

Barnsley Association of Community Partnerships

Equal Opportunities Policy

Barnsley Association of Community Partnerships is committed to the principles and development of equal opportunities in employment. The organisation is committed to ensuring that no applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, marital status, caring responsibilities, age, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or similar belief, political opinion, physical or mental disability, employment status, class, sexual orientation, past criminal convictions or the type of contract that they are employed on. All differences in treatment must be justified by the needs of the organisation on a non-discriminatory ground. We recognise that everyone has a contribution to make to our society and a right to equal treatment.

Equal Opportunities Statement

Barnsley Association of Community Partnerships is an equal opportunities employer and is committed both to the principles of equal opportunities and to the implementation of equal opportunities legislation and codes of practice. The purpose of this equal opportunities policy is to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and that the Barnsley Association of Community Partnerships (BACP) strives to provide an environment that is free from prejudice in all areas. It also ensures that all employees and volunteers are recruited according to their competence and that they progress within the organisation as opportunities occur on the same basis. Accordingly, and in furtherance of its objectives the BACP resolves to undertake a continuing review of all its policy and practice and will in particular:

- become better informed about racial issues and their effects on all members of society and the implication for the work of the partnership
- work to ensure that the services we provide are relevant and accessible to all racial groups
- work to ensure that the BACP Partnership procedures for recruiting both paid staff and volunteers do not discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic and national origins or nationality.

Types of Unlawful Discrimination

BACP opposes all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination. Discrimination can include:

Direct discrimination

This is when a person is treated less favourably than another in the comparable circumstances on the grounds of the prohibited reasons e.g. although a job applicant has all the skills and competences required for the job, the organisation decides not to offer the job because he/she is a Hindu. This would be direct religious discrimination.

Indirect Discrimination

This is when a requirement or condition is applied which is detrimental to a significantly larger proportion of one group of people compared with another and cannot be justified e.g. a requirement for all employees to work full time could

adversely affect a higher proportion of women than men, as a higher proportion of women have childcare responsibilities than men. This could therefore, be indirect sex discrimination.

Harassment

This is when there is unwanted conduct relating to one of the prohibited grounds which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person e.g. an employee has a son who is gay or knows someone who is gay and people in the employee's workplace often tell jokes about gay people and tease the employee about that person's sexual orientation. This could be grounds for a complaint of harassment on the grounds of sexual orientation. Harassment does not have to be intentional and can include thoughtlessness.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments

If work arrangements disadvantage an individual because of their disability an employer has a duty to make reasonable adjustments to help the person overcome the disadvantage. A failure to comply with this duty is an act of disability discrimination.

Victimisation

This is when a person is treated less favourably because they have been complained or been involved in a complaint about discrimination e.g. an employee gives evidence for a colleague who has brought a claim for discrimination on the grounds of race and their subsequent application for promotion is rejected because they are labelled as a troublemaker.

Liability and remedies

BACP and individual employees can be held liable for acts of discrimination that they commit, authorise or condone. It is the duty of all employees to accept their personal responsibility for the practical application of this policy.

An employee who believes that they have been discriminated against, can raise the matter under BACP's Grievance and/or Bullying and Harassment procedures. In serious cases, such behaviour could be deemed to constitute gross misconduct and may result in summary dismissal.

Implementation

Recruitment/employment

- Vacancies will be advertised in diverse mediums to aim to attract a diverse group of people. All advertisements will carry the statement: BACP is an equal opportunities employer.
- Posts which are funded through grants must be advertised in accordance with the funder's requirements.
- All application packs will contain an equal opportunities monitoring form which will be separated from the application to ensure anonymity, and information gleaned in this way will be analysed to review compliance with this policy.
- Application forms will be kept for a minimum of 12 months after the date of interview and must be kept securely, in line with the Data Protection Act.

- The BACP will not automatically regard a criminal record as a bar to employment within its organisation. Each applicant for a position will be considered on his or her merits, skills, experience and qualifications. Any criminal conviction an applicant holds will be assessed and considered in relation to the post applied for. (See policy 007 section 1.2 regarding CRB checks)
- Employees/volunteers will receive training during induction and at other appropriate times to ensure awareness and understanding of this policy.
- No employee/volunteer will be treated less favourably on the grounds of his or her sex, gender, marital status, colour, race, ethnic origin, religion or similar belief, sexual orientation, disability or age.
- All Employees and volunteers have a responsibility to ensure that they adhere to this policy; this includes reporting any incidents which they feel contravene this policy to their line manager, who will take the appropriate action.

Responsibilities

The Chair will bring to the attention of the relevant committee any example of bad practice within the BACP or any example of good practice in any other organisation that the committee should consider, and any committee member or member of staff is invited to do likewise.

The Chair will report annually to the management committee (or any other committee with responsibility for staffing) on:

- the gender and ethnic origin of all applicants posts, in relation to the grade of the post applied for
- the gender and ethnic origin of all persons short-listed for posts, in relation to the grade applied for
- the gender and ethnic origin of all staff appointed, according to the grade of the post
- any other matter relating to staffing that is relevant to the policy

The Chair will report annually to the management committee on other aspects of the policy and how the BACP is ensuring the necessary procedures are in place to enable correct application and implementation of the equal opportunities policy.

All staff has a responsibility for:

- Ensuring the non-discriminatory treatment of all staff/visitors/customers and volunteers.
- Identifying and reducing or removing discriminatory attitudes and practices within the organisation.
- Raising the level of awareness of the policy's existence.
- Dealing fairly and speedily with any discriminatory issue raised in the course of their work
- Supporting and contributing to the monitoring and review process.

The management committee may at any time ask for other relevant information to be given or collected.