

BOURNEMOUTH EAST ALLOTMENT SOCIETY LTD

EQUALITIES POLICY

First adopted on 16th April 2012; ratified at AGM on 9th December 2012

Last reviewed on 13th October 2021; ratified at AGM on 9th December 2021

The policy will be reviewed every three years.

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Originally registered as a Friendly Society in 1935 under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act (1893), Bournemouth East Allotment Society Ltd was re-registered in 2018 under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. It is affiliated to the National Allotment Society, previously the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners Ltd.

Membership: The Committee decides who may be admitted to membership and may also admit into associate membership any adult interested in the activities of the Society. No adult will be excluded from membership of the Society due to their protected characteristics.

Cessation of membership: A membership will cease on the member's death, resignation, expulsion under Rule 11 for conduct detrimental to the Society or non-payment of the annual subscription for a period of 40 days after it is due.

2. REFERENCE TO OTHER KEY DOCUMENTS

BEAS leases the allotment sites from Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and so this policy links to the Council's Corporate Equality and Diversity Policy. It also links to the Society's Complaints Procedure.

3. POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND CONSULTATION

- The policy was originally drafted by the Secretary and accepted for consultation by the Committee.
- The policy was distributed to all members for comment and adopted on 9th December 2012.
- The Committee is responsible for monitoring the policy through the recording of incidents. Any such incidents or issues are considered at the monthly committee meetings and reported to the full membership at the AGM in December.

4. INTRODUCTION

BEAS seeks to promote the principles of welcoming diversity and practising equality and mutual tolerance among its members and visitors to the site. The Society recognises that Equalities is not about "treating people the same", but rather about recognising people's differences, acting positively to ensure that as far as possible those differences are recognised for the enrichment they bring to the culture of the Society, and that where individuals face barriers, including harassment and victimisation because of their differences, these are ameliorated as far as possible to enable everyone to have equal chances.

The Society understands **direct discrimination** under the Equalities Act (October 2010) to be treating someone worse than someone else because of a protected characteristic * and **indirect discrimination** as an action that would have a worse

impact on those with protected characteristics than those who do not share those characteristics. The Committee will ensure that its decisions or the application of the Society's rules does not lead to direct or indirect discrimination unless this can be **objectively justified**.

5. ENSURING EQUALITY IN POLICY AND PRACTICE

In line with the Equality Act 2010, the Society will take positive action to meet the needs of adults with protected characteristics* we actively promote the principles of fairness and justice for all and constantly strive to remove any forms of discrimination which may jeopardize members' enjoyment of cultivating their plots. We challenge stereotyping and prejudice and encourage the reporting of discrimination, victimisation and harassment.

6. WHO MUST COMPLY WITH THIS POLICY?

- All members and associate members.
- Anyone delivering services to the site such as contractors or distributors.
- All visitors to the site.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Role of the Committee

The Committee is responsible and accountable for this policy and its implementation.

The Role of the Secretary

The Secretary will ensure that all incidents are accurately recorded and reported and that, as far as possible, satisfactory resolution is reached.

The Role of all Members

Members will ensure that all people using the site are treated fairly and with respect. They will challenge and report any incidents of prejudice or discrimination, intervening positively to promote understanding between those who share a protected characteristic and others.

8. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The policy will be monitored through:

- Incidents
- Complaints
- Observations of committee members

The effectiveness of the policy will be evaluated by the Committee on at least an annual basis, using the evidence gathered through the monitoring process.

The policy will be reviewed at three-yearly intervals in consultation with the members.

9. DISSEMINATION OF THE POLICY

This policy will be made available to all members and associate members and to contractors with any contract documents.

Appendix A (attached) contains the guidance (updated in March 2011) giving advice on the Society's responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. It has been

aligned with the Code of Practice on Services, Public Functions and Associations. This will be used to ensure that the policy is implemented effectively and so help to avoid any adverse decisions by a court if legal proceedings are initiated.

** List of Protected Characteristics*

- Age
- Disability
- Ethnicity and race - this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- Faith, religion and belief - this includes lack of belief
- Gender
- Gender identity and reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy, maternity and breastfeeding
- Sexual identity and orientation