



## **Bush Club Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy**

The Bush Club is committed to providing activities free of any form of discrimination or sexual harassment, where individuals are treated with respect and dignity. The Bush Club will not tolerate either discriminatory or sexual harassment behaviour under any circumstances and will take disciplinary action against anyone who breaches the policy.

This policy applies to behaviour occurring within Bush Club activities and events, when the behaviour involves members and/or individuals associated with The Bush Club and negatively affects relationships within the Club.

### **Definition**

For the purpose of this policy, discrimination and sexual harassment are defined as follows:

Discrimination is any unjust or prejudicial treatment of members, prospective members or guests made on the basis of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, religion, political opinion or on any other basis that a reasonable person would interpret as discriminatory.

Sexual harassment is defined as behaviour that has a sexual element, that is unwelcome and that a reasonable person would judge as offensive, intimidating or humiliating to the person to whom it is directed. Behaviour constituting sexual harassment can take many different forms, including, but not limited to, unwelcome physical contact, or sexual comments, jokes and propositions. The behaviour may be a single incident or repeated. It may be explicit or implicit, verbal or non-verbal. Although the intent may vary, if it is unwelcome and/or the effect is to offend, humiliate or intimidate, the behaviour will be defined as harassment.

### **Responsibilities**

The Bush Club is responsible for taking all reasonable steps to prevent discrimination and sexual harassment and for ensuring its position is widely known by members.

The Bush Club will ensure that appropriate procedures are identified to handle complaints of discrimination and sexual harassment. It is further responsible for ensuring that:

- an awareness and understanding of discrimination and sexual harassment is promoted;
- reporting of discrimination and sexual harassment is encouraged, regardless of who the offender might be;

- complaints will be treated confidentially, in an impartial, sensitive, fair and timely manner;
  - information and support is available in cases of discrimination and sexual harassment;
  - this policy and its procedures are monitored and reviewed regularly.
- All members of The Bush Club are responsible for complying with this policy.

### **Disciplinary Action**

The Bush Club may take disciplinary action against a member who is found to be in breach of this policy. Disciplinary action may also be taken against a member who victimises a person who has complained of discrimination or sexual harassment.

The discipline will depend on the severity of the case and may involve an apology, suspension or revocation of membership, or other form of action.

### **Confidentiality**

The Bush Club committee is responsible for implementing this policy. The Committee will keep confidential the names and details relating to complaints of discrimination or sexual harassment.

### **Complaint Procedures**

Effective complaint procedures offer a range of options for dealing with discrimination or sexual harassment. The Bush Club recognises that natural justice is the minimum standard of fairness to be applied in the investigation and adjudication of a dispute.

A complaint may be handled in a variety of ways. The Bush Club recognises that, as complex and highly sensitive matters, discrimination and sexual harassment are best dealt with informally with the aim of minimising any damaging effects. If an informal resolution is not possible it may be necessary to resort to formal procedures to resolve the complaint.

The Bush Club encourages individuals who experience discrimination or sexual harassment to inform the person that the behaviour is unwelcome, unacceptable, contrary to policy and to ask that the behaviour stop.

Individuals are advised to keep notes documenting occurrences of the behaviour including time, place and any witnesses.

If the complainant chooses not to confront the person or if confronting the person fails to stop the behaviour, then the matter should be brought to the attention of any member of the Bush Club Committee. The role of the Committee Member, as a first point-of-contact, is to serve in an unbiased/impartial capacity to listen to the complaint, offer support, provide advice on procedures and refer to the Committee when appropriate.

The Bush Club recognises the importance of providing a choice of reporting mechanisms so that anyone with a complaint feels comfortable to come forward and discuss or report an incident. It is the right of the complainant to decide to proceed with a complaint and to choose who on the Committee to contact in the first instance.

When a complaint has been referred to the Committee, the President and a delegated committee member will inform the subject of the complaint of the nature of the complaint. They will inform both parties of their rights and

responsibilities in proceeding with a grievance, act as mediator/conciliator between the parties to resolve the complaint, and follow up after a complaint has been resolved to ensure there is no recurrence.

The complaint between the parties may be resolved informally through discussion, and/or an apology and/or commitment to stop the behaviour. In this case, the persons assisting an informal resolution will establish a follow up date to ensure the behaviour has not recurred, in which case no further action is necessary.

In the event that the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the complainant may lay a formal complaint, which will then be dealt with as set out in Sections 11 and 12 of the Bush Club Constitution.

The Bush Club Committee is responsible for ensuring the complaint is investigated and mediated or conciliated confidentially, in an unbiased and prompt manner.

### **Right to Appeal**

Both parties to a complaint have the right to appeal the decision if a matter of procedure, bias, or fairness is questioned. The appeals procedure, as set out in Section 13 of the Constitution, will be used to handle formal appeals.

### **Policy Review and Approval**

The Secretary of The Bush Club will ensure a review of this policy is conducted periodically.