**Digby War Memorial Hall**

**Equal Opportunities Policy**

**Statement on Equal Opportunities**

The Digby War Memorial Hall Management Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Management Committee) is committed to implementing and upholding equal opportunities in its activities, events and practice. It realises that discrimination exists in society (whether protected by law or not), and believes that this prevents potential and ability from being realised in young people and others.

The Management Committee will not tolerate discrimination on the basis of:

1. Race

2. Colour

3. Gender

4. Sexual orientation or identity

5. Ethnic or national origin

6. Disability

7. Partnership status or home responsibility

8. HIV or AIDS status

9. Age

10. Political or religious belief

11. Trade union activity

12. Socio-economic background

13. Refugee or asylum seeker status

As a voluntary committee and in its capacity as managing the War Memorial Hall on behalf of the community, the Management Committee accepts the responsibility to uphold equal opportunities and challenge discrimination wherever it occurs. This document sets out the main consequences of this commitment and the action to be taken in order to achieve equal opportunities.

The Management Committee members, jointly and severally recognise that some users of the Hall may, because of their past or present distress or illness, say or do things which would otherwise be unacceptable and incompatible with the Digby War Memorial Hall Management Committee’s Equal Opportunities Policy. The Management Committee will do all it can to challenge such behaviour. In cases where intervention is possible a gentle approach will be adopted which aims to alter attitudes and behaviour while maintaining support for the distressed user / hirer.

The Management Committee reserves the right to open its membership to any organisation which supports its aims and objectives. However, it will exclude from membership / future use of the Hall, any organisation that actively works against the implementation of the Policy despite encouragement to do so.

The Management Committee realises that a genuine commitment to equal opportunities must operate on all levels and:

1. Will prevent unfavourable treatment, directly or indirectly, upon individuals from any group facing discrimination in its recruitment and deployment of human resources. Where discrimination does occur, it will be dealt with through the agreed procedures. This will be achieved by following this Equal Opportunities Policy.

2. Will seek to prevent discrimination and ensure equal representation in the services it provides, the structures that it facilitates and the practice through which it carries out its work. This involves the development of greater diversity in the management committee. Networks and membership, to ensure a genuinely wide representation.

**Responsibility**

The Management Committee has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy. However, all volunteers and service users have a duty as part of their involvement with the Committee to do everything they can to ensure that the policy works in practice. Those responsible for recruiting volunteers to work on behalf of the Management Committee are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of this Equal Opportunities Policy and adhere to it while working as a volunteer.

The Management Committee will bring to the attention of all volunteers and service users the existence of this policy, and will provide such training as is necessary to ensure the policy is effective and that everyone is aware of it.

If any service user or volunteer feels that they have been, or are being discriminated against, in any way, they are entitled to pursue the matter with the committee.

All instances or complaints of discriminatory behaviour will be treated seriously.

Complaints or allegations of an unfounded or malicious nature will also be treated as serious.

**Disabled Access**

The Management Committee will endeavour to ensure, as far as is practicable, that all current and future facilities have disability access.

**Use of Language**

Volunteers and service users should avoid and challenge the use of language which, in any way, belittles anyone.

Where the language used has a personal impact on others, and it has been made clear to the person concerned that their use of such language is unwelcome and / or offensive, disciplinary action may be taken if they persist with it.

All materials used or developed by the Management Committee will be judged in the light of the promotion of equal opportunities, and those considered to be discriminatory will not be used.

**Sexual Harassment**

No volunteer or service user should be subject to sexual harassment.

This is interpreted as unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature including:

1. Verbal sexual abuse

2. Physical contact

3. Repeated remarks which an individual finds offensive

If it has been made clear to the person concerned that their behaviour is unwelcome and they persist with it, then the service user or volunteer who is the recipient of the behaviour will be entitled to make a formal complaint.

**Monitoring and Review**

The Policy will be constantly reviewed by the management committee to ensure that no Member of the group is put to a disadvantage either, directly or indirectly. This monitoring will apply to the practices of trustees and volunteers, the member organisations, the composition of the Committees and the provision of services.

It is the responsibility of every individual to eliminate discrimination and to ensure the practical application of this Policy.

The Management Committee will review this policy every 2 years.

Review Date: May 2025