



## EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

### Statement

Basingstoke – Old Basing u3a is a learning co-operative and membership charity which enables members in their third age to share educational, creative and leisure activities. Members draw upon their knowledge, skills and experience to teach and learn from one another (peer to peer learning). Basingstoke - Old Basing u3a recognises that some people may experience discrimination and harassment and is committed to making sure the u3a is as inclusive and welcoming as possible.

### Aims of this policy

This policy has been drawn up to comply with the Equality Act 2010. The Act stipulates that organisations cannot treat someone unfairly on the basis of what it calls ‘protected characteristics’, which are:

- ethnic origin, nationality (or statelessness) or race
- age
- disability
- religion or belief (including the absence of belief)
- marital or civil partnership status
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy
- gender reassignment
- political belief

Basingstoke – Old Basing u3a strives to ensure that members do not experience discrimination on the basis of their protected characteristics. This includes ensuring equal access to groups, and behaviour among members and by Basingstoke - Old Basing u3a Committee members and group leaders.

The Equality Act highlights that organisations need to consider what ‘reasonable adjustments’ can be made in order to accommodate those who may have particular needs. Basingstoke - Old Basing u3a Committee will review the reasonable adjustments needed for all members, including individual members with particular needs, on an ongoing basis. Where necessary, the Committee will seek guidance and additional support from National Office.

## Practical approaches to inclusion

Basingstoke - Old Basing u3a will make sure all new members are made aware of our policies and procedures in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion and accessibility as well as the Member Code of Conduct.

Basingstoke - Old Basing u3a will make reasonable adjustments and take practical steps to ensure a wide range of people can participate in our activities and meetings. These may include:

- Consideration given to the time and location of meetings
- Consideration of venues for meetings including:
  - Access for wheelchair users
  - Access to PA system and a hearing loop
  - Availability of parking, including parking for the disabled
  - Disabled toilet facilities
- Publicity:
  - Using a variety of methods and platforms to communicate externally and raise the profile of the u3a
  - Making communications available to those who don't have access to the internet
  - Using a range of images that reflect the local community
- Recruiting new members:
  - Doing outreach sessions and contacting agencies working with community groups who may be harder to reach
  - Encouraging members who are representative of groups which are under-represented within the u3a
  - Managing growth to ensure that new members can be accommodated
- Monitoring:
  - Basingstoke - Old Basing u3a will monitor the numbers of members who join, re-join and leave each year in order to identify any trends in membership
- Tasks and roles:
  - Encouraging more members to take on roles such as leading groups
  - The Group Facilitator will ensure new Group Leaders are made aware of issues in relation to accessibility and what steps they may need to take in meeting access requirements. Each group will be reviewed on an individual basis as certain groups may require a certain level of fitness or mobility and members need to be made aware of this in advance
  - Basingstoke - Old Basing u3a will offer induction and training around equality, diversity and inclusion to Committee members and group leaders on an ongoing basis



## Member Code of Conduct

Basingstoke - Old Basing u3a has a Member Code of Conduct. This outlines that members must abide by the u3a's policies and procedures as well as treating one other with dignity and respect. This includes not acting in a way that would be deemed discriminatory or offensive.

## Dealing with discrimination and harassment

Where the Basingstoke - Old Basing u3a committee becomes aware of any discriminatory practice or harassment, the committee will seek to address this through consultation with all parties concerned and, where necessary, through invoking formal procedures.

If any member of Basingstoke - Old Basing u3a feels they have experienced or witnessed discriminatory behaviour or harassment, this should be reported to the Committee. Any matters of concern will be reviewed by the Committee and a decision will be made, in line with the u3a's Constitution and formal procedures, as to what steps will be taken to address the issue.

## Definitions

**Equality** is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents and believing that no one should have poorer life chances because of where, when or who they were born, or because of other characteristics. Promoting equality is about behaving in a way that tackles inequalities, aiming to ensure that all members are treated fairly, and do not experience discrimination.

**Promoting diversity** is about recognising that everyone is different and creating an environment that values members and ensuring that the u3a movement is as accessible as possible to different groups within the community.

**Inclusion** is about positively striving to meet the needs of different people and taking practical steps to ensure members feel respected.

**Direct Discrimination** is the treatment of a person less favourably because of their ethnic origin, nationality (or statelessness) or race, age, disability, religion or belief (including the absence of belief), marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, gender reassignment, political belief.

**Indirect Discrimination** occurs when a condition or requirement is applied equally to all groups of people but has a disproportionately adverse effect on one particular group.

**Harassment** is unwanted conduct related to 'protected characteristics' that has the purpose or effect of violating a member's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Harassment is also unwanted conduct of a sexual nature which has that same purpose or effect.



**Victimisation** occurs when a member is treated less favourably than others in the same circumstances because he or she has made a complaint or an allegation of discrimination, harassment or bullying or given information regarding such a complaint or allegation.

This policy was adopted on: 29<sup>th</sup> November 2022

Revision Aug 2023 to change incorrect name of group co-ordinator to facilitator and correct website address.

Revision May 2024 to remove reference to Accessibility Officer and minimal rewording with no factual change.

Review date: 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024