



**Dunstable Good Neighbours**

# Equality & Diversity Policy

# 1. General Statement

1.1 Dunstable Good Neighbours is committed to achieving equal opportunities in the services it provides. We believe that equality for all is a basic human right and actively oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. We celebrate the diversity of our community and seek to reflect that diversity within our good neighbourhood scheme. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 no user of Dunstable Good Neighbours services or volunteer should receive less favourable treatment because of: race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or creed, age, gender or gender reassignment, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability.

1.2 As a provider of a service to the community, Dunstable Good Neighbours accepts the responsibility to promote equal opportunities and challenge discrimination wherever it occurs. We will treat all people with dignity and respect, recognising the value of everyone. This document sets out the main consequences of this commitment and the action to be taken to achieve equal opportunities.

1.3 It is the responsibility of all volunteers and service-users to ensure that no individual receives less favourable treatment than any other on the grounds stated in Para. 1.1 of this policy.

1.4 Dunstable Good Neighbours recognises that some users of its services may, because of their past or present distress or medical condition, say or do things which would otherwise be unacceptable and incompatible with Dunstable Good Neighbours Equality and Diversity Policy. Dunstable Good Neighbours will do all it can to challenge such behaviour. In cases where intervention is possible a gentle approach will be adopted which aims to alter attitudes and behaviour while maintaining support for the distressed service-user.

1.5 The Steering Group of Dunstable Good Neighbours will review this policy biannually.

## 2 Responsibility

2.1 The steering group of Dunstable Good Neighbours has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy. However, all volunteers and service-users have a duty as part of their involvement with Dunstable Good Neighbours to do everything they can to ensure that the policy works in practice.

2.2 Dunstable Good Neighbours is committed to inclusive recruitment of volunteers and will strive to recruit volunteers to reflect the diversity of the community.

2.3 Dunstable Good Neighbours will bring to the attention of all volunteers and service-users the existence of this policy and will provide such guidance as is necessary to ensure that the policy is effective and that everyone is aware of it.

2.4 Those responsible for recruiting volunteers to work with Dunstable Good Neighbours good neighbourhood scheme are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of Dunstable Good Neighbours Equality and Diversity Policy and for ensuring that those volunteers adhere to it while working with Dunstable Good Neighbours.

2.5 Every effort will be made to ensure that the services offered by Dunstable Good Neighbours reflect the composition of the community it serves. Dunstable Good Neighbours is committed to encouraging access from under-represented groups.

2.6 If any service-user or volunteer feels that they have been, or are being discriminated against, in any way, they are urged to pursue the matter with the officers of the steering group.

2.7 All instances or complaints of discriminatory behaviour will be treated seriously.

2.8 Complaints or allegations of an unfounded or malicious nature will also be treated as serious.

### 3 Disabled Access

3.1 Dunstable Good Neighbours will endeavour to ensure, as far as is practicable, that all the premises it uses have disabled access. When considering new premises, every effort will be made to ensure such premises are fully accessible.

### 4 Use of Language

4.1 Volunteers and service-users should avoid and challenge the use of language which, in any way, may be regarded as discriminatory, particularly in relation to:

- disabled groups and/or individuals with special needs
- any race, culture, or religion
- a person's sexual orientation
- women and/or men
- age

4.2 Where the language used has a personal impact on others, and it has been made clear to the person concerned that their use of such language is unwelcome and/or offensive, appropriate action may be taken if they persist with it.

4.3 All materials used or developed by Dunstable Good Neighbours will be judged in the light of the promotion of equal opportunities, and those considered to be discriminatory will not be used.

## 5 Sexual Harassment

5.1 No volunteer or service-user should be subject to sexual harassment.

5.2 This is interpreted as unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature including:

- verbal sexual abuse
- physical contact
- repeated remarks which an individual finds offensive

5.3 If it has been made clear to the person concerned that their behaviour is unwelcome and they persist with it, then the service-user or volunteer who is the recipient of the behaviour will be entitled to make a formal complaint to the officers of the steering group.

## 6 Equal Opportunities Monitoring

6.1 The steering group will endeavour to monitor Dunstable Good Neighbours equality and diversity in practice with regards to recruitment of volunteers and provision of services to service-user.

6.2 Annual monitoring of the provision of services within the local diverse community will be carried out to ensure Dunstable Good Neighbours are providing equal opportunities to both service-users and volunteers.

6.3 Monitoring will be conducted through volunteer and service-user feedback and evaluation - written and/or verbal - at least once a year.

6.4 Quarterly reports to BRCC will contribute to this annual monitoring.

7 Signature:



Andrew Harland

Position/Role:

CHAIRPERSON

Dated:

17<sup>th</sup> June 2021