



# **Stevenage Town Bowls Club**

## **Equality and Diversity Policy**

### **Statement**

The aim of this policy is to ensure that everyone is treated fairly, with dignity and respect and that members, associate members, members of the public and visiting teams are not denied access to Stevenage Town Bowls Club because of a discriminatory reason. The club President, committee and members of Stevenage Town Bowls Club are fully responsible for the implementation and reviewing of this policy.

### **Legal obligations**

Stevenage Town Bowls Club is committed to avoid and eliminate unfair discrimination of any kind within bowls in Hertfordshire 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 below.

### **Implementation**

The following steps will be taken to implement this policy and promote sports equality in bowls clubs throughout Hertfordshire.

- The General Committee will be responsible for setting standards and values to apply throughout the club at every level, as bowls should be enjoyed by everyone who wants to play the game.
- Stevenage Town Bowls Club will not discriminate or in any way treat anyone less favourably, on grounds of age, being or becoming a transsexual person, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, disability, race (including colour nationality, ethnic or national origin), religion, belief or lack of religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.
- Stevenage Town Bowls Club will ensure that it treats its members, associate members, members of the public and visiting teams fairly and with respect and will ensure that all members of the community have access to and have opportunities to take part in, and enjoy, its programmes of activities, competitions and events.



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- Stevenage Town Bowls Club will require all members, associate members, members of the public, visitors and visiting teams to abide by and adhere to these policies and the requirements of the relevant legislation (including the Equality Act 2010) as well as any amendments to existing legislation and any new legislation.
- Stevenage Town Bowls Club will be committed to the immediate investigation of any complaints of discrimination on the above grounds, once they are brought to its attention. Complaints will be dealt with in accordance with its constitution and complaints policy and, where such a complaint is upheld, Stevenage Town Bowls may impose such sanction as it considers appropriate and proportionate to discriminatory behaviour.

### **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 Great Britain 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 (employment only until 2012), 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 characteristic. 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.

### **Terminologies and descriptors**

Dignity is about respectful, responsible, fair and humane behaviour, something that is reflected in the constitution.

Disadvantage is where, as a result of discrimination, an individual or group is deprived of some or all resources and opportunities. This may affect people directly or indirectly.



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### **Discrimination**

**There are three categories of discrimination: direct, indirect and positive:**

Direct discrimination is where a club member, associate member, member of the public, visitor is less favourably treated because of their race, sex, marital status (including civil partnerships), religion, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, disability, pregnancy or maternity. Indirect discrimination is when there's a practice, policy or rule which applies to everyone in the same way, but it has a worse effect on some people than others. The Equality Act says it puts you at a particular disadvantage.

Positive discrimination is in favour of those who were formerly discriminated against, especially in the provision of social and educational facilities and employment opportunities.

**Forms of discrimination and discriminatory behaviour include the following:**

### **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.

### **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.

### **Prejudice**

Is literally pre-judging someone. It is usually led by negative, irrational feelings, resulting from preconceived attitudes and opinions.



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### **Stereotyping**

The definition of a stereotype is any commonly known public belief about a certain social group or a type of individual. Stereotypes are often confused with prejudices, because, like prejudices, a stereotype is based on a prior assumption. Stereotypes are often created about people of specific cultures or races.

### **Complaints**

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any employee, member or volunteer who violates Stevenage Town Bowls Club Equality & Diversity 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 a member club, individual member or affiliated association, should first raise their concerns to that person or organisation. If this does not resolve the matter, or in the case of allegations of discriminatory behaviour against Stevenage Town Bowls Club itself, the person may raise the matter by writing directly to the club President. The club President will appoint an appropriate person to investigate the concern and they will work with all parties involved to reach an amicable solution. Stevenage Town Bowls Club will consult the Equality and Human Rights Commission when appropriate to seek expert advice. In the event that an individual or organisation associated with Stevenage Town Bowls Club is subject to allegations of unlawful discrimination in a court or tribunal, the Stevenage Town Bowls Club General Committee will co-operate fully with any investigation carried out by the relevant lawful authorities and, subject to the outcome, may consider taking action in relation to the matter concerned. The President may impose sanctions on that individual or organisation in line with the Stevenage Town Bowls Club Policy. In deciding what sanction is appropriate in a particular case the President will consider the severity of the matter and take account of any mitigating circumstances.

### **Responsibility, Monitoring and Evaluation**

The club General Committee are responsible for ensuring that this Equality and Diversity Policy is implemented, followed, and reviewed when appropriate.

The club General Committee is also responsible for ensuring that this Equality and Diversity Policy is enforced and any breaches are dealt with appropriately.

This Equality and Diversity Policy will remain in force until it is amended, replaced or withdrawn. A review of this Equality and Diversity Policy will take place as and when required, but not less than once every three years.

