Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Burgess Hill Creative Community recognises that people with different backgrounds, skills, attitudes and experiences bring fresh ideas and perceptions. This policy seeks to value and harness these differences and to make our services relevant and approachable for everyone. We aim to draw upon the widest possible range of views and experiences in order to meet the changing needs of our users, committee members, volunteers, partners and supporters.

1.2 Burgess Hill Creative Community believes in equality of opportunity and values all individuals regardless of any collective identity.

1.3 Burgess Hill Creative Community aims to ensure that no volunteer or committee member, organisation or individual is discriminated against on grounds including gender, nationality, ethnic origin, race, age, disability, sexual orientation, belief, religion, marital status, civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, or gender reassignment.

1.4 These are known as 'protected characteristics' within the Equality Act 2010. However Burgess Hill Creative Community also recognises that it is wrong that poverty, geographical location, culture and stereotypes and other unjustified grounds may also be used as a basis of discrimination; we recognise that everyone has a contribution to make to society and a right to equality of opportunity.

1.5 Burgess Hill Creative Community recognises that unjustified discrimination does exist in our society and that we have an obligation and a responsibility both to oppose such discrimination and actively to promote equality of opportunity amongst all groups of society. Burgess Hill Creative Community recognises that the following types of discrimination are recognised in law and take these very seriously and extend these to all forms of discrimination whether specified in law as a 'protected characteristic' or not:

- Direct discrimination: discrimination because of a 'protected characteristic'.
- Associative discrimination: direct discrimination against someone because they are associated with another person with a protected characteristic
- Indirect discrimination: when rules or policies apply to everyone but disadvantages a person with a 'protected characteristic'.
- Harassment: behaviour deemed offensive by the recipient.
- Harassment by a third party: the harassment of staff or clients/customers by people not necessarily employed by the organisation.
- Victimisation: discrimination against someone because they made or supported a complaint under Equality Act legislation.
- Discrimination by perception: direct discrimination against someone because others think they have a protected characteristic
- Institutional discrimination

1.6 A copy of this statement is available to view on our website www.bhcreativecommunity.co.uk

2. Responsibilities and Process for Implementation of Policy

2.1 The Committee members

(a) The Committee members have overall and final responsibilities and will try to ensure in everything we do that its policies and procedures meet with both the letter and spirit of the relevant legislation including the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010.

(b) The Committee members are committed to promoting diversity, a commitment that goes beyond adherence to any legal responsibilities.

(c) The Committee members will review and record the effectiveness of this policy every two years.

3. Approval and Adoption

3.1 This policy was formally adopted by Burgess Hill Creative Community Committee members on **31st July 2023**

Signature of Chair:

Jo Homan

Date first published: 31st July 2023
Date last reviewed: 25th January 2025
Next review date: 25th January 2027
Policy Owner: BHCC Trustee's