



**Abbey Cwmhir  
Heritage Trust**

*Ymddiriedolaet  
Trefladaeth  
Abaty Cwmhir*

## Equal Opportunities Policy

### 1. Policy Purpose

This policy covers any and all aspects of our activities, how we treat those who work for and with us and how we recruit or engage others to join that community.

We do not tolerate discrimination or harassment in any part of Abbey Cwmhir Heritage Trust's activities.

We are fully committed to promoting the equal opportunities of all who work with us.

### 2. Policy Details

#### 2.1 What does this policy cover?

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| 2.1.1. | This policy covers, but is not limited to, the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• your working conditions</li><li>• our recruitment processes (for the purpose of this policy this includes volunteers and Trustees)</li><li>• our procedures for addressing grievances and disciplinary matters</li><li>• how we end individual relationships with the Trust</li><li>• how visitors and suppliers are treated</li></ul> |
| 2.1.2. | It also means that we will ensure, as far as possible: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• full access for everyone to benefit from opportunities with the Trust</li><li>• that all relevant decisions are made on the basis of objective criteria</li></ul>   |

#### 2.2. Who does it apply to?

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| 2.2.1. | All Trustees, members, volunteers and associates of the Abbey Cwmhir Heritage Trust. |
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#### 2.3. What is discrimination?

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| 2.3.1. | Under UK Employment Law, there are a number of characteristics relevant to an individual who is covered by the policy that must not unfairly be considered (if accounted for at all) in decisions relating to any aspect of their working life.  |
| 2.3.2. | These characteristics are called 'protected characteristics' and they are listed immediately below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Age</li><li>• Disability</li><li>• Gender reassignment</li><li>• Marital or Civil Partnership status</li><li>• Pregnancy or maternity</li><li>• Race (which includes colour and ethnic/national origin)</li><li>• Religion or belief</li><li>• Sex</li></ul> |

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual orientation</li> </ul>
2.3.3.	Trustees and volunteers, although not paid by the Trust are for the purpose of this policy, considered as employees and decisions are made about an individual on the basis (whether wholly or partially), of any of these protected characteristics, it is almost inevitable that unlawful discrimination will have taken place.
2.3.4.	<p>The sorts of actions that would fall into this category of unlawful and prohibited initiatives, include (but aren't limited to) those set out below. These actions need not be intended or directly committed by someone (indirect responsibility may be sufficient for someone to have unlawfully discriminated) and an omission or failure to do something may be just as culpable as a positive action. We will not tolerate this practice by anyone within our organisation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Direct discrimination</b> when someone with a protected characteristic is treated less favourably than somebody else has or would have been in identical circumstances. An example of this would be where an individual is rejected on grounds of their racial background. Further examples would be where a pregnant employee, or one with young children, is treated unfairly.</li> <li>• <b>Indirect discrimination</b> When a group of people with one of the protected characteristics is disadvantaged by a provision, criterion or practice that is applied to all staff (unless the treatment may be justified for a good operational reason). Examples of this would be insisting, without good reason, that colleagues are present at unreasonable times, (which indirectly discriminates anyone with child-care responsibilities, women in particular)</li> <li>• <b>Harassment</b> Covers hostile, humiliating, degrading, intimidating or similarly offensive treatment or conditions to which an individual with one or more protected characteristics is subjected. Any such actions deprive an individual of their dignity and violate them. We draw no distinction between actions that may be labelled as 'joking' and not intended to cause offence, and those that may have been more direct and premeditated in their delivery. So, for example, in line with legal definitions, reflecting general standards of decency, we will regard any of the following as falling within the definition of harassment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Making lewd comments and/or displaying pornographic material</li> <li>b. Calling someone unkind, derogatory or otherwise unwelcome names or nickname</li> <li>c. Making insensitive jokes, whether about someone directly, or the content of which would be evidently offensive to anyone with a protected characteristic</li> <li>d. Excluding colleagues and/or making them feel that they have no option but to exclude themselves</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Victimisation</b> This has a particular meaning under UK employment law and it is narrower than an ordinary dictionary definition, covering the situation only where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A worker has complained of discrimination (or harassment)</li> <li>b. Has supported a fellow worker in making a complaint about these concerns, and has then suffered reprisals from others, including those responsible for that worker's employment prospects and working conditions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Other discriminatory actions that are also prohibited</b> The UK's employment law also identifies other actions that can be unlawful under the equal opportunities legislation. Examples of these include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Failing to make reasonable adjustments to minimise certain disadvantages suffered by a disabled colleague</li> <li>b. Instructing another person (or applying pressure on them) to discriminate</li> <li>c. Knowingly assisting somebody else when they carry out a discriminatory act</li> <li>d. Discriminating against somebody believed to have a protected characteristic, whether or not they actually do, or because they associate with a third party who does.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### 3. Our Procedures and Approach to this Policy

#### 3.1 Duties and responsibilities

3.1.1.	Overall responsibility for the effective implementation and operation of the policy lies with Abbey Cwmhir Heritage Trust's Trustees. All are expected to lead by example, and attain and maintain appropriate standards of behaviour.
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3.1.2.	Everyone who works/volunteers with the Abbey Cwmhir Heritage Trust is responsible for ensuring that this policy works to prevent the activities that it prohibits from taking place within our activities.
3.1.3.	As we are a values-led organisation, this goes beyond the legal obligations that each one of us has, (and regardless of our job descriptions or how long any of us has worked with the Trust).
3.1.4.	A breach of these legal obligations alone will mean that any individual can be found personally liable for unlawful discrimination where they have breached this policy and they will face disciplinary action and potentially other legal actions.
3.1.5.	We therefore expect you to take personal responsibility for adhering to this policy's aims and commitments and for promptly and appropriately drawing any breaches of them to our attention.

### **3.2. Recruitment, promotions and identifying people for other opportunities (*in this instance recruitment refers to recruiting new Trustees and Volunteers*)**

3.2.1.	In any selection process that we use within our Trust we will apply a rigorous, objective selection process using non-discriminatory criteria, as far as possible.
3.2.2.	Both direct and indirect age discrimination may be justified and lawful, if the less favourable treatment, criterion or practice amounts to a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
3.2.3.	A legitimate aim must relate to a genuine need on our part that is not related to age discrimination itself. For example, a legitimate aim potentially justifying age discrimination might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The health, welfare and safety of the individual concerned (including the protection of young people or older workers)</li> <li>● Particular training requirements</li> </ul>
3.2.4.	All role adverts and opportunity announcements must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discussed with and signed off by the Trustees, one of whose responsibilities is to ensure that any advert is compliant with this policy</li> <li>● Located and/or circulated so as to reach as wide and diverse a pool of interested candidates as possible, and</li> <li>● Worded so as to encourage, as far as possible and reasonable, applications from individuals of all characteristics to apply or, at the very least, so as not to discourage any individuals with protected characteristics from applying.</li> </ul>
3.2.5.	There may be circumstances where some indication of required skills (that do discriminate) is justified and where self- deselection is inevitable.
3.2.6.	If you are involved in interviewing and or any other part of our recruitment process, you must never ask about their health, or whether they have a disability.
3.2.7.	You can ask someone if they have any particular needs or requirements with which you can assist if they are coming to meet you for an interview.
3.2.8.	During interviews or other interactions with volunteers you must not ask anything that might infer a bias against any person with one or more protected characteristics.

### **3.3. Monitoring**

3.3.1.	During any recruitment and onboarding process, we may ask questions that include some protected characteristics to help us monitor our diversity and how we are succeeding in our commitment to promote equal opportunities. Including health or disability questions in equal opportunities monitoring exercises is acceptable, but the data gathered must not be used for any employment-related decisions, such as whether to offer a role or opportunity to a particular candidate.
3.3.2.	We may also record and analyse information about equal opportunities more generally within the workplace. We do this so that we can make sure this policy operates successfully. The data helps us to refine it, review the composition of our workforce, and to promote workplace equality.

3.3.3.	When you join the Trust, you give us consent to gather and process this data about you.
<b>3.4. Handling breaches and enforcement</b>	
3.4.1.	We take all allegations of breach and any breaches that we discover very seriously. All allegations and/or suspicions of breach will therefore be thoroughly investigated.
3.4.2.	If you wish to complain or raise an allegation of breach (or potential breach) under the policy, you should contact a Trustee as soon as possible. If you want to take formal action, you will need to follow our Feedback & Complaints Policy.
3.4.3.	Anyone raising a concern about matters covered by this policy, who does so in good faith, will have our full support and cooperation in getting to the bottom of what has happened and any appropriate action that needs to follow on from that examination. This will be the case regardless of our conclusions and including where we determine that the allegation was mistakenly made. There will never be any reprisals against those who genuinely have, or consider that they have, valid grounds to bring concerns about discrimination to our attention.

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