



## Equality & Diversity Policy

Age UK Bolton actively promotes a culture which recognises diversity, tackles inequality, and promotes equality in all areas of activity and will aim to emphasise this commitment at every opportunity

### KEY INFORMATION

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| <b>Policy prepared, reviewed or amended by:</b> | Bridgette Doyle and Suzanne Hilton - Chief Executive<br>Updated by Paul Davies Corporate Services Manager   |
| <b>Policy approved by Board of Trustees on:</b> |   |
| <b>Policy became operational on:</b>            | <b>28 July 2015</b><br><b>Reviewed: November 2017, 2019, 2021</b>   |
| <b>Next Review Date</b>                         | The Equality and Diversity Policy, and associated guidance and procedures, does not form part of staff contracts of employment and may be reviewed and updated at any time. It will be reviewed no less than every two years, or sooner where there are significant changes to guidance or legislation. Minor updates will be made as required.<br><br>Review November 2023 |

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The aim of this policy is to promote equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the Charity by the fair treatment of individuals and the prevention of discrimination.

Recognising that passive policies will not achieve change, overall Age UK Bolton will strive to take all practical steps to prevent discrimination, will monitor actions taken under the framework of this policy in order to identify inequalities and will formulate plans to address them actively ensuring the implementation the Equality Act (2010)

## **2. POLICY STATEMENT**

Age UK Bolton is committed to promoting equal opportunities in employment. You and any job applicants will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (**Protected Characteristics**).

Age UK Bolton is dedicated to helping all older people in society (irrespective of their background, characteristics and current circumstances) and, therefore, we ensure all our policies, procedures and practices promote equality and fairness amongst and between all older people.

## **3. SCOPE AND RESPONSIBILITY**

This policy applies to all permanent and temporary employees, trustees, volunteers, agency staff, job applicants, contractors and consultants working for or providing services to Age UK Bolton or Age UK Bolton Enterprises Limited (which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Age UK Bolton), hereafter referred to collectively as 'workers' and also to customers, clients and visitors.

Whilst ultimate responsibility for ensuring implementation of this policy lies with the Board of Trustees, all Age UK Bolton workers are responsible for observing, implementing and monitoring this policy on a day-to-day basis and reporting on its operation to the Trustees on a regular basis.

This policy sets out our approach to equal opportunities and the avoidance of discrimination at work. It applies to all aspects of employment with us, including recruitment, pay and conditions, training, appraisals, promotion, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment.

The Corporate Services Manager is responsible for this policy and any necessary training on equal opportunities.

#### 4. DISCRIMINATION

You must not unlawfully discriminate against or harass other people, including current and former employees, job applicants, clients, customers, suppliers and visitors. This applies in the workplace, outside the workplace (when dealing with customers, suppliers or other work-related contacts [or when wearing a work uniform]), and on work-related trips or events including social events.

All staff and volunteers are specifically encouraged to recognise, respect and welcome diversity amongst older people in our community.

The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:

- (a) **Direct discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. For example, rejecting a job applicant because of their religious views, or because they might be gay.
- (b) **Indirect discrimination:** a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others, and is not justified. For example, requiring a job to be done full-time rather than part-time would adversely affect women because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement would be discriminatory unless it can be justified.
- (c) **Harassment:** this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in our Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy.
- (d) **Victimisation:** retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.
- (e) **Disability discrimination:** this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

## **5. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

Recruitment, promotion and other selection exercises, such as redundancy selection, will be conducted on the basis of merit, against objective criteria that avoid discrimination. Shortlisting should be done by more than one person if possible.

Vacancies should generally be advertised to a diverse section of the labour market and local community. Advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage particular groups from applying.

Job applicants should not be asked questions which might suggest an intention to discriminate on grounds of a Protected Characteristic. For example, applicants should not be asked whether they are pregnant or planning to have children.

Job applicants should not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made, except in the very limited circumstances allowed by law; for example, to check that the applicant could perform an intrinsic part of the job (taking account of any reasonable adjustments), or to see if any adjustments might be needed at interview because of a disability. Where necessary, job offers can be made conditional on a satisfactory medical check. Health or disability questions may be included in equal opportunities monitoring forms, which must not be used for selection or decision-making purposes.

Within the scope permitted by law, older people are encouraged and enabled to work or volunteer with Age UK Bolton as part of our attempt to avoid discrimination and promote equality and fairness, and so that our trustees, staff and volunteers reflect the diversity amongst older people in our community.

## **6. DISABILITIES**

If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can consider what reasonable adjustments or support may be appropriate.

## **7. PART-TIME AND FIXED-TERM WORK**

Part-time and fixed-term employees should be treated the same as comparable full-time or permanent employees and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate), unless different treatment is justified.

## **8. MONITORING AND BREACH OF POLICY**

Age UK Bolton is committed to monitoring the diversity of its employees and will seek to do likewise with volunteers (including trustees), contractors, clients and customers.

Effective equalities monitoring is integral to all services of Age UK Bolton. Data gathered can help to identify trends, variations, and any gaps in service provision. This can be used to plan and develop services to address these gaps or inequalities identified.

We will monitor all cases of disciplinary action, grievances and employment practices to ensure that these are dealt with fairly and do not adversely affect any specific group of employees. Age UK Bolton will, periodically, monitor its performance.

Knowingly breaching this Equality and Diversity policy is a serious matter and employees who do so may be subject to disciplinary procedures. Other workers (including volunteers / trustees), contractors and service users may also be held personally liable for violating this policy, and appropriate action will be taken according to the circumstances.

If you believe that you have suffered discrimination, you can raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure or Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy. Complaints will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.

You must not be victimised or retaliated against for complaining about discrimination. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

### **EMPLOYEE/VOLUNTEER CONSENT STATEMENT**

I ..... (name of employee / volunteer) hereby confirm that I have read, understood and will comply with the attached Age UK Bolton Equality and Diversity Policy.

Signed.....

Date .....