

Equality and Diversity Policy



Lead Responsibility	Chairperson	Approved by	Board of Trustees
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Policy applicable to	All stakeholders	Date of next review	April 2027

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1. Policy Statement

SHAWIN is committed to promoting equality, diversity, inclusion, dignity, fairness, and respect throughout all areas of its work and community engagement activities. The organisation aims to provide an inclusive, welcoming, safe, and supportive environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and with dignity regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, language, culture, or any other protected characteristic.

SHAWIN recognises that equality, diversity, and inclusion are fundamental to effective community engagement, responsible governance, safeguarding, wellbeing, social cohesion, and public trust. The organisation is committed to ensuring that no individual is disadvantaged, excluded, treated less favourably, harassed, victimised, or discriminated against in relation to access to services, volunteering opportunities, community activities, support arrangements, recruitment, partnership working, or organisational engagement.

The organisation values diversity and recognises that individuals from different backgrounds, cultures, experiences, beliefs, and communities contribute positively to stronger, safer, and more inclusive communities. SHAWIN therefore seeks to create environments in which differences are respected, participation is encouraged, and barriers to inclusion are challenged appropriately and sensitively.

Any form of discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimisation, hate-based behaviour, exclusion, or unfair treatment connected to organisational activities will be treated seriously and may result in appropriate action being taken in accordance with organisational procedures, safeguarding arrangements, volunteer expectations, disciplinary processes, or partnership agreements where applicable.

The organisation will monitor the implementation of this policy through ongoing governance oversight, operational review, community feedback, safeguarding arrangements, equality monitoring, and continuous improvement processes.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all trustees, employees, volunteers, contractors, beneficiaries, community members, visitors, partner organisations, external stakeholders, and individuals acting on behalf of SHAWIN.

The policy applies across all organisational activities including:

- community engagement activities
- wellbeing initiatives
- support services
- outreach activities
- volunteering opportunities
- events and community programmes
- partnership activities
- recruitment and selection processes
- online engagement and communication
- governance and operational activities

The organisation expects all individuals engaging with SHAWIN to uphold the principles outlined within this policy and to contribute positively towards creating inclusive, respectful, safe, and welcoming environments.

3. Organisational Commitment

SHAWIN is committed to advancing equality of opportunity, promoting inclusion, eliminating discrimination, and fostering positive relationships between individuals and communities from diverse backgrounds.

The organisation recognises that inequality, discrimination, exclusion, and social disadvantage can negatively affect wellbeing, community participation, mental health, confidence, opportunities, and access to support services. SHAWIN is therefore committed to identifying and reducing barriers that may prevent individuals from participating fully in community life or accessing support and opportunities connected to the organisation.

The organisation seeks to promote:

- fairness and equality of opportunity
- dignity and respect
- inclusion and accessibility
- community cohesion
- participation and engagement
- cultural awareness and understanding
- positive mental health and wellbeing
- safe and respectful environments

SHAWIN recognises that equality and inclusion must be embedded throughout organisational culture, operational practice, governance arrangements, safeguarding responsibilities, partnership working, and community engagement activities.

4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy is informed by relevant legislation, statutory guidance, and recognised best practice including:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Care Act 2014
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Public Sector Equality Duty principles
- Charity Commission guidance relating to equality, inclusion, governance, and safeguarding

SHAWIN will fulfil its responsibilities in accordance with applicable equality, diversity, safeguarding, employment, and human rights legislation and will seek to maintain inclusive and non-discriminatory practices throughout all areas of organisational activity.

5. Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees retains overall responsibility for ensuring that equality, diversity, and inclusion are promoted effectively throughout the organisation and that appropriate policies, procedures, monitoring arrangements, and governance oversight are maintained.

Managers, supervisors, trustees, volunteers, and individuals acting on behalf of SHAWIN are responsible for promoting inclusive practice, challenging inappropriate behaviour, supporting equality of opportunity, and ensuring that individuals are treated fairly, respectfully, and consistently.

All individuals engaging with SHAWIN activities are expected to:

- treat others with dignity and respect
- avoid discriminatory or offensive behaviour
- challenge inappropriate conduct where appropriate
- contribute positively towards inclusive environments
- report concerns relating to discrimination, bullying, harassment, or victimisation

The organisation recognises that promoting equality and inclusion is a shared responsibility requiring ongoing awareness, accountability, reflection, and commitment at all levels of the organisation.

6. Community Engagement and Inclusion

SHAWIN recognises the importance of ensuring that community activities, support services, wellbeing initiatives, outreach arrangements, and engagement opportunities are accessible, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of diverse communities.

The organisation will seek to ensure that:

- community activities are delivered in safe and inclusive environments
- communication methods are accessible where reasonably practicable
- individuals are treated fairly and consistently
- barriers to participation are identified and reduced appropriately
- cultural diversity and community differences are respected
- vulnerable or socially excluded individuals are supported appropriately where possible

The organisation acknowledges that some individuals and communities may face additional barriers relating to language, disability, financial hardship, mental health, social isolation, discrimination, cultural expectations, digital exclusion, or access to services. SHAWIN will seek to respond sensitively and appropriately to such circumstances wherever reasonably practicable.

7. Recruitment, Volunteering and Opportunities

SHAWIN is committed to fair, transparent, and inclusive recruitment and volunteering practices. Recruitment, selection, volunteering, and appointment processes will be based on suitability, skills, experience, values, and the needs of the organisation.

The organisation will seek to ensure that:

- recruitment and volunteering opportunities are promoted fairly
- selection processes are objective and non-discriminatory
- individuals are treated consistently and respectfully
- reasonable adjustments are considered where appropriate
- volunteers and staff are supported appropriately within their roles

The organisation recognises the importance of creating opportunities for individuals from diverse backgrounds to participate positively in volunteering, community engagement, and organisational activities.

8. Equality within Organisational Practice

SHAWIN is committed to embedding equality, diversity, inclusion, dignity, and respect throughout operational practice, safeguarding arrangements, governance processes, organisational communication, and community engagement activities.

The organisation will not tolerate:

- discrimination
- bullying or harassment
- victimisation
- hate-based behaviour
- exclusionary practice
- intimidation
- offensive language or behaviour
- abuse connected to protected characteristics

Concerns relating to discrimination, harassment, victimisation, or inappropriate conduct will be taken seriously and managed appropriately in accordance with organisational procedures, safeguarding arrangements, and governance expectations.

9. Harassment, Bullying and Victimisation

SHAWIN recognises that harassment, bullying, intimidation, victimisation, and discriminatory behaviour can have serious effects on individuals' wellbeing, confidence, mental health, dignity, and sense of safety.

Harassment may include:

- offensive or abusive language
- intimidation or threatening behaviour
- discriminatory remarks or conduct
- exclusion or isolation
- inappropriate jokes or comments
- online harassment or cyberbullying
- abuse of authority or position
- behaviour creating hostile or degrading environments

Bullying may involve persistent offensive, intimidating, humiliating, insulting, or abusive behaviour which undermines confidence, wellbeing, dignity, or emotional safety.

The organisation expects all individuals connected to SHAWIN to behave respectfully and responsibly at all times. Any concerns relating to bullying, harassment, discrimination, victimisation, or inappropriate conduct should be reported promptly through appropriate organisational procedures.

10. Complaints and Concerns

SHAWIN is committed to ensuring that concerns, complaints, or allegations relating to equality, diversity, inclusion, discrimination, harassment, or unfair treatment are dealt with fairly, sensitively, confidentially, and without unnecessary delay.

Individuals who feel they have experienced discrimination, bullying, harassment, victimisation, or unfair treatment connected to organisational activities are encouraged to raise concerns through appropriate organisational procedures or with an appropriate representative within SHAWIN.

The organisation will seek to:

- investigate concerns appropriately
- maintain confidentiality where possible
- respond fairly and proportionately
- support individuals affected by concerns
- promote resolution where appropriate
- take action where behaviour breaches organisational expectations

Where necessary, safeguarding procedures, disciplinary processes, partnership arrangements, or external agencies may be involved depending on the nature and seriousness of concerns raised.

11. Monitoring and Review

SHAWIN recognises the importance of monitoring equality, diversity, and inclusion arrangements to support continuous improvement, accountability, fairness, and effective governance.

Monitoring activities may include:

- governance review
- community feedback
- safeguarding monitoring
- complaints monitoring
- participation and engagement review
- operational review processes
- equality impact considerations
- policy review and quality assurance

The organisation will seek to identify barriers, inequalities, concerns, or areas requiring improvement and will take reasonable and proportionate steps to address such matters where appropriate.

12. Training and Awareness

SHAWIN is committed to promoting awareness and understanding of equality, diversity, inclusion, safeguarding, respectful behaviour, and community cohesion throughout the organisation.

Training, induction, and awareness arrangements may include:

- equality and diversity awareness
- safeguarding awareness
- inclusion and accessibility guidance
- safer working practices
- governance and trustee responsibilities
- community engagement expectations

The organisation recognises that promoting equality and inclusion requires ongoing learning, reflection, accountability, and commitment throughout all levels of organisational activity.

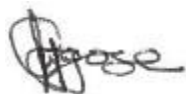
13. Policy Review and Governance

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where legislative, organisational, safeguarding, or operational changes require amendment.

The Board of Trustees retains overall responsibility for monitoring, reviewing, and approving equality, diversity, and inclusion arrangements within SHAWIN to ensure continued compliance with equality legislation, Charity Commission expectations, safeguarding responsibilities, and recognised best practice standards.

Policy Approval

Chairperson's Name: Gertrude Logose



Chairperson's signature

Date: 01/04/2026

