

# **BWSW EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY**



Effective from July 2012 – supersedes all previous BWSW policy documents.  
Issued by: Lead Officer Safeguarding & Equality

## **1. Statement of Intent**

1.1 BWSW is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and is responsible for ensuring that no job applicant, employee, volunteer or member receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (together the 'Protected Characteristics').

1.2 BWSW will ensure that there will be open access to all those who wish to participate in all aspects of the sport of water skiing and wakeboarding and that they are treated fairly. In addition, BWSW recognises that we live in a diverse society and will endeavour to ensure that all participants are given the same opportunities regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds. BWSW will encourage partner organisations; regions, clubs, suppliers, sponsors and members to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equality as set out in this policy.

1.3 As an organisation we aim to deliver clear and inspirational leadership for water skiing and wakeboarding to ensure a vibrant and empowered sport at every level that can evolve to meet every challenge. As part of this aim we very much recognise the benefits of diversity and inclusion across our wider leadership to include our Board, senior management, committees and key volunteers within the sport.

## **2. Definitions**

For the purpose of clarification BWSW are working to the following definitions:

### ***Equal Opportunities***

Within the employment context, treating people as individuals and providing them with opportunities on the basis of their skills, talents and qualifications so that they are neither disadvantaged nor denied access on the grounds stated in section 1.1.

### ***Equality***

The state of being equal – treating individuals equally, which is not necessarily the same as treating them the same. In some cases the need for equality may require unequal effort to ensure the principle is achieved.

### ***Equity***

In its simplest sense, 'fairness' and respect for other people; the process of allocating (or re-allocating) resources and entitlements, including power, fairly and without discrimination. It includes fairness in opportunities and the upholding of individual human rights through social justice.

## **3. Purpose of the Policy**

3.1 BWSW recognises that individuals and / or certain groups in our society who share one or more 'Protected Characteristics' may not have been able to participate equally and fully in water skiing and wakeboarding in the past and that some barriers do exist. BWSW will take positive action to ensure that the sport is accessible for everyone and to encourage diversity. Diversity will relate to participation at all levels of the sport e.g. officiating, driving, observing, committee attendance etc.

3.2 This policy has been produced to identify and eradicate barriers and tackle unlawful discrimination or other unfair treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, which may preclude some people from participating fully in the sport.

#### **4. Actions**

4.1 BWSW will produce, maintain and monitor an action plan to ensure the intent of this policy is consistently delivered.

4.2 All areas of the organisation will be affected by this action plan, which will be incorporated in to the overall business delivery plan (Corporate Strategy) of BWSW, which is itself reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

4.3 BWSW recognises that, in some cases, to achieve the principle of equality, unequal effort and resource is required and, if appropriate and proportionate, will consider positive action or may introduce special measures to assist any group with a Protected Characteristic which is currently under represented within any aspect of the sport.

#### **5. Legal Requirements**

5.1 BWSW is required by law not to discriminate against its employees and recognises its legal obligations under, and will abide by the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and any relevant associated legislation:

- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Any later amendments to the above Acts/regulations, or future Acts/regulations that are relevant to BWSW.

5.2 BWSW will seek advice each time the policy is reviewed to ensure that it continues to reflect the current legal framework and good practice.

#### **6. Discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation**

BWSW recognise the following:

6.1 Discrimination can take the following forms:

6.1.1 *Direct Discrimination*. This means treating someone less favourably than you would treat others because of a Protected Characteristic.

6.1.2 *Indirect Discrimination*. Imposing requirements or conditions, which on the face of it, apply equally to all but which, in practice, can disadvantage individuals with a Protected Characteristic. Such requirements or conditions are lawful only if they can be objectively justified.

6.2 *Harassment is described as* engaging in unwanted conduct (intentional or unintentional) relating to a relevant Protected Characteristic or unwanted conduct of a sexual nature where the conduct has the purpose or effect of violating the recipients dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the recipient, or any other individual affected by such conduct. BWSW is committed to ensuring that its employees, volunteers and members are able to conduct their activities free from harassment. Bullying is the misuse of power or position to criticise persistently or to humiliate and undermine an individual's confidence.

6.3 *Victimisation is defined as* when someone is treated less favourably than others because he or she has taken action against BWSW under one of the relevant Acts/regulations (as previously outlined) or provided information about discrimination, harassment or inappropriate behaviour.

6.4 BWSW regards discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation, as described above, as serious misconduct and any employee, volunteer or member who discriminates against, harasses or victimises any other person will be liable to appropriate disciplinary action.

## **7. Reasonable Adjustments**

7.1 When decisions are made about an individual, the only personal characteristics taken into account will be those which, as well as being consistent with relevant legislation, are necessary to the proper performance of the work involved.

7.2 BWSW recognises that it has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people. BWSW will consider all requests for adjustments and where possible will accommodate reasonable requests and will work with disabled participants and / or disability organisations to implement any adjustments that will help disabled people to increase their participation in the sport and related activities.

## **8. Transgender Athletes**

BWSW considers that water skiing and wakeboarding is a gender affected sport under the Equality Act 2010. We recognise that social attitudes and lack of information have hampered policies to ensure an inclusive approach to LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) people in sport. We aim to provide practical guidance and advice for clubs and other bodies on inclusive support for LGBT people – we currently utilise the guidance and expertise of Sport England and UK Sport as a resource on all related matters.

## **9. Responsibility, implementation and communication**

9.1 The following responsibilities will apply:

9.1.1 The Board of Directors of BWSW will endorse and be responsible for ensuring that this Equality & Diversity Policy is implemented and will deal with any actual or potential breaches.

A member of the Board will be appointed as the 'Equality Champion' and will ensure that equality is included as an agenda item at Board meetings when appropriate and that the Board takes equality issues into consideration when making decisions.

9.1.2 The Chief Executive has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the Equality & Diversity Policy within the resources of the organisation. The organisation will endeavour to work with other organisations (e.g. British Disabled Water Ski & Wakeboard Association) to ensure implementation of the policy on an operational level.

9.1.3 A specific member of staff, the Safeguarding and Equality Lead, designated by the Chief Executive, has the overall responsibility for managing the implementation of the equality action plan as this will form a key part of their work programme.

9.1.4 All employees, volunteers and members have responsibilities to respect, act in accordance with and thereby support and promote the spirit and intentions of the policy and, where appropriate, individual work programmes will be amended to include equality related tasks.

9.2 The new / revised policy will be implemented immediately following Board agreement and, at a corporate level, will result in the following:

9.2.1 A copy of this document will be given to all employees (both permanent and contract), and made available to members of BWSW.

9.2.2 BWSW will take measures to ensure that its employment practices and recruitment policy are non-discriminatory.

9.2.3 No job applicant will be placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which are not necessary to the performance of the job or which constitute unlawful discrimination.

9.2.4 A planned approach will be adopted to eliminate barriers that discriminate.

9.2.5 Regional representatives and affiliates will be required to adopt this policy as a commitment to good practice.

9.2.6 Partner organisations, consultants and advisers used by BWSW will be encouraged to demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equality.

9.3 This Equality & Diversity policy will be communicated in the following ways:

9.3.1 It will be part of the Employee Policies and Procedures and reference will be made to it in all BWSW Codes of Conduct.

9.3.2 It will be covered in all staff and volunteer induction training.

9.3.3 BWSW will promote continual personal development for all employees, volunteers and members to support equal opportunities and equity within the organisation and, where appropriate, provide specialist facilities, equipment or training.

9.3.4 All members will be made aware of the policy's existence when they join and a summary of any revisions will be published widely within the organisation.

9.3.5 The policy will be available on the BWSW Website and in alternative formats upon request.

9.3.6 At time of review, a mechanism will be put in place to allow all employees, members and volunteers to be part of the review and consultation process.

9.3.7 A summary of this document will be integrated into new and revised publications, where appropriate.

## **10. Monitoring and Evaluation**

10.1 Once approved, the policy will apply for a maximum of 2 years before a formal review takes place, unless any proposal to the Board, or legislation change, requires an interim review and/or amendment.

10.2 The equality action plan, created to ensure the intent of the policy is delivered, will be reviewed by the CEO and the Safeguarding and Equality Lead, who is responsible for leading its implementation, on a 6 monthly basis.

10.3 As part of the overall business delivery plan (Corporate Strategy), the equality action plan, will be reviewed by the Board on an annual basis.

10.4 On an annual basis, evidence will be produced for the Board, and this will be published internally and externally, to show the impact of this policy in areas where statistical data can be gathered.

## **11. Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures**

11.1 To safeguard individual rights under the policy, an employee, volunteer or member who believes he/she has suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of the policy may raise the matter through the appropriate grievance procedure. For employees this will be through the BWSW Grievance Procedure, for volunteers this will be through the BWSW Byelaws and Codes of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.

11.2 An individual may raise any grievance and no employee, volunteer or member will be penalised for doing so unless it is untrue and not made in good faith.

11.3 Any employee, volunteer or member who discriminates against or harasses any other person will liable to action according to the BWSW Employee Disciplinary Policy or the BWSW Codes of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures outlined in the Employees Guidelines Handbook.

## Document History

July 2012	Approved by the Board	CEO	Adopted policy - Equality Act compliant
August 2014	Policy Reviewed	CEO	No changes – fit for purpose
April 2015	Policy Reviewed	CEO	Minor amendments.
April 2016	Policy Reviewed	CEO	Fit for purpose and up to date / current
April 2017	Policy Reviewed	CEO	Diversity within leadership highlighted
April 2019	Policy Reviewed	CEO	Clarification re transgender