

TITLE	Equality and Diversity Policy
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Review Date:	March '18
Lead officer(s) & Author:	Dave Hider
Approved by:	Vennture Trustees in 2016

This Policy relates to Equality and Diversity and Herefordshire Vennture's responsibility to ensure that our services promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination.

1. Policy Statement

1.1 This policy sets out Herefordshire Vennture's (Vennture) commitment to ensuring that all service users, Board Members, employees, contractors, consultants and agency services are treated equally and fairly. Vennture's values and embraces diversity because we believe this helps to make us a better service provider. Equality and Diversity is core to our business and our aim is to reflect this in all our policies, practices and services.

2. Vennture's commitment to Equality and Diversity:

2.1 'People' are a fundamental part of our business, our staff and boards combine to provide homes and services to our service users. Therefore our commitment is to ensure we have the best possible approach to embrace the diversity of our people and their needs, as well as ensuring our services are accessible, equal and fair to all. This commitment is central to the Vennture's vision to "Love People Better".

3. Our Policy commitments

3.1 Vennture is committed to:

- Making equality and diversity integral to every aspect of our business,
- Eliminating unlawful discrimination,
- Promoting equality of opportunities and
- Taking positive action to redress the effects of historic and continuing discrimination.

3.2 We are committed to promoting equality in respect of:

- **Our role as a service provider** – providing a range of accessible facilities and services meeting the differing needs of local people.
- **Our role as an employer** – ensuring fair recruitment, by maximising the impact of the skills and abilities of all sectors of the community to benefit Vennture, as well as providing a working environment that is safe, accessible and free from harassment and discrimination.
- **Our responsibility to the places and communities we live and work in** - through our Board Members, staff, stakeholders / partner agencies in the statutory, voluntary and private sectors to improve the quality of life for our customers.

We expect this commitment from all Members, staff and anyone else we work with, such as suppliers, contractors, consultants and partner agencies. We also expect our customers to support our commitment and we will promote this policy through the delivery of our services.

Herefordshire Vennture

Formerly Hereford City Mission founded by John Venn in 1856
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The Venn Legacy Centre, 45 Venns Lane, Hereford, HR1 1DT
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3.3 This policy aims to cover all aspects of equality, including eliminating discrimination, promoting equality and fostering good relations. However, as well as meeting any statutory and regulatory duties, Vennture believes that these should be a starting point and that we should strive to be an organisation that exceeds these standards and be committed to tackling social exclusion in its widest sense.

4. Policy Purpose and Aims:

4.1 Our approach to Equality and Diversity focuses on the protected characteristics detailed in the Equality Act 2010:

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

4.2 Vennture will endeavour to reflect diversity in all its activities, make them accessible to everyone and ensure equality of opportunity for all. This approach is also designed to help us to continuously improve our business and services, by extending our understanding and ability to embrace the diversity of the individuals and communities where we work, and so tailor services more effectively to meet their needs.

5. Our Policy

5.1 This policy promotes the Vennture values:

Responsibility

Everyone is a leader when they take responsibility for themselves or others or their circumstances. So... We encourage individuals to be and act as leaders in their lives, family, work and community.

Family

However messy it gets, we recognise family is an answer. So... We work to build supportive families committed to giving people – especially children, the best and we share the meaning in our actions of rock-solid Christian values – *Worth – Hope – Love - Choice*.

Worth – we value each individual as special; each has a unique mix of God-given gifts, talents and experiences – bad as well as good. So... We work with, serve and relate to all people.

Hope – we believe that no matter how difficult someone's past it need not define their future. So... We never give up on people encouraging them to take the small steps that can lead to big changes.

Love – we live in the light of love and recognise that love can change everything: - loving God and loving others as we love ourselves. So... We accept everyone as we find them and without condition; we encourage people to live a life rooted in love.

Choice – we want to see change that lasts. So... We make it possible for people to make better choices for themselves; we accept we don't have all the answers and in sharing in each person's journey we are willing to share the changes we are making in our own lives.

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Industry

Work and creativity is part of every person. So... We respect, nurture and promote a strong work ethic to build everyone's esteem, resilience and resourcefulness.

Enterprise

It is important that we care for ourselves so we can care for others. So... We encourage enterprise to create more to invest in helping individuals to take responsibility for their future.

6. Access to services

- 6.1 Anyone applying for services from Vennture will be dealt with fairly and without any form of discrimination. We actively encourage all sections of the communities where we work to make use of Vennture's services.
- 6.2 We are committed to building and delivering services, facilities and resources that are accessible, relevant and of use to the individuals and communities where we work. This involves improving our understanding of our customers and their needs, as well as recognising that how we deliver services may need to be different to meet diverse needs. It also includes making a range of opportunities available for customers to be involved in shaping and improving those services.

7. Employment

- 7.1 Vennture aspires to a diverse workforce whose profile reflects the communities where it works and will:
- Demonstrate its commitment to equality and diversity in all aspects of employment, including recruitment, approach to pay, performance and development management framework, training and promotion and by ensuring that Vennture's job relativity (job evaluation) methodology has been tested to ensure that it is non-discriminatory.
 - Take action with the aim of having a workforce that reflects the communities it serves.
 - Inform all employees of this Policy and of their rights to protection from discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.

Vennture will take action to eliminate discrimination, which will include:-

8. Recruitment

- 8.1
- all vacancies will be advertised in accordance with agreed protocols and in a way that does not discourage under-represented groups from applying for posts.
 - specific qualifications or experience will only be called for where essential to the job.
 - training will be given to staff involved in recruitment to ensure that they understand and apply the policy.
- 9.1
- different means of promoting our vacancies will be considered in recruitment to positively encourage applications from under-represented groups in our employment
 - all job applicants will be made aware of the Equality and Diversity Policy.

10. Board Membership

- 10.1 Vennture will endeavour to ensure that the composition of its governing bodies reflects the communities they serve. This Policy will apply to the recruitment and development of Board members. Where possible, action will be taken to redress any imbalance in membership. Board members are required to be aware of the organisations commitment to equality and diversity at all times and are bound to comply with this Policy in discharging their duties.

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Monitoring and Review

11. This policy will be reviewed every 3 years (from the date of the Trustees approval) to ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness or as required by the introduction new legislation or regulation.

Responsibility

12. The effective implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the Chief Executive of Vennture

8. Suppliers, including contractors, consultants and agency services

- 8.1 Vennture encourage a diverse range of contractors, consultants and suppliers and will ensure that our contractors, consultants, suppliers and partner agencies are aware of this policy and will encourage them to have similar objectives. All relevant contractors, consultants, suppliers and partner agencies will be asked to provide a copy of their own policy or alternatively subscribe to Venntures.

9. Communication

- 9.1 We have access to a wide range of communication methods to help us meet diverse customer and staff requirements and continue to explore different ways of communicating with

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current and potential customers. We will make every reasonable adjustment in order to meet any communication needs amongst our customer group.

10. Monitoring and Review

10.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years (from the date of the Trustees approval) to ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness or as required by the introduction new

11. Responsibility

Implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the Chief Executive and Board.

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