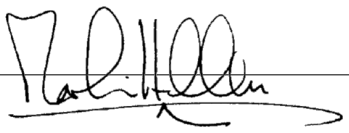
# Wilts & Berks Canal Trust

**Patron: Her Majesty the Queen**

Restoring 70 miles of canal and towpath for the benefit of local communities, wildlife and leisure

| Document Details | |
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| | **Name and Position** | **Signature** | **Date** |
| **Prepared By** | Johnnie Graham, Trustee |  | 23 July 2026 |
| **Checked By** | Policy Working Group |  | 23 July 2026 |
| **Approved By** | Martin Holliss, Chair |  | 23 July 2026 |

| Revision History | | | |
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| **Rev.** | **Amendment** | **prepared by** | **Date** |
| 1.0 | Adopted (as Equal Opportunities Policy) | | 26 Aug 2003 |
| 1.1 | Reviewed with minor amendments | Patricia Clements | 2007 |
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| | **Wilts & Berks Canal Trust** | POL PPL.05<br>rev 2.0 |
| | **Policy: Equality Diversity and Inclusion** | 23 July 2026 |

## Background

This policy sets out the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust's (WBCT) commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of its work. It supports our mission to restore and preserve the canal network for the benefit of all communities, ensuring that our activities are welcoming, accessible and inclusive.

## Policy

WBCT is committed to creating an environment where everyone is treated fairly and with respect, and where diversity is valued. We will not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. All WBCT volunteers, trustees, employees, contractors, consultants, and anyone acting on behalf of the Trust must:

### Equality of Opportunity

- Provide equal access to volunteering, employment and participation opportunities.
- Make decisions based on merit, ability and organisational need.
- Ensure that no individual or group is unfairly disadvantaged.
- Ensure fair and non-discriminatory practices in recruitment, selection and conditions of employment and volunteering.
- Take reasonable steps to adapt roles, workplaces or equipment to enable individuals to participate fully.

### Respect and Inclusion

- Treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect.
- Promote an inclusive culture where differences are welcomed and valued.
- Challenge and report discrimination, harassment or exclusionary behaviour.

## Accessibility

- Strive to make WBCT sites, activities and information accessible to all.
- Consider the needs of people with disabilities, including providing wheelchair access where reasonably practicable.
- Make reasonable adjustments to enable participation in volunteering, events and services.
- Work within the physical and heritage constraints of our sites to improve accessibility wherever reasonably practicable.
- Ensure that canal restoration and infrastructure projects are designed, so far as reasonably practicable, to maximise accessibility for disabled users, including wheelchair access, while respecting heritage and safety requirements.

## Community Engagement

- Actively engage with a wide range of communities to encourage participation.
- Reduce barriers that may prevent underrepresented groups from getting involved.
- Promote the canal as a shared resource for all sections of society.

## Awareness and Training

- Promote understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion across the organisation.
- Provide guidance and training where appropriate to support inclusive behaviours.
- Ensure leaders and volunteers understand their responsibilities under this policy.

## Accountability

- Take all complaints or concerns seriously and investigate appropriately.
- Report and address breaches of this policy in line with WBCT procedures.
- Continually review practices to improve equality, diversity and inclusion outcomes.
- The Trust recognises that promoting equality, diversity and inclusion is an ongoing process and is committed to continuous improvement.

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

## Legal and Regulatory Framework

All WBCT volunteers, trustees, employees, contractors, consultants, and anyone acting on behalf of the Trust must comply with all relevant legislation, including the Equality Act 2010, and other applicable equality, accessibility and human rights laws.

## Roles and Responsibilities

The COO will be responsible for the communication, dissemination and implementation of this policy through the SLT and Branch Chairs.

All individuals must adhere to this policy and promote inclusive behaviours. Any concerns or breaches should be reported to a WBCT Trustee, Director or Branch Chair, who will record the details. The matter will be investigated by a trustee or director appointed by the Board of Trustees.

Individuals who feel they have not been treated in accordance with this policy should raise the matter as above. Where resolution is not achieved, the matter will be escalated to the Board of Trustees for formal review.

Contractors, consultants and partner organisations are expected to uphold equivalent equality, diversity and inclusion standards in their own practices.

Trustees, Directors, the Senior Leadership Team and other leaders must lead by example, actively support inclusion, and take appropriate action where necessary.

Breaches of this policy by paid staff, volunteers, contractors or suppliers may result in removal from roles, cessation of volunteering, termination of engagement/contracts, or referral to external authorities for serious misconduct.