



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Policy owner

Legislation and regulation

Formally endorsed by Board of Trustees

Last update October 2022

Next review June 2024

Sussex Green Living is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our volunteers and service users, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

Our aim is for all our volunteers and service users to be truly representative of society. We are committed to creating an inclusive environment where individual differences are valued and respected, and in which each volunteer, staff member and the public engaging with our charity can fulfil their potential, maximise their contribution to the project and are able to give their best.

Our policy's purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Outline our commitment to the principles of equality and diversity, and to supporting ethnic minorities, the LGBTQ+ community, people of all faiths and beliefs and people of all abilities.
2. Acknowledge that we all have protected characteristics, and the [Equality Act 2010](#) protects people against discrimination based on any of them. Sussex Green Living will not unlawfully discriminate any individual on any of the following protected characteristics:
 - Age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage or civil partnership
 - pregnancy and maternity
 - race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
 - religion or belief
 - sex
 - sexual orientation
3. Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in:

- terms and conditions of volunteer placements
- provision of services to service users
- dealing with service user complaints
- termination of voluntary agreements
- selection of individuals for volunteer placements, training or other developmental opportunities

Our commitments

Sussex Green Living commits to:

1. Encourage equality, diversity, and inclusion within Sussex Green Living.
2. Create an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all volunteers are recognised and valued.
3. Provide training for all volunteers about their rights and responsibilities to uphold our values on equality, diversity, and inclusion. Responsibilities include those of volunteers who will uphold the values of Sussex Green Living when volunteering to help the organisation provide equal opportunities, prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

During volunteer inductions, all parties will be made aware of their responsibilities and potential liabilities in relation to acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their role, against all others working or volunteering with Sussex Green Living, customers, suppliers and the public.

4. Take complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow volunteers, service users, visitors, the public and any others during the organisation's activities very seriously.

Appropriate and proportionate action will be taken by the Trustees of Sussex Green Living where an allegation is made.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

4. Make opportunities for training and development available to all staff and volunteers, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

5. Make decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act). <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

6. Review practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.

7. Monitor the make-up of the volunteer group regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

Agreement to follow this policy

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by the trustees. All volunteers will be provided with an electronic copy of this policy on their induction.

Adoption

This Policy was adopted on: [date]

Review

This Policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, but at least annually.

The date of the last review was: [date]

Note of changes made	Date changes made	Date policy statement approved by the Trustees
Approved by the Trustees		

Sussex Green Living, The White House, Coneyhurst, Nr Billingshurst, West Sussex, RH14 9DH
W: SussexGreenLiving.org.uk
Registered charity 1189569

Appendix 1. Further Support and resources

The links below include organisations, charities and think tanks that are dedicated to equality and diversity and offer online resources.

The [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) is the best place to find advice and guidance on legislation.

The [Equality Advisory Service](#) is a helpline and advice service that assists people on issues relating to equality and human rights.

[Stop Hate UK](#) works to challenge all forms of hate crime and discrimination.

The [Race Equality Foundation](#) promotes race equality in public services through a number of projects.

[The Runnymede Trust](#) is a race equality think tank that creates important resources and reports on race equality through research and network building.

[The Fawcett Society](#) is a national charity that produces reports and runs campaign for gender equality and women's rights.

[Rosa](#) is a national charity fund set up to support women and girls. It can offer advice and support and has a Justice and Equality fund.

[The Muslim Council of Britain](#) is an independent body that works with over 500 affiliated organisations, mosques, charities and schools.

The [Jewish Leadership Council](#) works with the major British Jewish organisations to work for the British Jewish community.

[Friends, Families and Travellers](#) is a national charity that works on behalf of gypsy, traveller and Roma communities. Find out more about the Council's [Gypsy and Traveller site allocations](#).

[Scope](#) is a national disability equality charity that provides advice and support as well as engagement programmes and national campaigns.

[Independent Lives](#) is a Worthing-based charity that works with disabled people, people with support needs and carers to help people manage their own care and support.

[Stonewall](#) is a national charity that supports the LGBT community.

[Switchboard](#) is a Brighton-based charity that offers support and information to the LGBTQ community. It runs a Rainbow Café for LGBTQ people with dementia or who are concerned about memory loss.

The [Gender Identity Clinic](#) is the UK's oldest gender clinic and accepts referrals from across the UK. Its website offers information and support as well as appointments.

The [Gender Identity Development Service](#) is a specialised clinic commissioned by NHS England for young people presenting with difficulties with their gender identity.