Reg charity no 1187423

The Rural Coffee Caravan (RCC)
Policy: Equal Opportunities & Diversity

Introduction:

- The Rural Coffee Caravan's (RCC) aim is to be inclusive. It not only acknowledges differences between people but also seeks positive ways to harness these differences in order to enhance creativity and productivity.
- The RCC actively promotes a culture of equality and diversity and emphasises this commitment at every opportunity, particularly within its strategic practices and employment policies.
- The RCC monitors and reviews its response to diversities and ensures that its employees and members are regularly reminded of the charity's commitment to equality and diversity.

Equality Act 2010 and Protected Characteristics:

The RCC is committed to meeting its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. The Act protects people from unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation in employment and in the provision of services.
The nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:

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

Types of Discrimination and Unlawful Treatment:

- **Direct discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic, including because they are perceived to have a protected characteristic or are associated with someone who has one.
- **Indirect discrimination:** applying a provision, criterion, practice, rule or policy to everyone which puts people sharing a protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage and cannot be objectively justified.
- **Harassment:** unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

- **Victimisation:** subjecting someone to a detriment because they have made, supported or are believed to have made or supported a complaint or other protected act under the Equality Act 2010.

Managing Equality & Diversity:
Internal

- The RCC aims to reflect its commitment to diversity throughout all its employment systems and policies. In particular, the principle of equal opportunities will apply to recruitment and selection, promotion, transfer, training and development, benefits, facilities, redundancy selection and all other terms and conditions of employment, including the implementation of its disciplinary and grievance procedures.
- The RCC aims, therefore, to ensure that no job applicant, employee or volunteer receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, disability, race, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, age, trade union membership or non-membership, nor is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.
- Selection criteria and procedures will be reviewed to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities.
- The RCC respects and values all its employees and volunteers who will receive equal opportunity and, where appropriate and possible, training to ensure career progression within the organisation.

Training and Awareness

- All staff and volunteers will be made aware of this policy as part of their induction and will receive equality, diversity and inclusion training appropriate to their role and responsibilities.
- Refresher training will be provided periodically and when there are significant changes to legislation, guidance, this policy or relevant RCC procedures.
- Managers and others responsible for recruitment, supervision, service delivery or handling concerns will receive additional guidance or training appropriate to those duties.
- The RCC will maintain appropriate records of training and will review training needs and effectiveness through supervision, feedback, monitoring and policy review.

External

- The RCC recognises that we live in a diverse society and believes that this positively enriches the community and that nobody should suffer disadvantage by reason of social exclusion.
- The RCC seeks to make its services accessible to all individuals and/or organisations.

Raising Concerns and Complaints:

The RCC encourages anyone who believes they have experienced or witnessed discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other conduct contrary to this policy to raise the matter promptly. Concerns will be taken seriously, handled sensitively and, so far as reasonably possible, confidentially. No person will be treated unfavourably for raising a concern in good faith or supporting another person's complaint.

- **Service users and members of the public** should raise concerns through the RCC's Complaints Policy and procedure.
- **Employees** should raise concerns through the RCC's Grievance Policy and procedure. Where appropriate, concerns may also be addressed under the Disciplinary Policy.

- **Volunteers** should raise concerns with their usual RCC contact or manager; the matter will be handled under the Grievance Policy or other relevant procedure, as appropriate.

Anyone who is unsure which procedure applies should contact the RCC's management team for guidance. Complaints will be considered fairly and without unreasonable delay, and appropriate action will be taken where concerns are upheld.

Monitoring:

- The RCC sees monitoring and evaluation as a valuable management tool and will monitor its response to this policy.
- The RCC will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the organisation's working procedures and practices with regard to Equal Opportunities & Diversity management.
- The RCC will regularly review this policy and procedures in accordance with changes in legislation and guidance.

Approved by:

Approved by:

Kate Axon -Trustee
Date: 27.10.2026

Policy review date: November 2027

This policy is displayed on RCC website and review dates should also be updated on the on-live version.