

Bruisyard Parish Council Bruisyard Parish Council Village Hall

Equal Opportunities Policy

Introduction

Bruisyard Parish Council and Bruisyard Parish Council Village Hall committee are committed to equality of opportunity including equality of access to the services we provide.

Bruisyard Parish Council and Bruisyard Parish Council Village Hall committee will act at all times in a fair and open manner without distinction as to race, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability, and in compliance with relevant legislation.

Our commitment

Bruisyard Parish Council and Bruisyard Parish Council Village Hall committee are committed to:

Treating all people with dignity and respect

Providing high quality services that are appropriate and accessible to all in our community

Consulting all members of our community to identify their needs, and where practical, to deliver services to meet those needs

Encouraging and enabling all members of our community to participate in our local decision making

Treating suppliers and contractors fairly

Promoting equality and diversity in the community

Working with the District Council, County Council, contractors and suppliers to promote equal opportunities

The legal framework

Bruisyard Parish Council adopted the 'Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 [1] in its entirety in July 2007. This mandatory code also places a legal obligation on the Parish Council to fully comply with the equality enactments as defined in section 33 of the Equality Act 2006 [2]. Bruisyard Parish Council and Bruisyard Parish Council Village Hall committee will continue to update its Equal Opportunities Policy in line with any new equality and diversity legislation as they become law.

Achieving equality

To achieve our aims for equality and diversity;

Promoting accessibility: our aim is to have a village hall on the Parish Park which is easily accessible by all in our community by (i) minimising travel and encourage access by foot or cycle for the able-bodied and easy access and use for the disabled, (ii) minimising operational

costs to keep hiring fees as low as possible by having a highly energy efficient and environmentally sustainable building design and effective management practices, and (iii) encouraging use by all sections of our community.

Valuing cultural diversity: the differing needs of our community for the facilities and services to be supported in the hall will be respected and promoted. The membership of the village hall committee will continue to represent all sections of our community and the major user groups, and will continue to represent the diverse views and needs of the residents.

Promoting participation: our aim for the village hall is to facilitate and encourage greater social interaction and participation in village activities by all in our community. The Parish Council and Village Hall Committee will use both inclusive and targeted approaches to foster the activities and services provided in the hall, involving the respective beneficiaries as much as possible in the planning, management and delivery of these activities and services. The new clubs/groups to be formed during the first 3 year period will include;

- Senior citizens lunchtime club (targeted)
- Bruisyard Society (inclusive)
- Childrens Activity Club (targeted)
- Youth Club (targeted)
- Exercise classes (inclusive)
- IT training course (inclusive and targeted)

Promoting equality of opportunity: our aim is to provide the basic facilities and services for our isolated rural community which are taken for granted in non-rural areas and larger communities. The village currently has no shop, pub or other community building and very limited public transport – this has severely limited the recreational, social and training opportunities for our community. Our policy is to stimulate self-help groups to provide these basic services locally.

Promoting inclusive communities: our aim is for a more cohesive community where all feel they belong, appreciated and valued. Bruisyard is a highly diverse community – for example (2001 census data [3]);

- 28% All pensioner households
- 38% Households with one or more persons with limiting long-term illness
- 5% Households with dependent children and no adult in employment
- 8% Households with no private transport (car or van)
- 17% One person households (of which ¾ are pensioners)
- 16% residents are children aged 0-15
- 18% residents are aged 65+, 9% residents aged 75+
- 25 people providing unpaid care
- 35 people with limiting long-term illness
- 43% people aged 16-74 with no qualifications or level 1
- 21% people aged 16-74 with highest qualification at level 3,4,5

Our aim is for the village hall to support a broad range of user groups providing activities/services to meet the needs of all in our community.

Reducing disadvantage and exclusion: the young, elderly and disabled are the ones at greatest risk of being disadvantaged and excluded in our community. This problem of social isolation is an acute problem for many in Bruisyard. The lack of public transport, car ownership costs and the prioritisation of local authority/government spending on the major conurbations (ie. small towns, sub-urban and urban areas) is increasing these problems. Small communities such as Bruisyard must address these issues directly. Our aim is for the village hall and the activities and services provided by it to be a major enabler in reducing this problem.

Equality and diversity in partnerships, procurement and contracting

Bruisyard Parish Council and Bruisyard Parish Council Village Hall committee recognises its responsibility to encourage and work with partners and other groups to integrate equality and diversity into their policy making, service delivery and monitoring arrangements.

We will ensure that all user groups of the village hall, contractors and suppliers are aware of our policy on equality and diversity and are clear about their obligation to provide services that are free from discrimination.

We will ensure that our selection and tendering processes include equality considerations.

Our responsibilities

All Parish Councillors and members of the Village Hall Committee have a part to play in challenging discrimination and in implementing this policy.

Parish Councillors and Village Hall Committee members are responsible for leading the equality and diversity agenda, providing a scrutiny role, prioritising resources, and providing community leadership.

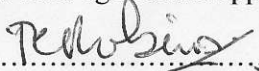
The Parish Council is responsible for the overall management and implementation of this policy.

[1]. DCLG 5018 - The Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007

[2]. Equality Act 2006 Chapter 3

[3]. Census 2001. Data assembled by Suffolk County Council using information on www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk

This policy has been agreed and approved by Bruisyard Parish Council.

Signed: 

Name: Peter E Robinson

Position: Chairman