Umbrella Sussex

Supporting the Sharing Economy in Hastings and Rother

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Opening Statement

Umbrella Sussex is a collective of non constituted wealth sharing projects who work together to support and maintain sharing economy projects for the benefit of the communities of Hastings and Rother.
Sharing Economies focus on building community wealth and working cooperatively to overcome problems caused by poverty, or lack of access to things. In the sharing economy emphasis is on fair access to things rather than owning things. Sharing economy projects try to avoid transactional relationships, and obligations are social rather than financial.

At present, Umbrella Sussex is formed of its 2 founding projects, Make and Mend Bexhill and Beyond, and Hastings Library of Things.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Umbrella Sussex is a community interest company, with an asset lock, which operates on cooperative principles to support community sharing projects.

We recognise that even as an informal and member led group we have responsibilities towards members, visitors and volunteers and that they will develop over time. This document lays out the main areas we have considered, what we will do and what expect of library members, volunteers, visitors, stakeholders and partners.

Umbrella Sussex aims to appoint a volunteer with specific responsibility for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, including arranging briefings and training and for keeping the policy up to date.

Volunteers, members and visitors should be proactive in raising any concerns they have by emailing info@umbrellasusex.org.uk

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years 1st review: June 2023

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Umbrella Sussex- Commitments to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We will work together to create and sustain a community where diversity is recognised, valued and celebrated. We will pro-actively advance equality and inclusive practice in our staff recruitment and their working environment, in our interactions with stakeholders, and with participants in our public programmes. We will endeavour through effective and collaborative action to create a culture which values diversity, and in which all employees, Trustees, and other volunteers and participants in our activities give due respect to other people and their work or ideas.

This policy is underpinned by the belief that Equality, Diversity and Inclusive (ED&I) practice enhances our culture and effectiveness practically and socially. To ensure this we will:

- Ensure everyone who works or volunteers for Umbrella Sussex understands their personal responsibility to promote equality and inclusive practice and remove any unfair barriers, through appropriate training on induction and periodic refresher courses
- Engage and involve our members, partner organisations and stakeholders, to develop our ED&I initiatives

What we mean by:

Equality	A fundamental part of a fair society in which everyone can have the

	best possible chance to succeed in life.
Diversity	Recognising that everyone is different in a variety of visible and non-visible ways, and that those differences are to be recognised, respected and valued.
Inclusion	The active creation of a working and social environment that is welcoming, which recognises and celebrates difference, and that this is reflected in its structures, practices and attitudes.

Commitments

We are committed to not discriminating unfairly on the grounds of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership (all of which are 'protected characteristics' under the law); nor will we discriminate unfairly on the grounds of class, financial status, or any other unjustifiable cause.

Awareness

We will encourage awareness of our aims, policies and procedures in the field of equality and diversity and provide appropriate information and training as required. Our commitments to ED&I will be promoted prominently on our website and in other publicity.

Monitoring

We will find ways to collect, evaluate and publish data relevant to our equality, diversity and inclusion policies. This will be reported to members, the public, partners, stakeholders and funders.

Policy review

We will find ways to develop and review our policies and practices using equality impact assessments (EIAs) and monitoring to ensure equality of opportunity and treatment of members and potential members. We will regularly review and initiate new policies and practices in response to changing needs.

Failure to adhere to the policy

Umbrella Sussex will do its utmost to protect staff, volunteers and participants from all forms of discriminatory and unacceptable behaviour, including micro-aggressions by any individual or groups, whether in person, online, or in any other way. Allegations of

discriminatory behaviour will always be treated with the utmost seriousness and will be dealt with promptly.

Responsibility

Responsibility for ensuring Umbrella Sussex actively practices and promotes equality, diversity and inclusion lies with all its members. A lead person will be appointed to be the contact person for concerns around equality discrimination.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Objectives

1. We will be an organisation that leads by example; we will raise awareness and promote equality in a way that informs our culture and practices, is inclusive and removes any form of less favourable treatment, unfair discrimination or harassment.

We will do this by:

- Ensuring everyone working, volunteering or otherwise participating at Umbrella Sussex understands their responsibilities to foster an inclusive working and social environment, and are aware of relevant good practice policies, guidance, and support services. This will include ED&I training or briefings
- Ensuring diversity is reflected in all our decision-making forums, and that they, in turn, actively contribute to promoting equality, diversity and inclusive practice.
- Embedding structures and resources to support ED&I activity across all areas of our activities.

2. We will attract, retain, and develop a diverse community and strive to ensure that everyone can attain and succeed to the best of their abilities.

We will do this by:

- Ensuring we engage and inspire potential employees, volunteers and participants in our programmes from diverse backgrounds.

  Proactively encouraging applications from under-represented groups for all roles.

3. Be adaptive to the needs of our diverse community, supporting flexible ways of working and participating that recognise potentially exclusionary factors in people's lives such as disability, caring responsibilities or economic disadvantage.

We will do this by:

- Ensuring we promote equality and inclusion within all our policies and practices, embedding these in terms of employment for staff and participation agreements with volunteers.
- Ensuring an inclusive approach to the design and delivery of programmes, ensuring that we support those who may have specific limitations to full participation (such as caring responsibilities; disabilities, etc.).

4. Encourage an inclusive and supportive environment for all members of our community.

We will do this by:

- Committing to promoting a culture based on the principles of respect, dignity and inclusion for everybody.
- Understanding the diverse composition and needs of members and volunteers by creating an environment which encourages disclosure (for example, clear guidance for reporting discrimination and guarantees of confidentiality) as well as collecting and analysing robust information.
- Doing as much as possible to ensure adequate access to our physical spaces for those with physical or sensory disabilities

Implementation

We will implement and monitor detailed actions that work towards specific targets, timescales, and responsibilities. These actions will be set out and regularly reviewed and we will encourage members, volunteers and others to feedback on actions taken and areas for improvement.