PTBC EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

Core Purpose
The policy ensures fair, respectful, and non-discriminatory access to the club for members, non-members, employees, volunteers, and visiting teams. It aims to make bowls enjoyable and accessible to everyone.

Management Committee Responsibilities
The Committee commits to:
- Setting standards and values promoting inclusive participation at all levels.
- Eliminating discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion/belief, ability/disability.
- Ensuring fair treatment of all employees, members, visitors, and teams.
- Providing equal access to club activities, competitions, and events.
- Taking action against harassment, bullying, abuse, or victimisation.
- Investigating complaints immediately, following the club's complaints policy.
- Applying sanctions when discriminatory behaviour is proven.
- Promoting positive action and ongoing training to reduce inequalities.
- Complying with equalities legislation, including Race Relations, Sex - - Discrimination, Disability, and Age Discrimination Acts.

Complaints Procedure
If someone feels discriminated against or harassed:

1. Report in writing to the Secretary or a Committee member, including:
What happened, when, where
- Witness details
- Similar incidents
- Previous complaints
- Desired outcome

2. If the accused is an employee
→ Treated as a disciplinary matter under statutory procedures.

3. If the accused is a non-employee
The Committee may:
- Request written evidence from both parties
- Uphold or dismiss the complaint without a hearing
- Hold a hearing at its discretion
- Impose sanctions: warning, suspension, removal from membership, exclusion from the club, rejection of future membership applications
- Provide written reasons within one month
- Allow appeals to the Sussex County Bowls Association within three months

4. If the complaint concerns the Management Committee itself
→ It may be reported directly to the Sussex County Bowls Secretary.

Key Definitions Included in the Policy
The document explains important terms:
- Direct discrimination – treating someone less favourably due to protected characteristics.
- Indirect discrimination – rules applied equally but disadvantaging certain groups.
- Positive discrimination / positive action – measures to counteract past discrimination.

- Harassment – behaviour causing offence or distress; may be criminal.
- Victimisation – unfair treatment because someone raised a complaint.
- Prejudice, stereotyping, dignity, disadvantage, social exclusion – explained to support understanding of discriminatory behaviour.

Protected Characteristics Recognised by the Club
The club ensures no discrimination based on:

Race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, gender, marital status, disability, sexuality, age, employment status, HIV/AIDS status, religion/faith, unrelated criminal convictions, responsibilities for dependents.