

East Suffolk One equality, diversity and inclusion policy

East Suffolk One is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our volunteers and eliminating unlawful discrimination.

The aim is for our volunteers to be truly representative of all sections of society, to feel respected and able to give their best.

East Suffolk One is also committed against unlawful discrimination of the public.

The policy's purpose is to:

- provide equality, fairness and respect for all volunteers
- not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation
- oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in benefits, terms and conditions of voluntary work, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, training or other developmental opportunities

The organisation commits to:

- Encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace as they are good practice and make business sense
- Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all volunteers are recognised and valued.

This commitment includes all volunteers about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Responsibilities include volunteers conducting themselves to help the organisation provide equal opportunities to prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination.

All volunteers should understand they can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their voluntary work, against fellow volunteers, customers and the public.

- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow volunteers, visitors and the public and any others in the course of the organisation's activities.

Such acts will be dealt with as misconduct and appropriate action will be taken.

- Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal from the group.

Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter, such as in sexual assault allegations. In addition, harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 – which is not limited to circumstances where harassment relates to a protected characteristic – is a criminal offence.

- Make opportunities for training, development and progress available to all volunteers, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential.
- Decisions concerning staff being based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
- Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
- Monitor the make-up of the workforce regarding information such as age, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in the equality, diversity and inclusion policy.

Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

This equality, diversity and inclusion policy is fully supported by East Suffolk One's committee