

Tewkesbury Junior Anglers

Tewkesbury Junior Anglers (TJA) Equality and Diversity Policy

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1. Policy Statement

Tewkesbury Junior Anglers (TJA) is wholeheartedly committed to promoting equality of opportunity, celebrating diversity, and fostering an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued, respected, and safe. We believe that angling is an activity for all, and we strive to ensure that our club is accessible and welcoming. TJA is opposed to all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.

2. Aim and Ethos of TJA in Relation to Equality and Diversity

- **Aim:** TJA aims to ensure that no individual involved with the club – whether a junior member, parent/guardian, volunteer, committee member, or guest – is discriminated against or receives less favourable treatment on any grounds. We aim to eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote a culture of respect and fairness.
- **Ethos:** TJA believes that diversity enriches our club and the sport of angling. Our ethos is to create a supportive and inclusive atmosphere where everyone has the opportunity to participate, learn, and achieve their potential, free from prejudice, discrimination, and harassment. We encourage respect for others and a positive attitude towards diversity.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all aspects of TJA's activities, including membership applications, participation in sessions and events, volunteer recruitment and involvement, and all interactions between individuals associated with the club. It applies to all junior members, parents/guardians, volunteers, committee members, and visitors.

4. Legal Framework

This policy is developed in accordance with the principles of the Equality Act 2010 (UK).

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5. Protected Characteristics (Equality Act 2010)

TJA is committed to ensuring that individuals are not discriminated against based on the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010:

- Age: Protecting people of all ages.
- Disability: Protecting individuals who have or have had a disability.
- Gender Reassignment: Protecting individuals who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone a process to reassign their sex.
- Marriage and Civil Partnership: Protecting individuals who are married or in a civil partnership (in employment contexts, less directly applicable to junior membership but important for volunteers).
- Pregnancy and Maternity: Protecting women who are pregnant or have recently given birth.
- Race: Protecting individuals based on colour, nationality, or ethnic or national origins.
- Religion or Belief: Protecting individuals of all religions or beliefs, including lack of belief.
- Sex: Protecting men and women.
- Sexual Orientation: Protecting individuals based on their sexual orientation (e.g., lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual).

6. Forms of Discrimination

TJA will not tolerate any form of discrimination, including:

- Direct Discrimination: Treating someone less favourably than others because of a protected characteristic.
- Indirect Discrimination: Applying a rule or policy that disadvantages a group with a particular protected characteristic, without a justifiable reason.
- Harassment: Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that violates an individual's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment.
- Victimisation: Treating someone unfairly because they have made or supported a complaint related to discrimination or harassment.

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7. TJA's Commitments

To uphold our commitment to equality and diversity, TJA will:

- Strive to ensure our activities, facilities (where under our control or influence), and communications are accessible to all, making reasonable adjustments where practicable for disabled individuals.
- Promote a welcoming and inclusive environment where bullying, harassment, victimisation, and unlawful discrimination are not tolerated.
- Treat all individuals with fairness, dignity, and respect.
- Ensure that the selection of members (where applicable) and the recruitment and progression of volunteers are based on aptitude, ability, and adherence to TJA's values and policies (as per our Safer Recruitment Policy).
- Provide awareness and, where appropriate, training to volunteers on equality, diversity, and inclusion principles.
- Take all complaints of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation seriously, investigating them promptly and impartially.
- Regularly review our practices, procedures, and policies to ensure they actively promote equality and diversity and do not inadvertently discriminate.
- Challenge discriminatory language, attitudes, or behaviour if observed or reported during TJA activities.
- Aim to reflect the diversity of our local community within our membership and volunteer base, actively encouraging participation from all sections of society.
- Communicate our commitment to equality and diversity to all members, parents/guardians, and volunteers.

8. Responsibilities

- TJA Committee: Holds overall responsibility for ensuring this policy is implemented effectively, monitored, and reviewed. They are responsible for leading by example.
- Volunteers (Coaches, Helpers, Committee Members): Are expected to actively uphold this policy, act as positive role models, treat everyone with respect, challenge inappropriate behaviour or comments, and report any concerns related to discrimination or harassment.
- Junior Members and Parents/Guardians: Are expected to treat all other members, volunteers, and individuals with respect and adhere to TJA's Codes of Conduct, which reflect the principles of this policy.

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9. Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

TJA is committed to providing a fair and transparent process for addressing complaints related to discrimination, harassment, or breaches of this Equality and Diversity Policy.

* Raising a Concern/Grievance:

* Individuals who feel they have been subjected to discrimination, harassment, or unfair treatment, or who have witnessed such behaviour, are encouraged to report it.

* Where appropriate and if the individual feels comfortable, an attempt at informal resolution can be made (e.g., a polite request for the behaviour to stop).

* If informal resolution is not appropriate or successful, a formal concern or grievance should be raised with a TJA Committee Member (e.g., the Club Chair, Secretary, or the Named Safeguarding Lead, Christopher Birch, especially if the concern also involves safeguarding issues).

* Concerns should ideally be submitted in writing (if possible) to ensure clarity, but verbal reports will also be accepted and documented.

- Investigation:
 - The TJA Committee will ensure that all formal complaints are investigated promptly, fairly, thoroughly, and impartially.
 - The investigation will be conducted by at least two committee members (where possible, not directly involved in the allegation).
 - All parties involved will be given an opportunity to provide their account. Confidentiality will be maintained as far as is reasonably possible during the investigation.
 - Outcome and Disciplinary Action:
 - If, following an investigation, a complaint is upheld, TJA will take appropriate action.
- For Volunteers: Depending on the severity, actions may range from informal discussion and mediation, a requirement for further training, a formal warning, suspension from duties, or termination of their volunteering role with TJA, in line with principles of fairness and proportionality. This will align with other relevant policies (e.g., volunteer agreement, Code of Conduct).
- For Junior Members: Depending on the severity and age of the child, actions will be managed in line with TJA's Behaviour Management Policy and Code of Conduct. This may involve discussions with parents/guardians, warnings, educational measures, temporary suspension from activities, or, in serious or repeated cases, termination of membership.
- For Parents/Guardians or other individuals: Action may include a warning or, if behaviour persists, being barred from attending TJA activities.
- Appeals: Individuals subject to formal disciplinary action will be informed of any right to appeal the decision, and the process for doing so (e.g., appeal to a different panel of committee members not involved in the original decision).

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- Support: TJA will consider what support may be appropriate for individuals who have made a complaint or been subjected to discrimination or harassment.

10. Monitoring and Review

The TJA Committee will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and will review it annually, or sooner if required due to changes in legislation or circumstances, to ensure it remains fit for purpose and effectively promotes equality and diversity within the club.