**Orebeck Benefice: Equality, diversity and inclusion policy**

The Orebeck Benefice is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce and volunteer base, and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

Our aim is for our clergy, lay ministers, church wardens, elders and volunteers to be truly representative of all sections of community and for each person to feel respected and able to give their best.

The Orebeck Benefice is also committed against unlawful discrimination of church members, beneficiaries, guests or the public.

The policy’s purpose is to:

* provide equality, fairness and respect for all paid and unpaid staff, or those offering help as volunteers;
* following the Equality Act 2010, not to discriminate unlawfully against those with a protected characteristic: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation
* oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination.

Notwithstanding the above, it may be a requirement for some paid and volunteer roles within the Church that the applicant be a practising Christian, under the “occupational requirement” regulations of the Equality Act.

The Orebeck Benefice commits to:

Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion;

Create an environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all are recognised and valued;

Participate in training made available through the diocese concerning rights and responsibilities under the diocesan equality, diversity and inclusion policy and to support the Church in providing equal opportunities, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination;

To make all clergy, volunteers and other staff understand they can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their duties, against fellow employees, volunteers, church members, beneficiaries, guests, suppliers and the public;

Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, and that such acts will be dealt with as misconduct under the diocesan grievance and/or disciplinary procedures, and appropriate action will be taken.

The equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by our clergy, lay ministers, church wardens and elders.