

# **Felton Village Hall Fair Treatment Policy**

## **Purpose of the Policy**

This policy enables the Trustees to pursue their aim of providing and maintaining a village hall for the use of inhabitants of Felton and the Neighbourhood. The Hall should be an accessible and emotionally safe place for all who wish to use, work in, run or and visit it. In order to ensure this, the Trustees will:

- maintain and improve the Hall and its facilities allowing all who wish to use it to do so easily and comfortably
- in their own work with each other, employees, volunteers, contractors, hirers and people from other organisations operate fairly and with respect
- share with all involved with the Hall their expectation that everyone will be treated fairly and with respect
- recognise that some individuals need reasonable adjustment in facilities or treatment to be able to gain equal access
- respond to any alleged breaches of this policy

This policy covers all aspects of equality of opportunity, bullying and harassment

## **Legal Requirements**

- The Equality Act 2010 which brings together all the previous legislation over the previous 30 years covering equal pay, sex equality of all kinds, race, disability, belief and age

## **Responsibility for Implementing the Policy**

Trustee with responsibility for Fair Treatment and Inclusion

## **People affected by the Policy**

Leaders of activities, all Trustees, employees, volunteers and contractors

## **Monitoring and Review**

The Trustee with responsibility for Fair Treatment and Inclusion is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the policy supported by the Officer with responsibility for Policies

In order to monitor the policy, the Trustee with responsibility for Fair Treatment and Inclusion will bring to the attention of the Management Committee at the next meeting:

- any breaches of this policy and action taken at the next meeting
- any changes in legislation that require immediate action
- any feedback from hirers or users about matters covered by this policy
- progress on Access Audits

The review will be presented to the Trustees as a report containing:

- an evaluation of how any improvements to the Hall and its facilities have impacted on accessibility, drawing on hirer / feedback as necessary
- a summary of any breaches of the policy together with action taken
- a summary of any feedback, requested or unsolicited about any matters covered by this policy together with any recommended action
- any changes recommended to the policy

This policy will be reviewed annually. The next review is due in February 2023

This policy was adopted on June 28 2021

Signed

Eileen Cameron

Chair

**Fair treatment meets two criteria: consistency and openness.**

- The way one individual or organisation is treated is consistent with how all others have and will be treated
- How that individual or organisation is treated can be shared openly with anyone who has an appropriate right to know

Adherence to up to date, relevant, accessible, reviewed policies helps to ensure consistency and openness.

The Trustees have direct responsibility for ensuring the fair treatment of representatives of Regular User Groups, other hirers and prospective hirers, employees, volunteers, contractors and each other.

They also have responsibility for ensuring that the Hall is accessible and usable by all who wish to attend activities.

Responsibility for ensuring fair treatment of those attending activities at the Hall is delegated to those in charge of those activities. The Trustees expects all hirers to be mindful of fair treatment for all individuals.

The Trustee for Fair Treatment will lead Access Audits from time to time, checking with users and members of the community how accessible the Hall is and what improvements should be considered.

Fair Treatment and Inclusion will be included in the Trustees' training programme.

## **The Hall and its contents**

1. Both entrances can be accessed without steps, and all doorways and fire exits are wide enough for wheelchairs.
2. There is a disabled lavatory room with the usual facilities
3. A hearing loop system is fitted in the Main Hall to help users of hearing aids fitted with a "T" setting. It is activated on request.
4. There is not a permanent disabled parking bay, but there is a notice on a stand that can reserve a place
5. The disabled lavatory room has baby-changing facilities and there are high chairs in the cupboard off the Main Hall
6. Assistance dogs, wearing their identification, are welcomed in the Village Hall.
7. All proposed changes to the fabric, fittings, furniture and equipment will be evaluated from the perspective of improving accessibility for all. The Trustees will consult as necessary.

## **Written information**

8. While all the Hall's documentation for hirers and users is available on line, the Trustees will ensure that those who are not on line have easy access to information. For those who are on line, website addresses are publicised inside and outside the Hall and in The Bridge. For those who are not, paper copies of introductory information are available in the Hall, while notices in and outside and articles in The Bridge tell people how they can access the documents they need. All printed documents can be provided in large print if requested.
9. The Trustees will ensure that all information about the Hall includes a section about accessibility so as not to discourage potential users

## **Conducting the Business of the Village Hall**

10. The Trustees abide by their Code of Conduct.
11. Individual Trustees and the Management Board communicate with all others on Village Hall business with consideration and respect.
12. When there is a vacancy for a Trustee, every attempt will be made to ensure that all members of the community who might be interested feel able and confident to put themselves forward.
13. When there is more than one candidate for a Trusteeship, there will be an open process of application, personal statement and election at the AGM.
14. The Trustees will seek quotes for new maintenance and improvement work in the Hall likely to cost more than £500. They will attempt to get 3 quotes. Criteria for identifying the

successful contractor will be applied in the following order:

- history of good quality work and reliability at the Hall
- based in the local area
- value for money

15. Ongoing work is offered first to the contractor who completed the initial project if it was to a satisfactory standard in all ways.

16. Work estimated to be less than £500 in value will be offered to preferred contractors.

17. Cleaning services are provided by self-employed individuals. There is considerable flexibility about when cleaning is done. When there is a vacancy the job will be advertised, locally in the first instance. References will be taken for any potential candidates, and interviews held. If a candidate is known to a Trustee, that Trustee can provide a reference but they will not be part of the selection process from then on.

18. Cleaning services can be provided by one or more individuals. If someone applies who wishes to do fewer hours than those advertised, the Trustees will attempt to find someone else to share the work.

19. Anyone who is over 18 can hire the Hall for a legal activity as long as they adhere to the Hall's policies including this one.

### **Responsibilities delegated to Hirers**

12. The Trustees recognise that some activities have age restrictions on membership, and that all have to consider how many people can be accommodated.

21. Within these constraints, and with the exception of private hires, the Trustees encourage hirers / leaders to make their activities open to all those who could benefit from them, and to bear equal opportunities issues in mind when advertising sessions.

22. The Trustees acknowledge that some activities are restricted by their nature. Within those restrictions, the leader is expected to take responsibility for maximising equal quality of experience for all who attend.

23. The Trustees expect those running activities to ensure all interactions are conducted with consideration and respect to avoid any group or individual feeling demeaned in any way.

24. The Trustees recognise that for some people to access and engage in activities additional help and / or adjustments need to be made. They encourage leaders of activities to provide these and to contact the Trustees if they feel changes in the Hall could reasonably be made.

### **If things go wrong**

25. The Code of Conduct for Trustees sets out what should happen if there are issues within the Management Committee.

26. If there is a concern or complaint which falls into the area of Safeguarding, the Safeguarding Policy will apply and external agencies handle the matter. In all other cases

the Feedback Policy should be followed, as set out below.

27. The Trustees encourage any group or individual who experiences or witnesses a practice or behaviour in the Hall that seems to be unfair or lacking in respect to attempt to resolve this quickly and kindly with the person or people involved. How this is done depends on the rôles of those involved, and whether or not they need to bring someone else into the matter.

28. If there is an allegation or complaint against the person running a group, the group may have a policy to help sort this out. If not, the complainant(s) may contact the Chair or Meetings Secretary of the Management Committee in confidence, who will attempt to resolve the issue, or, if necessary, arrange for an investigation. Such mediation and investigation will be carried out quickly, impartially, thoroughly and confidentially.

29. If a complaint is upheld, The Chair or Meetings Secretary will meet with the leader to reassure him/herself that there will be no further breaches of the Village Hall Policy. If they are not reassured or if there are other proven breaches, no more hirings will be accepted if they are for activities led by that person.

30. If there is a complaint against a member of the Management Committee in their capacity as a Trustee that cannot be resolved with that person, the complainant should contact the Chair or Meetings Secretary in confidence. They will attempt to resolve the issue, or, if necessary, arrange for an investigation. Such mediation and investigation will be carried out quickly, impartially, thoroughly and confidentially