



LONG DISTANCE

LDWA

WALKERS ASSOCIATION

The Long Distance Walkers Association

Equality and Diversity Policy

Version Control

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V1.0

1.0 Statement of Principles

The Long Distance Walkers Association (LDWA) welcomes and supports the diversity of the community it serves, the volunteers and members it supports. LDWA's diversity is its strength and this is reflected in all its practices. The LDWA will do its best to integrate good equality practice in all that it says and does.

LDWA membership must reflect modern Britain in all its diversity. This brings different insights; creating a more sustainable membership model, making the LDWA more likely to subsist in the long term. The LDWA believes that opportunity for volunteers, members/potential members and freedom from discrimination are fundamental in creating a sustainable membership.

The LDWA will not discriminate on any grounds and acknowledges its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The NEC will continually review practices to ensure that they comply with the spirit as well as the letter of the law. Definitions of discrimination and harassment are listed in the Appendix.

The LDWA will ensure that all its volunteers and members demonstrate equality and diversity awareness in their actions and behaviour towards others.

Equality and diversity is essential to the LDWA and under no circumstances will the LDWA condone any unlawful discrimination. The LDWA will therefore take action against those who are found to be breaching this policy. All members who believe that the policy is being breached have the right to make a complaint. Such complaints will be investigated seriously and resolved in a timely manner.

No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.

2.0 Commitment to Equality & Diversity

The LDWA is committed to creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all its volunteers and members are recognised and valued.

The LDWA's volunteers and members can be assured of an environment in which their rights, dignity and individual worth are respected, and in particular that they are able to enjoy walking or their chosen sport without the threat of intimidation, victimisation, harassment or abuse.

All volunteer and members are entitled to an environment that promotes dignity and respect to all.

3.0 Responsibilities

The NEC has accountability for the implementation and oversight of the Equality and Diversity Policy.

All Chairpersons of local groups must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example and ensure this policy is applied in their local group. All volunteers and members are required to assist the LDWA to meet its commitment to equality, diversity, respect and inclusion.

As part of its commitment, The LDWA will ensure that all members of its National Executive Committee will undertake Equality and Diversity training.

4.0 Equality Areas: Protected Characteristics & Other Disadvantaged Groups

The Equality Act 2010 sets out groups that are protected from unlawful discrimination:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race and ethnicity
- Religion and belief and non-belief
- Sex (Gender)
- Sexual Orientation

The LDWA has widened the scope of this policy to extend outside of the law to include:

- *Socioeconomic Status*

The LDWA welcomes, celebrates and values the diversity of volunteers and members of all characteristics to ensure that all are treated fairly, reasonably and with dignity and respect.

5.0 Equality of Access: Volunteering

The LDWA welcomes all sections of the community to volunteer to achieve its vision as set out in LDWA Business Plans.

To ensure equality of access to volunteers, The LDWA will:

- Ensure that all voluntary roles reflect our commitment to equality and diversity.
- Ensure that everyone involved in volunteering assessment processes is familiar with The LDWA Equality and Diversity policy.
- Ensure that our commitments to Equality and Diversity is reflected in the volunteering policy / strategy.
- Ensure that communications encourage ways to support candidates prior to and during the volunteer assessment process.

Regularly review voluntary roles so that they do not discriminate against potential volunteers.

6.0 Monitoring & Management Information

The National Executive Committee (NEC) will monitor equality and diversity across the membership and feedback from its members to inform future decision making and planning.

The NEC will monitor publicity materials for the promotion of equality and diversity. We will ensure that our publicity materials are free from stereotypes and are positive about diversity and differences.

7.0 Complaints

Volunteers and members have the right to expect the highest standards of care. Anybody who wishes to make a complaint about discrimination, harassment or bullying should follow the grievance policy.

No volunteer or member will be victimized for bringing a complaint under this policy. However, where a complaint is made maliciously and/or on knowingly false information, the complainant may be subject to appropriate formal proceedings. **The LDWA will act against those breaching our strategy and policies.**

Appendix 1

Under the Equality Act 2010, individuals are protected from discrimination 'on grounds of' a protected characteristic¹. This means that individuals will be protected if they have a characteristic, are assumed to have it, associate with someone who has it or with someone who is assumed to have it.

Forms of discrimination and discriminatory behaviour include the following:

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination can be described as less favourable treatment on the grounds of one of the protected characteristics.

Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied to an individual or group that would put persons of a particular characteristic at a particular disadvantage compared with other persons.

Discrimination arising from disability

When a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and this unfavourable treatment cannot be justified, this is unlawful. This type of discrimination only relates to disability.

Harassment

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct relating to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or which creates an intimidating or hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

Victimisation

It is unlawful to treat a person less favourably because he or she has made allegations or brought proceedings under the anti-discrimination legislation, or because they have helped another person to do so. To do so would constitute victimisation.

Bullying

Bullying is defined as a form of personal harassment involving the misuse of power, influence or position to persistently criticise, humiliate or undermine an individual.

¹ The exception to this is pregnancy and maternity, which does not include protection by association or assumption – a woman is only protected from discrimination on grounds of her own pregnancy.