**Equality and Diversity Policy for Gerrards Cross Community Association GXCA**

Effective Date: 11 February 2025

**1. Introduction**

Gerrards Cross Community Association GXCA ("the Charity", "we", "our") is committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion within the community, ensuring that everyone, regardless of their background or circumstances, has the opportunity to participate in and benefit from our services and activities. We believe that diversity enriches our work, and we are committed to fostering a culture where all individuals feel respected, valued, and supported.

This Equality and Diversity Policy sets out the Charity’s approach to ensuring that equality and diversity are at the heart of our work. It applies to all members, staff, trustees, volunteers, and service users.

**2. Our Commitment to Equality and Diversity**

At Gerrards Cross Community Association, we are committed to:

* Promoting equality of opportunity and valuing diversity across all areas of our work.
* Ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity, fairness, and respect.
* Preventing discrimination, harassment, or victimisation of any kind.
* Providing an environment in which all individuals are able to contribute to their fullest potential, regardless of their age, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, belief, marital status, pregnancy or maternity, gender identity, socioeconomic status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

We actively seek to ensure that our services, activities, and employment practices are accessible to all and that no one is excluded or disadvantaged based on any of the above characteristics.

**3. Legal Framework**

This policy is informed by and in compliance with relevant UK legislation, including:

* **The Equality Act 2010**, which protects individuals from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
* **The Human Rights Act 1998**, which guarantees the right to non-discrimination and equality before the law.
* **The Public Sector Equality Duty** (Equality Act 2010), which requires public authorities and organisations carrying out public functions to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people.

**4. What We Aim to Achieve**

Our objectives under this policy include:

* **Eliminating Discrimination**: We are committed to ensuring that no person is treated unfairly or disadvantaged due to their personal characteristics.
* **Promoting Equal Opportunities**: We strive to ensure that all individuals have equal access to our services, activities, and events, and that everyone is given the opportunity to reach their full potential.
* **Encouraging Participation and Inclusion**: We will actively encourage participation from underrepresented or marginalised groups, providing a welcoming and supportive environment.
* **Raising Awareness**: We aim to raise awareness of equality and diversity issues within the community, ensuring that our staff, volunteers, and members understand the importance of inclusivity and respect.

**5. Scope of the Policy**

This policy applies to:

* **Staff**: All employees of Gerrards Cross Community Association, whether paid or unpaid.
* **Volunteers & Trustees**: Individuals who offer their time to support the Charity in any capacity.
* **Members**: All individuals who are registered members of the Charity or who participate in its activities or events.
* **Service Users**: All individuals accessing services or support offered by the Charity.

We expect all individuals working with us to abide by the principles of this policy and to behave in a way that promotes equality and inclusion.

**6. Responsibilities**

* **Board of Trustees**: The Trustees are responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented effectively across the organisation. They will review the policy regularly and ensure that adequate resources are in place to meet our equality and diversity objectives.
* **Designated Equality and Diversity Officer**: Members of the Executive Committee are responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy, ensuring compliance, and providing guidance on any related issues.
* **Staff and Volunteers**: All staff and volunteers are responsible for:
  + Treating others with respect and dignity at all times.
  + Promoting an inclusive and supportive environment.
  + Reporting any concerns or incidents of discrimination, harassment, or inequality.
* **Service Users and Members**: We encourage all individuals who use our services or participate in our activities to uphold the values of equality and respect. We also encourage feedback to ensure that our services are meeting the needs of all community members.

**7. Anti-Discrimination and Harassment**

We have a zero-tolerance policy towards any form of discrimination, harassment, bullying, or victimisation. This includes, but is not limited to, discrimination based on:

* Age
* Disability
* Gender identity
* Marriage or civil partnership status
* Pregnancy or maternity
* Race (including ethnicity and nationality)
* Religion or belief
* Sex
* Sexual orientation
* Socioeconomic status

Any incidents of discrimination or harassment will be taken seriously and dealt with according to our **Complaints and Grievance Procedure**.

**8. Accessibility**

We are committed to making our services, events, and activities accessible to everyone, regardless of their background or personal circumstances. We will:

* Provide reasonable adjustments for individuals with disabilities to ensure they can fully participate.
* Ensure that our physical venues are accessible to individuals with mobility issues.
* Make efforts to provide information in alternative formats (e.g., large print, audio, or translation) upon request.
* Review and improve accessibility on an ongoing basis to remove any barriers to participation.

**9. Monitoring and Evaluation**

To ensure that this policy is being effectively implemented, we will:

* Regularly monitor and assess the diversity of those involved in our activities and services.
* Gather feedback from staff, volunteers, members, and service users about their experiences and perceptions of our equality and diversity practices.
* Use this feedback to make improvements and address any issues or gaps.

We will also regularly review our progress against equality and diversity goals and take corrective action when necessary.

**10. Complaints and Grievances**

If you feel that you have experienced or witnessed discrimination, harassment, or unfair treatment, or if you believe we have failed to meet our equality and diversity objectives, please follow our **Complaints and Grievance Procedure**. We take all concerns seriously and will respond promptly.

**11. Review of the Policy**

This Equality and Diversity Policy will be reviewed at least every two years, or more frequently if necessary, to ensure that it remains relevant and effective. The review process will take into account feedback from staff, volunteers, service users, and external best practice.

**12. Contact Information**

If you have any questions or require further information about this policy, please contact:

* **Designated Equality and Diversity Officer**: Members of Executive Committee
* **Email**: office@gxca.org.uk

By following this Equality and Diversity Policy, we aim to create a charity that is inclusive, welcoming, and supportive of everyone. We are committed to making a positive impact in our community and ensuring that all individuals feel respected, valued, and able to participate fully in all our activities and services.

**Thank you for supporting Gerrards Cross Community Association and for being a part of our diverse, inclusive community!**