



Policy Number	Review Date	Next Review Date
9	March 2026	March 2027

Equal Opportunities and Fair Treatment Policy

Purpose of this Policy

Little Village is committed to ensuring equal opportunities and fair treatment for everyone who works with us, volunteers with us or accesses our services. This policy sets out how we promote equity, prevent discrimination and create an environment where people are treated fairly, with dignity, respect and kindness.

This policy applies to all Trustees, employees, volunteers, service users, visitors, partners and anyone connected with Little Village.

Our Commitment

Our commitment to equal opportunities and fair treatment is grounded in our four values: Love, Solidarity, Thriving, and Sustainability. We are inclusive and respectful, living out our values in the way we treat each other. We work to ensure that all individuals can participate, contribute and thrive without experiencing discrimination, exclusion or harm.

Little Village is committed to achieving equality and equity of access for all. We believe that no child, individual, or family should be excluded from our activities on the grounds of:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins);
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

This aligns with the Little Village's responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and relevant UK legislation, including updates flowing from the Employment Rights Act 2025 reforms. It reinforces the requirement to prevent discrimination, harassment, and unfair practices in any professional interaction or organisational activity.

We also recognise that unfair treatment may arise from factors not covered by legislation such as class, socio-economic background, family status, means or ability.

Fair treatment means that Little Village is committed to fair treatment in employment, volunteering and in access to our events, support and services. We recognise that discrimination comes in many forms and will work to prevent unlawful discrimination including direct, indirect, by perception or association or 3rd party harassment. In line with our values, we are committed to being a thriving, caring and welcoming place for all through:

- Working proactively to tackle social exclusion, eliminate discrimination and disadvantage and create equity for all our stakeholders.
- Actively promoting equality of opportunity and making reasonable adjustments.
- Ensuring all people are treated with dignity and respect, valuing the diversity of all.
- Working in collaboration with the community to deliver events, support and services that are accessible, appropriate and delivered fairly to all.
- Being resolute in our work to ensure the diversity of our trustees, employees, volunteers and any governing bodies reflects, as far as possible, the diversity of the community we support.
- Encouraging traditionally disadvantaged sections of the community to participate in policy decisions about, and the management of the services provided.
- Challenging all forms of unequal, offensive and unlawful treatment.
- Providing equitable resource allocation.

This policy helps us to put this commitment into practice. The only way to achieve these aims is with the full commitment and support of all those involved with Little Village.

Doing all in our power to ensure that our environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect is an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities and diversity and inclusion in employment. We have a separate anti-bullying and harassment policy to help us achieve this.

Recruitment

We aspire to have a diverse workforce because, in our view, diversity enables better organisational outcomes.

We ensure our recruitment practices are fair, transparent and inclusive by:

- Anonymising applications before shortlisting
- Offering reasonable adjustments
- Providing alternative application formats
- Basing decisions on clear and relevant criteria.

Diversity within our trustees, employees and volunteers supports us to better understand the needs of a diverse range of stakeholders. We may therefore take positive action to improve diversity amongst our trustees, employees or volunteers where legally appropriate.

Employment

We embrace diversity of community as an essential part of Little Village and will strive to avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including: training and development, pay and benefits, requests for leave, flexible working, grievances, discipline, dismissal, redundancy and redeployment. We will base decisions on objective criteria.

We will consider any possible indirectly discriminatory effect of our working practices, including the number of hours to be worked, the times at which these are to be worked and the place at which work is to be done.

We will always look to accommodate requests for variations to working practices. We will only refuse these requests if we have good reasons for doing so, that are unrelated to any protected characteristic.

We will comply with our obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations and will also make reasonable adjustments to our working practices with the aim as far as possible, to remove or reduce any substantial disadvantage faced by a staff member or job applicant, resulting in equitable outcomes for all.

Training

We will provide training and guidance to trustees and employees in equal opportunities, fair treatment, diversity, equity and inclusion. We are committed to providing support and information to anyone involved in recruitment or other decision-making processes where fair treatment issues are likely to arise to help them understand their responsibilities, avoid the risk of discrimination and promote equitable outcomes.

We will regularly review and assess our approach to equal opportunities, fair treatment diversity, equity and inclusion, with a focus on continual improvement and achieving best practice in our approach.

Volunteering

Little Village is committed to ensuring all volunteers have a positive volunteer experience. We aim to ensure that all who wish to work or volunteer within our charity should have an equal chance to do so. We aim to create effective partnerships within all parts of our community and provide services that are accessible according to needs.

Support, Services, Suppliers and Visitors

We will not discriminate unlawfully against anyone accessing our support or services, seeking to use the support or services we provide or providing services to us or visiting our organisation.

Your Responsibilities

Everyone associated with Little Village is responsible for upholding equal opportunities and fair treatment.

All trustees, employees and volunteers are made aware and will be given a copy of this policy as part of their induction. This policy is publicly available on our website.

Raising Concerns

If you experience or witness behaviour which feels discriminatory, unfair or exclusionary, you are encouraged to raise it through:

- Our Complaints Procedure (for volunteers, service users and visitors)
- Our Grievance Procedure (for employees)

It is possible that others are not aware or have not considered the impact of their actions, have not understood our policy, or possibly our practices need to be updated.

We take any complaint seriously and you will not be penalised for raising a complaint or grievance, even if it is not upheld, unless it is both untrue and made in bad faith.

If you witness what you believe to be discrimination you should report this to someone in authority, your line manager, a member of the Volunteer or People teams or the Chief Executive as soon as possible.

Individuals can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the organisation for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence. Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against others are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

Monitoring and Reviewing

This policy will be monitored periodically to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance to changes in the law. Effective record keeping and monitoring, and acting on information gathered, are essential in order to measure effectiveness and plan progress. The Board of Trustees will review this policy annually.

Any personal data provided by job applicants, employees, trustees or volunteers for monitoring purposes will be used only for these purposes and in accordance with our Data Protection Policy. We will consider and take any appropriate action to address any problems that may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.

Approved:

Sophie Livingstone, CEO, Little Village

Reviewers:

Andrey Ashwell, Director of People

Review Date: March 2026