



## Equal Opportunities Policy

Voluntary Action Barnsley believes that everyone has a contribution to make to our society and a right to equal treatment. It is our specific aim to promote equality and combat disadvantage.

We recognise that ours is a society diverse in race, culture and beliefs, and we believe that it is enriched by its diversity.

We believe that it is wrong to discriminate on the grounds of:

- race, colour, or ethnic or national origin (except as required by the law)
- gender, marital status or caring responsibilities
- sexuality
- age
- physical or mental disability or mental health
- political or religious belief
- class
- employment status
- criminal conviction otherwise than set out in our policy on employment of ex-offenders

We apply these general principles to our working situation.

In considering membership of the Executive Committee and other committees, we are bound by our democratic structures. Within those structures we will try to find a representative and skilled membership, without discriminating on other grounds.

In recruiting and managing staff and volunteers, we are looking for suitability to do the job, once we have done what we can to remove all causes of disadvantage, and we will not discriminate on any other grounds. Except as indicated in the policy on staff continuity, all new posts will be publicly advertised. Applicants will be shortlisted and appointed on the basis of predetermined criteria, which will be based purely on the requirements of the posts. Training and other advancement opportunities will be made available to all staff so far as can be achieved within the conditions under which VAB operates, and this is regularly reviewed with individual members of staff.

In the delivery of services, it is our express aim to tackle disadvantage, and disadvantaged groups may therefore be prioritised on the basis of identified need. We will encourage the groups with which we work to promote equal opportunities themselves. Where discriminatory practices occur within other organisations, we will work to remove them, and if this is unsuccessful, we may withdraw our services.



## **Harassment**

Intimidatory behaviour, including bullying, harassment and sexual harassment, will not be condoned or tolerated. Any staff involved will be liable to disciplinary proceedings. Where other people are involved, it will be strongly discouraged. In either case, recourse may be had to the complaints, disciplinary or grievance procedures or to any legal remedies available.

## **Positive values**

We have adopted the "rules of behaviour" of Partnership in Action in Barnsley.

## **Implementation**

To help us pursue these aims, we will keep informed on issues of discrimination and disadvantage.

We will take what steps we can to adapt premises, equipment and working practices to meet the needs of those who would otherwise be disadvantaged by them.

This policy is to be brought to the attention of other organisations as appropriate, and we will where necessary encourage them to make changes in policies and practices. Organisations applying for membership will be asked to say that they agree with it.

This policy is to be brought to the attention of all job applicants, and all staff are expected to abide by it.

Staff, volunteers and committee members are invited to bring to the attention of the relevant committee any example of good or bad practice in VAB or in any other organisations.

## **Monitoring**

The Chief Executive will report annually to the Executive Committee on the applications received for posts in relation to gender, ethnic origin and physical disability, and on all other matters relating to the policy.

The committee may at any time ask for any other relevant information to be given or collected.

*Date approved by Board of Trustees: June 2005*



Voluntary Action Barnsley is committed to workforce development and achieving excellence through the use of quality standards such as Customer First and PQASSO

