

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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Drafted/amended by	Deirdre McCarthy	Approved by Board on	25 March 2026
Owner (role)	Chair	Scheduled review date	September 2026

STATEMENT OF POLICY

NWR is a female membership organisation firmly committed to Equal Opportunities for all, regardless of race, disability, sexual orientation, belief, religion, education, class or age. This policy covers all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. NWR values the diversity in society and strives to be inclusive in all its activities. The Board of Trustees will endeavour to ensure that all the organisation's proceedings, practices and publications adhere to this.

NWR will ensure that as far as it practicable its offices and NWR led/managed events are fully accessible. NWR will encourage local groups and meeting organisers to ensure that meeting places and arrangements are similarly accessible to all. Every effort will be made to ensure an awareness and understanding of the need to overcome physical barriers and ensure access to meetings and services.

Whilst members mostly meet in their own homes we encourage and support the effort to accommodate individual needs to ensure equal and fair access to all services and aspects of membership.

SCOPE

These principles apply to local groups, independent members, the Board of Trustees, Local Organisers and employees. NWR will strive to create an environment for debate and dialogue within a culture of anti-discriminatory practices.

PUBLIC IMAGE

NWR will ensure that any publicity or promotional materials that it produces will not play on stereotypes or prejudices and strive to promote positive, anti-discriminatory messages.

MEMBERS

NWR is committed to ensuring that all members are treated equally and given equal opportunities to contribute to the organisation. NWR is also committed to ensuring that it recruits members and encourages membership from all sections of the population including different social and ethnic backgrounds.

VOLUNTARY ORGANISERS

NWR trustees and the CEO will endeavour to ensure that all voluntary posts such as Local Organisers, Conference Committee members, Facebook Moderators etc, within the organisation, are open to any member. All such post holders must follow and implement the Equal Opportunities policy. NWR relies on, and values, the immense contributions of its volunteers.

ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS – CODE OF CONDUCT

All staff and Board members are bound to uphold this Equal Opportunities policy. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. Unlawful discrimination and victimisation on any grounds will also be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedures. If any person wants to make a complaint about any aspect of discrimination, the procedures for this are set out below.

DISCRIMINATION IN MEMBERSHIP

Any individual, (member, enquirer, or potential member) who feels that they have been unfairly discriminated against in any way should complain to the Local Organiser, Area Supporter, CEO or Chair of Trustees via the NWR Office. A complaint can be raised in confidence, formally or informally, verbally or in writing.

COMPLAINTS OF BULLYING, HARASSMENT, VICTIMISATION OR WILFUL DISCRIMINATION

All complaints of unlawful discrimination and victimisation, whether related to an employee, member, Local Organiser or Area Supporter will be taken seriously and dealt with according to this policy.

WHAT CONSTITUTES HARASSMENT?

The Equality Act 2010 defines harassment as 'unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual'.

ACAS advises that Bullying 'may be characterised as: Offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient'.

The conduct is also unacceptable if a person's rejection of the conduct or submission to the conduct is used explicitly or implicitly as a basis for a decision concerning that person.

WHAT SHOULD A MEMBER OR EMPLOYEE DO IF BULLYING OR HARASSMENT IS SUSPECTED OR HAS ACTUALLY TAKEN PLACE?

Raise the matter in confidence with the Local Organiser, Area Supporter, Line Manager or any other appropriate senior person. This may be done with the assistance of a chosen colleague, supporter (if the complaint is brought by a member not an employee) or Trade Union representative (if appropriate).

HOW WILL THE MATTER BE DEALT WITH?

In minor cases and with agreement it is preferable that the matter is investigated and dealt with informally.

If this is not possible or appropriate, it will be dealt with formally.

The complaint will be investigated and dealt with by the Chair of Trustees or another, appropriate senior person.

- The matter will be dealt with sensitively and confidentially.

- The complainant and the alleged harasser will be told how long the investigation is likely to take and who will be dealing with it.
- The participants will be kept informed of every stage.
- Full records will be kept. NWR should always make a record of complaints and investigations. These should include the names of the people involved, dates, the nature and frequency of incidents, action taken, follow-up and monitoring information. All sensitive information should be treated confidentially and meet the requirements of data protection law.
- Consideration will be given to the opportunities for separating the participants from each other. It should not automatically be the complainant who is expected to move but they should be offered the choice where practical. Where the alleged perpetrator is an employee and is transferred, no breach of contract must occur, or a claim of constructive dismissal could arise.
- In some cases, mediation may be offered.
- The Chair or senior trustee will ensure that the complainant is not victimised by the line manager/Local Organiser or other members for having made a complaint.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE COMPLAINT IS FOUND TO BE UPHELD?

In all cases, the Disciplinary Procedure will be invoked.

POLICY MANAGEMENT

The managerial responsibility for this Equal Opportunities Policy will lie with the Trustee Board of NWR.

REVIEW AND EVALUATION

This Equal Opportunities Policy will be comprehensively reviewed and evaluated every two years.

Continuing membership of NWR may be denied to any Group who do not uphold NWR Equal Opportunities Policy

Document version history

Version	Description of changes	Date
10	Trustees	September 2025
11	Deirdre McCarthy – Mentions of , Area Supporters removed. Also format changes	25 March 2026