

Equal Opportunities Policy

Version 1.1

Aims

The Friends of Hedgemead Park (HPF) is a membership-based community group that brings together volunteers to perform activities in Hedgemead Park. Such activities include gardening, litter picking, improving and maintaining park infrastructure, and general working parties. We also occasionally organise events which attract members of the community and local residents.

We accept that society consists of many diverse groups and individuals and this diversity is an asset to the community and must be celebrated. We recognise that certain groups and individuals are often discriminated against, and we are wholly opposed to this. We know that we have a moral and legal responsibility to promote equal opportunities in all our work.

The Friends of Hedgemead Park is committed to ensure equality, dignity and fairness in all aspects of our work. We strive to treat all people equally and with respect, irrespective of their age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, sex, sexual orientation, religion or beliefs, or socio-economic status.

Code of Practice

The park is laid out on sloping ground and has some access limitations for certain disabilities. The type of work our volunteers undertake (e.g. gardening) may not be suitable for some people. Within these limitations, the Friends of Hedgemead Park:

- Welcomes anyone who wishes to volunteer their time in support of the activities for which the group is presently engaged
- Within reason, will make special allowances to accommodate those with limited abilities (e.g. by tailoring the type of work or by 'buddying up' with another volunteer)
- Will give special attention and kindness to new volunteers who may lack confidence among strangers
- Will be open to new ideas that improve accessibility for volunteers
- Will bring to the attention of all volunteers and helpers the provisions of this Policy and its complaints procedure, to ensure effective implementation
- Will take whatever steps are necessary including, if appropriate, use of the disciplinary mechanisms laid out in the code of conduct, to enforce the Policy.

In addition, anyone connected to our organisation, whether a volunteer, helper, or event attendee, who considers that he/she has suffered from unequal treatment on any grounds may use this policy to bring it to our Committee's attention for action.

Our Committee shall have responsibility for the operation of the Policy. However, all volunteers and helpers have a duty to do everything they can to ensure that the Policy operates in practice.

Code of Conduct

- People will be treated with dignity and respect regardless of race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion or age.
- At all times people's feelings will be valued and respected. Language or humour that people find offensive will not be used, e.g. sexist or racist jokes or terminology that is deemed derogatory.
- No one will be harassed, abused, excluded or intimidated on the grounds of their race, sex, age, nationality, disability, religion or sexual orientation.

Dealing with Complaints

- Foul, insulting, abusive or racist remarks will not be tolerated from anyone associated with our organisation and behaviour of this type may lead to expulsion from the organisation. Incidents of harassment will be taken seriously. If the matter cannot be resolved by way of an acceptable apology and an undertaking that the offence will not be repeated, the following action will be taken:
 1. The person in question will be requested to attend a meeting of the full Committee to explain their actions
 2. In the case of a helper/volunteer, action may be taken as appropriate and, if deemed necessary, their involvement with the organisation may cease
 3. In a case involving a member of the organisation, membership to the organisation may be withdrawn.
- Any directly involved person has the right to appeal against a decision made by the management committee who will consider that appeal before a decision is made and that decision will be final.

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.

Signed:



Name:

Graham Groom

Position:

Chair

Date:

1st April 2022