



Policy Date	Approved by Board of Trustees April 2025
Date of Next Review	

# Anti-Racism Policy

This policy sets out the Trust’s ambitions in relation to Anti-racism<sup>1</sup> and is supported by an Anti-Racism Action Plan.

Due to the history of the Trust, unlike other policies it is essential for the Trust to present a contextual analysis in which this policy sits. Our aim is to set a high standard for ourselves, which may be useful for others. This will be updated as the Trust makes progress. Elements of this context may appear in other Trust documents.

## The Context

To make way for the Westway (A40/M) the community in North Kensington was riven, with homes and people only metres away exposed to noise, glare and pollution. The protests of local residents hit the headlines when the motorway opened in 1970. There had already been a decade of action by the communities in the area that developed networks to campaign for better housing, green spaces and play areas for children. There was an energetic sense of activism with many grass roots organisation plugging gaps where the State was failing to make provisions. Many activists from the African Caribbean community organised around local issues, mainly with self-help groups and societies. They developed networks around the country with other cities such as Liverpool that were experiencing similar issues. These groups campaigned for improvements across schooling, housing, rates of pay, for example where they were experiencing deep inequality.

Following a four year campaign in 1971 the North Kensington Amenity Trust, was set up in partnership with the Local Authority as a custodian of 23 Acres of land underneath the Westway. This was only possible because local activists uncovered and exposed in the media a discrepancy in due regard in the planning process, whereby the stated process had not been followed. The intention, therefore, to build a bus and car park under this part of the Westway was stymied. The North Kensington Amenity Trust became a vehicle to promote positive use

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<sup>1</sup> Anti-racism means standing in solidarity with all people of colour, by amplifying their voices and fighting with them. This demands acknowledging mistakes and missteps without excuses.



of spaces.

The construction of the A40 emerged itself following the worst 'race riots' in Cardiff some 50 years earlier, the 1958 so called Notting Hill Race Riots, which spread from the Latimer Road area. These were whipped up by the neo-fascists, primarily members of Oswald Moseley's Union Movement and the White Defense League, whose purpose was to rally white residents behind their declared mission to 'keep Britain white.' Many injustices followed the period of unrest, including the murder of Kelso Cochrane, no one was brought to justice for his murder.

The black community across Britain have continued to live with the denial of justice due to the systemic racism of the State including the New Cross Fire and the Murder of Stephen Lawrence in 1993.

During the same period, a culture of racism and institutional racism was expanding in Britain, perhaps partly generated by the legacy of dwindling empire and Britain still struggling to find its place in the world. Under these circumstances, many 'minority' communities were left to fend for themselves, often pitted against each other by the instruments of State. Whilst at the same time being encouraged to integrate and 'live peaceably' despite the reality of their economic circumstances and the class system. It is also worth noting that we live with the inherent normalisation of a particular race against which others are forced to define themselves, this in itself affects self-worth as well as a range of biased attitudes.

North Kensington experiences repressive racist policing, the criminalisation of black youths and criminal exploitation by landlords. This gave rise to many community generated organisations essentially existing to make life tolerable. Examples of these were the Black People's Information Centre, the North Kensington Law Centre and the Notting Hill Housing Trust. Whoever was defining the function and purpose of the North Kensington Amenity Trust needed to recognise this history and should have been cognisant that they were carving through efforts to build cohesion, belonging and survival. Any purpose of the Trust that did not factor in the need to encourage the healing of this rupture, including mobilising the instruments of the State and Civic Structures functioning around it, was likely to lead, eventually to more friction.

It is in this context that we now operate; therefore, our stated values need to consider this background as we interpret them and as we aspire to meet the needs of the diverse



communities around us. We need to behave respectfully towards each other, with professionalism and consistency and make sure we have the skills, qualities and capacity, including harnessing the capacity of others, to deliver our work. When we lack resources, we need to mobilise our communities to work with us to do our best to put those resources in place. This is what our communities should expect and deserve.

The Westway Trust genuinely continues its struggle to develop into an organisation that can rise to this challenge, but we have to recognise that like many other organisations in London and the UK we are not there yet. It is a tall order and we have also struggled to find role models that are operating in a similarly complex context. The surrounding Local Government structures and national bodies have failed to provide or insist upon an adequate response to the need for healing and repair in the North Kensington communities so the Trust's own desire to participate fully in this process is made even more difficult. Legislation around Race Relations and concepts that have emerged in the last 25 years, such as the prevalence of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies have provided some progress, but disadvantage on the basis of race and class appears to remain embedded in British society with little appetite to effectively 'police' the General Duty on public bodies, which could have and should have led the way for other organisations.

The Trust, with the encouragement of community advisors recognises that it is not enough to have an EDI policy, it must go further with an active Anti-Racism policy. We know we are operating within problematic structures, which we will continue to stretch and challenge, but we need to communicate to communities around us that this is not a 'quick fix'. We need their help to challenge ourselves and institutions around us to go further. We need to make the most of the current 'will' within the body of the Trust, that will inevitably ebb and flow in line with the changing leadership. However, we are at a moment when we believe there is the 'will' to scrutinise ourselves more fully to drive progress beyond compliance. We will never trivialise issues around race equality and we will be vigilant to address any excuses that could be raised, an example being challenging any banter either by staff or visitors. The quality and willingness of people within the Trust to reflect upon what they bring to the Trust and by implication the communities of North Kensington, to engage with the context and develop from it is essential. We also do this whilst recognising the context has changed, with the different communities in North Kensington and the challenges that Grenfell has unleashed. This is the challenge that



the committed leadership of the Trust faces. If we don't address this, amongst the many other demands upon us whilst we ensure the Trust can function, then we will never reach our goal of an equitable organisation for our diverse communities. Being realistic, with the resources at our disposal, it is going to take energy and resilience, a long time and humility to encourage those that are willing, within communities, to engage with us and to a degree challenge themselves to reflect and try to do so with an open mind. We will need courage and tenacity to continue through the inevitable pressure and even criticism that we will face but we must continue to communicate our intentions as we progress.

For this we can look to the Public Sector Equality Duty for impetus to fulfil our equality duty. We need to demonstrate that equality considerations are taking into account in decision making. We need to review the impact of our policies, preparing them will adequate consideration of the protected characteristics under the law and monitor them to evaluate how they are affecting staff. This will include relevance for functionality, communication and impact assessment. This means that the Trust needs to look at elements of the process in each of its functions and examines each stage to ensure equity. The commitment to this and the intention that it will be actioned is in the detailed action plan that accompanies this policy. An example being within the Trusts staffing practices:

The appointment of staff / trustees and the policies and processes that support this – communication of opportunities in the first instance; the composition of panels to make the appointments; the criteria against which we appoint; the remuneration and contracting of staff; the appraisal of staff performance; the processes by which individuals can raise grievances; the scrutiny around handling disciplinary cases.

We will prioritise the review process and use it as a lever for building a culture of equity and integrity in line with our values. Crucially, we need to present evidence of both legal compliance and progress towards cultural equity. We will examine ways in which we do this and ways in which we can include the community in the process and this could start by expressing this context and intention.

This policy is created 4.5 years after the publication of the Tutu Foundation (UK) Report in 2020. The Trust actively started remedial work in 2021, it decided to learn from the initial developments and to publish an Anti-racism Policy and Action Plan once sufficient time had



been allowed for reflection and learning and sufficient staff and organisational development had taken place to ensure that the actions following reflection would land within a receptive culture.

## Scope of the Policy

The policy applies to everyone who works within the Trust and the Action Plan includes those who work with the Trust. This includes trustees and all staff, including temporary and sessional staff. This applies whether people are working on or off the premises.

With the publication of the Tutu Foundation Report into Institutional Racism at the Trust it was clear that the practice and culture needed to change. This is only possible if there are principles and actions that outline the change that is needed. We must be clear about the goals, principles and actions of our Anti-racist work in order to be held accountable because we recognise that Anti-racism promotes social justice. Our goals are:

1. To eliminate Institutional Racism<sup>2</sup> at the Trust.
2. To eliminate racism<sup>3</sup> at the Trust.
3. To become an exemplar organisation, driving change at an operational and strategic level. Providing opportunities for all staff to be the best they can be.
4. To use our experience to promote anti-racism within the sector and within our community.

To achieve these goals, we need a strong and embedded approach that takes us beyond the requirement to be compliant under the Equality Act 2010. By law under the Act and its

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<sup>2</sup> **Institutional Racism:** also known as systemic racism, is a form of racism that is embedded through laws and regulations within society or an organisation. It can lead to such issues as discrimination in criminal justice, employment, housing, health care, political power, and education. The term institutional racism was first coined in 1967 by Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton in *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation*. [2] Carmichael and Hamilton wrote in 1967 that while individual racism is often identifiable because of its overt nature, institutional racism is less perceptible because of its "less overt, far more subtle" nature. Institutional racism was defined by Sir William Macpherson in the UK's Lawrence report (1999) as: "The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour that amount to discrimination through prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people.

<sup>3</sup> **Racism:** A belief that race is a fundamental determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race. Also, behaviour or attitudes that reflect and foster this belief: racial discrimination.



subsequent amendments the Westway Trust must do everything it reasonably can to protect staff and job applicants from race discrimination. Anyone who discriminates can be held responsible under the Act.

As an organisation we believe that all staff and visitors have the right to be treated with fairness and respect. We believe that those who engage with us should be held to the same standard as our staff. We recognise that racism exists in society and in the workplace and that it can present in different ways from direct discrimination to so called 'banter' or while using social media. To address this we need to do more than just being 'not racist' we need to promote greater inclusion, equality and justice. To do this we will prevent, eliminate, change values, structures, policies, programmes and practices that perpetuate racism. We will close inequality gaps, advance opportunities and ensure workplace racism is eradicated.

Anti-racism and promoting race equality drives performance and social justice. It is not only the right thing to do, it also allows us to access the full range of talent in pursuit of our overall mission. It will allow us to enable people to fulfil their potential and create an inclusive culture with a positive focus. It improves motivation, retention, reputation and productivity.

The Trust's Anti-racism policy focuses on four key principles; to tackle inequalities in relation to race; to understand and respect lived experience; to ensure actions follow these principles and to review progress regularly.

### **Principle 1: Take action to tackle inequalities in relation to race**

This principle is about actively addressing and reducing inequalities in relation to race within the organisation, those we work with and the broader community. Westway Trust will embed the value of **Equity** by ensuring that all policies, practices, and services are designed to eliminate disparities and promote fairness. This involves taking concrete actions to dismantle barriers that prevent any racial group from fully participating in the Trust's activities and accessing its services.

#### **Action areas:**

- Create, implement and review policies and practices that promote equity and fairness across all levels of the organisation.



- Actively identify and address any instances of discrimination or bias within the organisation.
- Ensure that decision-making processes are inclusive and consider the impact on all community members, particularly those from marginalised groups.

### **Principle 2: Take action to ensure that the operating environment is equitable encourages high standards of performance for everyone**

This principle is about creating an environment that encourages high performance for everyone. That includes opportunities for people to reflect, develop, learn and celebrate achievements. That recognises that all colleagues have the right to be themselves at work in an environment that is professional and respectful. We need to ensure dignity and ensure the environment is free from bullying or harassment.

#### **Action areas:**

- Create a Governing body and workforce that reflects the community it serves
- Ensure the physical environment is inclusive
- Ensure that all staff are provided with environment to perform well and that there is good visibility of all races in distributed leadership

### **Principle 3: Encourage everyone to understand and respect lived experience**

Understanding that lived experience involves listening to and valuing the voices of those who experience inequality and discrimination and / or the full range of different cultural experiences. The Westway Trust will ensure that the perspectives and experiences of diverse colleagues and diverse communities are central to its work. This principle emphasises the importance of empathy, active listening, and meaningful engagement with communities.

#### **Action areas:**

- Engage regularly with community members to understand their experiences and challenges.
- Incorporate feedback from diverse voices into the development and implementation of policies and programmes.



- Listen to and incorporate the ideas of staff from diverse backgrounds into the future practice of the organisation.
- Provide training for staff and trustees to build their cultural awareness and understanding of the diverse communities they serve.

#### **Principle 4: Review Progress Regularly**

Regularly reviewing progress ensures that the Trust remains accountable to its commitments and can make necessary adjustments to eliminate Institutional Racism and racism. This principle reflects the values of Equity and Integrity, ensuring that the Trust's actions are transparent and that it is willingly held accountable for its progress in promoting equity and inclusion.

#### **Action areas:**

- Conduct regular audits and assessments of the organisation's anti-racism efforts.
- Report on progress and areas for improvement to the trustees, community and stakeholders.
- Continuously update and refine policies and practices based on feedback and changing community needs.

This policy outlines our commitment to improvement. To ensure it becomes a living document the policy needs an Action Plan so that all staff understand what the principles look like in practice.

The Trust recognise this is an 'in action' policy and therefore it will need to evolve. It will be reviewed and updated annually.

The Westway Trust acknowledges the findings of institutional racism within our organisation (Tutu Foundation Report, 2020) and takes full responsibility for addressing and dismantling systemic barriers that perpetuate racial inequities. We have started this journey and we are committed to becoming an actively anti-racist charity by embedding anti-racism into our structures, policies, and practices.

**Note:** with thanks to Professor Gus John for his inspiration and contribution to the formation of this policy.



We have also drawn inspiration from the [UK Charity MIND](#).

And the [UK Union UNISON anti-racism policy and charter](#).

And [Shelter UK](#).

This policy has links to our EDI Policy; our Cultural Intelligence Framework; our Reparations Framework. It will also link to any Whistleblowing Policy that the Trust may develop.