



FOREWORD

Policy Statement

Shepway Harness Club endorses the principle of sports equality and will strive to ensure that everyone who wishes to be involved in horse driving trials, whether as athlete, groom, spectator, judge, steward, coach, official or any other participants within Shepway Harness Club:

- has a genuine and equal opportunity to participate to the full extent of their own ambitions and abilities, without regard to their age, sex, gender identity, disability, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, religion, race, ethnic origin, nationality or sexual orientation (Referred to as 'Protected Characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010); and
- can be assured of an environment in which their rights, dignity and individual worth are respected, and in particular that they are able to enjoy their sport without the threat of intimidation, victimisation, harassment or abuse.

Legal obligations

Shepway Harness Club is committed to avoid and eliminate unfair discrimination of any kind in horse driving trials and will under no circumstances condone unlawful discriminatory practices. The organisation takes a zero-tolerance approach to harassment. Examples of the relevant legislation and the behaviours in question are given in the Appendix.

Positive action

The principle of Sports Equality goes further than simply complying with legislation. It entails taking positive steps to counteract the effects of physical or cultural barriers – whether real or perceived – that restrict the opportunity for all sections of the community to participate equally and fully.

Shepway Harness Club will therefore seek to institute, support or contribute to appropriate measures or initiatives that enable access to horse driving trials and participation in associated activities by people from any group that is under-represented in the sport or has difficulty accessing it.

Implementation

The following steps will be taken to publicise this policy and promote sports equality in horse driving trials:-

- A copy of this document will be published on the Shepway Harness Club website.
- The Chair of Shepway Harness Club will take overall responsibility for ensuring that the policy is observed.
- The committee of Shepway Harness Club will appoint a director/committee member with specific responsibility for equality and diversity issues who will report to the committee at each meeting of committee.
- The committee of Shepway Harness Club will take full account of the policy in arriving at all decisions in relation to activities of Shepway Harness Club.

- Shepway Harness Club will collaborate fully with any surveys or other initiatives designed to assess the level of participation of different sections of the community in horse driving trials and will take account of the findings in developing measures to promote and enhance sports equality in horse driving trials.
- Shepway Harness Club will provide access to training for all of its committee members to raise awareness of both collective and individual responsibilities. All coaches and trainers used by Shepway Harness Club will be equality and diversity trained.
- It will be a condition of membership of Shepway Harness Club that all members
 - commit to act in accordance with this policy; and
 - support such measures and initiatives that Shepway Harness Club may institute or take part in to advance the aims of this policy.

Responsibility, Monitoring and Evaluation

The committee of Shepway Harness Club will be responsible for ensuring the implementation of this policy.

The committee will review all Shepway Harness Club activities and initiatives against the aims of the policy on an ongoing basis, and the committee member with responsibility for equality and diversity issues will report formally on this issue at each meeting of the committee.

The committee of Shepway Harness Club or the committee member with responsibility for equality and diversity, will review any measures or initiatives that Shepway Harness Club may institute or take part in to promote and enhance sports equality in our sport, and will report its findings formally to the AGM.

The committee of Shepway Harness Club will review the policy itself at intervals of no more than three years (or when necessary due to changes in legislation) and will report with recommendations to the AGM.

Complaints and compliance

Shepway Harness Club regards all of the forms of discriminatory behaviour, including (but not limited to) behaviour described in the Appendix as unacceptable, and is concerned to ensure that individuals feel able to raise any bona fide grievance or complaint related to such behaviour without fear of being penalised for doing so.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any, member or volunteer who violates the Shepway Harness Club Equality Policy.

Any person who believes that he or she has been treated in a way that they consider to be in breach of this policy by any member of Shepway Harness Club, should first complain to that person. If this does not resolve the matter, or in the case of allegations of discriminatory behaviour against Shepway Harness Club itself, the person may raise the matter by writing directly to the Chair. Contact details are available through the website.

The Chair will investigate the complaint personally or appoint a disciplinary committee in accordance with the procedure set out in the Shepway Harness Club rule book to do so. The investigation will be conducted impartially, confidentially, and without avoidable delay. Any person or organisation against whom a complaint has been made will be informed of what is alleged and given the opportunity to present their side of the matter.

The outcome of the investigation will be notified to the parties in writing and reported to the Shepway Harness Club committee.

Where the violation of the Equality Policy by way of harassment, victimisation or discrimination amount to a criminal offence, the appropriate authority will be informed.

In the event that an individual or organisation associated with Shepway Harness Club is subject to allegations of unlawful discrimination in a court or tribunal, the council of Shepway Harness Club will co-operate fully with any investigation carried out by the relevant lawful authorities and, subject to the outcome, may consider taking action as above in relation to the matter concerned.

Adopted by the committee of **Shepway Harness Club** on 21/02/2023.

APPENDIX – Relevant legislation and forms of unacceptable discrimination

Legal rights

Discrimination has been legally defined through a series of legislative acts, including the Race Relations Act, the Sex Discrimination Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and the Equality Act 2006.

In April 2010, the Equality Act 2010 received Royal Assent. The Equality Act 2010 is a new law which harmonises where possible, and in some cases extends, protection from discrimination. It applies throughout the UK and came into force in October 2010.

Discrimination refers to unfavourable treatment on the basis of particular characteristics, which are known as the 'protected characteristics'. Under the Equality Act 2010, the protected characteristics are defined as age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status (employment only), pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality), religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

Under the Equality Act 2010, individuals are protected from discrimination 'on grounds of' a protected characteristic¹. This means that individuals will be protected if they have a characteristic, are assumed to have it, associate with someone who has it or with someone who is assumed to have it.

Forms of discrimination and discriminatory behaviour include the following:

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination can be described as less favourable treatment on the grounds of one of the protected characteristics.

Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination occurs when a provision, criterion or practice is applied to an individual or group that would put persons of particular characteristics at a particular disadvantage compared with other persons.

Discrimination arising from disability

When a disabled person is treated unfavourably because of something connected with their disability and this unfavourable treatment cannot be justified, this is unlawful. This type of discrimination only relates to disability.

¹ The exception to this is pregnancy and maternity, which does not include protection by association or assumption – a woman is only protected from discrimination on grounds of her own pregnancy.

Harassment

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct relating to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or which creates an intimidating or hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

Victimisation

It is unlawful to treat a person less favourably because he or she has made allegations or brought proceedings under the anti-discrimination legislation, or because they have helped another person to do so. To do so would constitute victimisation.

Bullying

Bullying is defined as a form of personal harassment involving the misuse of power, influence or position to persistently criticise, humiliate or undermine an individual.