

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

1. Policy Statement

SSHC is committed to providing equality of opportunity and to eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation. We aim to create a working environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

SSHC opposes all forms of direct or indirect unlawful discrimination on the basis of the following Protected Characteristics, as defined by the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

2. Our Commitment

SSHC aims to ensure that:

- All employees, workers, volunteers and job applicants are treated fairly and consistently at all stages of employment.
- Everyone has the right to work free from harassment, bullying or unwanted behaviour, whether from colleagues or third parties such as customers, contractors or service users.
- All individuals have equal opportunities to contribute and achieve their potential.
- No one is treated less favourably because they associate with someone who has a Protected Characteristic or because they are perceived to have one.
- A diverse workforce is valued and recognised as improving our services and understanding of our clients and communities.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all aspects of employment and engagement, including:

- Recruitment and selection.
- Training and development.
- Promotion and progression.
- Terms and conditions of employment.

- Grievance and disciplinary procedures.
- Dismissal and redundancy.

4. Fair Employment Practices

SSHC will:

- Use objective, fair and non-discriminatory criteria in recruitment, selection and promotion.
- Base decisions on merit, skills and experience.
- Assess individuals on their ability to carry out the role.
- Ensure equal pay and fair terms and conditions for employees doing the same or broadly similar work, or work of equal value.
- Operate grievance and disciplinary procedures fairly and consistently.
- Make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees and applicants to remove workplace barriers.
- Review this policy regularly to ensure continued compliance with the law.

5. Legal Compliance

This policy is implemented in line with current UK legislation, including but not limited to:

- Equality Act 2010 – Protecting individuals from discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Employment Rights Act 1996 – Ensuring fair treatment in employment practices.
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 – Supporting a safe and inclusive working environment.
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 – Protecting personal data relating to equality matters.

SSHC will comply with all statutory duties and any future amendments to equality and employment legislation.

6. Manager Responsibilities

Managers and supervisors are responsible for:

- Leading by example and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented consistently within their teams.
- Making fair and objective decisions relating to recruitment, training, promotion and performance.
- Taking prompt action to address and investigate complaints of discrimination, harassment or bullying.
- Ensuring reasonable adjustments are considered and implemented where required.
- Attending equality-related training as required.
- Challenging inappropriate behaviour and escalating concerns when necessary.

7. Employee Responsibilities

All employees, workers and volunteers are expected to:

- Treat colleagues, clients and third parties with dignity and respect.
- Comply with this policy and related Company procedures.
- Not engage in discriminatory, harassing or bullying behaviour.
- Report any concerns or suspected breaches of this policy promptly.
- Co-operate with investigations into complaints or incidents.

8. Breaches of the Policy

Any breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, in accordance with SSHC's disciplinary procedures. Serious breaches may be treated as gross misconduct.

9. Reporting Concerns and Complaints

SSHC encourages employees to raise any concerns relating to discrimination, harassment, bullying or breaches of this policy at the earliest opportunity. All concerns will be taken seriously and handled sensitively, fairly and confidentially, where possible.

How to Raise a Concern

An employee may choose to raise a concern through any of the following routes:

1. Line Manager

Where appropriate, employees are encouraged to raise concerns with their line manager in the first instance.

2. Diversity and Inclusion Advisor

SSHC has appointed and trained a Diversity and Inclusion Advisor who is available to provide confidential advice, guidance and support in relation to any equality, diversity or inclusion issues.

Employees may contact the advisor directly at: office@sshconservation.co.uk (marked "Confidential – Diversity and Inclusion Advisor")

The advisor can:

- listen to concerns in confidence;
- provide advice on options available;
- support employees in raising issues formally or informally;
- help ensure concerns are handled appropriately and in line with this policy.

3. Formal Procedures

Where a concern cannot be resolved informally, or where the issue is serious, employees may raise the matter under SSHC's Grievance Procedure. Allegations of serious misconduct may be investigated under the Disciplinary Procedure.

Non-detriment

Employees who raise concerns in good faith, or who support others in doing so, will not be subjected to victimisation or less favourable treatment in their detriment, the Advisors are impartial in these instances and will remain impartial throughout the process.

Signed: _____

Jake Motley — Managing Director, SSH Conservation Ltd

Date: 7 July 2026