

## **East Renfrewshire u3a Equity, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Policy Version 2**

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

- ethnic origin, nationality (or statelessness) or race
- age
- disability
- religion or belief (including the absence of belief)
- marital or civil partnership status
- sex
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy
- gender reassignment
- political belief

**2.** East Renfrewshire 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.

**3. East Renfrewshire u3a will:**

- work to uphold equal opportunities and good relations among all members of the organisation, specifically prohibiting any conduct which discriminates or harasses any member regarding their ‘protected characteristics’.
- make sure that all new members and committee members are aware of our policies and procedures in relation to equity, equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility as well as the Members Code of Conduct.
- Should a facilitator be aware of issues in relation to accessibility for a member or potential member, the Groups Coordinator should be made aware of the situation and will aim to resolve the problem.
- 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.

- have a range of groups available that will provide access to members so that they do not feel excluded from too many of our groups. Any suggestions for new groups will be investigated.
- 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.

However East Renfrewshire u3a is a membership charity and not a service provider, therefore whilst 'reasonable adjustments' will be made to ensure that individuals can participate, there may be certain needs that we will not be able to accommodate.

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.

- will use a variety of methods and platforms to communicate externally and raise the profile of the u3a and to highlight that anyone who meets the criteria is welcome to join our u3a.
- seek guidance and additional support, if necessary, from the u3aPlus sub-committee and/or National Office.

#### 4. Reporting incidents

If any member of East Renfrewshire 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 abilities, or has specific needs which they feel are not being met, they should contact the Secretary via the Contacts page of our website at:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/eastrenfrewshire/page/69517>

#### 5. Dealing with incidents

Where East Renfrewshire 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 – 14 August 2023**

**Next review date – July 2026 Subject to any legislative changes prior to the date.**