hall to do everything they can to ensure that the policy works in practice. Those responsible for recruiting volunteers to work in the Hall and its projects are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of this Equal Opportunities Policy and adhere to it while working as volunteers.
2. The Trustees will bring to the attention of all volunteers and service users the existence of this policy to ensure that the policy is effective and that everyone is aware of it.
3. No one will be harassed, abused or intimidated on the ground that they belong to a vulnerable group. If any service user or volunteer feels that they have been, or are being discriminated against, in any way, they are entitled to pursue the matter with the committee. Incidents of harassment or complaints of discriminatory behaviour will be taken seriously. The Trustees will undertake investigations of any complaints quickly, impartially and thoroughly. Complaints or allegations of an unfounded or malicious nature will also be treated as serious.
4. Any person or group claiming a breach of this Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy must supply the details in writing to the Chairman of the Management Committee, who will place the matter on the Agenda for the next Management Committee Meeting, or if such meeting is scheduled more than one month from the date of complaint being received, shall convene a special meeting to consider the matter. The Management Committee, considering all the evidence presented, will decide by a majority vote whether a breach of the policy has occurred, giving their reasons if the claim is not upheld. The person or group making a claim of discrimination will be advised of the date and time of the meeting. In the event the claim is upheld, the Committee will correct the matter as soon as possible. It will monitor the status of the corrective action at each Committee meeting until the problem is resolved. The person or group making the claim will be notified as soon as the action is cleared.

Responsibilities

5. In addition to item 1 above, all Trustees, volunteers and users of the Hall will:
 - Carry out their activities within the spirit of this policy to ensure and promote equal opportunities.
 - Neither practice any form of discrimination nor use discriminatory language

- Draw to the attention of the Management Committee any suspected acts of discrimination.
- Not victimise anyone who has provided information about discrimination.

Disabled Access

6. The Trustees have endeavoured to ensure, as far as is practicable, premises used are fully accessible. Physical constraints on access for the disabled will, as far as is practicable, be removed or mitigated as far as is reasonably possible. We also recognise that the legislation applies to persons who are not apparently disabled or ill.

Age

7. The Trustees believe that people of all ages have skills experiences and ideas, which are equally valid, and have valid needs, expectations and aspirations.

Ethnic Minorities

8. The Trustees will be alert to any implications of its services and actions for potential unlawful discrimination and will challenge racism in any form and will encourage its users to do the same.

Gender and Sexual Orientation

9. Sexist policies, practices and attitudes (including policies, practices and attitudes which may relate to sexual orientation and gender re-assignment) will be challenged, and users will be encouraged to do the same.

Religion and Belief

10. The Trustees endorse the right of each individual to his or her own religious beliefs or the absence of a belief.

Use of Language

11. Volunteers and service users should avoid and challenge the use of language which, in any way, belittles anyone. Where the language used has a personal impact on others, every effort will be made to ensure the person concerned is made aware that their use of such language is unwelcome and/or offensive. Materials used or developed by the trustees will be judged in the light of the promotion of equal opportunities, those considered to be discriminatory will not be used.

Sexual Harassment

12. No Trustee, volunteer or user of the Hall should be subject to sexual harassment. This is interpreted as unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature including: verbal sexual abuse; physical contact; or repeated remarks which an individual finds offensive.

13. If it has been made clear to the person concerned that their behaviour is unwelcome and they persist with it, then the service user or volunteer who is the recipient of the behaviour will be entitled to make a formal complaint.

Monitoring and Review

The Policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Management Committee to ensure there is no disadvantage either, directly or indirectly. This monitoring will apply to the practices of volunteers, the Committee, and the provision of services and facilities at the Hall. It is the responsibility of every individual to eliminate discrimination and to ensure the practical application of this Policy.