

Shrimpers Trust Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Policy

1. Introduction

The **Shrimpers Trust** is committed to upholding the values of **equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)** among our members and within our organisation. Given our unique relationship with **Southend United Football Club** and our position within the football community, we recognise our responsibility to set and apply high standards of fairness, inclusivity, and respect that reflect the values of the game.

This policy outlines our commitment to:

1. Promoting **equality, fairness, and respect** in all our procedures and activities.
2. Adhering to the principles of the **Equality Act 2010**, which protects individuals from discrimination based on the following characteristics:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
3. Opposing and preventing all forms of **unlawful discrimination**, including within our activities, membership, and handling of grievances and disciplinary matters.

2. Implementation

The **Shrimpers Trust** is committed to taking proactive steps to embed EDI principles into our organisation. We will:

4. **Encourage equality, diversity, and inclusion** in everything we do, ensuring that all members feel valued and welcome.
5. **Create an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination**, promoting dignity and respect for all.
6. **Recognise and value individual differences and contributions**, fostering a culture of mutual respect and understanding.
7. **Provide or obtain training for Board members** on issues of equality, diversity, and inclusion to ensure they can actively uphold these values.

3. Visibility

8. A copy of this policy will be **signed by all appointed and new Board members**, affirming their responsibility to respect, act in accordance with, and support the spirit and intentions of this policy.
9. This policy will be **published on our website** to ensure transparency and accessibility for all members and stakeholders.

4. Commitments & Actions

The Shrimpers Trust will take the following actions to maintain and enforce this policy:

10. **Provide information, materials, or suitable training** to Board members to support the effective operation of this policy.
11. **Address issues and complaints about discrimination or breaches of this policy** immediately and take appropriate steps to resolve them.
12. **Conduct fair investigations** into all reports of discrimination or misconduct. Depending on the severity of the issue, disciplinary action may be taken in line with our adopted disciplinary policy.
13. **Report matters of concern to statutory authorities** where potential criminal or safeguarding issues arise, ensuring the safety and well-being of all involved.

5. Anti-Discrimination and Reporting Mechanisms

The Shrimpers Trust has a **zero-tolerance policy** toward discrimination, harassment, or exclusion of any kind. If a member, volunteer, or stakeholder experiences or witnesses discrimination, they should:

- Report the issue to the **EDI Officer** or a **Board member**.
- Use the **designated reporting system** (if applicable) to make an anonymous complaint.
- Trust that all reports will be **handled confidentially and investigated thoroughly**.

Appropriate actions will be taken to address and rectify any violations of this policy.

6. Accessibility and Accommodations

We are committed to ensuring that our meetings, events, and communications are **fully accessible** to all individuals, including those with disabilities. This includes:

- Providing **reasonable accommodations** upon request.
- Ensuring that all venues and digital platforms used are **inclusive and accessible**.

7. Behaviour Expectations

All Board members, volunteers, and members of the Shrimpers Trust are expected to:

- Act in accordance with the **values of equality, diversity, and inclusion** at all times.
- Conduct themselves **respectfully** in all forms of communication, including in person, online, and on social media.
- Represent the Trust in a way that reflects our commitment to **fairness, respect, and inclusion**.

8. Monitoring and Review

To ensure that this policy remains effective and relevant, the Shrimpers Trust will:

- **Regularly review and update** this policy in line with best practices and any legal changes.
- Collect **feedback from members and stakeholders** to continuously improve our approach to EDI.
- Hold leadership **accountable** for upholding EDI principles within the organisation.

The Shrimpers Trust firmly believes that a **diverse, equitable, and inclusive** environment strengthens our organisation and enhances our mission. We are dedicated to ensuring that all individuals, regardless of background, feel welcome, valued, and respected.

This policy will be reviewed **annually** to ensure that we remain aligned with best practices and continue to foster an inclusive culture within the Shrimpers Trust.