

Equal Opportunities Policy

Section One

The Parochial Church Council of the Rectorial Benefice of Aberavon is committed to the principle of equal opportunities for all. All members of the Church in Wales are bound by The Constitution of the Church in Wales, but nothing contained therein prohibits or detracts from the principles of equal opportunities for all, save those things that pertain specifically to matters of Christian Doctrine, as allowed by law.

Section Two

The PCC accepts that:

1. **Direct Discrimination** occurs when a person is treated less favourably for a reason unconnected with their ability in relation to either a job they are employed to do or the job for which they have applied.
2. **Indirect Discrimination** occurs when an unjustifiable requirement or condition is applied which, though in principle applies to all, in practice is more difficult for one particular group of people to fulfil.

Section Three

Equal opportunities and our services users

The PCC will work to ensure that:

1. no person or organisation, receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, class, religion, ethnic or national origin, gender, marital status, age, child or domestic care arrangements, sexual orientation or disability, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justified.
2. the facilities provided in the church and the hall do not disable people from playing a full part in the activities taking place
3. all those who hire the hall understand the principles of equal opportunities and have their own policies in place to ensure equality of access to services
4. it is as responsive to the needs of all service users as it can be in both its policies and practice

Section Four

The PCC recognises that although at present it has no paid employees, it does have a number of persons who volunteer for various roles within the church community. Therefore:

1. The PCC will, within the limitations imposed upon it by the Constitution of the Church in Wales (set up under the Welsh Church Act 1914), ensure that volunteers are afforded the same rights as those in paid employment.
2. The PCC will not tolerate harassment, bullying or victimisation, and accepts the following definitions:
 - **Victimisation** occurs when someone with a genuine grievance who has followed a complaints procedure is treated badly as a result
 - **Harassment** occurs when speech, behaviour or other action is deemed by another person to be unacceptable and unwelcome. This would include instances of sexual harassment by men or women towards men or women (even where the perpetrator believes the remarks or action to be comical or jocular); unacceptable terms of speech or mockery on grounds of race or colour, gender, ethnic origin or physical or mental disability.
 - **Bullying** occurs when any unsolicited or unwelcome act intimidates, humiliates or undermines an individual's sense of safety, worth or well-being.

The Parochial Church Council is committed to developing an environment in which the culture of bullying, harassment or other forms of discriminatory practice are not tolerated under any circumstances.

Section Five

Implementation of the policy

The Parochial Church Council will ensure that there is an annual review of the Policy, and the Churchwardens and PCC together will monitor the working of the policy

The Parochial Church Council will publish this policy on its web site and in its buildings, together with a notice advising people who wish to make a complaint that they may do so verbally or in writing to the parish priest or churchwardens. Contact names and addresses will be provided.

The Parochial Church Council will appoint a complaints sub group who will be responsible for investigating all complaints in respect of Equal Opportunities. This sub group will make regular reports to the PCC at its quarterly meetings.

The sub group will comprise five people, one of whom will be a churchwarden (unless the complaint is in respect of that churchwarden when the place shall be filled by the other warden). The Parish Priest will not be a part of the initial investigation, but will, together with the secretary and the churchwarden who was not part of the sub group, form an appeal group.

The decision of the appeal group will be final.

The PCC understands that the following legislation applies

- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Children Act 1989
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Welsh Language Act 1995
- Employment Act 1989
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Employment Relations Act 1999
- Employment Act 2002
- Fixed – Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Human Rights Act 1998
- National Minimum Wage Act 1998
- National Minimum Wage Regulations 1999
- Working Time Regulations 1998
- The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006