



THE KENNET & AVON CANAL TRUST

Devizes Wharf, Couch Lane, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 1EB

Telephone (01380) 721279

Fax (01380) 727870

Email – admin@katrust.org.uk

website – www.katrust.org.uk

Bullying and Harassment policy

1. In line with their duties under company and charity law, and in accordance with the guidance issued by the Charity Commission, the Trustees have adopted the following policy on Bullying and Harassment.

Policy statement

2. The Kennet and Avon Canal Trust (KACT) is committed to maintaining high standards of behaviour and respect amongst its employees, members and volunteers. KACT affirms that bullying and harassment have no place within KACT and will always take allegations seriously. In line with this commitment, it encourages employees, members and volunteers with serious concerns about bullying or harassment to come forward and voice those concerns, without fear of reprisal.

Bullying

1. Bullying is behaviour that makes someone feel intimidated or offended over a period of time. Examples of bullying behaviour include:

- constantly criticising someone
- spreading malicious rumours about someone
- constantly putting someone down in meetings
- deliberately giving someone a heavier workload than everyone else
- excluding someone from team social events
- putting humiliating, offensive or threatening comments or photos on social media
- Overbearing and intimidating Behaviour

2. Bullying can happen:

- face-to-face
- by letter
- by email
- by phone

Harassment

3. Bullying itself is not against the law, but harassment is, under the Equality Act 2010. Harassment is when unwanted behaviour is related to one of the following:

- age
- sex, including unwelcome advances or suggestive behaviour
- disability
- gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- offensive emails, text messages or social media content
- race
- religion or belief



THE KENNET & AVON CANAL TRUST

Devizes Wharf, Couch Lane, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 1EB

Telephone (01380) 721279

Fax (01380) 727870

Email – admin@katrust.org.uk

website – www.katrust.org.uk

Procedure

4. Any employee, member or volunteer of KACT who believes that bullying or harassment is taking place, should in the first instance raise the issue within the Branch.
5. If the situation cannot be resolved within the Branch, a formal investigation may be requested by the Trustees. This should be addressed in writing to the Chair of KACT or, if that person is implicated in the case, to any other Trustee. This person, with at least one other Trustee present, will meet with the complainant to decide whether a Sub-committee should be formed to investigate, or whether there could be an alternative way forward.
6. If it is agreed that a Sub-committee should be formed, it will comprise at least three senior people within KACT including at least one Trustee. The Sub-committee will investigate the complaint by interviewing relevant parties.
7. The Sub-committee will keep minutes and evidence and provide a written report of its findings with recommendations. The Trustees will meet to consider the recommendations and decide on the action to be taken.
8. Should the complainant feel that the matter has been unsatisfactorily dealt with, and if the situation meets the relevant criteria, the concern could be raised with the Charity Commission: <https://forms.charitycommission.gov.uk/raising-concerns>

Upward bullying

9. Bullying can also happen from staff towards someone more senior, for example a manager. This is sometimes called 'upward bullying' or 'subordinate bullying'.
10. Examples of upward bullying can include:
 - showing continued disrespect
 - refusing to complete tasks
 - spreading rumors
 - constantly undermining someone's authority
 - doing things to make someone seem unskilled or unable to do their job properly
11. Volunteers who engage in upward bullying will be required to cease their involvement with KACT as they have violated the Code of Conduct in the Volunteer Handbook.

THIS DOCUMENT IS NOT CONTROLLED ONCE PRINTED

Date approved by the Trust Council: August 2025
Review Date: 28th Feb 2027