

Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Policy

1. Introduction

Wimbledon Guild is committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion in everything we do as an employer and service provider.

We aim to value and serve all the community and we welcome diversity in our staff, volunteers and service users. All job applicants, volunteers, employees and workers (including agency workers), customers, service users and trustees are covered by this policy and it applies to all areas of employment and service delivery.

The terms equality, inclusion and diversity are at the heart of this policy:

- 'Equality' means ensuring everyone is equal in status, rights and has opportunities to fulfil their potential free from discrimination.
- 'Inclusion' means ensuring everyone feels comfortable to be themselves at work and feels the worth of their contribution.
- 'Diversity' means the celebration of individual differences both amongst the workforce and in our service provision.

Although our end goal is equality, where everyone is equal in status, rights and opportunities, we recognise that we need to provide resources and opportunities and services in accordance with a person's specific needs to reach the equal outcome- this is equity.

Everyone in our organisation has a responsibility for making Wimbledon Guild an inclusive environment where everyone feels welcome and can be themselves.

Wimbledon Guild accepts that in our society individuals and groups can be discriminated, harassed or victimised through the following **protected characteristics** within the Equality Act 2010, and that people will have more than one of these characteristics;

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marital Status
- Pregnancy or Maternity
- Disability
- Race, including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- Religion, belief, or lack of religion/belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

In addition, we recognise these characteristics are also influenced by a range of other factors such as caring responsibilities, class, culture, physical appearance, socio-economic status. As such, people have complex situations which combine to create obstacles which cannot be addressed just thinking about single characteristics. We aim to create an environment where all employees, volunteers and service users can reach their potential and are valued people as individuals with diverse opinions, cultures, lifestyles and circumstances.

2. Policy Statement

Wimbledon Guild's mission is to provide people in Merton with help and support in times of need. In order to achieve our mission we have set ourselves these strategic objectives:

- Reduce social isolation and loneliness
- Help people who are experiencing difficulties
- Enable older people to be active and healthy
- Create and sustain an environment which supports our mission

We are committed to ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion. They are crucial to achieving our objectives and our mission effectively.

This policy underpins our commitment and explains how we will promote diversity and equality in everything we do to provide people in Merton with help and support in times of need. Our policy aims to:

- Prevent discrimination, promote inclusion and celebrate diversity
- Ensure we are fair when we deal with people we work with, taking into account diversity of culture and background of our service users, staff, volunteers, customers, local community, partners, trustees
- Ensure Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is embedded in our work

To achieve these aims we summarise our work on addressing Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion in an EDI work plan under these three themes:

- Making EDI everyone's responsibility
- Employing a diverse team of volunteers and staff and developing a culture of inclusion
- Providing services that meet the diverse needs of people in Merton.

As a Service Provider, we will:

- Always treat every customer as an individual with fairness, dignity and respect, identifying any individual needs as early as possible so they can fully access our services or be supported to access other more appropriate services
- "Make our services accessible to all sections of the community and avoid exclusion of customers because of protected characteristics. We agree to make reasonable adjustments to ensure equity where feasible depending on our resources
- Ensure that equity of outcomes and diversity is integral to our service delivery policies, practices and procedures and eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Develop services of special relevance to individual sections of the community such as services for under-represented groups
- Provide clear information using a range of communication methods to meet individual customer requirements and communicate our commitment to inclusion
- Ensure our buildings and services are welcoming to people with particular requirements and ensure that we comply with legal obligations for making reasonable adjustments, so our services are accessible to disabled people

- Recruit, induct and train our staff and volunteers to ensure they implement this policy effectively and require them to ensure their behaviour is consistent with this policy, being mindful of equalities and diversity in their day to day work
- Encourage feedback to understand the experiences of our service users, staff and volunteers, identify areas that require change in order to deliver effectively to all who need it, and encourage service improvements
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or otherwise oppressive language or behaviour will not be tolerated from private service providers providing services on our behalf (e.g. self-employed workers), or from anyone using our premises.

As an Employer we will:

- Recruit retain and reward diverse, skilled, motivated staff and volunteers, ensuring that individuals are selected, promoted, and otherwise treated solely on the basis of their relevant aptitudes, skills and abilities.
- Ensure that equality and diversity is integral to our recruitment and employment policies, practices and procedures, that we have processes which create equitable outcomes and enable us to employ a diverse group of staff and volunteers reflecting our community and they comply with equalities legislation
- Train, support and appraise our staff, volunteers and trustees so they are equipped with the skills, behaviours and knowledge to understand and meet the needs of colleagues, volunteers and service users
- Create an inclusive workplace where all our employees and volunteers feel engaged, can contribute to our work on EDI and feel able to be themselves
- Ensure that no-one is treated less favourably on the basis of being a part-time worker or fixed term employee or due to a protected characteristic.
- Ensure that our EDI policy is circulated to any agencies responsible for our recruitment and a copy of the policy will be made available for all employees and made known to all applicants for employment.
Support and work with staff engagement groups to champion, inform and influence our work on EDI.

3. Monitoring

We will collect equalities information about our staff, volunteers, job applicants and service users to help us to:

- Collect, monitor and review data on a regular basis so we can review our progress in meeting equality objectives and in broadening our reach to those most in need across the borough of Merton
- Ensure we are treating people fairly
- Demonstrate compliance with legislation
- Identify areas where there are gaps in our services for specific groups within the local community or where we need to take steps to address issues identified

When we collect this information we will provide a full explanation of why we collect information and what we use it for. We will treat sensitive personal data confidentially and only for the purpose of ensuring equality, fairness and improving outcomes.

We will also keep policies and practices under review and amend if necessary, to ensure that no unfair or unlawful discrimination, intentional, unintentional, direct or indirect, overt or latent exists.

4. Responsibility

Our staff, volunteers and trustees are central to implementing this policy. This includes attending training, complying with our procedures, promoting equality and fair treatment in their work.

The overall implementation of this policy and progress on the EDI objectives in our Business Plan and our EDI workplan will be monitored by the Senior Management Team and Trustees.

<i>Approved by Trustee Board</i>	<i>15th July 2024</i>
Next Review Due	July 2026