

Bearsden and Milngavie u3a

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Policy

The Equality Act 2010 stipulates that organisations cannot treat someone unfairly on the basis of what it calls 'protected characteristics', which are:

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

Bearsden and Milngavie u3a fully endorses this principle and will strive to ensure that members do not experience discrimination on the basis of their 'protected characteristics'. This will include ensuring equal access to our groups, wherever possible, in order to ensure that a wide range of people can participate in our activities and meetings. Our Members Code of Conduct outlines that members should abide by the u3a's policies and procedures as well as treating each other with dignity and respect and not acting in a way that would be deemed discriminatory or offensive.

Bearsden and Milngavie u3a will:

- 1) Make sure that all new members and committee members are aware of our policies and procedures in relation to equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility as well as the Members Code of Conduct.
- 2) Ensure the Groups Coordinator makes all convenors aware of issues in relation to accessibility and what reasonable steps they may need to take about their group to meet access requirements.
- 3) Review each group on an individual basis as certain groups may require a certain level of fitness or mobility or expertise and members need to be made aware of this in advance.
- 4) Encourage and promote a wide range of groups to ensure all members and prospective members can participate in as many groups of their choice as possible. The Groups Coordinator will keep an overall database of the venues' accessibility and groups' requirements.

- 5) Appoint an Accessibility Officer whose role it will be to facilitate new and existing members access to the members' meetings and groups that they would like to join, and consider what 'reasonable adjustments' may be needed to enable this.
- 6) Make 'reasonable adjustments' as highlighted in the act and take practical steps to ensure a wide range of people can participate in our activities and meetings. These include consideration being given to the time and location of meetings as well as the accessibility for wheel chair users, the availability of disabled toilets and parking facilities. The member requiring any adjustments will be involved in discussions about their participation in the group. Bearsden and Milngavie u3a is a mutual self-help organisation and not a service provider, therefore whilst 'reasonable adjustments' will be considered to ensure that individuals can participate, there may be certain needs that we will not be able to accommodate.
- 7) Where there is no PA System or a hearing loop for the hard of hearing, seats will be reserved at the front of the meeting for members who are hearing or vision impaired.
- 8) Will make relevant communications available to members who do not have email by mailing them paper copies.
- 9) Seek guidance and additional support, if necessary, from the u3aPlus sub-committee and/or National Office.

Reporting incidents

If any member of Bearsden and Milngavie u3a feels they have experienced or witnessed discriminatory behaviour, abuse, harassment or that they are being denied access to a group or activity on the basis of their protected characteristics or has specific needs which they feel are not being met, they should contact the Secretary. Secretary@bamu3a.org.uk

5. Dealing with incidents

Where Bearsden and Milngavie u3a committee becomes aware of any discriminatory practice, abuse or harassment, the committee will seek to address this through consultation with all the parties concerned and where necessary, through invoking formal procedures. The members' rights will be paramount and they will be supported through the procedure and kept fully informed of any developments. Any actions taken will be recorded and any records will remain confidential to the committee.

Policy approved by Committee: November 2022

Next Review Date: November 2025

Or upon an update or revision of the Equality Act 2010