

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Creation Date: Feb.2025

Revised Date:

Review Date: Feb 2027

General Statement

Suffolk Coastal Poverty Action (SCPA) is a ministry of SKC Church in Saxmundham, Kelsale and Carlton (SKC) and its principles are in line with theirs.

Christ teaches us to love our neighbours as ourselves, and we firmly believe that any form of unfair discrimination goes against God's intentions and cannot be justified. Christianity teaches that every human is created in God's image and equally cherished by God, sharing in divine love without distinction.

SCPA upholds equal opportunity not only as a core Christian value but also as a principle of good volunteering and employment practice.

Our services are available to all. We are dedicated to embracing diversity within society, actively serving all, regardless of age, gender, disability, racial or ethnic origin, religion, socio-economic background, marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, and health conditions (including HIV status).

Principles and Practice

SCPA acknowledges and accepts its responsibilities under current anti-discrimination laws. The main legislative framework is the Equality Act 2010, which outlines nine protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy & maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

SCPA is committed to fostering an environment where all people are treated with dignity and respect and given equal opportunities, especially those with protected characteristics.

SCPA understands the importance of recognizing, admitting, and identifying discrimination in all its forms¹, including subtle expressions of prejudice. It accepts that discrimination or offensive attitudes can sometimes be present unintentionally in individuals, policies, and organizational structures—both within its services and in organizations it interacts with. SCPA is dedicated to challenging such attitudes and structures. In line with this, SCPA expects its employees and volunteers to be sensitive to both the ethos of SKC and its own values.

SCPA strives to create an inclusive environment for employment, volunteering, and daily work—where everyone is treated with respect and dignity, and where harassment or prejudice is not tolerated, regardless of its source or intention. This commitment extends to all staff, volunteers, and third parties who engage with the organisation or its activities. This policy should be read in conjunction with SCPA's Safer Recruitment Policy.

SCPA is dedicated to ongoing action to ensure the effectiveness of this policy. This policy has been provided to all volunteers and staff within the organisation and will be provided to any new volunteers as part of their induction. This policy is published on our website. Specific training will be provided where there are any concerns about the risk of discrimination actually or potentially taking place.

While maintaining this policy, it is recognized that SCPA, as part of SKC Church, is a Christian organization, and has a "Genuine Occupational Requirement" (as defined in the 2010 Act) for staff and volunteers to be practicing Christians.

This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will be reviewed by SCPA periodically (at least every three years) or whenever relevant legislation changes.

Any concerns regarding contravention of this policy (i.e. complaints regarding actual or perceived discrimination) should be addressed either to the Centre Manager (laura.knight@scpa.uk) or the charity's Safeguarding Officer, Julia Kinsey (safeguarding@scpa.uk).

¹ Types of discrimination include: Associated Discrimination (against a person based on those with whom they associate); Discrimination by Perception (against a person who is believed to have a particular protected characteristic); Indirect Discrimination (resulting from a practice or policy which puts a person with a particular protected characteristic at a disadvantage); Victimisation (treating someone adversely because they have made a complaint or legal claim under the Equality Act); Harassment (either directly or by a third party) or direct Discrimination (e.g. arising from a disability of any kind).