

# Equality and Diversity Policy

## Introduction

Gateway into the Community is a registered charity which supports people in West Northumberland who have a learning disability to access social, leisure and learning opportunities. This policy adheres to the Equality Act 2010 and describes the way in which Gateway into the Community will meet the requirements of that Act. The policy applies to all members, staff and volunteers including trustees.

Members, staff and volunteers including trustees will be made aware of this policy and where it can be accessed. It is expected that every person in the organisation will make a positive contribution to this policy.

## Members

Everyone who uses the services of Gateway into the Community is a member of the charity, including those who receive Individual Support or a Day Service.

## Policy Statement

We recognise that discrimination is unlawful on the grounds of the protected characteristics:

- age
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- gender
- being or becoming a transsexual person
- sexual orientation
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or having a child
- disability
- religion, belief or lack of religion/belief

Gateway into the Community will not discriminate against members, staff, volunteers including trustees, job applicants or anyone involved in external agencies with which we may be working, on any of the grounds listed above or any other irrelevant distinction such as socio-economic status. We shall also not discriminate against anyone because of their association with a person who has a protected characteristic, for example a family member or friend, or because someone has complained about discrimination or supported someone else's claim.

## Equality of Opportunity

We understand and acknowledge that individual differences require individual responses and support, to enable equality of opportunity. This philosophy underpins the whole work of the charity and is reflected in the membership of the management committee whose responsibility it is to implement the Equality and Diversity Policy.

Gateway into the Community will promote an inclusive and supportive environment in which our members, staff and volunteers including trustees will be encouraged to access opportunities that enable them to fulfill their potential. We shall try to encourage good equality and diversity practice in all groups and organisations with which we work and shall ensure that the services we provide are accessible to all.

The Equal Opportunities Policy for staff is listed in full in the Staff Handbook. Staff and volunteers including trustees will value the abilities of members and will support them and enable them to participate to their full ability. It is expected that members in turn will not themselves discriminate against others.

### **Confidentiality**

Information requested at selection about staff and volunteers including trustees and when members join, will be kept confidential. (See Privacy Notices.) When recruiting staff, health-related questions will not be asked until after a job offer is made, and then only if it is necessary for the role.

### **Membership**

Potential members self-refer or are identified by advertising in the media or through personal contact with establishments and organisations working with people who have learning disabilities. We recognise the need to use a range of different communication techniques.

### **Complaints**

Any person who experiences, witnesses or is reasonably led to believe that this Equality and Diversity Policy has not been respected, should immediately bring the matter to the attention of the Chief Executive. The person responsible for the breach will be reminded of the existence and purpose of this policy and asked to adhere to it.

If the person continues to behave in an unacceptable manner, the matter will be referred to the management committee which will decide the best course of action. The offending person has a right of appeal.

### **Evaluation**

Gateway into the Community will undertake an annual evaluation process to ensure that this Policy is clear, in keeping with current legislation and being adhered to.

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