

Craignish Community Company Equal Opportunities Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

Craignish Community Company (C3) is an organisation dedicated to the promotion of rural regeneration for the public benefit following principles of sustainable development, within the geographical area defined in its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

C3 recognises that not all sections of society have equal power and influence in terms of employment, community participation, decision making or access to facilities, recreation and their environment.

The purpose of this Equal Opportunities policy is to confirm C3's commitment to preventing discrimination and providing equal opportunities in all of its activities. C3 is trying to make sure that inequality is addressed in a positive way in all its work and that all those involved with the organisation, both members and non members, are treated fairly and without prejudice. Towards this aim the committee is determined to mainstream equality issues in all aspects of the project, using the definition of mainstreaming in the Scotland Act (1998):

“Mainstreaming equality is the systematic integration of an equality perspective into the everyday work of government, involving policy makers across all government departments, as well as equality specialists and external partners.”

Objectives of Policy

The legal requirements of equal opportunities are covered by:-
the Disabled persons Act (1958 and 1994)
the Equal Pay Act (1970 and (1983)
the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974)
the Sex Discrimination Act (1975 and 1986)
the Race Relations Act (1976)
the Disabled Persons Discrimination Act (1995)
as well as the European Commission's equal treatment Directive.

Following the above legislation, this policy aims to make sure that:-

- Nobody suffers discrimination in a direct way. This means that no person should be treated less favourably because of their age, class, childcare or care responsibilities, colour, culture, disability, ethnic origins, gender, health status, marital status, nationality, race, religious belief, sexual orientation, Trade union membership or being an ex-offender.

- Nobody suffers any form of discrimination in an indirect way. That is where any conditions are imposed which have the effect of discriminating against any of the groups noted in the previous paragraph, whether this is intentional or not.

- C3 supports the elimination of illegal discriminatory practices and the promotion of

resisting the effects of past discrimination.

- Nobody is victimised because they have made a complaint, or intend to make a complaint or supply evidence or information under the race or sexuality laws.

Statement

C3 intends to make sure that people are treated equally and fairly in all its activities. These activities include training, conferences, information, membership services and field work as well as policies and public statements. C3 also intends to do this in any promotional activity.

C3 believes that no one should suffer less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, care responsibilities, childcare, class, disability, ethnic origin, gender, health status, nationality, race, religious belief, sexual orientation, being an ex-offender, or trade union membership.

Areas Covered

C3 is committed to equal opportunities, which supports every area of its operation; it is included in all areas of policy thinking and decision making particularly:

- Employment

The principle of equal opportunities is included in all areas of staff and volunteer recruitment, supervision, review and development. Examples are:- advertising, application forms, disciplinary/grievance procedures, interviewing, job specifications, monitoring, promotion, supervision and training.

Staff contracts and job descriptions will include the equal opportunities policy.

- Delivery of Services

The principles of equal opportunities will be included in the delivery of all C3's activities.

- Organisational Policy and Development of C3

The principles of equal opportunities will be included in all marketing and promotion of C3 and will be considered in the development of and evident in the strategy of, both image and public statements.

Day to Day Running

The principles of equal opportunities will be included in the day to day running of the organisation. Different cultural and religious backgrounds will be considered and people given respect and dignity.

Implementation and Responsibilities

- All staff, Directors, sub committee members and volunteers have a responsibility to make sure that the policy is carried out effectively.
- A member of the Board of Directors will be responsible for ensuring the policy is monitored, reviewed and developed. The Board of Directors will take the final decision if there is any dispute.
- The Director representing each sub committee will be responsible for putting equal opportunities policy in place and giving reports to the Board.
- The Membership Secretary will be responsible for making sure the terms of the policy are followed on membership and administrative matters.

Grievance and Complaints Procedure

- Any breach of the equal opportunities policy or act of discrimination, victimisation or harassment towards staff, Volunteers, providers or users of C3's services will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly by the Directors.
- Staff members who want to make a complaint and anyone who supports them or gives evidence on their behalf will be guaranteed not to suffer any harassment or any unfair treatment as a result.
- C3 will make sure people of one racial group or sex, or with disability are not disciplined or dismissed for performance or behaviour which may be ignored or accepted in other groups.
- C3 will aim to make this an on-going practice process rather than a formal legal process. The C3 Board of Directors will arbitrate in the event of dispute with, or complaint from, service users.
- Anybody contracted to C3 for specific work will be bound by the code of practice on equal opportunities which will form part of the contract. If the code is not followed the contract may be deemed to be broken. C3 will have the right to end a contract if this should happen and also to take legal action to recover any losses that result from the contract being broken.

Monitoring and Review

Review

The staff and Directors should expect regular discussion and debate on the operation of this policy as part of their responsibilities. The policy will also be reviewed regularly by the Board and updated as necessary.

Monitoring

Regular assessment and monitoring of the policy will be carried out to make sure that the objectives of the policy are being met.

Resources

C3 will try to make sure that appropriate support is available to carry out this policy.

In particular:

C3 undertakes to::

- Ensure that the policy is known to all C3's Directors, staff, sub committees and ordinary members and that all are aware of their obligations.
- Display a copy in the registered office, and make a copy available to anyone who requests one. It will also appear on C3's website www.craignishcommunitycompany.org.uk and reference will be made to it on all relevant publicity materials.
- Make available and provide training and guidance for all users and potential users, to ensure an understanding of their responsibilities under the law and under this Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Examine and regularly review procedures and criteria and make appropriate changes where they are found to be actually or potentially discriminating.

LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

The European Community Treaty: Article 12, 13 and 141 (Cited in Scottish Executive: 2000: 32).

The European Convention on Human Rights, incorporated into the Scottish legislative framework. (Human Rights Act, 1998, Article 14, Ibid.: 32).

The relevant UK legislation which relates to equal opportunities are:

The Equal Pay Act 1970

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975

The Race Relations Amendment (RRA) Act (2000) and the RRA 1976

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Employment Act 1989 and Employment Rights Act 1996.