

# Barrow upon Soar Community Library

## Equality and Diversity Policy

### Statement:

Barrow Library Management Committee is committed to equality and diversity. This commitment extends to our volunteers and we welcome everyone from our community as a volunteer.

Library Management Committee (the Organisation) encourages all people it works with to contribute to an environment in which people feel comfortable expressing how they feel and what they need, knowing they will be treated with respect and that their contribution will be valued.

The way we work and learn within the Organisation reflects both the Mission and Objectives of the Organisation and the spirit and intentions of legislation that outlaws discrimination and promotes equality and diversity.

The Organisation will endeavour to deliver services in a way that genuinely recognises the importance of an inclusive society that brings opportunities and access, not barriers to individuals.

We will not discriminate and will protect people from unfair treatment under the Equality Act 2010 which covers the 9 protected characteristics:

### Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 covers 9 protected characteristics. It aims to protect people from unfair treatment. Everyone has a protected characteristic, so it is important that these are recognised.

<b>1. Age</b>	Age refers to a person being of a certain age (such as 65 years old) or belonging to a particular age group (such as 40 - 45 year olds).
<b>2. Disability</b>	A disabled person refers to a person who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
<b>3. Gender Reassignment</b>	Gender reassignment is the process of transitioning from one gender to another.
<b>4. Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	Marriage is defined as a 'union between two partners'. Both heterosexual and same sex couples can get married. Currently, same-sex couples can have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'.
<b>5. Maternity and Pregnancy</b>	Pregnancy is the condition of expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In a non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth. It includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.
<b>6. Race</b>	Race refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins.
<b>7. Religion or belief</b>	Religion refers to a person's faith. Belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.
<b>8. Sex/gender</b>	Sex/gender refers to a person's gender - man or woman

<b>9. Sexual orientation</b>	Sexual orientation refers to whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.
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We also recognise that many potential volunteers have criminal records, and may be reluctant to apply for volunteering roles. Having a criminal record is not necessarily a bar to volunteering with us.

Furthermore, we value difference, and recognise the value that the different backgrounds, skills, outlooks and experiences of our volunteers bring to the Organisation.

**Aims and Objectives**

The aims and objectives of the Equality and Diversity Policy are:

- To encourage, promote and celebrate diversity in all our activities and services
- To ensure equal access to volunteer opportunities, and services
- To ensure compliance with legislation on discrimination and equality including Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation currently in force
- To promote equal opportunities in other areas not currently covered by legislation
- To create environments free from harassment and discrimination
- To maximise the use of resources in the best interests of, volunteers and service users
- To confront and challenge discrimination where and whenever it arises, whether it is between colleagues, or in any other area relating to the Organisation's work
- To make a willingness to accept and implement this policy to be a necessary qualification for any position in the Organisation
- To ensure, through positive action and so far as is practicable, that all the Organisation premises and services are accessible to all people

**Responsibility:**

The Library Management Committee has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy. However, all volunteers also have a duty as part of their involvement with Barrow Library to do everything they can to ensure that the policy works in practice.

The Library Management Committee will regularly review the implementation of its Equality and Diversity Policy and strategy. Where evidence is found of ineffectiveness, immediate remedial action will be taken to ensure implementation.

The Organisation recognises the need for a continuing commitment to genuine equal opportunities and diversity within the Organisation. The effectiveness of the policy's aims and objectives can only be judged by how the policy operates in practice.

## **Our commitment:**

### **Take action, where it is needed, to address inequality or promote diversity**

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our volunteers are recognised and valued.
- Every volunteer is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- Breaches of our equality and diversity policy will be regarded as misconduct
- This policy is fully supported by the management committee
- The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.

Any service user who feels he/she has been unfairly treated in a way contrary to the intention of this policy should make a complaint through the Barrow Library Management Committee Chair.

Any volunteer who believes that they have been treated unfairly and contrary to the intention of this policy should raise the issue with the volunteer coordinator or the Chair of the Library Management Committee

### **Policy Enforcement**

All incidents of **direct discrimination** are will be dealt with under the complaints procedure.

Incidents of **indirect discrimination** will be investigated to determine whether they should be dealt with under the complaints procedure

Incidents of **victimisation** or **harassment** will be dealt with in accordance with the Barrow Library complaints procedure, Where incidents of victimisation and harassment are proven, the issue will be dealt with by the Library Management Committee .

Any volunteer, including Library Management Committee member, found to be in breach of this policy will be counselled on his/her actions and may, where necessary, be removed from the Barrow Library volunteer register.

Any member of the Library Management Committee or volunteer of the Barrow Library found in breach of this policy will be counselled on their actions and may, where necessary, be asked to leave the Barrow Library.

Any service user found in breach of this policy will, where appropriate, be counselled on their actions and may, where necessary, and appropriate action will be taken.

### **Monitoring**

The Organisation regards the collection/analysis of data as vital in informing change and improving performance. Where appropriate, statistics on the Barrow Library services will be collected and analysed in relation to equality and diversity matters. We will review volunteer turnover and seek information on reasons for leaving.

The Library Management Committee will review annually equality of opportunity relating to the Organisation services. Recruitment and selection procedures for volunteers will be monitored

and reviewed annually to ensure that they do not operate against the Equal and Diversity Policy.

Appropriate action will be taken to encourage wider take up of volunteering, and community use of its services.

Where it appears that there may have been or there is a breach of the policy, the Library Management Committee will investigate the circumstances and action will be taken to counter any proven breach of policy.

If it is found that the policy is excluding or discouraging volunteers or restricting service users, the Library Management Committee will take action to re-adjust the policy.

This policy was adopted by BUSCA Trustees on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015

Signed ..... (BUSCA Trustee)

Date .....

Signed: .....A.Kazianis

Date .....

Review Date: October 2018

