



## **The Shire Horse Society**

### **Harassment & Bullying Policy**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The Shire Horse Society is committed to providing a work environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. We do not tolerate bullying and harassment.
- 1.2. This Policy:
  - a Explains the concepts of 'bullying' and 'harassment'
  - b Sets out our expected standards of behaviour
  - c Sets out the process you should follow if you have a bullying or harassment complaint
  - d Explains how we will deal with any complaints
- 1.3. This Policy applies to everyone who works for us, including employees, members, workers, agency workers, consultants, casual workers, volunteers and interns.
- 1.4. This Policy does not form part of your contract with us. We reserve the right to amend or remove this Policy.

#### **2. What is 'bullying'?**

- 2.1. Bullying is unwanted behaviour from a person or group that is one of the following:
  - a Offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting
  - b An abuse or misuse of power that undermines, humiliates or causes physical or emotional harm
- 2.2. Bullying can take many different forms. Examples of bullying behaviour include:
  - a Spreading malicious rumours about someone
  - b Consistently putting someone down and undermining them
  - c Deliberately giving someone a heavier workload than everyone else
  - d Excluding someone from team social events
- 2.3. Bullying could involve a pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident. It could happen face-to-face, online, by phone or in writing. It can be verbal and non-verbal. It is not always obvious to others.

- 2.4. Although bullying is often connected to a power imbalance, that does not mean that it always involves a more senior person bullying a more junior person. It can also be directed at someone more senior than the bully. It may take the form of spreading rumours, refusing to follow instructions, undermining authority, making fun of or mocking the more senior person or spreading rumours about them.
- 2.5. Constructive and fair feedback about your behaviour or performance from your manager or colleagues is not bullying. It is part of normal employment and management functions.

### **3. What is 'harassment'?**

- 3.1. When bullying or unwanted behaviour is about certain protected characteristics under discrimination law, then we refer to it as 'harassment'. The protected characteristics which apply are:
  - a Sex
  - b Sexual orientation
  - c Race
  - d Religion or belief
  - e Gender reassignment
  - f Age
  - g Disability
- 3.2. Behaviour can still be harassment even if the person being harassed does not complain or ask for it to stop.
- 3.3. We define harassment as behaviour that creates a hostile, humiliating, degrading or similarly offensive environment in relation to a protected characteristic. Name-calling, lewd comments, excluding colleagues, making insensitive jokes and displaying pornographic material are all examples of harassment.
- 3.4. Even if you did not intend to harass someone, if your behaviour has this effect on someone else, then you may be found to have harassed them. They may only be a bystander to behaviour you directed at someone else, but they may still have been harassed.
- 3.5. The law protects people who are harassed because they are thought to have a certain protected characteristic when they do not or they are linked to someone who has a certain protected characteristic even if they don't have it themselves.

### **4. Our position**

- 4.1. The Shire Horse Society will not tolerate bullying or harassment by anyone working for us.
- 4.2. We expect you to treat people with respect and dignity in all communications you have with them, whether face-to-face, over the phone or in writing.

- 4.3. Our Trustees are trained to recognise behaviours which may amount to bullying and harassment and to intervene
- 4.4. As a society, we are guided by our core values, including integrity and respect. These values impact the way we view workplace behaviours and our expectations of you. Our managers are trained to recognise behaviours which may amount to bullying and harassment. We will provide regular training to everyone on what our values mean and explain how you must 'live' these values in your interactions with others.
- 4.5. We have clear and universal standards of workplace conduct
  - a Bad and/or offensive language or gestures of any nature should not be used in the workplace, whether directed at a particular person or not.
  - b Inappropriate images or other content should not be viewed or shared at work.
  - c You should always think before making a joke in the workplace – could anyone be upset or offended by what you say?
  - d You should never invade colleagues' personal space.
  - e You should not exclude colleagues unfairly from discussions or events.
  - f You should not use crude humour.
  - g You should not use an aggressive tone or aggressive language when speaking with colleagues.
  - h You should not be physically aggressive towards colleagues.
  - i You should not gossip about your colleagues.

## **5. Raising a complaint**

- 5.1. If you believe that you are being bullied or harassed, then you should first consider whether it would be appropriate to discuss the matter informally with the person who is bullying or harassing you. Sometimes, people do not realise how their actions are impacting others and it might be that an informal discussion can resolve the issue and reset behaviours.
- 5.2. If you do not feel comfortable approaching the person yourself, or a direct approach has not worked, then you should refer to our *Grievance or Complaints Policy*, which sets out a clear process for raising complaints (both informally with an appropriate manager, and formally, if you prefer).
- 5.3. We may, if we think it necessary, separate you from the person you are complaining about whilst we investigate. This is not a prejudgment of your complaint. It is simply a way to stop things from getting worse during the investigation.
- 5.4. If you notice behaviour of others which may be in breach of this Policy, then you should first consider whether it is appropriate to challenge the behaviour yourself. Only do so if you feel comfortable. If you don't feel comfortable, or a direct approach has not worked, then please report the matter to your Simon Livesey, Safeguarding Trustee who will investigate.

- 5.5. If we decide that your complaint is not upheld, we will always tell you why in accordance with our *Grievance or Complaints Policy*. Regardless of the formal outcome, we will consider ways of improving your relationship with your colleague[s] and may, for example, suggest mediation or offer training.
- 5.6. Anyone who raises an allegation of bullying or harassment with us in good faith will not be subjected to any detriment as a result.

## **6. Confidentiality**

- 6.1. To protect the interests of the person complained about, the person who has raised the complaint and any others who may be involved as witnesses or otherwise, confidentiality will be maintained during any investigation process as far as is possible.
- 6.2. If you fail to maintain confidentiality when you are involved in some way in a bullying and harassment complaint, then you may face action under our *Disciplinary Policy*.
- 6.3. We may place information and documents about a complaint raised by or about you on your personnel file. These will be processed in accordance with our *Data Protection Policy*.

## **7. Breaches of this Policy**

- 7.1. Any breaches of this Policy will be handled under our *Disciplinary Policy* and may result in action including dismissal for gross misconduct or the termination of your membership with us.

## **8. Useful links**

- 8.1. The following internal policies contain additional guidance:
  - a *Grievance Policy*
  - b *Disciplinary Policy*
  - c *Data Protection Policy*
  - d *Complaints Policy*
  - e Whistleblowing Policy
  - f Bribery Policy

## **9. Administration of the Harassment & Bullying Policy**

- 9.1. Simon Livesey, Safeguarding Trustee is responsible for the administration of the Harassment & Bullying Policy. Should you have any feedback, please contact [*insert contact details*].