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EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Introduction

St Austell AOS is a society open to anyone sharing our interest in Amateur Theatre regardless of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, sex or sexual orientation, age, disability, religion or belief, party political views or socio-economic status. We call these, together with any other criterion not relevant to the point at issue a “Protected Characteristic”.

This policy sets out our approach to equal opportunities and the avoidance of discrimination. Our Committee has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy, and we ask that all members do what they can to help make sure that the policy works in practice.

Aim

All of our members, ticket holders, and other users of the facilities we use have the right to be treated fairly, equitably and with respect.

St Austell AOS aims to promote equality of access, equality of treatment and equality of opportunity, and to challenge discrimination wherever it occurs.

We will consider very carefully all feedback, and take reasonable steps to respond to suggestions and complaints as quickly as we can.

Equality of Access

St Austell AOS will try to meet the access requirements of all our members, ticket holders [and other users of our facilities]. All of our meeting, rehearsal venues and performance spaces are accessible to wheelchair users. We can produce papers and scripts in large fonts for those with visual impairments. If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can consider what other reasonable adjustments or support may be appropriate.

Equality of Treatment

St Austell AOS is committed to equal treatment of all our members, ticket holders and other users of the facilities we use. We ask that all our suppliers abide by an equal opportunities policy too.

We will not treat any person less fairly than others on the grounds of any Protected Characteristic. We will not expect any person to comply with membership requirements that are different to those that apply to others due only to a Protected Characteristic.

We do not allow any person to be victimised or harassed.

Equality of Opportunity

We will not discriminate or in any way treat anyone less favourably due to a Protected Characteristic. We acknowledge that some casting decisions are based on the requirements of a script, and we will work with rights holders when relevant to achieve equality of opportunity.

However, equality of opportunity does not just apply to casting decisions. We will also aim for equality of opportunity when seeking new members and new committee members, and when selecting members of the creative team, backstage and front of house volunteers.

When appropriate, we will take positive steps to meet the needs of underrepresented communities, especially when making invitations to our events and productions.

Anti-discrimination procedure

St Austell AOS will not tolerate harassment or other unlawful discriminatory behaviour, whether physical or verbal and will ensure that appropriate action is taken whenever it occurs.

Any person guilty of unacceptable behaviour may be asked to leave the meeting, event or production, may be suspended from the company or any appointment or role, and may be suspended from being a member of St Austell AOS (see Disciplinary and Grievance Policy). We reserve a right to take other appropriate action as our committee deems fit.

Complaints Procedure

In the event that any person feels that they have suffered discrimination in any way, we ask that the following procedure be followed:

1. The matter should be reported to the Chair or another member of the Executive Committee. The report should include as much detail about the nature, time and place of the objectionable behaviour as possible.
2. Please include any suggestions on how the situation can be addressed to your satisfaction.
3. The Committee will consider the complaint as soon as possible. You will be kept informed about the decision-making processes and actions taken. A record will be archived by the Secretary.
4. All information will normally be treated confidentially but any allegation of a criminal offence, or any safeguarding concerns, will be passed to the appropriate authorities depending on the nature of the incident.

This policy will be regularly monitored by the Committee of the society and will be subject to biennial review.

POLICY HISTORY

Policy Date	Summary of Change	Contact	Ratified Date	Implemented Date	Review Date
19/05/2022	New Policy	Chair	16/06/2022	16/06/2022	16/06/2024
01/06/2024	Reviewed, no changes made	Governance Lead	19/06/2024	19/06/2024	June 2026