

# **Beltane Fire Society**

## **A BFS Organisational Safer Spaces Policy**



### **1. Introduction**

Beltane Fire Society (BFS) is committed to ensuring that there is an open and welcoming environment at any BFS space or event so that all our members and volunteers feel able to participate.

### **2. Definition**

BFS is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive space for all volunteers, contractors, suppliers and audience members. This policy is applicable to our whole volunteer community, whether an individual performer, Group Organiser, Court Role, Trustee or Contracted worker.

BFS recognises that systematic oppression excludes and disempowers certain groups whilst providing others with unequal power. The safe space policy is designed to protect oppressed and/or marginalised groups and facilitate their full participation within BFS events and settings. BFS is committed to operating as a space which is inclusive and supportive in which no forms of discrimination are tolerated.

We do not solely refer to a physical space at any event when discussing a BFS “Safe Space” but rather the concepts mentioned in this document. With this in mind we ask all volunteers, members, and contractors involved with BFS adhere to this policy. It is mandatory that all official BFS activity is carried out in accordance with this policy. This policy also extends to all online resources (Facebook, Twitter, Website etc).

### **3. Standards We Hold**

By adopting this policy, the board ensures that there are obvious standards to which all aspects of BFS must subscribe to. BFS believes all volunteers and contractors should be free from intimidation or harassment, resulting from prejudice or discrimination on the grounds of;

- age,
- disability, both physically and mentally,
- marital or maternity/paternity status,
- race and ethnicity,
- religious beliefs,

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- sexual orientation,
- gender, both the person's identity or presentation,
- socio-economic status,
- immigration status, or
- any other form of distinction.

BFS recognises that discrimination can occur wherever it is not consciously challenged. Upholding this policy is a collective responsibility and people should be confident in challenging any behaviour which contravenes this policy. Any person in a BFS space or attending a BFS event is accountable for their own language and behaviour. If we become aware of behaviour, or it is reported to us, that is not in accordance with this policy, people may be asked to leave immediately by our volunteers or contracted workers.

### **4. Guidelines**

To help ensure that the standards above are met, there is general guidance for all those involved with BFS to be aware of. Please note the below is not an exhaustive list but is intended as a basis to build upon to help people consider their interactions with others.

- Respect each other's physical and emotional boundaries, always have consent before touching someone or crossing boundaries.
- Be aware of the connotations of your language. Many common expressions use discriminatory language so think before speaking. Be aware of the language you use in discussion and how you relate to others.
- Do not make assumptions about anyone's physical abilities, mental capacity, gender, pronouns, sexual preference, ethnic identity, survivor status, or life experiences. Do not be derogatory to anyone about these things.
- Participants should be considerate of how much they are speaking to avoid dominating the conversation, and avoid interrupting other people who are sharing their views. We encourage participants to listen to views which are different from their own, but feel confident in expressing opposition in a non-confrontational way.
- If a discussion becomes personal, we trust that participants will keep what is said inside the room and behave with kindness and consideration when responding.
- Be prepared to challenge hateful, discriminatory, or oppressive language.
- If you are challenged, do not become defensive, but listen, think and learn.

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- Harassment, hostility and aggression will not be tolerated and if we feel that someone has overstepped these boundaries they will be challenged and may be asked to leave the setting or greater involvement with BFS altogether.

### **5. Breaches to Policy**

Should anyone feel that the policy has been breached and appropriate action was not taken at the time, they may raise this using the BFS Resolutions Procedure. All concerns will be taken seriously and dealt with in accordance with our resolutions and other relevant procedures.