



## **Anti- Harassment and Bullying Policy and Procedure**

### **Introduction**

Natural Kirklees is committed to having a environment which is free from harassment and bullying. Also, to make sure that all volunteers, contractors and others who come into contact with us in the course of our role, are treated with dignity and respect. This is without regard to gender, sexual orientation, transgender status, marital or family status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, creed, culture, religion or belief, age, or disability.

This policy and procedure is intended to support this commitment in practice and to provide guidance to all trustees on how to deal with concerns of bullying or harassment.

### **Policy**

Natural Kirklees will not tolerate bullying or harassment in our day to day relationships. This is regardless of whether the conduct is a one-off act or repeated course of conduct, and whether done purposefully or not.

Neither will we tolerate retaliation against, or victimisation of, any person involved in bringing a complaint of harassment or bullying.

Trustees should also be aware that if a court or tribunal finds that you have bullied or harassed someone, in some circumstances the treatment may amount to a crime punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

Natural Kirklees will take appropriate action if any of our volunteers or contractors are bullied or harassed by our stakeholders or suppliers.

Allegations of bullying and harassment will be treated seriously. Investigations will be carried out promptly, sensitively and, as far as possible, confidentially. If, after an investigation, we decide that a trustee has harassed or bullied another trustee or contractor, then the trustee may be subject to that trusteeship being terminated.

Volunteers and others who make allegations of bullying or harassment in good faith will not be treated less favourably as a result. False accusations of harassment or

bullying can have a serious effect on innocent individuals. Volunteers and others have a responsibility not to make false allegations.

### **The type of treatment that amounts to bullying or harassment**

Bullying or harassment is something that has happened that is unwelcome, unwarranted and causes a detrimental effect. If volunteers complain they are being bullied or harassed, then they have a grievance which must be dealt with regardless of whether or not their complaint accords with a standard definition. For further information, please refer to [ACAS' guidance](#).

It is important to recognise that conduct which one person may find acceptable, another may find totally unacceptable. All volunteers must, therefore, treat their colleagues with respect and appropriate sensitivity.

Bullying does not include appropriate criticism of an trustee's behaviour or proper performance management.

### **Reporting concerns**

#### **What you should do if you witness an incident you believe to harassment or bullying**

If you witness such behaviour, you should report the incident in confidence to the chair or treasurer. Such reports will be taken seriously and will be treated in strict confidence as far as it is possible to do so.

#### **What you should do if you feel you are being bullied or harassed by a stakeholder or supplier (as opposed to a colleague)**

If you are being bullied or harassed by someone with whom you come into contact please raise this with the chair. We will then decide how best to deal with the situation, in consultation with you.

#### **What you should do if you are being bullied or harassed by a colleague**

If you are being bullied or harassed by another volunteer or contractor, there are two possible avenues for you, informal or formal.

##### Informal resolution

If you are being bullied or harassed by another volunteer or contractor, you may be able to resolve the situation yourself by explaining clearly to the perpetrator(s) that their behaviour is unacceptable, contrary to our policy and must stop. Alternatively, you may wish to ask the chair or a colleague to put this on your behalf or to be with you when confronting the perpetrator(s).

If the above approach does not work or if you do not want to try to resolve the situation in this way then raise a formal complaint.

## **Raising a formal complaint**

If informal resolution is unsuccessful or inappropriate, you can make a formal complaint about the harassment or bullying to the chair or treasurer.

We will first investigate the complaint. You will need to co-operate with the investigation and provide the following details (if not already provided).

- The name of the alleged perpetrator(s).
- The nature of the harassment or bullying.
- The dates and times the harassment or bullying occurred.
- The names of any witnesses.
- Any action taken by you to resolve the matter informally
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The alleged perpetrator(s) would need to be told your name and the details of your complaint in order for the issue to be investigated properly. However, we will carry out the investigation as confidentially and sensitively as possible.

After the investigation, we will meet with you to consider the complaint and the findings of the investigation. At the meeting, you may be accompanied by a fellow volunteer.

## **Disclosure and confidentiality**

We will treat personal data collected during this process in accordance with the [data protection policy](#).

Signed



Ed Day – Chair of the Trustees

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