



Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility (EDIA) Policy

Document Control

ITEM	DETAILS
Policy Number	GP02
Policy Title	Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility (EDIA) Policy
Policy Owner	Board of Directors
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Applies To	Board of Directors, Volunteers, Contractors, Delivery Partners and anyone acting on behalf of Gravesham Pride CIC
Related Policies	Articles of Association; Governance Handbook; GP01 – Code of Conduct; GP03 – Safeguarding Policy; GP04 – Conflict of Interest Policy; GP05 – Confidentiality & Data Protection Policy; GP06 – Speaking Up (Whistleblowing) Policy; GP07 – Complaints & Concerns Policy; GP08 – Volunteer Management Policy; GP09 – Volunteer Code of Conduct; GP10 – Health, Safety & Safe Working Policy; GP11 – Risk Management Policy; GP12 – Financial Management Policy; GP13 – Document Control & Records Management Policy; GP14 – Communications, Branding & Social Media Policy; GP15 – Environmental Sustainability Policy; GP16 – Event Governance & Delivery Policy.
Related Legislation	Equality Act 2010, Human Rights Act 1998, Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR

1. Purpose

Equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility are not separate initiatives at Gravesham Pride CIC—they are the reason we exist.

Our organisation was founded on the belief that everyone deserves to feel safe, respected, represented and able to participate fully in community life.

This policy explains how we will promote equality, celebrate diversity, remove barriers to participation and create an organisation where everyone feels that they belong.

It provides a framework for our decision-making, governance, volunteering, events and partnerships, ensuring that inclusion is considered in everything we do.

Our commitment extends beyond meeting our legal obligations.

We aim to create an environment where people are valued not despite their differences, but because of them.

2. Scope

This policy applies to everyone involved with Gravesham Pride CIC.

Including:

- Directors
- Committee Members
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Consultants
- Performers
- Stallholders
- Sponsors
- Delivery partners
- Anyone acting on behalf of Gravesham Pride CIC

The principles within this policy also inform how we plan, organise and deliver:

- Pride events
- Community engagement activities
- Meetings
- Training
- Recruitment
- Volunteering opportunities
- Communications
- Marketing
- Partnerships
- Procurement

- Governance

Every decision we make should consider whether there are opportunities to improve equality, accessibility and inclusion.

3. Definitions

Equality

Ensuring everyone has fair access to opportunities and is treated fairly, recognising that different people may require different levels of support to achieve equitable outcomes. Equality is not always about treating everyone exactly the same. Sometimes fairness means providing additional support or making reasonable adjustments to remove barriers.

Diversity

Diversity is the presence of different backgrounds, identities, lived experiences, perspectives and characteristics within our organisation and community. We believe diversity strengthens decision-making, improves creativity and helps us better represent the communities we serve.

Inclusion

Inclusion is creating an environment where everyone feels welcomed, respected, valued and able to participate fully. It is not enough to invite people into the room. We must ensure they feel able to contribute, influence decisions and belong.

Accessibility

Accessibility is the process of identifying and removing barriers that may prevent people from participating. Accessibility includes physical environments, communications, digital information, events, attitudes and organisational culture. Accessibility benefits everyone.

Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustments are practical changes made to remove or reduce barriers experienced by disabled people or others who may require additional support. Adjustments should be considered positively and collaboratively.

Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 protects individuals from discrimination because of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

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We also recognise that people may experience disadvantage for reasons not specifically protected by legislation.

Where possible, we seek to remove barriers for everyone.

4. Our Commitment

Gravesham Pride exists because everyone deserves to feel that they belong.

We recognise that LGBTQIA+ communities are wonderfully diverse.

Our volunteers, supporters and partners all bring unique experiences, identities, cultures and perspectives.

We celebrate those differences.

We believe diversity strengthens our organisation.

We believe accessibility improves everyone's experience.

We believe inclusion should be intentional.

We therefore commit ourselves to:

- treating everyone with dignity and respect
- promoting equality of opportunity
- celebrating diversity in all its forms
- creating welcoming and accessible environments
- listening to lived experience
- challenging discrimination whenever it occurs
- learning continuously
- improving continuously

Inclusion is not a destination. It is something we actively work towards every day. We recognise that we will not always get everything right.

When we fall short, we will listen, learn, apologise where appropriate and strive to do better. We will never stop working to make Gravesham Pride more welcoming, more representative and more accessible for everyone.

5. Our Principles

Everything we do is guided by six principles.

5.1 Everyone Belongs

Everyone should feel welcomed, respected and valued. We do not simply invite people to participate. We create environments where people feel they genuinely belong. We recognise that belonging is created through everyday actions, respectful behaviour and inclusive decision-making. Everyone should feel confident that their voice matters.

5.2 We Celebrate Diversity

We recognise that diversity exists in many forms, including culture, race, ethnicity, disability, neurodiversity, age, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background and lived experience.

We celebrate these differences because they enrich our organisation and strengthen our community. We encourage different perspectives and welcome respectful challenge as part of healthy decision-making.

Excellent. This is where the policy moves from describing our values to explaining **how we put them into practice**.

5.3 Accessibility by Design

Accessibility is not something we add at the end of planning. It is something we consider from the very beginning.

Whenever we develop a new event, activity, policy, service or communication, we will actively consider how it can be made as accessible as reasonably practicable.

We recognise that barriers may be physical, sensory, cognitive, psychological, financial, cultural or digital.

By considering accessibility early, we can often remove barriers before they affect people. Where barriers cannot reasonably be removed immediately, we will seek alternative solutions wherever possible and continue working towards improvement.

We will strive to ensure accessibility is embedded throughout our planning rather than treated as a separate activity.

This includes considering:

- physical access
- accessible parking and transport
- toilet provision
- viewing areas
- signage
- lighting
- sound levels
- quiet spaces
- communication methods
- digital accessibility
- financial accessibility
- volunteer support

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Accessibility is a shared responsibility. Every Director, volunteer and contractor should consider whether there are opportunities to improve accessibility within their own area of responsibility.

5.4 Inclusive Communication

Communication should be accessible, respectful and easy to understand.

We recognise that people access information in different ways.

Where reasonably practicable we will:

- use plain English
- avoid unnecessary jargon
- produce accessible digital content
- use clear typography and good colour contrast
- consider alternative formats where requested
- provide information in sufficient time for people to prepare
- ensure important information is communicated consistently

We will always seek to communicate in ways that help people participate rather than create barriers. We also recognise that communication is about listening as well as speaking.

We actively encourage feedback from our community and will use that feedback to improve how we communicate in the future.

5.5 Equality in Volunteering

We believe everyone should have an equal opportunity to become involved with Gravesham Pride CIC.

We are committed to creating fair, transparent and inclusive volunteering processes.

Appointments will always be based upon the skills, experience, knowledge and values required for the role. We will not discriminate unlawfully during recruitment, selection or appointment.

Where appropriate, we will consider reasonable adjustments to enable people to participate fully. We also recognise that some communities remain underrepresented within voluntary organisations.

Where lawful and appropriate, we may take positive action to encourage wider participation and improve representation.

We are committed to ensuring that volunteering opportunities remain welcoming, inclusive and accessible to everyone.

5.6 Accessible Events

Our events should be welcoming to as many people as reasonably possible.

Accessibility should be considered throughout the planning, delivery and evaluation of every event.

This includes consideration of:

- step-free access
- accessible toilets
- seating and rest areas
- accessible information
- clear signage
- volunteer support
- emergency evacuation arrangements
- assistance for disabled attendees where appropriate.

Accessibility is an ongoing journey.

Following each event we will seek feedback from attendees, volunteers and partners to identify opportunities for improvement.

5.7 Representation and Participation

We want Gravesham Pride to reflect the diversity of the communities we serve.

We therefore seek to encourage participation from people with different identities, backgrounds, cultures, faiths, ages, abilities and lived experiences.

Representation is not simply about visibility. It is about ensuring that people have genuine opportunities to contribute to decision-making and influence the future of our organisation.

We will seek to involve our community when developing significant initiatives, policies and events. Listening to lived experience helps us make better decisions and build a stronger organisation.

5.8 Zero Tolerance of Discrimination

Gravesham Pride CIC has zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimisation or hate-related behaviour.

We are committed to creating environments where everyone feels safe and respected. Any behaviour that undermines another person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment will be taken seriously.

This includes discrimination based upon any protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

We also recognise that discrimination may occur for reasons not specifically protected by legislation. Where behaviour conflicts with our values or undermines inclusion, we will take appropriate action. Concerns will be managed fairly, proportionately and in accordance with our governance procedures.

5.9 Positive Action

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Equality does not always mean treating everyone exactly the same. Sometimes additional support is needed to achieve equitable outcomes.

Where permitted by law, Gravesham Pride CIC may take positive action to encourage participation from groups that are underrepresented or experience disadvantage.

Positive action may include:

- targeted volunteering opportunities
- mentoring and development
- outreach activities
- accessible engagement methods
- removing unnecessary barriers to participation

Positive action is intended to improve equality of opportunity. It does not mean unfairly favouring one individual over another.

5.10 Working with Partners and Suppliers

We expect the organisations we work alongside to demonstrate values that are compatible with our own.

When selecting partners, contractors and suppliers, we will consider:

- equality
- diversity
- accessibility
- safeguarding
- organisational values
- professionalism

We recognise that every organisation is at a different stage of its inclusion journey.

Where appropriate, we will encourage partners to improve their own practices and work collaboratively to create welcoming and inclusive environments.

We will not knowingly enter into partnerships that fundamentally conflict with our organisational values.

5.11 Continuous Learning

Creating an inclusive organisation requires continuous learning.

We encourage everyone involved with Gravesham Pride CIC to remain open to new ideas, listen to lived experience and develop their understanding of equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility.

We recognise that language, legislation and good practice continue to evolve. Rather than fearing change, we embrace opportunities to learn and improve.

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Constructive feedback is welcomed and should be viewed as an opportunity to strengthen our organisation.

We believe that humility, curiosity and openness are essential qualities of an inclusive organisation.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Creating an organisation that is equitable, diverse, inclusive and accessible is the responsibility of everyone involved with Gravesham Pride CIC.

While specific responsibilities differ depending on an individual's role, we all have a part to play in creating an environment where people feel welcomed, respected and able to participate.

6.1 Board of Directors

The Board of Directors has overall responsibility for ensuring that equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility remain central to the governance and strategic direction of Gravesham Pride CIC

The Board will:

- approve this policy and ensure it remains effective
- promote a culture of inclusion and belonging
- consider equality and accessibility when making strategic decisions
- monitor organisational performance and areas for improvement
- allocate appropriate resources to improve accessibility where reasonably practicable
- lead by example in demonstrating inclusive leadership

The Board will regularly reflect on whether its decisions support the communities we exist to serve.

6.2 Directors

Every Director is responsible for:

- complying with this policy
- promoting inclusive leadership
- challenging discrimination appropriately
- considering accessibility during planning and decision-making
- supporting volunteers and partners
- encouraging participation from underrepresented communities
- creating an environment where people feel listened to and valued

6.3 Volunteers

Volunteers represent Gravesham Pride CIC and are expected to:

- treat everyone with dignity and respect
- behave inclusively
- report barriers to participation
- support accessibility wherever possible
- challenge inappropriate behaviour respectfully
- complete any required equality or accessibility training

Volunteers should never feel they have to solve complex issues alone. Advice and support should always be sought where required.

6.4 Contractors, Performers and Partners

Organisations and individuals working alongside Gravesham Pride CIC are expected to support our commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility.

Where appropriate, contracts and partnership agreements may include expectations relating to inclusive practice.

7. Raising Concerns

Gravesham Pride CIC encourages an open culture where concerns relating to equality, diversity, accessibility or inclusion can be raised safely and respectfully.

Concerns may include:

- discrimination
- harassment
- bullying
- victimisation
- inaccessible environments
- inappropriate language or behaviour
- exclusion from opportunities
- barriers to participation

Concerns should be raised as soon as reasonably practicable. They may be reported to:

- a Director
- the Chair
- the Safeguarding Lead (where appropriate)
- through the Complaints Policy
- through the Whistleblowing Policy where appropriate

Every concern will be considered fairly, confidentially and proportionately. Individuals raising concerns in good faith will not be disadvantaged for doing so.

8. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

Equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility are ongoing commitments. We recognise that our work is never complete.

We will monitor this policy through:

- community feedback
- volunteer feedback
- complaints and compliments
- accessibility reviews
- lessons learned following events

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- Board discussions
- policy reviews

Where opportunities for improvement are identified, we will develop action plans and monitor progress. We welcome constructive challenge and recognise that feedback is essential to becoming a more inclusive organisation.

9. Equality Impact

When developing significant policies, projects, events or organisational changes, Gravesham Pride CIC will consider the potential impact upon different groups within our community.

We will seek to identify opportunities to:

- improve equality
- remove barriers
- promote accessibility
- increase participation
- minimise unintended disadvantage
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Where potential negative impacts are identified, we will seek appropriate mitigation wherever reasonably practicable.

We believe that considering equality at the earliest stage leads to better decisions and better outcomes.

10. Review

This policy will normally be reviewed every two years. An earlier review may take place where:

- legislation changes
- organisational learning identifies improvements
- accessibility standards develop
- governance arrangements change
- the Board determines that amendments are required

The Board of Directors is responsible for approving any revisions.

Appendix A – Practical Examples

The following examples illustrate how this policy may be applied in practice.

Example 1 – Accessible Meetings

Situation

A volunteer advises that they experience sensory overload during lengthy meetings.

Expected Practice

The meeting organiser discusses reasonable adjustments with the individual, such as shorter meetings, scheduled breaks, quieter environments or providing papers in advance.

Inappropriate Practice

Ignoring the request or suggesting that everyone must participate in exactly the same way.

Example 2 – Accessible Events

Situation

A disabled attendee contacts Gravesham Pride before an event requesting information about accessible parking and toilet facilities.

Expected Practice

Accurate information is provided promptly and, where appropriate, further assistance is offered to support attendance.

Inappropriate Practice

Providing unclear information or dismissing the enquiry without considering the individual's needs.

Example 3 – Inclusive Language

Situation

A volunteer unintentionally uses inappropriate terminology when speaking to a member of the public.

Expected Practice

The mistake is acknowledged respectfully, guidance is provided and the volunteer learns from the experience.

Inappropriate Practice

Mocking the individual or refusing to adapt language after concerns have been raised.

Example 4 – Representation

Situation

The Board is considering new volunteers for a working group.

Expected Practice

Recruitment is open, transparent and encourages participation from a broad range of communities and lived experiences.

Inappropriate Practice

Selecting individuals solely because they are already known to existing Board members without considering wider participation.

Example 5 – Challenging Discrimination

Situation

A volunteer hears discriminatory comments during an event.

Expected Practice

The behaviour is challenged appropriately, reported to a Director and managed in accordance with organisational policies.

Inappropriate Practice

Ignoring the behaviour because it is uncomfortable to address.

Example 6 – Reasonable Adjustments

Situation

A volunteer requires additional time to complete online training due to a disability.

Expected Practice

The organisation considers reasonable adjustments and agrees an appropriate solution.

Inappropriate Practice

Applying inflexible deadlines without considering individual circumstances.

Example 7 – Learning and Improvement

Situation

Following an event, attendees identify several accessibility improvements.

Expected Practice

Feedback is welcomed, reviewed by the Board and considered during planning for future events.

Inappropriate Practice

Dismissing feedback without discussion or review.

Key Principles

Whenever we make decisions we should ask ourselves:

- Is everyone able to participate?
- Have we removed unnecessary barriers?
- Have we listened to those affected?
- Are we treating people fairly?
- Does this reflect our values?
- Could we make this more accessible?

If the answer is "no" or "I'm not sure", we should pause, seek advice and consider alternative approaches.

Appendix B – Related Legislation and Governance Documents

Primary Legislation

This policy should be read alongside relevant legislation, including:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Children Act 1989 and 2004 (where safeguarding responsibilities arise)
- Care Act 2014 (where applicable)
- Relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance applicable in England

Related Gravesham Pride CIC Governance Documents

This policy should be read alongside the following Gravesham Pride CIC governance documents:

- Articles of Association
- Governance Handbook
- GP01 – Code of Conduct
- GP03 – Safeguarding Policy
- GP04 – Conflict of Interest Policy
- GP05 – Confidentiality & Data Protection Policy
- GP06 – Speaking Up (Whistleblowing) Policy
- GP07 – Complaints & Concerns Policy
- GP08 – Volunteer Management Policy
- GP09 – Volunteer Code of Conduct
- GP10 – Health, Safety & Safe Working Policy
- GP11 – Risk Management Policy
- GP12 – Financial Management Policy
- GP13 – Document Control & Records Management Policy
- GP14 – Communications, Branding & Social Media Policy
- GP15 – Environmental Sustainability Policy
- GP16 – Event Governance & Delivery Policy

Supporting Guidance

In addition to legislation, the Board should have regard to recognised good practice relating to:

- equality, diversity and inclusion;
- accessibility and inclusive event planning;
- safeguarding;
- volunteer management;
- governance;
- community engagement.

Review and Version Control

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This appendix will be reviewed whenever there are significant changes to legislation, recognised guidance or related Gravesham Pride CIC governance documents.

Our Promise

Equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility are not projects that begin and end with a policy. They are values that shape every decision we make and every experience we create.

We are committed to building a Gravesham Pride where everyone feels welcomed, respected, represented and able to participate with confidence.

We recognise that inclusion is a journey, not a destination. We will continue listening, learning and improving so that our organisation reflects the diversity, strength and pride of the communities we proudly serve.