

The Inland Waterways Association - Equality, diversity and inclusion policy

The Inland Waterways Association is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our employees and volunteers, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our employees and volunteers to be truly representative of all sections of society and our beneficiaries and customers, and for each employee and volunteer to feel respected and able to give their best.

The organisation - in providing goods and/or services and/or facilities - is also committed against unlawful discrimination of customers or the public.

Our policy's purpose

This policy's purpose is to:

1. Provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time
2. Not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:
 - age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage and civil partnership
 - pregnancy and maternity
 - race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
 - religion or belief
 - sex
 - sexual orientation
3. Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in:
 - pay and benefits
 - terms and conditions of employment
 - dealing with grievances and discipline
 - dismissal
 - redundancy
 - leave for parents
 - requests for flexible working
 - selection for employment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

Our commitments

The organisation commits to:

1. Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense
2. Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all employees and volunteers are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes training trustees, managers and all other employees and volunteers about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include employees and volunteers conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment and volunteering opportunities, and to prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

All employees and volunteers should understand that they, as well as IWA, can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their work, against fellow employees, customers, suppliers and the public.

3. Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, volunteers, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under IWA's grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

4. Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff and volunteers, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
5. Make decisions concerning employees and volunteers being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
6. Review employment and volunteer engagement practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and to also update them and the policy to take account of

changes in the law.

7. Monitor the make-up of the workforce (comprising trustees, employees, committee members and other volunteers) regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

Approved by trustees on 11th April 2026