

# **The Seven Towers Benefice**

*The Parishes of Down Hatherley, Norton, The Leigh with Evington, Sandhurst and Staverton with Boddington*

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

The Seven Towers Benefice celebrates and welcomes rather than tolerates diversity in our organisation and in society as a whole. Thus, it is therefore committed to proactive equal opportunities and welcomes all people, with a positive view of age, caring responsibilities, gender, disability, racial/ethnic origin, religion, health-related status, sexual orientation or socio-economic background, as Employees, Committee Members and Volunteers.

However, where there is a genuine occupational reason for a specific post it may require the post-holder to be a practising Christian. All staff must understand and express sympathy with the Christian ethos of the Benefice Council and PCC's and do nothing that would be seen to undermine it.

- We will not tolerate any breaches of this Policy and will endeavour to ensure that all its activities and other policies are in accordance with this policy.
- We recognise and accept our obligations under current discrimination legislation.
- We accept that there is a need to understand what discrimination is, admit it exists and be able to recognise it in all its forms. We accept that it is possible for individuals, policies and structures to be unintentionally discriminatory or offensive and also that such attitudes and structures must be challenged.
- We will proactively promote an environment that treats all people with dignity and respect and provides equality of opportunity to people of any gender, age, religious beliefs, caring responsibilities, racial/ethnic origins, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic status. We expect our employees and volunteers to be sensitive to our Christian ethos.
- We aim to nurture an environment of equality of opportunity in employment. Interviews for employment and voluntary work will take place in accordance with Equal Opportunities practice. Internal and external job applications and appointments and staff retention will be monitored.
- In order to make physical environments and services accessible to all, we will strive to make relevant adaptations and provide appropriate resources.
- We aim to ensure that all our staff and volunteers understand and are committed to the promotion of Equal Opportunities from the time of appointment. We will ensure employees understand their responsibilities under legislation and government guidelines, by providing on-going training and development opportunities. We will undertake Equal Opportunities monitoring. This will assist in measuring the effectiveness of the Policy as well as identify training needs, gaps in service and review of practices.
- We recognise the need to have support mechanisms for those who have been or may be subjected to discrimination or harassment and will endeavour to provide such services.
- We will avoid entering into contracts, partnerships or agreements with individuals, groups or organisations when it is aware that any of their policies or practices contravenes the Equal Opportunities policy of the organization.

### **Responsibilities of the ORGANISATION**

The Seven Towers Benefice accepts responsibility under legislation for the actions of employees and responsibility for any practices, policies or procedures that may be found to be unintentionally discriminatory and will strive to ensure that this is eradicated. It welcomes the input of staff, volunteers, committee members and users to bring this to our attention.