Moulsecoomb Forest Garden and Wildlife Project
Equal Opportunities and Inclusion Policy

This policy helps to make sure everyone involved in the project has equal access and is treated equally, in every way.

Aim

The Moulsecoomb Forest Garden and Wildlife Project is committed to promoting equal opportunities for everyone involved in the project and in the local community, to promoting social inclusion in our work; and to addressing any form of negative discrimination.

These are the principles we work to:

1. **Reaching everyone:** We will continue to establish close links with disadvantaged groups in our areas of operation, to understand their needs and work together. We will actively promote the use of our services by disadvantaged groups using a variety of channels to raise awareness of the project's work and opportunities.
2. **Treating people fairly:** We will ensure equal opportunity, treatment and access to services for everyone through our activities. To this end, no individual or group using the Project site and services will be treated less favourably than any other individual or group because of their gender, sexual orientation, marital status, responsibilities for dependants, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or cultural beliefs, trade union or political activity, age or disability.
3. **Taking action if something goes wrong:** If anyone feels that they have been discriminated against, harassed or treated unfairly they should report initially to the project manager, who can bring in the trustees and other specialist help if required.
4. **Open to doing things better:** If anyone feels that equal opportunities could be improved, they can make suggestions for improvement to the project manager.
5. **Our composition:** Our commitment to equality will be reflected in the composition and operation of our project, including employees, contractors, volunteers, user groups and committees.
6. **Legal compliance:** Our actions are guided by the Equalities Act 2010*.

The Equalities Act 2010 and voluntary and community groups

The Equalities Act 2010 protects people from discrimination, harassment and victimisation. It makes it illegal for community groups with more than 25 members to exclude, discriminate against, harass or victimise people because they have particular characteristics.

"Protected characteristics" are characteristics that make people more likely to face discrimination, harassment or victimisation. Under the Equalities Act it is illegal to discriminate against, harass or victimise people because of:

- age
- being or becoming a transsexual person
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or having a child
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- sex or sexual orientation

In particular, it is unlawful to exclude people from membership of your group or from using services you provide because of their protected characteristic.

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The policies, practices and procedures of the Moulsecoomb Forest Garden and Wildlife Project will be regularly reviewed to ensure that they do not discriminate directly or indirectly against individuals or groups. Changes to policies, practises and procedures will be made where it is found that such discrimination is, or has been, taking place.

Our policy will be included in induction and briefings, and the policy will be available online or in printed form. All staff, volunteers, trustees and the management committee are expected to take account of our commitment to equal opportunities in their work.

Signed by Project Manager and Trustees

Julie Shergold
Treasurer

Duncan Graham Cameron
Company Secretary

Susie Howells
Chair

Warren Carter
Project Manager

Date **August 2021**

References: The Resource Centre
http://www.resourcecentre.org.uk/information/equal-opportunities-policy/#samplepolicies