

Document Name:	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
Approved by Board of Trustees on:	21 st November 2022
Review Schedule	every two years
Last reviewed	April 2025
Next review due	April 2027
Owner (Responsibility)	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Document Description:

Age UK Wiltshire, both as an employer and service provider, seeks to promote equity, diversity and inclusion for staff and clients. The Board of Trustees also wants staff and volunteers to be truly representative of the community they service. This Policy sets out how the Board aims to achieve this.

Implementation & Quality Assurance

Implementation is immediate and this Policy shall stay in force until any alterations are formally agreed.

The Policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if legislation, best practice or other circumstances indicate this is necessary.

All aspects of this Policy shall be open to review at any time.

Revision History

Revision date	Summary of Changes	Other Comments
24/04/25	Amendments made to content and wording, added in unpaid carers. Policy updated to reflect the need to provide 'Equity' across the organisation rather than providing the same to everyone. Equality is about uniform support, while equity is about fairness and meeting individual needs.	

Glossary of Terms

AUKW – Age UK Wiltshire

Board – Board of Trustees, the collective term for all Trustees (see below)

Casual Workers – the paid personnel of the charity with a Terms of Engagement rather than a contract of employment, their terms and conditions differ from those of employees; distinct from employees

CEO – Chief Executive Officer, the most senior paid employee within the charity, accountable to the Board of Trustees

The Charity – Age UK Wiltshire

CharityLog – the database used to record & store details of AUKW clients, staff, volunteers, Trustees and other contacts

Client – an individual in receipt of support from one or more of AUKW services

DBS – Disclosure and Barring Service; used to refer to the check made on an individual to ensure they are suitable to work with vulnerable individuals

Employees – the paid personnel of the charity with a Contract of Employment, whether that be permanent, temporary or fixed term; distinct from Casual Workers

Executive Team (ET) – comprises the CEO, Operations Manager -Deputy CEO, Operations Manager, Senior Commercial Manager, Finance & Business Support Manager.

Staff – collective term for all paid personnel within the charity irrespective of their contract type; includes both employees and casual workers

Trustees - The people who share ultimate responsibility for governing the charity and directing how it is managed and run. The Trustees are legally responsible for the charity. Trustees are volunteers and are not paid other than reimbursement of expenses.

Volunteers – the unpaid personnel of the charity, volunteers give their time freely and are not obliged to do work for the charity, equally the charity is not obliged to provide them with work, volunteers do not have rights under employment.

Introduction

- 1.1. Age UK Wiltshire expects everyone to apply the principles outlined in this policy. It is recognised that, while much can be achieved through developing policies and procedures to meet legal, and other obligations, real progress requires a programme of action that involves the participation of trustees, staff and volunteers. Genuine equity and inclusion in every workplace and every service requires a commitment from everyone.

2. The Law

- 2.1. Age UK Wiltshire accepts the statutory requirements laid down in the Equality Act 2010 (as amended in 2024). It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of age, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, pregnancy, parenthood, race (which includes skin colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. These are known as 'protected characteristics'.
- 2.2. In addition, trustees, staff and volunteers should not discriminate against or harass a member of the public in the provision of services. It is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, Age UK Wiltshire have an obligation to anticipate and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.
- 2.3. The **Accessible Information Standard** aims to ensure everyone can be as actively involved as possible in discussions about their support. NHS and local adult social care organisations, such as Age UK Wiltshire, must ensure people with a disability or sensory impairment receive information they can access and understand and any help they need to communicate with Age UK Wiltshire. The Service will:

ask if a client has any communication or information needs relating to a disability or sensory loss and if so what they are;

record their needs in a clear, standardised way in electronic and paper records;

alert/flag/highlight their records or notes so the client's needs and how to meet them are 'highly visible' whenever staff or volunteers access the record;

share information about the client's communication needs with other providers of NHS and social care that have permission to see them and ensure the records are kept secure;

act by taking steps to ensure the client gets information they can access and understand and by arranging communication support.

2.4. Unlawful discrimination can include:

- direct discrimination – where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic;
- indirect discrimination – where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic;
- harassment – where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics;
- associative discrimination – where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic;
- perceptive discrimination – where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that he/she has a particular protected characteristic;
- third-party harassment – when a staff member or volunteer is harassed by third parties such as clients, and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic and Age UK Wiltshire has failed to take action;
- victimisation – where a staff member or volunteer is subject to detriment because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance, or because they are suspected of doing so;
- failure to make reasonable adjustments – where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic, and Age UK Wiltshire has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

2.5. The following statements of policy provide a framework within which Age UK Wiltshire will seek to develop programmes and initiatives.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1. The trustees and Executive Team are responsible for promoting Equity, Diversity & Inclusion. All trustees, staff, and volunteers of Age UK Wiltshire share the responsibility for ensuring that the Policy is promoted and implemented equitably and effectively.
- 3.2. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will ensure the implementation and effectiveness of the Policy and report to the Board annually. It is, however, the responsibility of the Age UK Wiltshire's Executive Team and service managers to actively promote equity of opportunity in their respective departments and services.
- 3.3. It is the individual responsibility of all members of staff and volunteers to seek to ensure the practical application of the Policy. Age UK Wiltshire wishes to state explicitly that acts of direct and indirect discrimination and failure to comply with the

provisions of the Policy, cannot and will not be tolerated and will be investigated. Disciplinary action may then be taken against the individual(s) concerned.

- 3.4. In addition, if any member of staff or volunteer considers that they are the subject of, or witnesses unequitable or discriminatory treatment, a complaint may be made through the agreed procedures for dealing with grievances, harassment or raising concerns.

4. Equitable Opportunities in Employment and Volunteering

4.1. Statement of Policy

- 4.1.1. Age UK Wiltshire aims to achieve genuine equity of opportunity in all aspects of its activities as an employer and in its engagement of volunteers.

4.2. Implementation

- 4.2.1. This Policy is made available to all new staff via the Policy Handbook and copies are available on the website. Volunteers are asked to refer to the website for the Policy although a paper copy can be made available if this is a difficult for them. The principles and practices of the Policy are covered by their Line Manager during induction. Equity and Diversity training is part of the organisation's mandatory training.

- 4.2.2. Service Managers are advised of any revisions to the Policy and asked to pass the information to their teams, both staff and volunteers). Information about the changes is also given in on The Loop and in staff newsletters. The updated Policy is also uploaded to the website.

4.3. Staff

- 4.3.1. Age UK Wiltshire will ensure that the ways in which jobs are designed, advertised and filled meet the requirements of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy and the Equality Act.

- 4.3.2. Information, training, advice and guidance, as appropriate, will be given to those trustees and staff involved in the recruitment and selection process.

- 4.3.3. Permanent paid posts will normally be advertised externally, and all posts will be advertised internally within Age UK Wiltshire as a minimum. Advertisements, job descriptions, application forms and person specifications for each job will be designed to ensure that no unnecessary requirements or qualifications are required. Unrelated criminal convictions will not be taken into account.

- 4.3.4. All potential applicants for jobs will be asked to complete and return a diversity monitoring form that will be used to in order for Age UK Wiltshire to check and review the inclusivity of our recruitment processes. The diversity and monitoring

forms will not be made accessible to the recruitment panel so that the recruitment process can remain entirely unbiased.

- 4.3.5. Candidates will be asked to inform us of any reasonable adjustments required to make the interview process accessible to them. Age UK Wiltshire is committed to implementing reasonable adjustments, where possible, to achieve equity for all candidates.
- 4.3.6. Interviewers will take an unbiased approach, asking only questions which relate to the job and person specification. All candidates will be asked the same questions.
- 4.3.7. Candidates will not be asked about past or current pregnancy or future intentions related to pregnancy. Candidates will not be asked about matters concerning age, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment.
- 4.3.8. Assumptions about immigration status will not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality and in all cases we are required to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK.
- 4.4. Volunteers
 - 4.4.1. Interviewers will take an unbiased approach, asking only questions which relate to the task or role. All applicants will be asked the same questions.
 - 4.4.2. Volunteer applicants will not be asked about past or current pregnancy or future intentions related to pregnancy. Volunteer applicants will not be asked about matters concerning age, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment.
 - 4.4.3. Volunteer applicants will be supported equitably within the interview process and in their ongoing engagement according to their needs and within the resources at the Charity's disposal.
 - 4.4.4. All potential volunteer applicants will be asked to complete and return a diversity monitoring form that will be used to in order for Age UK Wiltshire to check and review the inclusivity of our services volunteer recruitment process and the diversity of our volunteer pool.
 - 4.4.5. Links will be sought with a diverse range of groups to promote and encourage the recruitment of volunteers from all backgrounds.
 - 4.4.6. Volunteers will be placed on the basis of their knowledge, skills, experience and ability. Where no suitable opportunity exists within Age UK Wiltshire, alternatives will be suggested.
 - 4.4.7. The reasons for not placing an individual as a volunteer will be recorded.

5. Equity Diversity and Inclusion in Service Delivery

5.1. Statement of Policy

- 5.1.1. It is recognised that certain groups in society are discriminated against, directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally. Direct and indirect discrimination can occur when services are inappropriate, insensitive or inaccessible.
- 5.1.2. Age UK Wiltshire is committed to providing equitable, quality services to clients. The Charity aims to provide services that are equitable for everyone so to encourage take-up of services and to ensure our facilities are accessible to all groups within the community and their needs.

5.2. Implementation

- 5.2.1. All beneficiaries with whom Age UK Wiltshire works, will be afforded equal respect and the same courteous, efficient approach. The aim is to offer a warm and welcoming environment to all service users.
- 5.2.2. The diversity of our beneficiaries is acknowledged and valued and access to services shall be in accordance to the service criteria.
- 5.2.3. We collect diversity monitoring information in order for the Charity to check and review the inclusivity of our services.
- 5.2.4. The services aim to respond to such diversity by adopting a flexible, non-judgemental, anti-discriminatory approach whilst also valuing individuality.
- 5.2.5. The services seek to provide each client with a service that meets their individual needs and choices, within available resources. For example, Language Line.
- 5.2.6. Age UK Wiltshire aims to make the physical environment in which services are provided as accessible and inclusive as possible.
- 5.2.7. The service provision will be continually reviewed to develop more inclusive ways of working that more appropriately meet the diverse needs of the local community.
- 5.2.8. Age UK Wiltshire shall ensure, as far as is possible, that all service activities and sites are accessible in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. The Charity is committed to challenging discrimination within service provision through focused staff and volunteer training, development and support, and a culture that respects and values the individual.

6. Monitoring

- 6.1. The success of any policy depends upon the commitment of all staff and volunteers but particularly of the trustees and the Executive Team. The effectiveness of the

Policy in meeting the aims of the Charity can be judged by careful monitoring of the operation of the Policy. Age UK Wiltshire aims to produce monitoring reports on a regular basis, covering staff and volunteer recruitment, training and development, and staff and volunteer turnover. As part of the service planning process, the Leadership Team will also monitor the take-up of services.