



### Introduction

This policy aims to outline Kings Heath Residents' Forum (KHRF) commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity and equal treatment for Committee members and volunteers.

### Scope

The policy applies to all Committee members and volunteers. The policy applies specifically to discrimination and equality of opportunity in respect of 'protected characteristics' as defined in the Equalities Act 2010:

- (a) Age
- (b) Disability
- (c) Race
- (d) Sex
- (e) Religion or beliefs
- (f) Gender reassignment
- (g) Marital status and civil partnership
- (h) Sexual orientation
- (i) Pregnancy and maternity

### Responsibilities

KHRF values its Committee member and volunteers and expects them to be treated in a respectful manner. Accordingly, all have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect.

### Aims

As one of its core values is ethical behaviour; KHRF aims to:

- promote equality of opportunity
- celebrate and value diversity

KHRF will aim to provide equality of opportunity and equal treatment as an integral part of good practice. The organisation is committed to working in an environment in which the contribution and needs of everyone are fully valued and recognised. Any inappropriate, violent or abusive behaviour from colleagues, other organisations or customers will not be tolerated

## General purpose

KHRF practices will ensure that Committee members and volunteers will not be discriminated against on any grounds including age, disability, race, sex, religion or beliefs, gender reassignment, marital status and civil partnership, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity.

KHRF commitment to anti-discriminatory practice relates to all kinds of discrimination, as set out below:

- Direct discrimination - where someone is treated less favourably than another because they have a protected characteristic
- Indirect discrimination – when a requirement or a condition is applied which has a detrimental effect on a particular group or individual. This applies even if there was not a deliberate intention to discriminate.
- Associative discrimination – direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who has a protected characteristic.
- Perceptive discrimination - direct discrimination against someone because others think they have a protected characteristic even if they do not possess that characteristic.
- Harassment – unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. This applies even if the conduct is not directed at the individual or if they do not have the protected characteristic..
- Victimisation – when someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint under the Equalities Act or it is thought that they have done so.

KHRF fully supports the principle of equality and diversity. We aim to encourage, value and manage diversity and we recognise that talent and potential are distributed across the population. Not only are there moral and social reasons for promoting equality of opportunity, it is in the best interest of this organisation to continue to encourage membership and volunteering for the Forum from as wide and diverse a pool of talent as possible.

Discrimination operates through commonly held assumptions and prejudices, which are reinforced by laws, rules and customs. This makes discrimination appear normal and inevitable. Discrimination works by stereotyping people into different roles, by treating some people worse than others, or simply by ignoring them.

KHRF is committed to opposing all forms of discrimination including that based on protected characteristics such as age, disability, gender reassignment, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity. This list is not exhaustive.

Discrimination can be direct, associative, perceptive, indirect, harassment (including by 3<sup>rd</sup> parties) or victimisation. (See glossary at end for definitions). All forms of discrimination are unacceptable, regardless of whether there was any intention to discriminate or not.

## **Legislation**

We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that we do not unlawfully discriminate under:

the Equality Act 2010  
any other relevant legislation in force from time to time relating to discrimination in employment and the provision of goods, facilities or services.

## **Equal Opportunities Policy Implementation:**

- i) KHRF is committed to promotion of equal opportunities in all aspects:
  - by providing information in a way that is accessible, for example, large print
  - by meeting in premises with facilities which are physically accessible to those participating
- ii) The recruitment of volunteers shall be undertaken in accordance with this policy, in particular:
  - by ensuring that posts encourage applications from groups experiencing discrimination

## **Training**

KHRF will ensure that all new volunteers and Management Committee members will receive induction on the policy.

## **Review**

The KHRF Committee shall regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy in achieving the stated aims. This process shall be undertaken at least annually, shall include the review of each component of the policy, and shall aim to seek the views of organisations representing the interests of those groups referred to in this policy.

## **Glossary**

### **Protected Characteristics**

The protected characteristics as listed in the Equality Act 2010 are sex, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, age, disability, pregnancy and maternity.

### **Disability**

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse affect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

### **Gender reassignment**

A transsexual person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender. The person does not have to be under medical supervision.

### **Race**

Race includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

### **Religion or belief**

Under the Equality Act 2010, religion includes any religion. It also includes lack of religion, in other words employees or jobseekers are protected if they do not follow a certain religion or have no religion at all. Additionally, a religion must have a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief or a lack of such belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour.

**Sexual orientation**

Includes bisexual, gay, heterosexual, and lesbian people.

**Direct discrimination**

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have (see perceptive discrimination below), or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (see associative discrimination below).

**Associative discrimination**

This is direct discrimination against someone because they are linked or associated with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

**Perceptive discrimination**

This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

**Indirect discrimination**

Indirect discrimination can occur when you have a condition, rule, policy or even a practice in your company that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic and which cannot be justified in relation to the job.

**Harassment**

Harassment is “unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual”.

**Victimisation**

Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint about discrimination or harassment, or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010; or because they are suspected of doing so. An employee is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint.

**Positive action**

Some people with protected characteristics are disadvantaged or under-represented in some areas of life, or have particular needs linked to their characteristic. They may need extra help or encouragement if they are to have the same chances as everyone else. The new positive action provisions held within the Equalities Act 2010 enable service providers to take proportionate steps to help people overcome their disadvantages or to meet their needs.