

Street Paws – Equality and Diversity Policy

Lead responsibility:	Street Paws Chair Person
Approved by:	Street Paws Trustees
Operational from:	January 2018
Review due:	January 2019
Legal framework:	Equality Act 2010

1. Introduction

This Equality and Diversity policy is a demonstration of the commitment of Street Paws to the promotion of equality within Street Paws and in general. This document outlines our position with regards to the provision and protection of equal opportunities and the steps which will be taken to ensure this.

Street Paws values people from different backgrounds and strives to be a fully inclusive organisation. We recognise that the provision of equal opportunities will benefit Street Paws, helping individuals from all walks of life to progress and overcome barriers, which will in turn maximise the effectiveness of Street Paws.

This policy applies to all members, trustees, volunteers and the general public.

2. Discrimination

We are opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination, and all members, volunteers for, and clients of Street Paws will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of any protected characteristic i.e. age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity or dependents considerations.

Discrimination may be direct or indirect, and can take different forms, for example:

- Treating any individual less favourably than others on grounds of a protected characteristic.
- Expecting a person, solely on the grounds stated above, to comply with requirements that are different to the requirements for others, for any reason whatsoever.
- Imposing on an individual requirements that are in effect more onerous than they are on others. This would include applying a condition (which is not warranted by the requirements of Street Paws) which makes it more difficult for members of a particular group to comply than others not of that group.
- Harassment i.e. unwanted conduct which has "*the purpose, intentionally or unintentionally, of violating dignity, or which creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment*" for the individual.
- Victimisation i.e. treating a person less favourably because he or she has committed a "protected act". "Protected acts" include previous legal proceedings brought against the employer or the perpetrator, or the giving of evidence at a disciplinary or grievance hearing or at

tribunal, or making complaints about the perpetrator or the employer or their alleged discriminatory practices.

- Discrimination by association, i.e. someone is discriminated against because he/she associates with someone who possesses a protected characteristic.
- Discrimination by perception, i.e. discrimination on the grounds that the person is perceived as belonging to a particular group, e.g. sexual orientation, religion or belief, irrespective of whether or not this is correct.
- Any other act or omission of an act, which has the effect of disadvantaging one person against another, purely on the above grounds.

We aim to ensure that we not only observe the relevant legislation but also do whatever is necessary to provide genuine equality of opportunity. The fundamental consideration for attraction and retention of members in Street Paws will be based on merit and any decision on membership be made objectively, without unlawful discrimination, and based on ability, potential, conduct and interest, to further our charitable objects.

3. Implementation and Practice

The Board of Trustees has a specific responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy. We expect all members, trustees, volunteers and others to abide by it.

In order to implement this policy we shall take the following necessary steps:

- Communicate the policy by issuing it to all new members as part of their application for membership.
- Publish the policy on the relevant page of our website, making it accessible to all.
- Assign Street Paws' Chair Michelle Southern as Equality lead.
- Ensure that we do not consciously or unconsciously discriminate in the selection or recruitment of applicants for membership of the organisation.
- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to fulfil the objectives of the policy.

4. Monitoring and Review

The overall responsibility for implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of this policy rests with Street Paws' Chair Michelle Southern. The effectiveness of the equal opportunities policy will be reviewed regularly by the Board of Trustees, at least annually, and action taken as necessary.

Any questions or concerns about the interpretation or operation of this policy should be taken up in the first instance with the Equality lead i.e. Street Paws' Chair Michelle Southern

5. Complaints

Members and volunteers of Street Paws, and members of the general public who believe that they have suffered any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation and who have not been able to resolve this informally are entitled to raise the matter in confidence to the Equality lead. The Equality lead will immediately take action to investigate the complaint. All complaints will be dealt with seriously, promptly and confidentially. Every effort will be made to ensure that members who make complaints will not be victimised. Where appropriate, breaches of this policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to termination of membership.