Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Aim

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.

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.

We are committed to developing an organisational culture where everyone feels responsible for and contributes positively to the progression of equity. Equity means recognising that people have different backgrounds, experiences, circumstances and barriers, and taking appropriate action to ensure everyone has fair access to opportunities, services and support. We aspire to establish a culture that promotes dignity and is free from any barriers, bias or discrimination that prevent individuals or groups from thriving.

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.

We recognise that people may experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination or disadvantage. Brigstowe will ensure that no person is treated less favourably because of homelessness, economic status, class, culture, appearance, offending history, perceived lifestyle, or HIV status.

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 equity of opportunity, and are inclusive. Our policy will be implemented as described on the following pages.

Governance

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

- Trustees will be actively involved in reviewing this policy biennially
- EDI objectives will be reviewed annually and progress will be reported to the board
- 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)
- Where people living with HIV are underrepresented on the board, positive action measures will be used to encourage suitably skilled and experienced candidates to apply

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. We will consider intersectionality when designing services, and we are developing an Equality Impact Assessment template for use at the outset of any new work or major changes.

Service provision

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

- All clients will be treated with dignity, respect and fairness
- Our complaints procedure will be published and implemented
- Clients will be consulted about the services provided
- Whenever possible, clients who have communication difficulties will be provided with assistance
- Clients who have felt 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, accountable, and non-discriminatory. Positive action may be used where the underrepresentation of groups has been identified.

- Recruitment will be conducted in accordance with EDI principles
- Applications will be encouraged from underrepresented and minoritised groups
- Training, selection and promotion will be on an equal basis
- Trustees, employees and volunteers will receive appropriate EDI training and development opportunities relevant to their role
- Brigstowe has zero tolerance for discrimination, bullying, harassment, victimisation or other exclusionary behaviour, including behaviour that may be unintended; staff, trustees or volunteers who experience or witness discrimination are encouraged to report concerns and will be supported to do so without fear of retaliation
- We will make reasonable adjustments and remove barriers so that employees, volunteers and trustees with disabilities or physical/mental health conditions are not disadvantaged
- 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, online publications, and all other communications will promote equity, value diversity and champion inclusion, not only to achieve our aims but to influence wider society. We will also strive to ensure our communications, events and digital services are accessible and available in appropriate formats where reasonably practicable.

Implementation

It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to ensure the implementation of this policy, monitor its effectiveness, and review and develop it where necessary. Monitoring and review will take place biennially. The CEO 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 complying 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 receive induction on the policy, and consultants, trainers and facilitators will also be fully informed of the policy.

Related policies/documents

- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Finance Policy

Date policy created	2013
Created by	Pamela Hampton
Last review date	October 2026
Amended by	Louise Young
Approved by Trustees	
Next review due	October 2028