

Equal Opportunities Policy

April 2015

West Silvertown Foundation recognises that Newham is a plural society, diverse in race, culture, creed and interest. This Equal Opportunities Policy is based on the belief that each individual person or group of people should be valued equally.

WSF aims

To be sensitive to the issues that face this inner city area relating to our work in community development, informal education, encouraging healthy living and providing facilities for arts, sports and leisure.

To provide services to all sections, groups and individuals within the West Silvertown community.

To target its services to those in greatest need or who suffer discrimination in any form.

To be identified strongly as an organisation that condemns any form of unfavourable treatment on the grounds of race, gender, religion or disability.

We recognise that we operate in an environment where unfair discrimination exists and creates inequality between individuals and groups of people. This discrimination can be direct or indirect and is unjustifiable.

We reject inequality of opportunity at all levels and in any area of our activities and will strive to eliminate the unfair discrimination that exists. This means discrimination, in particular, on account of ethnicity, nationality, disability, age, gender, religion or lifestyle.

It is our intention to ensure that unfair discrimination in the following areas is addressed and eliminated wherever possible:-

- Access to the benefits, resources, facilities and services we provide.
- Access to membership of our user groups, working parties, management groups and other similar structures while recognising that special needs groups and specific social groupings will use our facilities.
- Recruitment, selection, promotion and training of employed and volunteer staff.

We welcome anti-discriminatory legislation that has been enacted.

We particularly welcome:-

- The Equal Pay Act 1970
- The Equal Pay (Amendment) Regulations 1983
- The Sex Discrimination Acts 1975 & 1986
- The Race Relations Act 1976
- The Disabled Persons (Employment) Acts 1944 & 1958
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) Order & Exceptions (Amendments No. 2) Order 1986.

We see our EOP as building on and enhancing this current legislation. This will be implemented through our operational policies now detailed below.

The Foundation has been committed to the promotion of equal opportunities since its inception in 1995 and the original promoters therefore incorporated into its articles of association when it was first incorporated as a company the following provisions:-

1. Applications for membership of the Company shall be welcome from any individuals, corporate bodies or organisations regardless of any issues of race, creed, religion, culture, ethnic origin, sex or sexual orientation, marital status, physical disability, age and class and the Company shall not be entitled to withhold or reject membership on the grounds of any such issue.
2. The members of the Trust Board, in managing the business of the Company, shall have regard to the equal opportunities implications of the issues under their deliberation and in particular the extent to which equal opportunities might be furthered by their decisions but for the avoidance of doubt, shall not be bound to treat equal opportunities as the overriding considerations.

The Foundation, while acknowledging as a registered charity that the law requires charitable considerations to be paramount, has thus always been and continues to be committed to the elimination of discrimination in the furtherance of its charitable aims and, in pursuing its overall strategic thrust to build a sound sense of community in West Silvertown, aims to promote an environment where the diversity of its population is welcomed and valued and where everyone can live and work in harmony. Accordingly, in furtherance of this, the Foundation, will:-

- (i) seek to honour and respect the demographic make up of the area which it serves in the delivery of its charitable services;
- (ii) develop and maintain fair and effective policies and practices which ensure that no applicants for grants or other assistance or for the hire of the village hall are unfairly discriminated against or receive less favourable treatment than others on the above grounds;
- (iii) welcome into membership of the Foundation and onto the Board of Trustees any applicant or appointee irrespective of the issues referred to in the above extract from the articles of association;
- (iv) develop an “inclusive” culture that welcomes diversity among those whom it employs, whether directly, as agents or consultants or as volunteers, treating all with dignity and respect;
- (v) ensure that everyone in the service of the Foundation shows tolerance and respect to those with whom they relate in the discharge of their responsibilities;

(vi) raise consciousness of overt and hidden prejudice and discrimination and the damage they do in accordance with anti-discrimination legislation from time to time in force and develop and review policies and practices, guided by relevant codes of practice issued by relevant authorities and agencies;

(vii) deal with all incidents of prejudice and discrimination in an open, firm, fair and decisive manner;

(viii) not tolerate harassment or victimisation on any grounds;

(ix) make reasonable adjustments under the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act as needs arise to practices, working arrangements and premises;

(x) regularly monitor and assess policies and practices for any adverse impact.

The above policy applies without exception to:

(a) all members of the Foundation;

(b) all trustees however appointed;

(c) all those who work for or provide voluntary services on behalf of the Foundation;

and the Foundation expects all to be conversant with the principles and practices set out above and to accept responsibility for ensuring that they conduct themselves in line with them.