

# Equal opportunities policy

**Version 1.0**

**Pending adoption by Board Meeting January 2023**

## Policy statement

Stourbridge Community Land Trust (SCLT) will treat all people fairly and with respect, recognising and responding to their individuality.

## Policy outline

SCLT has a long standing commitment to fairness and social justice and one of its core values is to celebrate diversity and promote equality of opportunity for all. SCLT is committed to developing an organisational culture which values people as individuals, recognising the contribution each person can make.

We aim to eliminate discrimination, promote equality and good relations between people and protect the human rights of everyone our services impact upon. This encompasses our approach to community cohesion, reflecting the importance of intercultural services in the diverse areas of our operation. We recognise the particular needs of different groups and individuals and aim to ensure that these are met, whilst also understanding that not all members of a particular group will have the same needs and aspirations.

We will:

- Focus on the needs of each individual in providing employment, homes and services;
- Listen to and understand our members, asking people what help, support and/or guidance they feel they need to access our services;
- Encourage our members to treat each other with respect to build the trust, care and commitment necessary to deliver an excellent service to all;
- Monitor and demonstrate how successful we are in acting fairly, making a difference and in meeting the needs of our local communities;
- Always aim to exceed the requirements of the law and our regulators, as well as adopting a person centred approach;

- Be an excellent organisation, demonstrating our accountability and promoting fairness for all.

We realise that effective equality and diversity activity requires resources. We have a dedicated central budget for our fairness activities including:

- Core fairness training programme;
- Recruitment and selection training for Board members.

Our targets are based on measurable outcomes across the following key areas of work:

- **Governance and Corporate culture:** ensuring that fairness is embedded across the organisation and led by the Board;
- **Access and member care:** ensuring fair access to and exit from services, housing and employment;
- **Co-operative Living Policy:** ensuring a culture of Co-operative Living in which members can live free from discrimination and harassment from other members, and any breaches of this policy met with swift and firm action;
- **Partnership working:** ensuring that partners and contractors share our ethos of fairness and can demonstrate its application;
- **Hate crime and harassment including domestic abuse:** ensuring that our responses are effective and seriously challenge bullying, harassment and anti discriminatory practice;
- **Meeting legislative and regulatory requirements:** ensuring that we comply with equality legislation in employment and services and the requirements of all of our regulators;
- **Employment and training:** ensuring that we recruit, train, promote and discipline colleagues fairly and deal with discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying at work as a disciplinary offence;

The essential elements of monitoring and target setting to improve include:

- Assessments of member satisfaction with what is being done, making sure that methods of doing so take into account the access needs of all;
- Access to and exit from services (lettings, evictions and move on), complaints, aids and adaptations provided, incidents of hate crime and harassment and domestic abuse;
- Recruitment, selection, training, promotion, discipline and dismissal of colleagues;
- Annual review reports to the Board who have overall responsibility for ensuring that the Strategy delivers continuous improvement;

- Systems that identify performance issues and monitor the progress of actions to address them, including impact assessments of policies, services and activities;

The minimum monitoring that will take place will be against the six diversity strands which for clarity are:

- **Gender** including trans and non-binary
- **Race**
- **Disability**
- **Sexual Orientation**
- **Age**
- **Religion and Belief**

Progress is reviewed by the Board and General Meeting . The policy is communicated to all members at General Meetings.

## **Service standards**

Our Service Standards are set out in the member Service Standard on Fairness