

Winchelsea New Hall Charity Number 235174

Equal Opportunities Statement of Intent of the Committee

This policy applies to users of the Winchelsea New Hall, Rectory Lane, Winchelsea TN36 4AA ("the Hall"), including its external areas and the car park adjoining. It is based on the Statement of Intent set out in Appendix B of Village Hall Information Sheet VHIS 42 produced by Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) dated February 2006.

Winchelsea New Hall Committee ("the Committee") acknowledges that the United Kingdom is diverse in culture, race, beliefs and religion and believes that no individual or group of people should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, age, colour, race, nationality, racial or national origins, cultural heritage, disability, marital status, social background, sexual orientation or geographical location.

The Committee acknowledges that members of these groups are often under-represented, exposed to prejudice and stereotyping, and suffer various disadvantages within our society.

The purpose of this statement is to set out clearly and fully the positive action that the Committee intends to take to combat direct and indirect discrimination in employment policy, management of the organisation, relationships with other bodies, and the services it provides to the community, community organisations and individuals.

The Committee is committed to providing equality of opportunity in all areas of its work. It aims to overcome discrimination on the grounds mentioned above.

The Equal Opportunities Policy will be implemented ensuring equality of provision in representation, service provision, appointment of staff and their conditions of service and access.

The Aims of the Committee

The Committee is committed to the equal opportunities policy set out in this document and will work to develop, improve and monitor it.

The Equal Opportunities Policy and Code of Practice

The Committee acknowledges the definitions of various groups of people who are vulnerable to discrimination as set out in the Equality Act 2010. It will support and implement the legislation and will work to ensure that no person protected by the legislation is discriminated against unlawfully, and that any positive obligations and duties are performed.

Committee's obligations

The Committee will:

- where reasonably practical, widen accessibility by removing barriers which make it difficult for people with disabilities to use the Hall;
- provide facilities for people with disabilities to enable them to participate in activities e.g. the installation of an induction loop;
- ensure that the design of publicity and information take account of the needs of people with disabilities e.g. language used, print size;
- deal with any complaints of discrimination promptly, impartially, thoroughly and confidentially;
- ensure all staff, hirers and committee members are aware of Hall's policy on equality;
- ensure that the Equal Opportunities Policy is monitored and reviewed annually;
- challenge racism in any form and encourage its users to do the same;
- challenge sexist policies, practices and attitudes (including policies, practices and attitudes which may relate to sexual orientation and gender re-assignment) and encourage users to do the same;
- endorse the right of each individual to his or her own religious belief or the absence of a belief; and
- encourage people from under-represented groups to attend and participate in the activities of the Hall.

Specific commitments

The committee has procured technical advice for the enhancement of the use of the Hall for those with a hearing impairment, with a view to bringing forward improvement works as a high priority this year.

The Code of Conduct

1. People will be treated with dignity and respect regardless of the group to which they belong.
2. People's feelings and views will be valued and respected. Language or humour that people find offensive will not be used or tolerated e.g. racist jokes or derogatory terminology.
3. No one will be harassed, abused or intimidated on the grounds that they belong to a vulnerable group. Incidents of harassment will be taken seriously and the committee will undertake investigations of any complaints quickly, impartially, thoroughly and confidentially.