

Friends of MV Freedom
Charity Number 283955
Equal Opportunities Policy

1. General Statement of policy

Friends of MV Freedom believes in the importance of equal opportunities within the charity. The Charity must ensure that equal opportunities exist wherever possible within the organisation. There may be new forms of discrimination to be challenged. To meet these challenges, the Charity aims to develop a culture of continual improvement. All members need to feel free to talk about issues of equality.

There are various forms of unfair discrimination. These may be direct and based on prejudice or may be based on lack of awareness and understanding. It may be something that is seen as 'normal' in some organisations.

The charity is committed to equality and will not tolerate discrimination with regard to race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, sex, gender, sexual orientation, marital partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, disability, religion or belief, age, or any other grounds on which it is, or becomes, unlawful to discriminate under the laws of England, Wales and Scotland (referred to as Protected Characteristics)

The Charity does not allow expression of Political or Religious beliefs within the organisation, which promote prejudice and/or discrimination.

All members must work to prevent and, if necessary, stop unfair discrimination within the charity. Members will strive to create a welcoming, positive and safe working environment for everyone.

Friends of MV Freedom will take positive action to prevent discrimination by promoting Equality of Opportunity. The Charity will allow everyone the chance to use their skills towards a common aim – *"Providing access to the sea for people living with disability"*

2. Delivery of service to clients

The 'Clients' of MV Freedom include all members of the public who either use our Vessel or who interact with the Charity at events or by any form of communication. It includes people working with us from the voluntary and the public sector, as well as our volunteers and trustees.

The Charity will:

- (i) treat everyone who has contact with the charity, for whatever reason, with dignity, courtesy and respect.
- (ii) plan the services in a way that is fair for people with any protected characteristic. In particular we will plan for what people with a range of impairments might reasonably need or expect.
- (iii) understand what services are required by different sections of the community.

- (iv) not permit discriminatory advertisements or news items to appear on our publications or media presentations.

The principles of non-discrimination and equal opportunities also apply to the way in which members treat visitors, clients, customers, suppliers and former members.

4. Recruitment & selection of volunteers

- (i) The Trustees will seek to ensure that opinions of the Trustees and volunteers, reflect those of the local community, where possible.
- (ii) The Charity has a Recruitment & Selection Procedure for accepting applications from potential members. This is to ensure an effective but fair recruitment process using Equal Opportunities principles.
- (iii) Applicants for voluntary work with Friends of MV Freedom will be given a copy of the Equal Opportunities Statement.

5. Protection for members and partners

- (i) Friends of MV Freedom will not tolerate its members or partners being harassed by anyone whilst attending events or crewing on our vessel. The charity will take action should an incident be reported.
- (ii) Any member of staff who feels they have been subjected to inappropriate treatment should inform the Board of Trustees. They can do so informally through a mentor, a Trustee, or through the 'Resolving concerns' process.
- (iii) Friends of MV Freedom considers discrimination to be a disciplinary offence.

6. Monitoring and evaluation

The Board of Trustees has responsibility for reviewing how effective the charity is promoting equal opportunities. The Board of Trustees has set up a procedure, through the Resolving Concerns Policy, to deal with complaints or grievance.

7. Changes to version

This policy will be reviewed biannually by the Trustees' named Owner. The policy will then be endorsed by the Board and this action will be minuted.

Version 1.1 – Adopted 5 Dec 24

Review in Nov 2026