

FRIENDS OF RIDGE WOOD EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

INTRODUCTION AND AIMS OF THE POLICY

The Friends of Ridge Wood recognise and value people's differences and will assist them to use their talents to reach their full potential.

The organisation will do all it can to ensure it involves, trains and promotes people based on qualifications, experience and abilities for all roles within the organisation.

This policy is designed to ensure that the Friends of Ridge Wood comply with their obligations under equality legislation and demonstrates our commitment to treating people equally and fairly.

The Friends of Ridge Wood are unreservedly opposed to any form of discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (defined as Protected Characteristics).

The organisation aims to ensure that

- All volunteers / group members and potential volunteers are treated fairly and with respect at all stages of their involvement with the group.
- All volunteers / group members have the right to be free from harassment and bullying of any description, or any other form of unwanted behaviour. Such behaviour may come from other volunteers or by people (third parties) who are not members of the Friends of Ridge Wood (e.g. attendees at group events).
- All volunteers have an equal chance to contribute and to achieve their potential, irrespective of any defining feature that may give rise to unfair discrimination.
- All volunteers have the right to be free from discrimination because they associate with another person who possesses a Protected Characteristic or because others perceive that they have a particular Protected Characteristic, even if they do not.

SCOPE OF THE POLICY

The policy applies to volunteers, group members and those attending events run by the group.

RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the Chair to develop and lead the implementation of the equality and diversity policy.

Responsibility for approving the policy and monitoring that it is being followed rests with the executive committee.

Volunteers and members of the Friends of Ridge Wood have a duty to act within this policy, ensure it is followed and to draw attention to any suspected discriminatory acts or practices.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

All volunteers and group members will be involved in creating an equality environment and one that values diversity.

Communications

Communication of the policy to volunteers and group members will take place through discussion at group meetings and via the group website.

Working with partners

In selecting our partners we will consider their commitment to Equality and Diversity.

Users of our service

We will make our services accessible by: promoting our activities (such as workdays) widely and providing tasks and events suitable for volunteers / group members with a range of abilities including, where possible, those with disabilities. We will actively encourage new members from a range of backgrounds to join the group.

REPORTING DISCRIMINATION / POTENTIAL DISCRIMINATION

Volunteers / group members who feel that they have suffered any form of discrimination should raise the issue through the following means: approaching any member of the executive committee.

Volunteers / group members should also use this approach if they feel that they been the subject of harassment from someone who is not a member of the Friends of Ridge Wood. The Friends of Ridge Wood will not tolerate any harassment from third parties towards its volunteers and will take appropriate action to prevent it happening again.

If a volunteer/group member or attendee at a group event witnesses behaviour that they find offensive in relation to age, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, even if it is not directed at them they should also use this procedure.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be monitored to judge to what extent it is working and identify areas for improvement.

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Friends of Ridge Wood executive committee to ensure that it remains up to date and reflects the needs and practices of the organisation.

The policy may also be reviewed if legislation changes or if monitoring information suggests that policy or practices should be altered

Date adopted: 5th October 2015