

Equal Opportunities Policy

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Shopmobility Manchester understands that, in society, groups or individuals have been disadvantaged in the past and, as a result, is committed to taking positive steps to redress the balance. Shopmobility Manchester, therefore, commits itself to the task of establishing and developing an equal opportunities policy for employment, membership, volunteers, and management committee.

Shopmobility Manchester believes that in providing a service to the community it is essential to eliminate discrimination and to promote good relations and equality of opportunity.

In addition to its **moral responsibility**, Shopmobility Manchester accepts the **statutory requirements** laid out in the Race relations act 1976, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the disabled persons (Employment) Acts 1944 and 1958, and more recently the Disability Discrimination Act 1996. We will also ensure that all individuals connected with the provision of services by Shopmobility Manchester will not hinder this policy, and we will ensure this by making known its commitment to equal opportunities.

Shopmobility Manchester is committed to a program of positive action to make its Equal Opportunities policy fully effective.

1. EMPLOYMENT

Shopmobility Manchester is striving to be an **equal opportunities employer**.

- Shopmobility Manchester will ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment than another because of their colour, creed, ethnic or national origin, disability, age, sex, marital status, sexuality, employment status, trade union activity or responsibility for dependents.
- Shopmobility Manchester will ensure that no applicant or employee is placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions of employment, and that provision for disabled access, flexible hours and so on will be arranged wherever possible.

2. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

- Shopmobility Manchester wishes to ensure the widest response to any employment vacancies and will take positive steps to inform local disadvantaged groups of all vacancies and of its equal opportunities policy.
- Shopmobility Manchester recognises the advantages of recruiting individuals with specialist knowledge and experience of local needs.
- Shopmobility Manchester only asks questions relevant to qualifications and experience: questions on marital status, age, children and religion are not permitted. No discrimination is made on the basis of postal code or address.
- Shopmobility Manchester will ensure that those making selection decisions will not discriminate, whether consciously or unconsciously, in making those decisions.
- At interview, all questions will be strictly relevant to the job. In no case will questions be asked or assumptions be made about a person's personal and domestic circumstances or plans.
- Disabled people will be guaranteed an interview provided that they fulfil the criteria for the post.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Shopmobility Manchester recognises that in order for the organisation to become more effective and serve the needs of the community it must appeal to all sections of the community.

Shopmobility Manchester will:

- Regularly review its membership to ensure that people from all areas of the community are encouraged to join and that no individuals or groups are discriminated against.
- Introduce application forms, newsletters and any other information for membership or the general public in various formats, such as large print, Braille, Cassette and translated.
- Target specific organisations to ensure that the information about the service reaches individuals and groups across the whole community.
- Issue an Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form to new and existing members and users of the service.
- Shopmobility Manchester recognises the importance of showing positive images of people of different ethnic origin and people with disabilities. Any publicity will reflect this.

4. VOLUNTEERS

Shopmobility Manchester recognises that individuals from under-represented groups may face discrimination in voluntary activity, just as in their other life experiences.

- Shopmobility Manchester will strive to achieve a volunteer workforce whose composition reflects that of the wider community.
- Shopmobility Manchester will ensure that all of its activities and practical projects attract people from all sections of the community and that the activities, wherever possible, do not discriminate against any individual or group.
- In order to attract volunteers from the wider community, Shopmobility Manchester will target appropriate media and local resources.
- Shopmobility Manchester will ensure that volunteers will receive equal treatment as paid staff.
- Shopmobility Manchester will ensure that all paid employees responsible for volunteers will promote equal opportunities.
- Shopmobility Manchester will ensure that all volunteers will not discriminate against any individual or group and this will be achieved by providing equal opportunities training.

5. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Shopmobility Manchester recognises the effectiveness of a user-led Management Committee and this is reflected in the structure of the committee. This means that:- this organisation is run by disabled people, for disabled people. Shopmobility Manchester recognises that even though the Management Committee consists mainly of disabled people it still requires representation from the wider community, such as members of different ethnic origins.

- Shopmobility Manchester will target specific local groups to obtain membership and representation from the wider community.
- Shopmobility Manchester will target members of different ethnic origins for election, who are currently under-represented on the Management Committee. This is required to achieve a true representation of the membership, and of the community it operates in.

6. TRAINING

Shopmobility Manchester recognises that training plays an important role in enabling people who experience discrimination to gain access to employment and volunteer opportunities in the organisation.

Shopmobility Manchester will:

- Ensure that **training opportunities are equally available to all staff**, volunteers, management committee and members.
- Strive to ensure that, in order that discrimination does not occur in training, the principles laid down in this document will be addressed at all stages of the training process, from planning and organising to delivery and evaluation.
- Provide each employee and volunteer with a **Personal Development programme** and the training needs of each individual will be developed accordingly.

7. MONITORING THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

An equal opportunities document is not a static document. It is essential that it is regularly monitored, reviewed and modified.

- Shopmobility Manchester will review their Equal Opportunities policy on an annual basis.
- The review will monitor equal opportunities practice and procedure, and make recommendations, if necessary for improvement and change as appropriate.
- The review will monitor the composition of the membership, and members will be asked to complete an equal opportunities monitoring form. (Please note this action is voluntary for the membership)
- The Management Committee will be required to complete an equal opportunities monitoring form.
- All volunteers, they will be required to complete an equal opportunities monitoring form.
- All staff and job applicants will be asked to fill in an **equal opportunities monitoring form**, asking for information on gender, ethnic origin and disability.

8. GRIEVANCES

- Shopmobility Manchester will ensure that any employee, job applicant, volunteer and management committee member who feels that they are being treated unfairly and contrary to the principles of the equal opportunities policy, will have their case heard fairly under the agreed grievance procedures.
- Shopmobility Manchester will ensure that any member or individual who feels that they are being treated unfairly and contrary to the principles of the equal opportunities policy will be entitled to make a complaint through the Complaints procedure.