

# DARSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

## EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

### Objective

Darsham Parish Council is committed to providing and promoting equal opportunities, eliminating discrimination, and encouraging diversity in the community. The Parish Council aims to create a culture that respects and values each other's differences and which promotes dignity, equality, and diversity.

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination legislation, simplifying the law, removing inconsistencies, and making compliance easier. The Public-Sector Equality Duty of 2011 demands that all public bodies and organisations carrying out public functions have a duty to consider the needs of all individuals in their day-to-day work. This Equality and Diversity Policy ensures that Darsham Parish Council, its members, and officers comply with this legislation. An up-to-date copy of this Policy will be maintained via the Darsham website.

### Public Sector Equality Duty

Public Sector Equality Duty Section 149 of the 2010 Act, which came into force on 5 April 2011, imposes on public authorities (which as specified in Schedule 19 includes principal authorities, parish councils and parish meetings without a separate parish council and, in Wales, community councils) in the exercise of their functions, a duty to take into account:

- The need to eliminate discrimination and harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- To advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- To foster good relations between those who share protected characteristics and those who do not. The protected characteristics of marriage and civil partnership are not covered by the provisions of Section 149.

### Scope

This policy applies to employees, Councillors, volunteers, and contractors employed by Darsham. All employees and Councillors have a duty to uphold equal opportunities principles.

### Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to provide equal opportunities for everyone who meets Darsham Parish Council, irrespective of:

- **Gender (including gender reassignment)** - gender reassignment is a protected characteristic that applies to a transsexual person who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) to change their sex (by physiological or other attributes of sex).
- **Sexual Orientation**
- **Age** - Individuals of any age or apparent age are protected from discrimination. Favourable treatment of a person because of age is not lawful.
- Marital or civil partnership status.
- **Race** - (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins) The Parish Council has a general duty to:
  - Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination.
  - Promote equality of opportunity.
  - Promote good race relations between people of different racial groups.
- **Religion, belief, or political opinion** - This must be genuinely held.

- **Disability** - A person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities (for example using a telephone, walking, lifting, and reading). An impairment is long-term if –
  - It has lasted for at least 12 months.
  - It is likely to last for at least twelve months, or
  - It is likely to last for the rest of the life of the person affected.

**Policy Commitment**

Darsham Parish Council commit to:

- Providing services that are equally accessible to all people, free from prejudice and discrimination and sensitive to the needs of all sections of the community.
- Value people and their differences and enable employees to achieve their full potential.
- Work actively towards eliminating all forms of discrimination of both a direct and indirect nature.
- Encourage partnership and participation in the development and application of council policy and practices by:
  - Ensuring that all policies and practices are in line with relevant employment legislation, anti-discrimination legislation and good practice guidelines.
  - Integration of equality of opportunity into all aspects of local authority activity.
  - Ensuring all employees and Councillors understand the values and expectations of the Parish Council and the standards of behaviour expected from them.
  - Making clear the action an employee who feels unfairly treated may take.
  - Provision of training to employees and Councillors so they can actively put this policy into practice.
  - In line with government guidance, encouragement of voluntary organisations to provide evidence of their commitment to equality in terms of their personnel policies and delivery of their services as criteria in determining the awarding of grants from the Parish Council.
  - Monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the policy and practice on a regular basis as determined by law

**This policy was adopted in July 2023**

**Signed** .....

**Date** .....

**Date for Review: July 2024**