Swanton Novers Village Hall

Bullying and Harassment Policy

1. Statement of intent

Swanton Novers Village Hall Committee is committed to encouraging all users of the village hall to maintain good relations, and not use words or deeds that may harm the wellbeing of others.

Everyone has the right to be treated with consideration, fairness, dignity, and respect. This contributes to an environment in which individuals feel safe to participate and to work or volunteer.

The Village Hall Committee will take seriously and investigate any allegations of bullying or harassment.

2. Why we have a policy

- To create a climate in which all types of bullying and harassment are regarded as unacceptable
- To promote an environment free from threat, harassment, and any type of bullying behaviour
- To take positive action to prevent bullying and harassment from occurring
- To show commitment to overcome bullying and harassment by practising zero tolerance
- To ensure volunteers can work in a respectful environment

3. Definition of harassment and bullying

Harassment and bullying can be summarised as any behaviour that is unwanted by the person to whom it is directed. It is the impact of the behaviour rather than the intent of the perpetrator that determines whether harassment or bullying has occurred.

Harassment may be defined as any conduct which is:

- Unwanted by the recipient
- Is considered objectionable
- Causes humiliation, offence, distress, or other detrimental effect

Harassment may be an isolated incident or repetitive; or occur against one or more individuals. Harassment may be, but is not limited to:

- **Physical** contact – ranging from touching to serious assault, gestures, intimidation, aggressive behaviour
- **Verbal** – unwelcome remarks, suggestions and propositions, malicious gossip, jokes and banter, offensive language
- **Non-verbal** – offensive literature or pictures, graffiti and computer imagery, isolation, and exclusion from social activities

Bullying is unlikely to be a single or isolated instance. It is usually, but not exclusively repeated

and persistent behaviour which includes:

- Conduct which is intimidating, physically abusive or threatening
- Conduct which denigrates, ridicules, or humiliates an individual, especially in front of others
- Conduct which is malicious or insulting
- Targeting on one person when there is a common problem
- Shouting at an individual to get things done

4. What to do if you think you are being harassed or bullied

If you wish to make an **informal complaint**, report any concerns regarding bullying or harassment to a member of the Village Hall Committee.

If you wish to make a **formal complaint**, follow the complaints procedure.

5. What will the Village Hall Committee do

- Treat all incidents fairly, sensitively and in the strictest confidence
- Listen to all parties involved in the incident
- Investigate as fully as possible
- Take appropriate action. This may involve asking people to leave the premises and preventing future bookings or attendance at the hall for a fixed period or indefinitely
- Record all incidents of bullying
- Promote the use of strategies which challenge bullying behaviour