

**Equality and Diversity Policy**

**Statement of Intent:**

Lane End Farm Trust (LEFT) recognises that unlawful and unfair discrimination against different groups of people is widespread in our society and that we have a responsibility to take action against, and take all reasonable steps to prevent, unlawful and unfair discrimination.

In all our work we will aim to eliminate unlawful and unfair discrimination and lack of opportunity on the grounds of gender, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy and maternity, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, HIV status, employment status, criminal record, class or place of residence.

We will actively strive towards promoting equal rights and opportunities for the people and organisations with which we work.

LEFT will use its influence to change attitudes and policies, which reinforce discrimination.

We will aim to create an environment in our activities, our meetings, our conferences and our office in which all individuals can feel welcome.

All staff, trustees and members of LEFT must operate within this equal and diversity policy. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action and/or ineligibility for membership.

We believe that Equality and Diversity are an integral part of all the activities of LEFT, and that our effectiveness can be measured by the fulfilment of the principles outlined in this statement.

**Implementation of policy:**

We are committed to making the above statement effective in all spheres of our work and structure.

All activities and projects maintained, developed and co-ordinated by LEFT will accord with our commitment to equality and diversity and this policy.

LEFT will actively support community groups wishing to develop their own equality and diversity policies.

LEFT reserves the right to refuse to work with organisations or individuals we consider to be unlawfully or unfairly discriminating or oppressive.

All our activities and procedures will be reviewed and monitored regularly to ensure they conform to this policy and that any problems that arise are remedied.

**Employment of staff and volunteers:**

* We will ensure that all our recruitment and selection procedures and our employment policies do not discriminate unlawfully or unfairly against potential employees and employees on the grounds of gender, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, criminal record or age.
* Only job-related criteria will be used in our recruitment and selection processes. Staff appointments will be monitored to ensure no unlawful or unfair discrimination is occurring at the point of selection.
* LEFT recognises that apart from job qualifications and experience, other knowledge and experience may be equally valid in the appointment of a worker or volunteer and that this is particularly relevant in the case of people from groups that experience discrimination.
* LEFT will operate disciplinary and grievance procedures, which all staff and volunteers will have a copy of. All staff will have a copy of the terms of their employment.
* We actively operate a ‘Positive about Disabled People’ policy, and will encourage applications from disabled people and make a commitment to interviewing all disabled applicants who meet the basic person specification for the job.

**The Management Committee:**

Monitoring of the Equality and Diversity Policy and its implementation is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees, who will review the policy regularly.

The Board of Trustees should reflect a fair balance and representation of local communities and should endeavour to redress any imbalance of under-represented groups in its committees and working groups.

**Access to Equality and Diversity Policy:**

Copies of our policy will be freely available to LEFT staff, members and any other interested parties.

**Procedures:**

All policy papers and reports of LEFT will take due consideration of equality and diversity issues relating to that paper or report.

Any person elected to the Board of LEFT will have to confirm that they understand and agree with the Equality and Diversity policy.

An annual review of the Equality and Diversity policy will take place.

**Procedures:**

**Principles**

Just and fair treatment for any organisation of individual accused of being unlawfully or unfairly discriminating or oppressive.

Any accused organisation or individual has the right to appeal against a decision and to be heard by a LEFT sub-committee not involved in the original decision.

All stages of the procedure will be confidential.

If any member of staff, trustee or member of LEFT considers an organisation or individual to be guilty of discriminating or oppressive behaviour, s/he should put the accusation in writing to the CEO of LEFT who will bring the matter to the Board.

If on considering the accusation the Board of LEFT decides there is a case to be answered, it will set up a sub-committee of three members to deal with the matter. This sub-committee may meet with an accused individual (accompanied by a friend if s/he wishes) or representative/s (no more than three) of an accused organisation. It may also receive written evidence. It may meet with the accuser/s. It will make a decision and inform the accused organisation or individual and the Board of its decision.

Any appeal against this decision will be considered by the Board of LEFT without the involvement of those members who were members of the sub-committee.

An appeal decision by the Board of LEFT shall be final.

**Definitions within the policy:**

**Unlawful discrimination:** Policy or practice that clearly contravenes the terms of the following acts and any subsequent amendments to these acts:

* Equality Act 2010
* Civil Partnerships Act 2004;
* Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (amended 2005);
* Employment Equality (Age) Regulation 2006;
* Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulation 2003;
* Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005;
* Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulation 2003;
* Equal Pay Act 1970 (amended 1983);
* Equality Act 2006
* Gender Recognition Act 2004;
* Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974;
* Race Relations Act 1976 (amended 2000 and 2003);
* Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006
* Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (amended 1986);
* Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999

**Unfair discrimination:** Policy or practice which does not directly contravene current legislation as defined above, but which nevertheless is likely to directly or indirectly exclude some members of the community from fully participating in activities, from receiving services or from gaining employment.

**Oppressive:** Policy or practice that is specifically and knowingly designed to exclude, offend, denigrate, or cause conflict and division within the community.

**All reasonable steps:** Action that is taken within the organizational capabilities of LEFT to rectify an acknowledged or perceived issue or problem. Unreasonable demands will be defined as ones which are likely to place unrealistic or disproportionate demands on the finances, resources and staff of LEFT, or which are likely to jeopardise the rights of others.

**Signature:** Alison Fox  **Date:** 2nd January 2020

**Print Name:** Alison Fox  **Position in Company:** Business Manager