



Equality and Diversity Policy

1. General Statement

- 1.1. Queen's Park Community Organisation (QPCO) is committed to achieving equal opportunities in the services it provides. No user of QPCO services or volunteer should receive less favourable treatment because of: sex, gender, gender reassignment, age, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, marital/civil partnership status, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, responsibility for dependents, trade union or political activities, criminal record, place of residence, religion, faith or other beliefs, health status, or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified. We will never use cultural practices as a justification for, or to ignore, an issue of safeguarding. In this context, QPCO considers that 'diversity' encompasses not just the nine protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010, but also reflects different backgrounds, career paths, life experiences, and diversity of thought.
- 1.2. As a provider of a service to the community, QPCO accepts the responsibility to promote equal opportunities and challenge discrimination wherever it occurs. This document sets out the main consequences of this commitment and the action to be taken to achieve equal opportunities. Service users will be informed of their right to complain if they feel these standards are not being adhered to or are dissatisfied with the service provided to them.
- 1.3. It is the responsibility of all volunteers and service users to ensure that no other service user or volunteer receives less favourable treatment than any other on the grounds stated in Para. 1.1 of this policy.
- 1.4. QPCO recognises that some users of its services may, due to past or present distress or illness, say or do things that would otherwise be unacceptable and incompatible with QPCO's Equal Opportunities Policy. QPCO will do all it can to challenge such behaviour. In cases where intervention is possible, a gentle approach will be adopted, aiming to alter attitudes and behaviour while maintaining support for the distressed client.
- 1.5. The executive committee of QPCO will review this policy every two years.

2. Links with other Policies:

QPCO Children's Safeguarding Policy
QPCO Complaints Procedure
QPCO Adult's Safeguarding Policy

3. Types of Discrimination

The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:

- Direct discrimination – treating someone with a protected characteristic less favourably than others.
- Indirect discrimination – putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone but put someone with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage.
- Harassment – unwanted behaviour linked to a protected characteristic that violates someone's dignity or creates an offensive environment for them.
- Victimisation – treating someone unfairly because they've complained about discrimination or harassment.

4. Responsibility

4.1. The executive committee of QPCO has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy. However, all volunteers and service users have a duty, as part of their involvement with QPCO, to do everything they can to ensure that the policy works in practice.

4.2. QPCO will bring the existence of this policy to the attention of all volunteers and service users and will provide such training as necessary to ensure the policy is effective and that everyone is aware of it.

4.3. Those responsible for recruiting volunteers to work on QPCO projects are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of QPCO's Equal Opportunities Policy and adhere to it while working as QPCO volunteers.

4.4. Every effort will be made to ensure that the services offered by QPCO reflect the composition of the community it serves. QPCO is committed to encouraging access from under-represented groups.

4.5. If any service user or volunteer feels that they have been, or are being, discriminated against in any way, they are entitled to pursue the matter with the committee.

4.6. All instances or complaints of discriminatory behaviour will be taken seriously.

4.7. Complaints or allegations of an unfounded or malicious nature will also be taken seriously.

5. Disabled Access

- 4.1. QPCO will endeavour to ensure, as far as is practicable, that all the premises it uses are accessible to disabled individuals. When considering new premises, every effort will be made to ensure such premises are fully accessible.
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6. Use of Language

- 6.1. Volunteers and service users should avoid and challenge the use of language which belittles:
- Disabled groups and/or individuals with special needs.
 - Any race, culture, or religion.
 - A person's sexual orientation.
 - Women and/or men.
- 6.2. Where the language used has a personal impact on others, and it has been made clear to the person concerned that their use of such language is unwelcome and/or offensive, disciplinary action may be taken if they persist.
- 5.3. All materials used or developed by QPCO will be assessed in the light of the promotion of equal opportunities. Those considered discriminatory will not be used.
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7. Sexual Harassment

- 7.1. No volunteer or service user should be subject to sexual harassment.
- 7.2. This is interpreted as unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature, including:
- Verbal sexual abuse.
 - Physical contact.
 - Repeated remarks that an individual finds offensive.
- 6.3. If it has been made clear to the person concerned that their behaviour is unwelcome and they persist, the service user or volunteer who is the recipient of the behaviour will be entitled to make a formal complaint.
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8. Equal Opportunities Monitoring

- 8.1. The committee will monitor QPCO's equal opportunities progress, development, and practice.
- 8.2. If you have any questions or concerns, please refer to our complaint procedure.
- 8.3. An annual review will be carried out by the executive committee.
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Chair's Name: Eric Masih

Adopted on: May 2025

Review date: May 2027



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