



Country Trust

Where children
learn and grow

Equal Opportunities Policy

The Country Trust is a registered charity no. 1122103 and is a company limited by guarantee registered in England no. 6436266
Registered address and head office: Moulsham Mill, Parkway, Chelmsford, CM2 7PX

Policy Ref	EO
Date Created	Dec 2018
CT Version	3
Review Date	Dec 2020



THE COUNTRY TRUST EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

The aim of this policy is to communicate the commitment of the Board of Trustees, Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team to the promotion of equality of opportunity in The Country Trust. We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. We recognise that the provision of equal opportunities in the workplace is not only good management practice, it also makes sound business sense. Our ultimate aim is that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society and each employee feels respected and able to give of their best.

It is the aim of the Company to ensure that no employee (whether part-time, full-time or temporary), volunteer, self-employed person or job applicant receives less favourable facilities or treatment (either directly or indirectly) in recruitment or employment on the grounds of the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.

This policy and the associated arrangements shall operate in accordance with statutory requirements. In addition, full account will be taken of any guidance or Codes of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, any Government Departments, and any other statutory bodies.



OUR COMMITMENT

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff are recognised and valued.
- Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff.
- To promote equality in the workplace which we believe is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- We will review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.
- Breaches of our equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- This policy is fully supported by senior management.
- The policy will be monitored and reviewed every two years

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANAGEMENT

Responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation and operation of the arrangements will rest with the Chief Executive. Managers will ensure that they and their staff operate within this policy and arrangements, and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to avoid discrimination. Each manager will ensure that:

- all their staff are aware of the policy and the arrangements, and the reasons for the policy;
- grievances concerning discrimination are dealt with properly, fairly and as quickly as possible;
- proper records are maintained.

Central Office will be responsible for monitoring the operation of the policy in respect of employees and job applicants, including volunteering.

The system may involve the routine collection as far as possible and analysis of information on employees (including volunteers) by gender, marital status, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion / beliefs. Information regarding the number of staff who declare themselves as disabled may also be maintained.

The information collected for monitoring purposes will be treated as confidential and it will not be used for any other purpose. It will be held in accordance with data protection regulations.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF

Responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests with all staff and the attitudes of staff are crucial to the successful operation of fair employment practices. In particular, all members of staff should:

- comply with the policy and arrangements;
- not discriminate in their day to day activities or induce others to do so;



- not victimise, harass or intimidate other staff or groups who have, or are perceived to have one of the protected characteristics.
- ensure no individual is discriminated against or harassed because of their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.
- inform their manager if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.

THIRD PARTIES

Third-party harassment occurs where a Country Trust employee (including volunteers and self-employed contractors) is harassed, and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties such as hosts, suppliers or beneficiaries. The Country Trust will not tolerate such actions against its staff, and the employee concerned should inform their manager / supervisor at once that this has occurred. The Country Trust will fully investigate and take all reasonable steps to ensure such harassment does not happen again.

RELATED POLICIES AND ARRANGEMENTS

All employment policies and arrangements have a bearing on equality of opportunity. The Country Trust's policies will be reviewed regularly, and any discriminatory elements removed.

RIGHTS OF DISABLED PEOPLE

The Country Trust attaches particular importance to the needs of disabled people.

Under the terms of this policy, the Country Trust will:

- make reasonable adjustment to maintain the services of an employee* who becomes disabled, for example, training, provision of special equipment, reduced working hours. (NB: managers are expected to seek advice on the availability of advice and guidance from external agencies to maintain disabled people in employment);
- include disabled people in training/development programmes;
- give full and proper consideration to disabled people who apply for jobs, having regard to making reasonable adjustments for their particular aptitudes and abilities to allow them to be able to do the job.

*Employed staff only

EQUALITY TRAINING

Equality information is included in our induction programme.



GRIEVANCES/DISCIPLINE

Employees have a right to pursue a complaint concerning discrimination or victimisation via the Company Grievance policy and procedures.

Discrimination and victimisation will be treated as disciplinary offences and they will be dealt with under the Company Disciplinary Procedure.

POLICY DATE

This policy was agreed and disseminated on December 12th 2018 and will be reviewed every two years or when there are substantial organisational changes.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees of The Country Trust

A Bufton McCoy
Chair of the Trustees