



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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Purpose

This policy is designed to explain Heart of Hastings commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. It should let staff and volunteers understand what we expect of them, and it should help members, partner organisations, stakeholders, tenants and the public understand what they can expect of us.

Scope

This policy is for staff, volunteers, Trustees, members, partner organisations, stakeholders, tenants and the public. You can contact us: info@heartofhastings.org.uk or on 07526130778 about this policy

HEART OF HASTINGS CLT Limited

Registered with the FCA: N 7604 Registered Charity with HMRC N EW82493.

Registered address: Eagle House, 27-29 Cambridge Road, Hastings TN34 1DJ

Document author: Richard Wistreich date: 28/04/2021 page 1



Heart of Hastings commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We will work together to create and sustain a community where diversity is recognised, valued and celebrated. We will pro-actively advance equality and inclusive practice in our staff recruitment and their working environment, in our interactions with stakeholders, and with participants in our public programmes. We will endeavour through effective and collaborative action to create a culture which values diversity, and in which all employees, Trustees, and other volunteers and participants in our activities give due respect to other people and their work or ideas.

As well as being integral to Heart of Hastings’ strategic plan, this policy is underpinned by the belief that Equality, Diversity and Inclusive (ED&I) practice enhances our culture and effectiveness practically and socially. To ensure this we will:

- Ensure everyone who works or volunteers for Heart of Hastings (HoH) [/Hastings Commons] understands their personal responsibility to promote equality and inclusive practice and remove any unfair barriers, through appropriate training on induction and periodic refresher courses.
- Align and embed our ED&I policy with other key HoH [/Hastings Commons partner organisations] policies and strategies.
- Engage and involve our own employees, volunteers, partner organisations and other stakeholders, to develop our ED&I initiatives.
- Ensure that our objectives and actions are led by our own ambition to play a leading role in shaping a more diverse and inclusive Hastings.

What we mean by:

Equality	A fundamental part of a fair society in which everyone can have the best possible chance to succeed in life.
Diversity	Recognising that everyone is different in a variety of visible and non-visible ways, and that those differences are to be recognised, respected and valued.

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Inclusion	The active creation of a working and social environment that is welcoming, which recognises and celebrates difference, and that this is reflected in its structures, practices and attitudes.
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Commitments

HoH remains committed to not discriminating unfairly on the grounds of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership (all of which are 'protected characteristics' under the law); nor will we discriminate unfairly on the grounds of class, financial status, or any other unjustifiable cause.

Monitoring

We will regularly collect, evaluate and publish data relevant to our equality, diversity and inclusion policies. This will be reported annually to the Board of Trustees and the Membership at the AGM.

Policy review

We will regularly develop and review through approved? Equality impact assessments (EIAs) our policies and practices to ensure equality of opportunity and treatment of those who are, or seek to be, its employees, volunteers or participants. HoH will also, where suitable, initiate new policies and practices.

Awareness

HoH [/Hastings Commons] will encourage awareness of our aims, policies and procedures in the field of equality and diversity and provide appropriate information and training as required. Our commitments to ED&I will be promoted prominently on our website and other publicity.

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Failure to adhere to the policy

HoH [/Hastings Commons] aims to ensure that every individual is treated with respect and dignity and that no member of staff or stakeholder is subjected to unfair discrimination. HoH [/Hastings Commons] will do its utmost to protect staff, volunteers and participants from all forms of discriminatory and unacceptable behaviour, including micro-aggressions by any individual or groups, whether in person, online, or in any other way. Allegations of discriminatory behaviour are always treated with the utmost seriousness and will be dealt with promptly, under the organisation's Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure if relating to employees, or appropriate complaints procedure for others.

Responsibility

Responsibility for ensuring the HoH [/Hastings Commons] actively practices and promotes equality, diversity and inclusion lies with all its members, employees and volunteers. Formal oversight and implementation of the ED&I Policy is maintained by the Executive Director and the Board of Trustees.

Policy adopted by HoH Board of Trustees on [17 May 2021]
Date of formal policy review: [May 2024]

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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Objectives

1. We will be an organisation that leads by example; we will raise awareness and promote equality in a way that informs our culture and practices, is inclusive and removes any form of less favourable treatment, unfair discrimination or harassment.

We will do this by:

- Ensuring everyone working, volunteering or otherwise participating at HoH [Hastings Commons] understands their responsibilities to foster an inclusive working and social environment, and are aware of relevant good practice policies, guidance, and support services. This will include mandatory ED&I training as part of the induction of employees and Trustees, refreshed annually. Training for employees and Trustees is organised by the Executive Director.
- Ensuring diversity is reflected in all our decision-making forums, and that they, in turn, actively contribute to promoting equality, diversity and inclusive practice.
- Embedding structures and resources to support ED&I activity across all areas of HoH's [Hastings Commons] activities.

2. We will attract, retain, and develop a diverse HoH [Hastings Commons] community and strive to ensure that everyone can attain and succeed to the best of their abilities.

We will do this by:

- Ensuring we engage and inspire potential employees, volunteers and participants in our programmes from diverse backgrounds. Employees are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential, and we will make sure our appointments process is fair and inclusive.

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- Proactively encouraging applications from under-represented groups for administrative and volunteer roles; we will pursue this through structured recruitment, career progression (where relevant) and leadership development opportunities.

3. Be adaptive to the needs of our diverse HoH [/Hastings Commons] community, supporting flexible ways of working and participating that recognise potentially exclusionary factors in people's lives such as disability, caring responsibilities or economic disadvantage.

We will do this by:

- Ensuring we promote equality and inclusion within all our working policies and practices, embedding these in terms of employment for staff and participation agreements with volunteers.
- Ensuring an inclusive approach to the design and delivery of programmes, ensuring that we support those who may have specific limitations to full participation (such as caring responsibilities; disabilities, etc.).

4. Encourage an inclusive and supportive environment for all members of the HoH [/Hastings Commons] community.

We will do this by:

- Committing to promoting a culture based on the principles of respect, dignity and inclusion for everyone.
- Understanding the diverse composition and needs of our employees and volunteers by creating an environment which encourages disclosure (for example, clear guidance for reporting discrimination and guarantees of confidentiality) as well as collecting and analysing robust information.

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- Doing as much as possible to ensure adequate access to our physical spaces for those with disabilities.

Implementation

To ensure that these key objectives are realised, we will implement and monitor detailed actions that will specify targets, timescales and responsibilities. These actions will not be static but will be set out and regularly reviewed by the Executive Director to ensure they remain relevant, and reported on annually to the Board of Trustees.

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