

DISABILITY POSITIVE MEMBERSHIP POLICY

Revision History

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1.0	17/10/2019	Approved by Board	
2.0	12/12/2019	Updated following amendment to Byelaws	5

Document Control

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1 POLICY STATEMENT

This policy sets **Disability Positive** (*hereinafter referred to as the “Company”*) approach to membership. The Company wants an equal and inclusive society for local disabled people. The Company considers that equality and inclusivity means breaking down barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunities and access to services for all disabled people.

The Company can only deliver services that are shaped, by and for, people with lived experience of disability, long term conditions and caring responsibility; and influence government policy, on the basis of views from our members, with information about your experiences.

Membership provides a platform for people with lived experience of disability, long term conditions and caring responsibility to: -

- improve the Company’s ability to influence the social or political environment on the issues which matter to members;
- keep the charity’s trustee board up-to date with the needs of beneficiaries, providing feedback and diverse opinions;
- keep the trustee board accountable, and help ensure probity and transparency;
- and act as a pool of volunteers and potential trustees.

2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a consistent approach to Membership and ensure that the Company meets its legal, statutory and regulatory requirements in line with the Company’s [governing document](#) (Articles of Association and associated Byelaws).

3 SCOPE

This policy applies to all individuals who agree with and support the work of the Company and would like a chance to contribute to what we do and say, as a member.

4 COMMITMENT

As a Disabled Peoples User Led Organisation, the Company is committed to:

- Actively promoting the social model principle by working to remove the barriers and disability discrimination faced by disabled people (including those with impairments, long term health conditions, autism, learning difficulties, and/or mental ill-health) and carers.
- Actively demonstrating commitment to disabled people by employing skilled staff and volunteers with lived experience of disability, long term conditions and caring responsibility, whenever possible

- Actively demonstrating commitment to disabled people by encouraging trusteeship of individuals with lived experience of disability, long term conditions and caring responsibility, whenever possible

5 CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP

The categories and eligibility criteria of Members is as follows:

- Any Company Trustee
- Any person with lived experience of disability or long-term conditions or caring responsibility (in accordance with Membership Byelaw 5 of the governing document);

6 MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- the right to vote on proposals (in accordance with **Membership Rights and Responsibilities** of this Policy and the Articles of Association)
- encouraged to attend and speak at our Annual General Meeting,
- receive the Company's quarterly Bulletin newsletter as part of your membership package. The newsletter contains the latest independent living news, updates on Company services, up to date information and analysis on current and anticipated disability issues from a national, regional and country-wide perspective
- have the opportunity to access the **members only area** of the Company website
- access the Company's range of disability/equality focused training and any other training agreed to be made available to Members

7 MEMBERSHIP RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Company is required to hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) which is an opportunity for members to attend and vote on various matters that have a direct bearing on the governance of the Company. The Company's governing document set out the procedures for holding an AGM.

Voting at these meetings is the most common way in which members exercise their administrative rights and is the main opportunity to influence the running of the charity.

At the AGM, members will typically:

- approve the accounts and report for the year;
- approve the appointment of auditors; and
- approve previous minutes.
- consider matters such as a change in the charity's name or objects and determine questions of constitutional change

Charity members should:

- **ensure that the membership role has been clearly explained, including the rights and responsibilities which accompany the role** (as outlined in this Policy and the governing document);
- **exercise their right to vote in the interests of the Company;**
- **abide by decisions that are taken fairly and within the rules of the Company, even if this does not match their own personal preferences.**

8 MEMBERSHIP LIABILITY

The role of a trustee is to hold the charity “in trust” for current and future beneficiaries by:

1. ensuring that the charity has a clear vision, mission and strategic direction and is focused on achieving these
2. being responsible for the performance of the charity and for its “personality”
3. ensuring that the charity complies with its governing documents and all legal and regulatory requirements in line with the Companies Act and Charities Act 2011.
4. acting as guardians of the charity’s assets, both tangible and intangible, taking all due care over their security, deployment and proper application
5. ensuring that the charity’s governance is of the highest possible standard

The Company hold Trustee Indemnity Insurance for decisions taken in good faith by the majority of trustees, in connection with the day to day running of the Company

Therefore, the liability of members (non-trustee) is limited to a sum not exceeding £1, being the amount that each member undertakes to contribute to the assets of the Company **in the event of it being wound up while he is a member**, or within one year after he ceases to be a member, for:

- payment of the Charity’s debts and liabilities incurred before he ceases to be a Member;
- payment of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up; and
- adjustment of the rights of the contributories among themselves.

9 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

We would like to thank all those who already support us as members.

If you as an individual, like a chance to contribute to what we do and say then why not join us as a member. Membership is free. You can [sign up to join online](#)