



# EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY, PROCEDURE AND GUIDANCE

**Version 1**

**Created 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020**

**Review 1<sup>st</sup> August 2021**



## IP3 Good Neighbours Equality and Diversity Policy



I have received, read and understood the above and have been provided with a copy of the Equality and Diversity procedure and guidance.

Signature:

Date:

Name:

## Equality and Diversity Procedure and Guidance

**1 Equal Opportunities** - the Scheme aims to ensure that policies, procedures and practices do not unfairly discriminate against our volunteers, stakeholders and service users. The Scheme aims to treat people fairly and equitably regardless of whom they are, their background or their lifestyle.

**2. Diversity** - the Scheme aims to ensure that all people are valued as individuals and are able to maximise their potential and contribution. It recognises that people from different backgrounds can bring fresh ideas and a different approach that can make the way we work and learn more fun, more creative, more efficient and more innovative.

**3. Protected characteristics** are the grounds upon which discrimination is unlawful. The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:

- **Age** – a person of a particular age group, but does not apply to those under the age of 18.
- **Disability** – a person who has a physical or mental impairment, where the impairment has a substantial and long term effect on the person’s ability to carry out day-to-day activities.
- **Gender Reassignment** – a person who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process, or part of a process, for the purpose of reassigning the person’s gender by changing physiological or other attributes of gender.
- **Marriage or Civil Partnership** – Marriage or Civil Partnership – A person has the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership if the person is married or is a civil partner.
- **Pregnancy and Maternity** – a woman who is pregnant has a protected characteristic for the whole pregnancy and for a period of 26 weeks from the day she gives birth (in the case of a still born child the 26 week period exists if the birth takes place after the 24th week of pregnancy). A woman who has given birth and is breast-feeding has a protective characteristic when accessing premises, services and public functions.
- **Race** – a person or group of people defined by their race, colour, nationality, including citizenship, and ethnic or national origins. A racial group can include more than two distinct racial groups; e.g. Black Britons would comprise of those people who are both black and who are British citizens.
- **Religion or Belief** - a person’s religion, religious or philosophical belief, lack of religion or lack of religious or philosophical belief. A belief will affect a person’s choices or the way they live for it to be considered a protected characteristic.
- **Sex** – a person who is a man or a woman.
- **Sexual Orientation** – a person’s sexual attraction towards a person of the same sex, another sex, or people of both sexes.

This Policy uses a wider definition of characteristics and includes caste, caring responsibility, mental health, class, HIV status, employment status, unrelated criminal convictions, and union activities.

4. **Direct Discrimination** - as defined in law, occurs when a person is dealt with less favourably than other people because of a 'protected characteristic'. These are defined from the Equality Act 2010 above.

5. **Associated Discrimination** is direct discrimination against a person because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

E.g. a person is refused entry to the library because the person they are with has limited mobility and uses crutches to help them move around.

6. **Discrimination by Perception** is direct discrimination against a person because it is perceived that they possess a particular protective characteristic.

E.g. a man who is perceived to be a woman because they have a high voice on the phone is refused access to a men only service. This would be sex discrimination because the man has wrongly been perceived to be a woman.

7. **Indirect Discrimination** occurs when an apparently neutral practice, provision or criterion puts people with a particular protected characteristic at a disadvantage compared with others who do not share that characteristic, and when applying the practice, provision or criterion cannot be objectively justified.

E.g. an organisation has a policy of reminding people of forthcoming appointments by phone. This would indirectly discriminate against deaf people as they would not receive a reminder of their appointment.

8. **Victimisation** means subjecting a person to detrimental treatment because they are or are believed to be bringing proceedings under the Equality Act; giving evidence or information in connection with proceedings under the Equality Act; doing any other thing for the purposes or in connection with the Equality Act or making an allegation that a person has contravened the Equality Act.

A person must be able to act against unlawful discrimination without fear of reprisals or being subjected to a detrimental effect.

E.g. a client makes a complaint to a service provider where they were obtaining support because they felt they were discriminated against for being gay. The complaint is resolved, but if the volunteer who provides the support refuses to work with the gay client this would be victimisation.

9. **Harassment** means unwanted behaviour that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creates a degrading, humiliating, hostile, intimidating or offensive environment.

**Sexual harassment** is any conduct of a sexual nature that is unwanted by the recipient, including verbal, non-verbal and physical behaviours, and which violates the victim's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for them. Harassment can be sexual, racial, ageist, directed against people with disabilities or indeed related to any protected or other characteristic exhibited by the individual.

E.g. A male volunteer is disabled and is claiming harassment against a committee member after she frequently teased and humiliated him about his disability. A female volunteer who volunteers alongside the male volunteer is claiming harassment, even though she is not disabled, as the committee member's behaviour has also created an offensive environment for her.

**10. Harassment by a third party** means unwanted, repeated conduct by a third party based on a protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for a person and where the committee does nothing to prevent it from reoccurring.

**11. Discrimination arising from disability.** Where someone is treated 'unfavourably' because of something linked to their disability, but not because of the disability itself. The disabled person claiming this type of discrimination does not have to compare their treatment to how someone else is treated.