

# **Wednesbury Sports Union**

## **Sport Equity Policy**

**February 2009**

# Equality Policy

## Sports Equality Statement:

This policy has been produced by the Management Committee of Wednesbury Sports Union to provide a framework for the organisation, and its constituent clubs, to address and implement a coordinated approach to sports equality issues. The policy will be adopted by the Sports Union and subsequently by each of the constituent clubs and is designed to ensure that all services provided are equally accessible for all people who wish to participate in sport and active recreation.

The purpose of Wednesbury Sports Union is to advocate and champion participation, enjoyment and success through sport, physical activity and active recreation. It is a role of the Sports Union to build accessible, integrated and progressive pathways in order to achieve the national target of 1% increase in participation year on year, which is reflected in the Sandwell Local Area Agreement – NI 8 target.

## What is Sports Equality?

Sports Equality is about fairness in sport, equality of access, recognising inequalities and taking steps to address them. It is about changing the culture and structure of sport to ensure that it becomes equally accessible to all members of society, whatever their race, gender, age, religion, ability, sexual orientation or social / economic status.

Sports Equality is about making sure that all people have an opportunity to realise their talent and fulfil their potential through the sporting pathway.

Sports Equality is about an individual's responsibility to challenge discriminatory practice and promote inclusion.

Sport England's Participation in Sport Equity Index 2002 shows that the key priority groups listed below demonstrate low levels of participation in sport either as players, coaches, officials or volunteers:

- ***Black and ethnic Minorities***
- ***Women and Girls***
- ***Disability***
- ***Social class 6, 7 & 8***

This is reinforced by the results of the two Sport England Active People Surveys (2006 & 2008) showing that participation in sport and active recreation in the West Midlands is below the national average for virtually every equity category. Local government Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) measures also highlighted these priority groups.

## **Defining Sport**

The broad definition of sport, adopted by the Council of Europe, is used within this policy.

‘Sport means all forms of physical activity, which through casual or organised participation, aims at improving physical fitness and mental wellbeing, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels’

**Council of Europe, European Sports Charter (1993)**

## **Why Have A Policy?**

The adoption and implementation of a sport equality policy is necessary to help to eliminate discrimination and provide equal opportunity to services for all sectors of the population of Wednesbury.

A policy also ensures that both the culture and structure of sports are addressed and challenged to ensure accessibility informs local communities, key partners and organisations of what the service is doing and what it plans to do to promote good practice and reduce inequality. The policy will also

- Support Sport England’s key areas of Widening Access and Increasing Participation.

## **Statement of Intent**

Wednesbury Sports Union wishes to act as an exemplar for equality and diversity within its sphere of influence. In doing so, the Sport Union commits to promoting good equitable practice within the organisation and with partners.

Wednesbury Sports Union will consult with key organisations involved with equality in sport to ensure that its services and programmes are based on current research and good practice.

Wednesbury Sports Union will take positive action to deliver services and programmes that are appropriate and accessible to every individual in Wednesbury.

Wednesbury Sports Union will ensure that responsibility and accountability for equality is placed firmly at the most senior level within the organisation and delivery is the responsibility of all constituent clubs, their volunteers and partners.

Wednesbury Sports Union will deliver on this policy by building equality and diversity into all aspects of its work. All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that employees, volunteers and partner organisations are committed to this policy.

Wednesbury Sports Union will ensure that no volunteer, employee, partner, participant, carer or spectator at a Sports Union facility, activity session or event receives less favourable treatment on grounds of race, gender, age, religion, ability, sexual orientation or social / economic status.

Wednesbury Sports Union will take positive action through advocacy, training and mentoring to achieve a voluntary workforce and structure that is representative of the population of the locality and the Borough.

Wednesbury Sports Union will ensure that its volunteers, employees, partners, participants, carers and spectators are able to conduct their activities free from harassment or intimidation.

## **Legal Framework**

Wednesbury Sports Union recognises its statutory obligations under the following legislation:

- Equal Pay Act 1970 (amended 1983)
- Sex Discrimination Acts 1975 & 1986
- Race Relations Act 1976 & Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and subsequent amendments (2005)
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Employment Act 2002
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Equality Act 2006
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

See Appendix 1 for more information about each Act.

Wednesbury Sports Union recognises its legal duties to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, age, religion, ability, sexual orientation or social / economic status throughout all of its activities.

## **Policy Objectives: Wednesbury Sports Union will**

- Work towards the implementation of The Equality Standard: A Framework for Sport ([www.sportengland.org/equity](http://www.sportengland.org/equity)) through the Black Country Sports Partnership
- Actively promote both existing and new policies which reference equity to key partners and organisations.
- Recognise barriers that traditionally disenfranchise target groups, and develop appropriate intervention strategies (e.g. outreach) that will ensure their fuller involvement with sport and active recreation programmes.

- Be committed to widening access to sport and physical activity to increase participation by under-represented groups
- Provide and utilise facilities that are accessible to everyone
- Provide information in various formats that are accessible to everyone with reference to publications of specific materials when requested.
- Seek to address individual's financial circumstances which prevent access to facilities and services.
- Consult with key organisations regarding the services that are offered with reference to equity and inclusion.
- Encourage clubs, community groups and other key organisations to be involved in the planning, decision making and implementation with reference to events, programmes and initiatives which promote equality.
- Provide adequate training and equipment to support planned events and programmes.
- Liaise with Women's Sports Foundation (**WSF**), Sporting Equals (**CRE and Sport England**) and English Federation of Disability Sport (**EFDS**) and Sports Coach UK (**SCUK**) through the Black Country Sports Partnership and Sport England's Single System for Sport to further encourage good practice relating to equity and to follow their guidelines.

### **Implementation – General**

Wednesbury Sports Union will:

- Agree an Annual Management Plan within which specific roles, responsibilities and resources are allocated and targets set. This will include recognition of equality issues and specific actions to address these.
- Review progress against the Plan every six months as a minimum.
- Achieve Intermediate and Advanced Sport Equality Standards within 3 years i.e. by the end of 2012.

### **Implementation – Volunteering and Employment**

Wednesbury Sports Union will:

- Ensure that training needs of all volunteers and employees in relation to this policy and sports equity are identified and addressed
- Ensure that all volunteers and employees have an equality objective, performance against which will be reviewed as part of annual appraisals
- Ensure that this policy is circulated to and is understood by all volunteers, employees, partners and consultants and this will form part of any recruitment and subsequent induction process
- Take positive action to ensure that practices are non-discriminatory
- Ensure that no applicant for either a volunteer position or employment will be placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which are not necessary to the performance of the job

- Take positive action through advocacy, training and mentoring to develop the skills of individuals from under-represented groups so that they can better develop their careers within sport in Sandwell
- Ensure that all appointed contractors demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practices of equality

### **Implementation – Service Delivery**

Wednesbury Sports Union will:

- Regularly liaise with key equality and community organisations in Sandwell and sub-regionally on the service on offer
- Work with these organisations to target specific groups
- Strive to ensure that the facilities provided and that are utilised are accessible to everyone
- Support and influence the Borough based network groups to address equality issues within their action plans

### **Implementation – Promotion and Communication**

Wednesbury Sports Union will:

- Communicate and check understanding of this policy as widely as possible
- Promote positive images and text relating to under-represented groups across a wide range of publications and formats
- Offer a wide range of communication methods and formats to meet the different needs of the community

### **Positive Action**

Wednesbury Sports Union acknowledges that certain groups are traditionally under-represented in sports participation, coaching and management. These groups are people from black and minority ethnic communities, people with disabilities, people on low incomes and women and girls. Positive action will be taken and specific programmes introduced to increase the inclusion of people from these and other identified under-represented groups in sport in Wednesbury and more widely in Sandwell. Targets and measures will be set in the Annual Management Plan.

Wednesbury Sports Union will however continue to encourage participation and involvement by those groups in society who are already well represented in sport.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Management Committee of Wednesbury Sports Union has the responsibility to regularly monitor and evaluate the policy, practices, procedures and operations on an ongoing basis.

The Management Committee of Wednesbury Sports Union is responsible for ensuring that this equity policy is followed and for dealing with any actual or potential breaches. This policy will be reviewed every two years and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the Annual Management Plan will be co-ordinated by the Committee Chairman.

### **Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures**

Wednesbury Sports Union regards discrimination (direct or indirect), victimisation and harassment as defined in Appendix 2 as serious misconduct. Any volunteer or employee of the Sports Union or a constituent club who discriminates against any other person will be liable to appropriate disciplinary action.

Any participant, volunteer or employee who believes that she/he has experienced inequitable treatment within the scope of this policy may raise the matter through Wednesbury Sports Union's Grievance Procedure.

Any partner, volunteer, participant or spectator using a facility managed by, or involved in a programme or event provided by the Sport and Physical Activity Section, who believe that she/he may have experienced inequitable treatment within the scope of this policy may raise the matter with the Chairman or through Wednesbury Sports Union's Complaints Procedure.

<b>Equality Policy</b>	<b>Date of Revision</b> 12/03/2009	<b>Signatories</b> Ian Morris - Chairman
	<b>Date of Review</b> March 2011	Andrew Webb - President

### **Appendix 1 – The Legal Framework**

**Equal Pay Act 1970 (amended 1983)** – gives an individual a right to the same contractual pay and benefits as a person of the opposite sex in the same employment, where the man and the woman are doing like work, or work related as equivalent, or work that is proved to be of equal value.

**Sex Discrimination Acts 1975 & 1986** – prohibits direct and indirect sex discrimination against individuals in the areas of employment, education, the provision of services, facilities and services and in the disposal or management of premises. It also prohibits discrimination in employment against married people.

**Race Relations Act 1976 & Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000** – makes it unlawful to discriminate against anyone on the grounds of race, colour, nationality (including citizenship) or ethnic or national origin. All racial groups are protected from discrimination. The Act applies to the fields of employment, planning, housing, the exercise of public functions, provision of goods, facilities and services and education.

Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and subsequent amendments (2005) – prohibits discrimination against disabled people in a range of different situations including employment, education and the provision of goods and services. In certain circumstances reasonable adjustments must be made for disabled people.

**Protection from Harassment Act 1997** – covers a wide range of conduct and behaviours, including racial or religious motivated harassment and certain types of anti-social behaviour. The Act states a person must not pursue a course of conduct which amounts to harassment of another and which he knows or ought to know amounts to harassment of the other. Harassment is defined as causing alarm or causing distress and a course of conduct, which can include speech, must involve conduct on at least two occasions.

**Human Rights Act 1998** – details various articles the most relevant to the Sport and Physical Activity Section being:

***Right to respect for private and family life***

This says there should be respect for everyone's private and family life, home and correspondence

***Freedom of thought, conscience and religion / Freedom of expression***

This guarantees the right to pass information to other people and to receive information that other people want to give you. It also guarantees the right to hold and express opinions and ideas and hold any religious belief.

***Freedom of association and assembly***

This protects the right to protest peacefully by holding meetings and demonstrations.

***Right to marry and found a family***

This gives men and women the right to marry, as long as they are old enough.

***Prohibition of discrimination***

This includes many types of discrimination, including discrimination on grounds of sex, race, religion and political opinion.

**Employment Act 2002** – is a wide-ranging Act covering new rights to paternity, adoption leave and pay and improvements to the maternity leave scheme; employment tribunal reform; new statutory dismissal and disciplinary procedures (DDPs); new rights for fixed-term employment; new rights for parents of young children to request flexible working and a number of miscellaneous provisions concerning equal pay questionnaires, union learning representatives and dismissal procedures agreements.

**Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003** – protects lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and heterosexuals from discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in employment and vocational training. It outlaws direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

**Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003** - Outlaws direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation in employment and vocational training, of an individual on the grounds of their religion or belief.

**Gender Recognition Act 2004** – provides transsexual people with legal recognition in their acquired gender.

**Equality Act 2006** – sets out to establish the Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR) and define its purpose and functions, to make unlawful discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in the provision of goods, facilities and services, the disposal and management of premises, education, and the exercise of public functions and to create a duty on public authorities to promote equality of opportunity between women and men, and to prohibit sex discrimination in the exercise of public functions.

Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 - Outlaws direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation in employment and vocational training, of an individual on the grounds of their age in employment and vocational training. The national default retirement age is now sixty-five years and compulsory retirement below the age of sixty-five is unlawful.

## **Appendix 2 – Types of Discrimination**

- Direct Discrimination – treating people less favourably than you would treat others in the same circumstances
- Indirect Discrimination – applying a provision, criterion or practice which disadvantages a particular group because fewer of that group can comply with it and the requirement cannot be justified in relation to the job
- Harassment – unwanted conduct that violates people’s dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment
- Victimisation – treating people less favourably because of action they have taken against Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council under one of the relevant Acts

### **Appendix 3 - Key Contacts**

**Sport England: West Midlands**

5<sup>th</sup> Floor

No. 3 Broadway

Five Ways

Birmingham

B15 1BQ

Tel: 0207273 1783

[www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org)

**English Federation of Disability Sport: West Midlands**

House of Sport

University College Worcester

Henwick Grove

Worcester

WR2 6AJ

Tel: 01905 855429

Fax: 01905 855426

Minicom: 01905 855448

Email: [westmidlands@efds.co.uk](mailto:westmidlands@efds.co.uk)

[www.efds.co.uk](http://www.efds.co.uk)

**Sporting Equals**

Commission for Racial Equality

3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Lancaster House

67 Newhall Street

Birmingham B3 1NA

Tel: 0121 710 3014

Email: [sportequal@cre.gov.uk](mailto:sportequal@cre.gov.uk)

[www.cre.gov.uk/speqs](http://www.cre.gov.uk/speqs)

**Women's Sports Foundation**

3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Victoria House

Bloomsbury Square

London WC1B 4SE

Tel: 020 7273 17490

Email: [info@wsf.org.uk](mailto:info@wsf.org.uk)

[www.wsf.org.uk](http://www.wsf.org.uk)

**Commission for Racial Equality**

3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

Lancaster House

67 Newhall Street

Birmingham

B3 1NA

**Disability Rights Commission**

Arndale House

Arndale Centre  
Manchester  
Lancashire  
M4 3AQ

**Sports Coach UK**  
114 Cardigan Road  
Headingley  
Leeds  
LS6 3BJ