



Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

1. Our Vision

1.1 The Malvern Hills and Commons are a stunning, unique and inspiring landscape that is enjoyed and respected by everyone in harmony with rich and flourishing wildlife, natural and cultural heritage.

2. Our Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

2.1 Everyone is welcome

2.2 We are an equal opportunities employer and actively support human rights and all equality legislation and promote diversity and inclusion throughout the Trust. Our ethos is to respect and value people's differences, and to help everyone achieve more at work as well as in their personal lives so that they feel proud of who they are and of the part they play in our success.

2.3 In delivering its vision, the Malvern Hills Trust (MHT) aspires to be an equitable, diverse and inclusive organisation with zero tolerance for discrimination. We believe that all decisions about people at work should be based on the individual's abilities, skills, performance and behaviour and our business requirements. With these values at its core, MHT will consciously and continuously improve how it approaches its work, ensuring no individual is discriminated against.

2.4 We therefore aim to ensure that the values of equality, diversity, and respect for all are embedded into everything that we do.

2.5 This policy statement applies to anyone acting on behalf of MHT, including staff, trustees, volunteers, and partner organisations, all of whom have a responsibility to comply with its requirements and promote fairness in the workplace and to ensure their language, behaviour and actions are consistent with its spirit and contents.

2.6 Any substantiated/significant form of discrimination, abuse or harassment will result in disciplinary action being taken, including dismissal for serious cases. The policy will also be drawn to the attention of subcontractors and visitors.

3. Defining equality, diversity and inclusion

3.1 Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) mean fair treatment and opportunities for all.

3.2 Equality means that individuals should be provided with the resources they need to have access to the same opportunities as the general population, eg equal job opportunities and fairness for employees and job applicants. In particular, it aims to remove prejudice and discrimination based on the following protected characteristics as defined under the Equality Act (2010):

- Age (or perceived age)
- Disability (past or present)
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership status
- Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Maternity, pregnancy or family leave

3.3 **Diversity** means recognising that everyone is different in a variety of visible and non-visible ways; for example, they might have different ages, religions, ethnicities, abilities, genders, etc. Importantly, it also means valuing those differences.

3.4 **Inclusion** concerns the active creation of a learning, working and social environment that is welcoming, which recognises and celebrates difference and is reflected in structures, practices and attitudes. An inclusive workplace means everyone feels valued at work. It lets all employees feel safe to:

- come up with different ideas;
- raise issues and suggestions to managers and trustees, knowing this is encouraged;
- try doing things differently from how they've been done before, with management and board approval.

4. Statement of policy

4.1 **Responsibilities** - we recognise our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and are committed to meeting them in full. In particular, we recognise that we must have due regard as part of our decision-making processes to the requirements of s149 of the Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Equality Duty), specifically, the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (see 3.2) and persons who do not share it.

4.2 **Culture** - we believe that a culture that embraces EDI will help us to ensure that everyone feels involved and included in our plans, programmes and activities. The MHT aims to:

- be a fair, diverse and inclusive place to work, which means we listen respectfully, to help us learn and understand different perspectives;
- represent all levels of society through our staff, board and volunteers;
- ensure our staff, trustees, volunteers and partners feel valued and respected;
- create an environment which respects and welcomes everyone and in which no form of bullying, harassment, disrespectful or discriminatory behaviour is tolerated by anyone towards anyone. This particularly applies in relation to the "protected characteristics"¹ named in the Equality Act 2010 (see para 3.2).

5. Values and behaviours

5.1 We endeavour to uphold the following values in all our work:

- **Public benefit** - we carry out our purposes for the public benefit; ie the interests of MHT's beneficiaries and the causes we work for are at the heart of everything we do;
- **Integrity** – MHT staff, trustees and volunteers uphold the highest level of institutional integrity and personal conduct at all times;
- **Openness** – staff, trustees, volunteers and the wider public can see and understand how we work, how we deal with problems when they arise and how we spend our funds.
- **Right to be safe** - Every person who volunteers with, works for or comes into contact with a charity is treated with dignity and respect, and feels that they are in a safe and supportive environment.

5.2 In accordance with best practice, as promoted by the [Committee for Standards in Public Life](#), our trustees are expected to sign up to and uphold a Code of Conduct, based on the Nolan Principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

6. Putting our equality, diversion and inclusion policy into practice

6.1 **‘Walking the talk’**. We recognise that an EDI Policy alone is not enough to ensure that these things are central to everything that we do. For the policy to be effective, we must all work to ensure:

- staff, trustees and volunteers feel valued and respected;
- different perspectives and experiences are celebrated and valued;
- people are treated fairly in all aspects of their work, including recruitment, training, development through career progression and volunteering;
- the working environment is free from bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, dignity and respect for all are promoted and decisions concerning staff are based on merit and in line with the Equality Act;
- MHT has a reputation as an exemplary place to work; and
- there is a positive work/life balance for all.

6.2 **Training** - we recognise that many people are unfamiliar with the ways in which discrimination and disadvantage affect people’s health, well-being and quality of life. We will therefore support people to develop equalities awareness and understanding, and expect staff, trustees and volunteers to participate in relevant training modules as required.

6.3 **Policy assessment** – we will assess any significant new or revised policies and procedures for their impact on EDI. Accordingly, we will:

- embed EDI into our development plans; and
- ensure our employment practices and procedures are consistent with the aims of this policy.

6.4 **Accessibility** - we are committed to:

- using accessible venues for events and meetings;
- using plain English and offering accessible communications, eg emails, letters, reports and publicity materials, in a suitable format as far as it is within our means to do so.

7. Review and Monitoring

7.1 MHT is committed to long-term action to embed lasting improvement in ED&I performance in relation to its work.

7.2 We recognise that it is important for us to review this policy regularly to ensure that it reflects up to date equality legislation and best practice. A review of our EDI Policy will be carried out on an annual basis as a minimum and any necessary actions taken.

8. Approval of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement

8.1 This policy has been agreed by our Board of Trustees. It will also be subject to agreement with any trade union which staff choose to join or to which they belong.

8.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with other MHT policies including the Trustees Code of Conduct

8.3 Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the CEO and our Board of Trustees.
