



## Diversity and Equality Policy

### Our Aim

We want nature and wildlife to be cherished and valued by everyone. We want to make it easier for people from all backgrounds and communities to visit and contribute to their local nature reserves, local green spaces and living landscapes. We want our education work to reach young people from all backgrounds and communities to inspire the next generation.

As an employer we want to treat all staff, volunteers and job applicants fairly. We recognise that the fair treatment of all staff and volunteers extends beyond the recruitment process and is an integral part of working relationships, policies, practices and procedures. This includes recruitment, pay, terms and conditions, induction, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, opportunities for promotion and access to training.

### Diversity and Equality

We are committed to equality and diversity in all areas of our work. Striving for equality does not mean treating everyone the same; it means recognising people's differences and adapting the way we work in order to ensure everyone is given a fair and equal chance. Equality is about creating a fairer society where everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential. Diversity is about recognising and valuing difference in its broadest sense.

We believe that diversity will make our organisation more effective in achieving our ambition of an environment rich in wildlife, valued by all. We are committed to developing and maintaining an organisation in which differing ideas, abilities, backgrounds and needs are fostered and valued.

### Equalities Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 provides legal protection for people from discrimination in the workplace and wider society on the basis of the following protected characteristics;

- Age
- Disability
- Sex (gender)
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Race (ethnicity)
- Religion or belief

- Sexual orientation

Under Equality legislation it is unlawful to:

- Discriminate directly against anyone and treat them less favourably than others on the grounds of the protected characteristics.
- Discriminate against someone for reasons relating to their association with a person on the grounds of the protected characteristics.
- Discriminate indirectly against anyone by applying a criterion, provision or practice which disadvantages people with a protected characteristic unless the person applying the provision can justify it as proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
- Subject someone to harassment for reasons relating to the protected characteristics. This includes behaviour that an individual finds offensive on these grounds even if the behaviour is not directed at the individual.
- Victimise someone because they have made, intend to make, a complaint or allegation or has given evidence in relation to complaint of discrimination in line with the Equality Act.

## **Definitions**

### Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have, or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic

### Discrimination by Association

This occurs when there is direct discrimination against an individual who associates with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

### Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination can occur due to a rule, policy or working practice that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic.

## **Responsibility for Implementation**

Ultimate responsibility for implementing the policy lies with the Chief Executive, but all staff and volunteers have a responsibility to comply with this policy and promote a culture that values diversity and equality. Managers are responsible for taking all reasonable steps to prevent discrimination and harassment at work and for taking appropriate action if unacceptable behaviour occurs. Breaches of this policy may lead to formal action including disciplinary action.

## **Recruitment of staff**

BBOWT recognise the benefits of having a diverse workforce and ensures employees are treated fairly by ensuring:

- Job descriptions and person specifications do not have requirements that unnecessarily exclude applicants from applying
- Externally advertised posts will be aimed at reaching a wide section of the population within available resources
- Selection criteria and processes do not unlawfully discriminate
- Recruitment decisions are made in accordance to the criteria set for each post
- Applicants' special needs and requests for reasonable adjustments are properly considered

### **Induction**

All new members of staff will be made aware of this policy and their role in its implementation at induction.

### **Appraisal and Training**

All staff will have 1:1 meeting with their manager and an appraisal once a year,. This will give individuals an opportunity to identify training appropriate to their personal development needs and the requirements of the organisation with their manager. Training will be offered and approved on the basis of its merits and not on the basis of any assumptions or factors relating to an individual's background or protected characteristics.

### **Disciplinary and Grievance**

All staff and volunteers have a clear obligation not to discriminate and to report incidents of discrimination against any individual or group of individuals. The 'Dignity at Work' Policy outlines the process to follow if there are concerns about discrimination or harassment of any kind.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Equal Opportunities monitoring will be undertaken on the organisations activities including involvement through employment, volunteering, or participation in BBOWT governance structures. Information from this monitoring and evaluation will be used to identify areas for improvement or change.

Approved: April 2017  
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