

Equality & Diversity Policy

Aims of the policy

- To promote equality of opportunity across all activities
- To engender a culture of understanding of EDI across the organisation
- To foster good relations between people of diverse backgrounds
- To eliminate discrimination and victimisation
- To comply with current legislation as defined in the Equality Act 2010

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If you require this information in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language, please contact us and we will do our best to help.

The Single Equality Policy

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Who is the Policy for?

All staff employed or volunteering with Active Norfolk, partners, participants and other users of the Services

What is equality?

Equality means making sure that individuals or groups are treated fairly and equally and not less favourably in the areas of race, sex, gender re-assignment, disability, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation or age

What is diversity?

Diversity means recognising, respecting and valuing everyone's differences and giving them the chance to realise their full potential and enrich the culture of our Service and the wider community to make our organisation fully inclusive

What does promotion of equality mean?

We can all promote equality and diversity through:

- Treating everyone we work or come into contact with fairly
- Creating a trusting and inclusive culture for everyone
- Making sure that access to opportunities in sport and physical activity through Active Norfolk staff and our partner providers acknowledges equality and diversity and that we take every step to assess any negative impact and address it
- Enabling all staff and participants to develop to their full potential
- Training staff and where necessary our partner providers and equipping them and learners with the skills to enable them to challenge inequality and discrimination if they encounter it
- Making sure that no resources discriminate against any individual or group and embedding Equality and Diversity practice through what we do and how we do it
- Identifying, acting and monitoring any findings that may have adverse impact on staff, learners and others who we come into contact with, in the course of our work environment

Legislative frameworks for Equality and Diversity

The Human Rights Act 1998

This Act underpins all the aspects of equality. Everyone has the responsibility under this Act to respect the rights of others.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act brings together over 116 separate pieces of legislation into one single Act. Combined they make up the legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.

The Act simplifies, strengthens and harmonises the current legislation to provide Britain with a new anti-discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society

The nine main pieces of legislation that have merged to form the Equality Act 2010 are:

- The Equal Pay Act 1970
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- The Race relations Act 1976
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- The Equality Act 2006 Part 2
- The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

Protected Characteristics under the Act

The Equality Act protects everyone from discrimination and harassment based on nine Protected Characteristics listed below. Active Norfolk will work to ensure that we proactively take action to help people within these protected characteristics in the course of our work to increase activity levels in Norfolk.

The nine characteristics are:

Age

The Equality Act makes age discrimination against the law. The regulations prohibit direct and indirect discrimination and harassment, bullying and victimisation on the ground of age and apply to persons of all ages

Disability

The Social model of disability is one that the Service ascribes to and the Act gives us a duty to promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people. This includes the promotion of positive attitudes towards people with a disability by tackling all forms of harassment and bullying and inclusion through participation in public life and the work environment

We are required to take **positive action** to pre-empt unlawful discrimination before it occurs. Taking steps to ensure that none of our staff or participants will be discriminatory to someone with a disability

Gender and gender reassignment

Our duty by law and our belief is to actively promote gender equality and best practice. We must have due regard for the need to stop unlawful discrimination and harassment and to promote equality of opportunity between men and women. We must also have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment for people who intend to undergo, or have undergone gender reassignment

Marriage & civil partnership

The Equality Act says you must not be discriminated against because you are married or in a civil partnership. In the Equality Act marriage and civil partnership means someone who is legally married or in a civil partnership. Marriage and civil partnership can either be between a man and a woman, or between partners of the same sex. Discrimination in this category can be direct, indirect or through victimisation. We will uphold this area of the act across our work and proactively seek to ensure that all people within a marriage or civil partnership are treated equally and fairly.

Pregnancy and Maternity

This part of the Act protects against discrimination during and after pregnancy and includes unfavourable treatment of a woman because she is breastfeeding

Race

The general duty for the Service under the Act requires us to

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Promote Equal Opportunities
- Promote good relations between people from different ethnic and racial groups

We are required to take **positive action** to pre-empt unlawful discrimination before it occurs. We must take steps to ensure that none of our staff or participants will be racist. If a particular ethnic minority has been identified as underrepresented in the workforce then we can take positive action to offer

training or encourage employees/ potential employees to take up work opportunities when they are presented. We are also required to target underrepresented minority ethnic groups of learners to increase participation.
Religion or Belief

The regulations prohibit discrimination on the grounds of “any religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief”. This could include

- Collective worship
- A clear belief system or a profound belief affecting a way of life or view of the world

Sex

In relation to the protected characteristic of sex:

- A reference to a person with a particular characteristic is a reference to a man or woman
- A reference to persons who share a protected characteristic could be persons of the same or different sex

Sexual orientation

This characteristic protects people from discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation. The Equality Act 2010 says you must not be discriminated against because:

- you are heterosexual, gay, lesbian or bisexual
- someone thinks you have a particular sexual orientation (this is known as discrimination by perception)
- you are connected to someone who has a particular sexual orientation (this is known as discrimination by association)

In the Equality Act, sexual orientation includes how you choose to express your sexual orientation, such as through your appearance.

Equality law protects against the following three areas: Discrimination

This includes:

- Treating a person worse than someone else because of a protected characteristic (direct discrimination). **NB** In the case of maternity and pregnancy this can occur if they have this protected characteristic without needing to compare treatment to someone else
- Putting in place a rule or a way of doing things that has a worse impact on someone with a protected characteristic than someone without one when this cannot objectively be justified, (Indirect discrimination)

- Treating a person with a disability unfavourably because of something connected with their disability when there is no justification (discrimination arising from a disability)
- Failing to make reasonable adjustments for people with a disability

Harassment

This is unwanted conduct which has the sole purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity. It could be hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive to someone with a protected characteristic or in a way that is sexual in nature

Victimisation

Victimisation means treating someone unfavourably because they may be taking, or supporting someone who is taking, action under the Equality Act.

In addition to the protected characteristics above, the law also protects people from being discriminated against:

- By someone who wrongly perceives them to possess one of the protected characteristics
- Because they are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic. For example: The parent of a child with a disability or a carer for someone with a disability

Policy Statement

Active Norfolk is committed to being an organisation that embraces diversity, equality and inclusion through every aspect of its governance, staffing and distribution of resources. We recognise however that there is still much to do as an organisation to ensure that we are representative in our decision making and understanding the people and communities we seek to impact.

As such it will be incumbent on every person within Active Norfolk, from Board level to all staff, to engage with, uphold and proactively promote the activities of the Active Norfolk Diversity & Inclusion Plan, and all relevant policies relating to this area. Without this level of commitment to Diversity and Inclusion across all areas it is unlikely we will achieve the level of impact sought in our current strategy.

Rights and Responsibilities

This Policy applies equally to everyone who is employed in a paid or voluntary capacity by Active Norfolk, uses our services or comes into contact with us through partnerships or the wider community.

The Policy explains your **rights** and **responsibilities** as members of the above groups. It contributes to Norfolk County Council's three strategic ambitions as defined in the County Council Plan for Norfolk. These are:

- To be an inspirational place with a clear sense of identity
- To have a vibrant, strong and sustainable economy
- To have aspirational people with high levels of skills and achievement

Whose responsibility is Equality and Diversity?

Promoting equality and tackling discrimination is the responsibility of everyone.

- **Senior Managers** have a responsibility to ensure that the policy is understood and implemented by everyone who works for Active Norfolk
- **Active Norfolk Board** – all Board NEDs are tasked with upholding this policy as part of the Board NEDs code of conduct while conducting the business of the organisation.
- **Everyone who works for Active Norfolk** has a responsibility to actively promote equality and not discriminate against anybody
- **Participants** have a responsibility to challenge discrimination wherever they see it and to uphold the principles of the Equality Act and the Service policy
- Staff have a responsibility to **partner organisations** with whom they work or come into contact with to ensure that they are aware of our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and that they must ensure that their own policies and practices are non - discriminatory
- **Partner providers** have a responsibility to make their own Equality Policy available to Active Norfolk and where necessary ensure Equality training is given to their staff. They are bound by this Equality policy when delivering activities on behalf of Active Norfolk

How will Active Norfolk deliver its commitment?

We will offer an environment where:

- All who want take part in sport and physical activity in Norfolk will have the opportunity to fully participate and achieve their potential
- Physical, social and other barriers are minimised
- There is a welcoming and supportive environment
- Participation programmes and places of activity actively promote equality of opportunity
- Everyone accepts that it is their responsibility to uphold the Equality legislation and show respect for others

Active Norfolk will also:

- Provide access to opportunities for Equality Awareness training for staff
- Work with our partners to ensure that we meet the needs of the wider community and ensure EDI considerations are at the forefront of conversations
- Set ourselves challenging and time bound targets and monitor how we have performed against these targets
- Investigate any incidence or allegation of discrimination and act upon the findings
- Assess new and existing policies, procedures and practices to make sure that they are accessible and non-discriminatory.
- Monitor our participation environments including partner organisations who are delivering to our contracts to make sure that they are accessible and non- discriminatory
- Aim higher- by listening, responding to and caring for everyone who works for, or uses our services and the wider community that we serve
- Have a robust complaints policy which responds proactively
- Monitor and identify where there are gaps in our provision or workforce in any protected group and take steps to increase participation or recruitment
- Ensure that access to Equality information is available through a diverse range of media, when required
- Develop and deliver a Diversity and Inclusion Plan (DIAP) to ensure continuous improvement
- Champion equality throughout Norfolk County Council and our partner provider organisations
- Ensure that the Active Norfolk Board has a nominated EDI Champion within its membership
- Maintain a Continuous Improvement Group with a focus on EDI