



Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Aim

Brigstowe is committed to developing an organisational culture where everyone feels responsible for and contributes in a positive way to the progress of equal opportunities, a culture that respects and values each other's differences, that promotes dignity, equity, diversity and inclusion, and that encourages individuals to develop and maximise their true potential.

We aim to remove any barriers, bias or discrimination that prevent individuals or groups from realising their potential and contributing fully to our organisation's performance and to develop an organisational culture that positively values diversity.

Brigstowe is committed to promoting equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in all its activities, including its services, recruitment, employment, volunteers, its Board of Trustees, work with consultants, contractors and agents, and approaches to development and monitoring.

All forms of discrimination are unacceptable, regardless of whether there was any intention to discriminate or not. Employees, trustees and volunteers have a duty to co-operate with Brigstowe to ensure that this policy is effective in ensuring equal opportunities and preventing discrimination. Employees, trustees and volunteers should draw the attention of their line manager to suspected discriminatory acts or practices or cases of bullying or harassment.

We believe that everyone has the right to live without fear or prejudice regardless of characteristics, including HIV status. Everyone should be able to make a full contribution to society in their own unique way and live in a world which demonstrates respect and values diversity. We are committed to driving change beyond our own organisation, whilst always ensuring that our beneficiaries remain at the heart of our thinking and decision-making.

Our commitment

Brigstowe is committed to upholding the terms of the Equality Act 2010 and any subsequent guidance issued. Therefore, we will ensure that no person shall be treated less favourably in relation to the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Care experience (a Bristol City Council locally agreed protective characteristic)

Full definitions of each characteristic can be found in sections 5-12 of the Act.

When promoting, planning, delivering, and reviewing our services, Brigstowe will also ensure that no person shall be treated less favourably because of homelessness, economic status, class, culture, appearance, spiritual or political beliefs, offending history, HIV status, perceived lifestyle, or route of HIV transmission or as a user of services.

Brigstowe firmly believes that a commitment to EDI does not end with a policy statement. There needs to be a real commitment to ensuring practices and delivery of services are non-discriminatory, promote equality of opportunity and are inclusive. Our policy will be implemented in the following ways:

Governance

Brigstowe will enhance its accountability through wide representation on the board of trustees. Participation in the affairs of the organisation will be open.

- Trustees will be actively involved in reviewing this policy biennially
- EDI objectives will be reflected in the board and governance policy, as well as being published publicly annually in our EDI Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2026
- Trustee recruitment will be fair and transparent in line with Brigstowe's Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Equalities data will be collected, compared, analysed, and reported to trustees to inform change, developments and improvements. For example, the trustees will review annually how client demographics compare with those of staff, trustees, and volunteers, as well as local patient population data (where it can be obtained)
- Positive action will be taken to recruit people living with HIV (who have the relevant skills and experience) to the board

Development

When developing new services, Brigstowe will ensure that EDI is an integral part of the design, so that people with protected characteristics have full access and involvement.

Service provision

Brigstowe will ensure fair and equal treatment of its clients and will provide sensitive services appropriate to their needs.

- No client will be treated less favourably than any other
- Our complaints procedure will be published and implemented
- Clients will be consulted about the services provided
- A clear and positive policy on harassment will be available, and assistance will be provided to all individuals experiencing harassment
- Whenever possible, clients who have communication difficulties will be provided with assistance
- Clients who feel they have been discriminated against by Brigstowe will be encouraged to use Brigstowe's Complaints Policy and Procedure

Employment and training

Employment and training practices will be open and accountable and will be non-discriminatory. Positive action may be used where the under-representation of groups has been identified.

- Recruitment will be conducted in accordance with equal opportunities principles
- Applications will be encouraged from disadvantaged groups

- Training, selection and promotion will be on an equal basis
- Action will be taken to prevent and respond to harassment of/by staff, trustees or volunteers
- Reasonable adjustments will be made to make sure workers with disabilities or physical or mental health conditions are not substantially disadvantaged when doing their jobs
- Staff, trustees or volunteers who feel they have been discriminated against by Brigstowe should be encouraged to use Brigstowe's Grievance Procedure

Contractors and consultants

There will be no discriminatory practices in the approval of contractors or consultants or in the allocation of work.

- Procurement procedures will be non-discriminatory. For example, we will follow the guidance within Brigstowe's Finance Policy regarding when to obtain more than one quote
- Consultants and contractors will be required to demonstrate a commitment to EDI principles where relevant
- Consultants and contractors will be required to sign up to Brigstowe's policy statement if providing services to clients on our behalf

Communications

Brigstowe's communications will speak to, and on behalf of, the diverse communities we work with and for. Newsletters, social media posts, our websites and other communications will all promote equity, value diversity and champion inclusion not only to achieve our own aims but also to influence wider society.

Implementation

It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to ensure implementation, monitor effectiveness, and review and develop the policy where necessary. Monitoring and review will take place annually. The Chief Executive is responsible for the policy's day-to-day implementation. We will also ensure that all other policies align with the EDI policy.

Each employee, volunteer, consultant, trainer, facilitator or trustee is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Breaches of the EDI Policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary action against employees, appropriate action against a trustee, termination of contracts for services of consultants or trainers, or withdrawal of volunteer agreements.

Brigstowe will ensure that all new employees, volunteers, and trustees will receive induction on the policy and consultants, trainers and facilitators will also be fully informed of the policy.

Related policies/documents

- Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2026
- Personal Harassment Policy and Procedure
- Recruitment and Selection Policy

Date policy created	2013
Created by	Pamela Hampton
Last review date	Feb 2021
Date amended	Jun 2024
Amended by	Rami Ghali/Louise Young
Approved by Trustees	Jul 2025
Next Review Due	Jun 2026