

# Hanley Castle Parish Council - Equality & Diversity Policy

Adopted at the 18 June 2026 council meeting.

## 1. Policy Statement

Hanley Castle Parish Council is committed to promoting equality, fairness, respect, and inclusion in all aspects of its work. The Council recognises its responsibility to ensure that no councillor, employee, volunteer, contractor, or member of the public is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

The Council aims to create an environment where diversity is valued, discrimination is actively challenged, and everyone is able to participate fully in civic life.

## 2. Purpose of the Policy

This policy sets out the Council's approach to:

- Ensuring equal access to services, facilities, and decision-making.
- Promoting a culture of dignity and respect.
- Preventing unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- Meeting legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

## 3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Parish councillors
- Council employees
- Volunteers acting on behalf of the Council
- Contractors and service providers
- Members of the public engaging with the Council

## 4. Protected Characteristics

The Council will not tolerate discrimination based on:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origins)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

## 5. Our Commitments

### 5.1 Service Delivery

The Council will:

- Ensure services are accessible and responsive to the needs of all residents.
- Consider equality impacts when making decisions or setting policies.
- Provide information in clear, inclusive formats wherever possible.

### 5.2 Employment & Recruitment

The Council will:

- Recruit and promote staff based on merit, ability, and fair assessment.
- Provide reasonable adjustments for disabled employees and applicants.
- Offer a working environment free from bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

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## 5.3 Councillor Conduct

Councillors will:

- Uphold the principles of public life (Nolan Principles).
- Treat all individuals with courtesy and respect.
- Challenge discriminatory behaviour when encountered.

## 5.4 Community Engagement

The Council will:

- Encourage participation from under-represented groups.
- Ensure meetings and consultations are accessible.
- Foster a welcoming environment at all Council events and activities.

## 6. Responsibilities

Council as a Whole

- Ensures compliance with equality legislation.
- Embeds equality considerations into all decisions and policies.

Clerk / Responsible Officer

- Implements this policy in day-to-day operations.
- Provides guidance and training where appropriate.
- Maintains records of any equality-related concerns or incidents.

Employees and Volunteers

- Treat colleagues and the public with fairness and respect.
- Report any concerns about discrimination or harassment.

## 7. Reporting Concerns

Anyone who believes they have experienced or witnessed discrimination, harassment, or unfair treatment may report it to the Parish Clerk. All concerns will be handled sensitively, confidentially, and in line with relevant procedures.

## 8. Monitoring and Review

The Council will:

- Review this policy every three years, or sooner if legislation changes.
- Monitor its practices to ensure ongoing compliance and improvement.
- Record and review any equality-related incidents or complaints.

## 9. Adoption

This policy was adopted by Hanley Castle Parish Council at its meeting on: 18 June 2026