

Community Action Hampshire – trading as Action Hampshire and Action Portsmouth

All references to Action Hampshire in this document should be deemed to cover and include Action Portsmouth.

Equality and Diversity Policy

The Organisation

Action Hampshire is a local support and development charity with over 60 years' experience of supporting Hampshire's not-for-profit organisations and rural communities. We strengthen and promote voluntary action by bringing organisations and communities together, enabling them to have their voice heard and to change things for themselves. We strongly encourage an equal partnership and understanding between the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.

We value:

- The independence of the Not-for-Profit sector
- Honesty, openness and transparency
- Challenging inequality and unfairness
- Our diverse communities

This Equality and Diversity Policy supports and enhances Action Hampshire's broad organisational values and is based on the fundamental principles outlined in the Equality Act 2010. Action Hampshire values the diverse cultures, environments and communities of which it is a part. We believe people have the right to be treated fairly and equally and oppose discrimination in all its forms. We recognise, value and respect diversity, and understand the importance of creating a fair and just environment. We do this through our existing policies and procedures which are revised regularly and by taking practical action where possible.

Action Hampshire is aware of, and opposes, all types of individual, institutional and cultural discrimination and the negative impact this has on discriminated groups or individuals. Such discrimination includes: direct or indirect discrimination, discrimination by association or perception, lack of awareness, stereotyping, prejudice, victimisation, harassment,

marginalisation, exclusion or oppression, discrimination arising from a disability where there is a failure to make reasonable adjustments.

Action Hampshire, and all projects managed by it, is fully committed to fairness, inclusion and social justice and the elimination of all forms of discrimination as a fundamental principle of its work. We consider opportunities and specific issues around equality and diversity in service design, implementation planning and delivery. We seek to prevent discrimination and promote equality of opportunity in the provision of services, in our employment practices, and in our dealings with individuals, members, clients, volunteers, groups and organisations.

In line with the Equality Act 2010, we are committed to ensuring that no individual or group of people is less favourably treated or denied opportunities because of their background, for example:

- race - ethnic or cultural origin
- religion, faith, belief or non-belief
- sex
- disability
- gender reassigned
- marital status and civil partnership
- sexuality
- age
- pregnancy and maternity
- long term health problems
- nationality (or statelessness)
- caring responsibilities
- HIV status
- unrelated criminal conviction

We work actively with rural communities to combat rural disadvantage and social, economic and geographic exclusion.

Action Hampshire works to achieve policies and practices that ensure both existing and potential employees, trustees and volunteers are positively encouraged to challenge

discrimination. All individuals within the organisation have their needs considered and, wherever practically appropriate, support is provided. We also work to achieve equality for the people and organisations we exist to serve. If any individual from the Action Hampshire trustee or staff team feels that they have been treated unfairly or that they have been discriminated against, the organisation has procedures in place to support them.

Action Hampshire demonstrates its commitment to these issues by adopting an Equality and Diversity Policy, which gives guidance on equality and diversity practices, service provision and the general work of the organisation. This policy is based on the Equality Act 2010 and its key principles are integrated into all policies and procedures in Action Hampshire.

This policy applies to staff, trustees and volunteers employed by or working for Action Hampshire. In addition, we expect that consultants, partners and other organisations have their own policies and procedures that reflect similar principles to our own. This policy enables staff, volunteers, trustees and member organisations to act positively in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion, and eliminate and prevent all forms of discrimination. We also encourage members to have an Equality and Diversity Policy in place.

Equality and Diversity Policy

This policy aims to ensure that Action Hampshire creates fair conditions for all current and potential members of Action Hampshire, its Trustee Board, staff, volunteers, users of our services and organisations with which we work. Its success depends on everyone having a full understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion and co-operating in the policy's implementation.

Action Hampshire recognises that Hampshire is socially and culturally diverse and believes its work is enriched by the different qualities and experience brought to the not-for-profit sector, their organisations and their work as trustees, employees and volunteers.

Action Hampshire seeks to ensure that our work programme, services and advocacy reflect the perspectives of Hampshire's diverse individuals and communities, and that our staff and trustee composition is representative of those communities. Where under-representation, or

where an obstacle to participation is identified, every effort is made to counter the effects of barriers that may have led to under-representation of certain groups within our workforce, in turn attracting and encouraging participation and application by that sector of the community. Where appropriate, we will use 'Positive Action' to support this, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Action Hampshire Trustee Board

Action Hampshire seeks to ensure that the members of the Trustee Board reflect the diversity of the county's population and the wide range of agencies who work in the not-for-profit sector.

Volunteers

Action Hampshire believes that voluntary activity, active community involvement and self-help are options that should be open to everyone irrespective of their background, and that they have a right to volunteer without experiencing discrimination or facing barriers preventing involvement.

Action Hampshire encourages and supports its member organisations and partners to promote volunteering to all people in our community, including those from under-represented groups.

Organisations

Action Hampshire seeks to raise awareness of cultural diversity, equality and anti-discrimination policy and practice by the provision of support materials, such as the Equality and Diversity Toolkit for the not-for-profit sector in Hampshire. Where possible, through the Hampshire Independent Equality Forum, we provide networking and policy and information support to not-for-profit organisations and community groups. We commission and promote equality and diversity, and diversity audit training, and undertake partnership and multi-agency work with other organisations which furthers the understanding and wider involvement of Hampshire's diverse communities.

Action Hampshire's Equality and Diversity Policy is available on request to other organisations in Hampshire.

Staff

Staff should not discriminate against or harass a member of the public or any person or organisation in receipt or potentially in receipt of Action Hampshire's goods or 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, service providers have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

Employment, recruitment and selection

Action Hampshire works to ensure equality of opportunity for all staff or applicants. This applies to all areas of employment, including:

- recruitment and selection
- training and development
- promotion
- conditions and benefits of service
- employment and equal pay procedures
- health and safety
- cessation of employment

The relevant policy is kept in the Staff Handbook.

Publicity

Action Hampshire endeavours to ensure that its published material is as accessible as possible to all and that no group is treated less favourably or denied opportunities because of their background.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Equality and Diversity Policy is reviewed regularly in order to evaluate its effectiveness and that it complies with current legislation. Information from the events and recruitment monitoring forms and other relevant information, for instance examples of breaches of the policy or changes in national and regional agendas, is examined to ensure that the Policy itself is up-to-date, and that our other policies and practices are fully compliant.

Training

Training and professional development policies and practices are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are non-discriminatory.