

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

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PURPOSE

Age UK Bournemouth, Poole and East Dorset is committed to supporting, developing and promoting diversity and equality in all its work and activities and aims to establish an inclusive culture free from discrimination and based on the values of fairness, dignity and respect.

Age UK Bournemouth, Poole and East Dorset will deliver services and support and develop staff and volunteers on an equal basis regardless of race, national or ethnic origin, disability, age (subject to the qualification below), gender, sexual orientation, transgender identity or religion/belief.

Age UK Bournemouth, Poole and East Dorset values diversity and recognises that the organisation is greatly enhanced by the different range of backgrounds, experiences, views, beliefs and cultures represented within its staff and volunteers.

Age UK Bournemouth, Poole and East Dorset expects all employees, volunteers, contractors and agency staff to act in accordance with this Policy.

SERVICES

Age UK Bournemouth, Poole and East Dorset recognises that there are many instances in which its current services do not meet all needs and do not reach all sections of the community of older people and will strive to change its services in recognition of this where resources allow.

All the provisions and statements of intention contained in this policy which are relevant will also apply to the way in which the organisation offers a service to older people and invites them to share in its activities.

Particular attention will be paid to:

- ◆ Responding flexibly and imaginatively to requests for services some of which may have to be different or separate from those currently provided.
- ◆ Active participation in the activities of disadvantaged groups of people, where appropriate, so that our organisation can build greater understanding of the needs of those groups of people and the individual members of those groups.
- ◆ Access to all the buildings and facilities that our organisation uses with a view to seek improvement where possible, alternative accommodation where necessary and information at all times.

Users of our services and those who take part in our activities will be informed that our organisation is committed to a policy of equal opportunity, so that: users will know that the policy exists and is designed to help them and those who work with them; Users will know that they are invited to share the same commitment and are expected to be bound by the same standards of behavior. Serious and/or repeated breaches of these standards may result in services being withdrawn.

Racial discrimination

Age UK Bournemouth, Poole and East Dorset will not accept discrimination or harassment on the grounds of racial or ethnic background.

Sex and marital status

Age UK Bournemouth, Poole and East Dorset will not accept discrimination or harassment on the grounds of sex or marital status.

People with disabilities

Age UK Bournemouth, Poole and East Dorset will not accept discrimination against people with disabilities. It will make every reasonable effort to make sure that its premises are accessible and its equipment suitable for people with disabilities. In the case of an existing committee member, staff member or volunteer becoming newly disabled, every effort will be made to retain or redeploy the individual by mutual agreement.

Sexual Orientation

Age UK Bournemouth, Poole and East Dorset will not accept discrimination or harassment on the grounds of a person's sexual orientation or declared sexual identity. The organisation regards a person's sexuality as an entirely private and personal matter, which will not affect recruitment, promotion, or training for staff and volunteers, nor accessibility to services or other activities for any older person needing or seeking them.

Age

Beyond the legal requirements to use charitable resources within our charitable objectives and to comply with any contractual and grant funding terms, Age UK Bournemouth, Poole and East Dorset will not accept discrimination on the grounds of a person's age.

Recruitment and Selection

Age UK Bournemouth, Poole and East Dorset, will ensure that the ways in which jobs are designed, advertised, and filled fulfil the requirements of our policy on equal opportunity. In particular:

- ◆ All job descriptions will be checked to ensure that they do not ask for unnecessary requirements or qualifications.
- ◆ The policy of the organisation on the employment of ex-offenders is that the safety of older people is paramount. Some offences, even where 'spent', will debar people from employment. Application forms will contain a suitable clause relating to this condition.
- ◆ All candidates for jobs will be questioned on their understanding of the issues.
- ◆ All application forms will be retained for at least twelve months.
- ◆ The word 'staff' includes volunteers engaged in the work of the organisation, in any way, except in provisions which obviously apply to paid employment.
- ◆ We will ensure that all applicants are treated fairly and in line with the Equality Act so that you are protected against unlawful discrimination

Criminal Records

It is the policy of this organisation to undertake formal Disclosure & Barring Service checks when appointing employees, dependent upon the post. Whilst it will be a condition of appointment that all criminal convictions are declared (including those that may normally be classed as spent), we will not discriminate by refusing employment because of criminal convictions that are not relevant to the duties of the post.

Training and Development

Age UK Bournemouth, Poole and East Dorset will provide resources to enable all committee members, staff, and volunteers to understand and be able to implement the equal opportunities policy.

Conditions of Service

It is a condition of service that all staff adhere to Age UK Bournemouth, Poole and East Dorset's equal opportunity policy and failure to do so will lead to disciplinary action being taken.

All members of the Board of Trustees will be expected to accept and adhere to the provisions of the equal opportunity policy.

All volunteers will be expected to abide by the provisions of the policy in their work for the organisation.

Harassment of any kind (but specifically on the grounds of age, disability, race, faith, sex or sexual orientation, marital status) will be considered a disciplinary offence. Harassment may involve derogatory or discriminatory remarks, ridicule, unwanted physical contact, and demands for favours or physical assaults. Any behaviour which is offensive to a member of staff, or which causes them to feel threatened or humiliated or which undermines their work performance or job security is harassment. Any staff member who seriously or repeatedly harasses another staff member or anyone else

connected with the organisation will be liable for gross misconduct. Similarly, any trustee, committee member or other volunteer found to have breached the rules of this code of practice in this regard will be asked to resign.

Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees has the first and final responsibility to promote, implement and review our policy. It is also the responsibility of all staff and volunteers of the organisation to promote the policy by ensuring that:

None of Age UK Bournemouth, Poole and East Dorset's activities and promotions reinforces or condones discriminatory practice.

Material is not displayed in connection with the organisation's work or activities which offend against the principles of this policy.

Material is prepared to develop an understanding and awareness of our anti-discriminatory practices.

Implementation

It is our responsibility to promote equality of opportunity in employment and to monitor the implementation of this policy regularly.

We will ensure that this policy is effectively communicated, and that proper training and guidance is given to ensure that all employees fully understand their own responsibilities as set out in both this policy and as laid down in law. We will also ensure all volunteers are given appropriate induction around this policy.

All employees have a responsibility to observe this policy and to ensure that equality of opportunity is continuously provided for in the organisation's activities. Anybody observing obvious breaches of this policy should make this known to their supervisor or manager.

In addition, supervisors and managers have a particular responsibility for ensuring that this policy is fairly and consistently applied in all areas under their control. Any supervisor or manager observing unacceptable behavior, attitudes or language should ensure that they take action to resolve any such issues.

Liability

Employers can be held liable by law for acts of discrimination committed by their employees. Individual employees can be held personally liable for acts of discrimination that they commit, authorise, contribute to or condone.

It is not sufficient to just conform to the letter of this policy; all employees must ensure that there is not discrimination in any of their decisions, behavior or actions. All employees and volunteers have a responsibility to guard against any form of discrimination and to avoid any behavior that goes against the spirit of this policy.

Any behavior that goes against either the letter or the spirit of this policy, could constitute serious misconduct and will be liable to disciplinary action, up to and including summary dismissal in the most serious cases.

The following are some examples of such actions; this is not meant to be an exhaustive list:

- Discrimination, in the course of their employment, against job applicants, employees, or customers, in any aspect of pre-employment, employment or service delivery, on any grounds laid out in this policy
- Inducing, or attempting to induce, employees or managers to practice unlawful discrimination
- Indulging in verbal or physical, sexual, racist or any unlawful harassment of a nature which is known, or should be known, to be offensive to the victim
- Victimising individuals who have made allegations or complaints of unlawful discrimination, or provided information about such discrimination or harassment

Use of Grievance & Disciplinary Procedures

If anybody has an issue that they wish to raise under the terms of this policy, then they should do that through the organisation's Grievance Procedure. Full details of how to raise and further a grievance are contained within the Grievance Policy, but in the first instance, any complaint should normally be raised with your direct line manager. When you are using this procedure and making a complaint, you have the right to be supported by a colleague from the organisation or a trade union representative.

If it is inappropriate for a matter of this nature to be raised in the first instance with your immediate supervisor or manager (because of its sensitive nature, or because it directly involves them), it may be raised immediately with the Chief Operating Officer or if it involves them the Chief Executive in strict confidence. Your complaint will then be investigated fully, and appropriate action taken. If your complaint is against the Chief Executive, then it may be raised directly with your Board of Trustees.

Individual actions not compatible with this policy should be reported immediately to your manager who will initiate an investigation and ensure that it is dealt with appropriately in accordance with the organisation's procedures, including the Disciplinary Procedure.

No employee will be victimised or suffer any detriment as a result of having made any complaint under this procedure or provided evidence during any investigation of a complaint.

The Chief Executive holds the day-to-day responsibility for ensuring that the policy is implemented and, in the first instance, for dealing with grievances or taking action on disciplinary offences