

# An Equality Policy for my group?



Equality is an important principle for charities and trustee boards. The voluntary sector is full of people fighting against injustice. The design of our organisations should also reflect this.

## An Overview of The Equality Act

The Act became law in October 2010 and replaces pieces of primary and secondary legislation. A single act is meant to be easier to understand and apply. Everyone in Britain is protected by the act which names nine protected characteristics. It states that no-one is allowed to discriminate against, harass or victimise anyone because they have these characteristics.

The characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion and belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

## Equality and diversity in the work environment

The Equality Act 2010 makes it a legal requirement to address injustice at work. Failure to adhere to legislation, or even being perceived as not being equal and diverse, can harm your organisation's reputation and de-motivate your staff.

## The role of trustees, committee members and directors

Trustees/committee members/Directors have legal responsibilities in this area, mainly in relation to discrimination in employment, the provision of services. They should take expert advice if they wish to restrict employment or service opportunities in a way that might be discriminating.

They can also follow equality and diversity principles within its own role of governing and their management functioning. For example, they might consider:

- the recruitment of new trustees – does the board ensure that vacancies are promoted as widely as possible?
- the involvement of users at board level – as trustees or in an advisory capacity
- the accessibility of board meetings – when and where meetings are held, and the support given to board members.

For more information go to Gov.Uk [Equality Act Guidance for charities](#)

## Resources to help you.

The following can be found CCVS Website:

Model Policies and guides.

<http://www.cambridgecvs.org.uk/group-support/Healthy%20Fenland%20Fund>

Other Resources can be found at:

Support Cambridgeshire Factsheets and resources

<https://www.supportcambridgeshire.org.uk/resources/>

Start Now—guide for getting community events off the ground in Cambridgeshire.

[www.startnow.org.uk](http://www.startnow.org.uk)

Sport—Club Mark

<http://www.clubmark.org.uk/resources/volunteer-resources/managing-your-club>