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EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This plan is to raise awareness of policies and procedures we have for ensuring our services are accessible to all and that staff, clients and third parties are treated fairly.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

We have an Equality and Diversity Policy setting out our duties under the Equality Act 2010. We also have to adhere to professional rules set out in the SRA Standards and Regulations.

We are aware of our professional obligations and we promote equality and diversity towards our work colleagues, clients and relevant third parties and in turn, we ask our staff, clients and third parties to adhere to these obligations.

The protected characteristics under the Act are:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex; or
- sexual orientation.

OUR POLICY STATEMENT

We, as a firm, are committed to preventing discrimination and harassment and to promoting equality and diversity with clients, staff and all other third parties that work within it. We are all expected and legally required to treat everyone equally and with the same attention, courtesy and respect regardless of any protected characteristics.

We will ensure (as far as is reasonable) that adjustments are made for anyone with a disability.

This Policy covers all professional dealings with clients, solicitors, barristers and other third parties to include:

- accepting instructions from clients;
- using experts and counsel;
- the provision of services to clients;
- dealings with those representing others; and
- interaction with everyone involved in or incidental to the provision of our services

This policy also covers any recruitment, training and promotion of personnel within the firm.

STAFF AWARENESS

All staff are made aware that they should :

- treat people courteously and fairly regardless of background
- assess client's needs without making assumptions based on ethnic origin, age or disability
- consider clients' needs and make reasonable adjustments.

Reasonable adjustments can include:

- If a client has hearing difficulties, we can agree to communicate in writing or the client may wish to have a person to "sign" for them
- If a client has sight impairment, we can agree to make the font larger in a letter or email or communicate by telephone
- If a client has mobility issues, we can offer an appointment in our office at Ystrad Mynach where clients can be seen downstairs, as access to our Caerphilly office is upstairs.
- If a client is unable to communicate effectively in English, there are translation services who can assist

Our Staff and Partners in the firm are trained annually on the duties under the Equality Act.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE POLICY AND REVIEW

Rhiannon Street is responsible for our Equality and Diversity Policy and this Plan and dealing with any issues that may arise. Ultimate responsibility rests with the Senior Partners.

INFORMING CLIENTS

Our Communications Plan will be openly available to the public:

- By being posted on our website
- The plan will be high-lighted in our Client Care letter and Terms of Business
- The plan is available on request

COMPLAINTS

If anyone believes they have been a victim of discrimination, they are entitled to implement the Complaints Procedure which is in the Complaints Procedure Information Sheet available on our website or by request.