

Launton Village Players' Equal Opportunities Policy
Registered Charity No: 1190149

Launton Village Players (LVP) is an amateur group and believes passionately that the performing arts should be inclusive and available to all.

In this document, "member" refers to any Trustee or non-voting member of LVP.

Aims

Launton Village Players aims to create a safe and welcoming atmosphere for everyone and that all people are treated equally. Subject to statutory provisions, no member or individual to whom we provide services, will be treated less favourably than another because of any of the nine protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010:

- Age (subject to minimum membership age of 16)
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality)
- Religion or belief (including lack of belief)
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Vaccination status

We aim to encourage and support participation from ALL people and especially those who face disadvantage in society.

We aim to promote equal opportunities, eliminate discrimination and eliminate harassment through the following:

- Opposing all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination.
- All volunteers, members, and beneficiaries will be treated fairly and with respect.
- Membership will be open to all. Where we do not already have the expertise within the group to support anyone who needs this then we assess the specific needs on a case by case basis and may look to source support from outside of the group.
- All members will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of individuals will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the LVP.
- All members have a legal and moral obligation not to discriminate and to report incidents of discrimination against any individual or group of individuals.

Accessibility

Launton Village Players' meetings and rehearsals are often held in Launton Parish hall. The main hall and the toilet are both accessible to those with restricted mobility but there is limited accessibility to the kitchen and backstage. The hall is about to undergo a major refurbishment which will improve the accessibility e.g. better access throughout the building, hearing loop. The hall is within a short distance of public transportation as well as having a car park. We have a good team of cast members who are usually willing to offer lifts to anyone who needs one.

Some performances and shows are also held in a pop-up theatre at Hare Leys Farm. This is an accessible site, but can be a bit rough underfoot. Signage is used to warn people about the uneven ground.

We aim to assist those experiencing financial hardship to ensure that they can still access the benefits from membership. In this event, the charity trustees will assess each individual on a case by case basis to ensure a fair and equal resolution.

Some potential new members may need specialist support to enable them to participate. In such cases, the trustees will work with the individual concerned to assess their specific needs. A suitable source of support (which may be from outside the group) may need to be found before the individual can participate.

LVP also aims to provide at least one free performance every year, and aims to have at least one show where a variety of ticket prices are offered, for example, with a discounted performance.

Our pantomime is performed in Cooper School Hall Bicester. Access throughout the school is good for the audience. We aim to have accessible / step-free seating available for all performances. There is no wheelchair access to the stage at the moment. Whilst this is not an issue for our current membership, it is a long-term goal to improve this accessibility, and if the need arose, we would work with the individual concerned to ensure safe and suitable access to the performance area where possible.

We are committed to improving access to the arts for all and will make this a priority when considering events in alternative locations. We are committed to ensuring any person who wishes to, is able to attend our activities so, when necessary, we will review our access requirements to meet the needs of new members.

Diversity (of audience and membership)

Launton Village Players is part of the local community, so we aim to provide a range of events and activities to suit the interests and needs of a wide variety of people. We should be mindful to be open to new ideas, particularly prioritising those which aim to increase the diversity of our repertoire, membership and audience. We will also aim to publicise events as widely as possible to ensure people are aware of the opportunity to attend or join.

Code of Conduct

- Every member of Launton Village Players and those who attend our events should be made to feel equally welcome and included.
- People will be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of age, race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion/beliefs or disability.
- Sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic or otherwise offensive and inflammatory remarks and behaviour are not acceptable and constitute harassment.
- At all times people's feelings will be valued and respected, so as a result, humour that people find offensive will not be used.
- No one will be harassed, abused or intimidated on the ground of his or her race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion/beliefs, disability or age.
- All members will have access to this Equal Opportunities Policy.
- We aim to use training opportunities to help our trustees and members better understand how discrimination occurs and how to prevent it.
- Incidents of harassment will be taken seriously.

Dealing with Discrimination, Harassment and Complaints

- Launton Village Players will support people who feel they have been harassed or discriminated against.
- Launton Village Players will not victimise or treat a person less well because they have raised a complaint.
- If any participant or audience member feels they have been discriminated against by a member of Launton Village Players, or harassed at a Launton Village Players' event, they should raise this with the trustees.
- The trustees will take complaints of discrimination and harassment very seriously, involving expert third parties where necessary.
- The trustees will investigate the complaint, listening to all concerned parties. These parties, especially the complainant and the particular individual or group complained about, will be provided opportunities to speak in a safe environment about their experience.
- The parties concerned will be informed of the process being followed and any dates of meetings to be held, in writing or by e mail. If any meeting is postponed, the parties concerned must be made aware of the new dates and reason for adjournment within 7 days of the original date, or earlier if this is later than the new meeting date.
- If the complaint is against a trustee then that trustee will not be a part of conducting the investigation.
- If the complaint is against a particular individual, this person will have the opportunity to express their point of view, accompanied (if they wish) by a friend as an observer. The person making the complaint will also have this opportunity.
- If the complaint is against Launton Village Players as a whole, the trustees will seek appropriate external assistance.
- Any decision to exclude a person(s) from Launton Village Players due to discriminatory or harassing behaviour will be made by the trustees.
- The trustees will decide any action to take and inform all parties concerned within 14 days of the decision being made.
- Any action taken by the trustees must take into consideration the continued inclusion and safety of any member who has experienced discrimination or harassment.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier if a complaint is made, or there is an incident which casts doubt on the resilience of this policy, or new statutory requirements are made.