

Equality & Diversity Policy

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Introduction

This policy applies to The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (HIWWT), Arcadian Ecology and Consulting, HIWWT Trading Limited and any other wholly owned subsidiary of the Trust Group.

The Trust is committed to ensuring that discrimination does not exist and encourages and values diversity within the organisation. The Trust treats all employees and those with whom it comes into contact with equally.

The Trust requires all employees, of whatever position or authority, to adhere to this general principle. Where a candidate, employee, volunteer or someone participating in the Trust's educational services, events or other activities has a disability, the Trust will take all reasonable measures to make adjustments so that the individual can be accommodated.

This statement has been produced in conformity with the Race Relations Act 1976, Sex Discrimination Act 1986, Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Equality Act 2010.

Purpose

Discrimination is specifically prohibited on the following grounds: sex, sexual orientation, marital status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, class, political or religious beliefs, HIV antibody status (including AIDS), disability, age or trade union membership status:

Unfair treatment or the perception of such including victimisation, harassment, bullying or violence (whether physical, verbal or visual) of an individual, are also prohibited.

The Trust commits itself to the immediate investigation of any claims of discrimination on the above grounds. Where it is found that discrimination has arisen, a requirement will be made to cease the practice, restitution for damage or loss will be considered, and the employee accused of discrimination will be subject to Trust disciplinary procedure. Unless assurances of future non-discriminatory actions are forthcoming, anyone committing a further, similar act may be dismissed.

The Trust recognises your right to belong to, or not to belong to, a trade union, and membership or non-membership of such a union will not be taken into account in any way during your service.

Principles

Recruitment

Any candidates will be assessed on merit. Policies, practices and procedures must ensure that at all stages of the recruitment process there is no discouragement and/or discrimination of candidates on the grounds stated above, or any other reason unrelated to the requirements of the job.

The Trust commits itself to the employment of disabled people whenever possible. Assistance will be given, wherever practical, to ensure that disabled employees are helped in their workplace, in gaining access to facilities on Trust premises and in progressing in their career.

Candidates who feel they may have been unfairly treated should contact the Chief Executive in the first instance. Complaints will be fully investigated in line with the Trust's Recruitment Procedure. This does not affect a candidate's statutory rights.

All job and person specifications and job advertisements should be free of criteria that may directly or indirectly discriminate against particular group.

All short-listing is carried out by not less than two people, one of whom should be the person to whom the post-holder reports or the department lead.

All short-listing criteria is objective and based solely on the knowledge skills and experience required for the post.

A record of the criteria used and candidate scores for short-listing purposes will be maintained and kept for a minimum of 6 months.

The interview panel will consist of more than one person, will normally be made up of two or three people; one of whom should be the person that the postholder will report to. Whenever possible, the panel should consist of at least one male and one female member of staff and include an impartial person; this should ideally be someone from HR or, if that is not possible, someone from another team.

Employment

The organisation recognises that the fair treatment of all employees beyond the recruitment process is an integral part of working relationships, policies, practices and procedures. These include the objective assessment of pay and benefits as well as access to training, development and opportunities for promotion.

All staff shall have equal access to opportunities for training and development where these relate to the individual's current and future role within the organisation and are agreed as part of the Personal Development Process.

Educational Services

The Trust provides a variety of opportunities for adults, young people and children to learn more about the environment. These include visits to the Trust's education centres, outreach services, courses for adults and accredited courses.

The Trust will endeavour to meet the diverse needs of learners in terms of provision of learning materials, the learning environment and student support

Organisation

The Council of Trustees, through the Chief Executive, will bear ultimate responsibility for ensuring compliance with this policy.

Effective reviews of the policy in action will be undertaken by the Chief Executive and Company Secretary on a regular basis. The Exec Team are responsible for monitoring the way in which they deliver services and ensuring that this is not discriminatory.

Each employee is responsible for ensuring that they do not discriminate against their fellow workers, volunteers, contractors and contacts of the Trust on the basis of their sex, sexual orientation, marital status, gender status, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, class, political or religious beliefs, HIV antibody status (including AIDS), disability, age or trade union membership status.

Arrangements

1. A copy of this Policy will be prominently displayed in all work premises occupied by the Trust.
2. A copy of the Policy will be issued to all staff.
3. A declaration of this policy will appear on all recruitment documentation and the full policy is available on our website.
4. Deliberate and intended discrimination (other than cases of positive action allowed under the Acts) will be a matter for the Trust's disciplinary procedure.
5. Records and procedures will monitor continuing compliance and awareness, and include a procedure whereby a complaint of discrimination can be lodged and investigated.

Across the Trust

The Trust is committed to promoting equal opportunities and diversity in all its activities.

Access, Participation and Development: All potential members, volunteers, supporters and learners have access to non-discriminatory publicity and individual information and advice which will enable them to meet individual needs and aspirations subject to the availability of suitable resources.

All staff shall receive appropriate training that will ensure they are conversant with and committed to the Trust's Equality & Diversity Policy.

Monitoring of Equal Opportunities

The Policy will be monitored and reported by using:

- Monitoring of statistics relating to
- recruitment and selection
 - staff development
 - course/event enquiry
 - attendance at events/courses
 - school participation
 - pay