

## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

### Introduction

This policy sets out the commitment of Hastings & St Leonards Seniors' Forum (HSSF) to achieving a membership environment :-

- ❖ which provides equality of opportunity and freedom from unlawful and unfair discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, gender re-assignment, marital or civil partnership status, disability, religious beliefs, age or sexual orientation, and
- ❖ where all members of the Forum and the wider community it serves are treated with dignity and respect.

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to :-

- ❖ reduce, stop and prevent all forms of unlawful discrimination;
- ❖ create an environment where individual differences and the contributions of all members of HSSF are recognised and valued;
- ❖ create an environment that promotes dignity and respect for all, where no form of discrimination or victimisation is tolerated;
- ❖ ensure that all applicants and members of HSSF are treated fairly at all stages of their HSSF membership;
- ❖ ensure that HSSF's procedures create equality of opportunity and diversity.

### Policy Statement

Every member of HSSF has the right to fair treatment and a personal responsibility to act in a way that does not subject any other member of HSSF, or member of the public, to inequality and direct or indirect discrimination. HSSF will not tolerate any form of discrimination (or victimisation) that is direct or indirect and based on the grounds of :-

- gender
- race
- religion or other philosophical belief
- nationality

- ethnic or national origin
  - disability
  - age (other than the definition of ‘membership for over 50’s’)
  - marital status
  - civil partnerships
  - dependants
  - pregnancy and or maternity
  - paternity
  - sexual orientation
  - gender re-assignment
  - caring responsibilities
  - nor any other inappropriate form, for example, hair colour
- ❖ All members of HSSF are required to commit and adhere to the statement of values – values that underpin how we treat each other.
  - ❖ Everyone is expected to support this policy by challenging incidents of discrimination that they may become aware of. Thus, it is essential for every member of HSSF to understand the contents of this policy and their obligations under the law.

### **Benefits**

This policy supports HSSF in :-

- ❖ recruiting members who are representative of the communities of Hastings & St Leonards
- ❖ being recognised as engaging with diverse communities
- ❖ becoming more accountable to local communities
- ❖ minimising any potential damage to the good reputation of HSSF
- ❖ being recognised as a Forum of choice
- ❖ developing awareness and understanding of the standards of behaviour required by all members of HSSF, and
- ❖ promoting and supporting the continuity and development of a diverse membership.