



Equality Policy

ACCESS Across Staffordshire

January 2013

1. Statement of Commitment to Equality

1.1 The Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent County Sports Partnership is committed to working proactively to ensure access to sport across the County for anyone, regardless of individual circumstance or background. SASSOT is full committed to the principles of equal opportunities and will work towards eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of the following characteristics:

- Age
- Race
- Religion/Belief
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender Reassignment
- Sexual Orientation
- Pregnancy & Maternity
- Marriage & Civil Partnership

1.2 We will address barriers to participation and promote positive actions to help individuals and/or certain groups who share one or more protected characteristics to have the opportunity to participate in their chosen activities. In order to achieve this we will produce and implement a robust equality action plan for staff, volunteers and key stakeholders.

2. Purpose of the Policy?

2.1 The adoption and implementation of a sports equity policy by SASSOT is necessary to;

- help eliminate unlawful discrimination
- meet legislative requirements
- promote community cohesion and encourage the provision of equal access to services across all sectors of the Staffordshire community.

This policy has been produced to try and prevent and address any unlawful discrimination or other unfair treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect against employees, volunteers or participants that may preclude them from participating fully in sports related activities.

3. Legal Requirements

3.1 SASSOT recognises its statutory equality duty under legislation (Equality Act 2010 and any other equivalent legislation) in terms of service provision and employment and is committed to meet them by complying with this policy. SASSOT recognises discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation* as unacceptable will proactively

eliminate such behaviour.

(* full definitions provided in glossary)

3.2 SASSOT recognises the responsibility to make reasonable adjustments relevant to the protected characteristics. SASSOT recognises that it has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled persons and where possible will accommodate reasonable requests to enable them to participate more fully in sports related activities.

3.3 SASSOT will seek advice each time this policy is reviewed to ensure that it continues to reflect the current legal framework and good practice.

4. Service Delivery

4.1 SASSOT is committed to ensuring our services are open, fair and accessible by taking into consideration the needs and requirements of all stakeholders and participants. SASSOT will ensure that;

- Through training and raising awareness all staff are familiar with the principles, practices and policies in regard to equal opportunities and have a understanding of diverse communities and their needs.
- Staff, stakeholders and participants have the opportunity to contribute and engage in the planning of programmes and services
- Monitor the uptake of services across the protected characteristics
- Information on services and policies are provided in a variety of formats and languages so as to not exclude or discriminate against any group or individual. SASSOT will promote positive images and text relating to the promotion of equal opportunities for all.

5. Responsibility

5.1 SASSOT's Partnership Director and Board are responsible for providing leadership in the implementation of this policy and for ensuring that service planning, delivery and monitoring take account of equality. However, all staff however, have a responsibility for the implementation of this policy and will be adequately equipped to do so through appropriate training.

5.2 SASSOT Board will maintain the appointment of the 'Equality Champion' who will ensure that the board takes equality issues into consideration when making decisions.

5.3 A member of the SASSOT team will be designated as the Equality Officer and will have the overall day to day responsibility for the implementation of the Equality Policy and for achieving any equity related actions resulting from it.

6. Implementation

- 6.1** SASSOT will adhere to Stafford Borough Council employment policies and procedures. This includes appointments, training, promotion, terms and conditions of service and termination of employment.
- 6.2** SASSOT will work towards the implementation of the four levels of The Equality Standard: A Framework for Sport and achieve the Intermediate Level by 2015.

7. Communication

- 7.1** SASSOT will communicate to all employees, partners, volunteers and relevant individuals its commitment to equal opportunities and the responsibilities detailed in this policy. The policy will be publically available on the SASSOT website and copies in other formats will also been available on request.
- 7.2** The policy will also be highlighted in staff and volunteer inductions and will be referenced in core staff job descriptions.

8. Actions

- 8.1** SASSOT will produce, maintain and monitor an Equality Action Plan to ensure the objectives of this Equality Policy are consistently delivered throughout all areas of the organisation.
- 8.2** SASSOT recognises that, in some cases, to further the principle of equality, an unequal distribution of resources maybe required. SASSOT will consider positive action to assist any group with a protected characteristic that is current underrepresented.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 9.1** Partners and employees have been consulted as part of the development of this policy and will continue to be consulted on the construction of the Equality Action Plan.
- 9.2** SASSOT has the responsibility to regularly monitor and evaluate the policy, practices, procedures and operations on an ongoing basis. The Board is responsible for ensuring that this equity policy is followed and for dealing with any actual or potential breaches. The host authority (Stafford Borough Council) will be responsible for dealing with employee issues that will be addressed through the Human Resources department.
- 9.3** This policy will be reviewed every 2 years and on-going monitoring and evaluation of the Action Plan will be co-ordinated by the partnerships lead

Equality Officer. The Executive Board will be provided with annual reports on the outcomes of the plan.

Key Contacts

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Sport England

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Bloomsbury Square
London
WC1B 4SE
Tel: 08458 508508
www.sportengland.org

English Federation of Disability Sport

SportPark- Loughborough University
3 Oakwood Drive
Loughborough
Leicestershire
LE11 3QF
Tel: 01509 227750
www.efds.co.uk

Sporting Equals

1301 Stratford Road
Hall Green
Birmingham
B28 9HH
Tel: 0121 777 1375
Email: info@sportingequals.org.uk
www.sportingequals.org.uk

Women's Sports Foundation

3rd Floor, Victoria House
Bloomsbury Square
London WC1B 4SE
Tel: 020 7273 17490
Email: info@wsf.org.uk
www.wsf.org.uk

This document will be made available on Sport Across Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent County Sports Partnership website:
www.sportacrossstaffordshire.co.uk/sportsequity

Glossary

Bullying	The misuse of power or position to criticise persistently or to humiliate and undermine an individual's confidence.
Direct Discrimination	Treating someone less favorably than you would treat others because of a protected characteristic.
Diversity	Respecting individual and community differences
Equal Opportunities	Equal opportunity is about giving people the right to be treated fairly and not discriminated against on the grounds of their sex, race or disability. Equal Opportunities legislation protects these groups of people but employer's policies usually extend this protection to cover discrimination on any grounds.
Equality	The state of being equal – treating individuals equally, which is not necessarily the same as treating them the same. In some cases the need for equality may require unequal effort to ensure that the principle of equality is achieved. Equality tends to be used as a quantitative measure
Harassment	Engaging in unwanted conduct relating to a relevant Protected Characteristic or unwanted conduct of a sexual nature where the conduct has the purpose or effect of violating the recipient's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the recipient, or any other individual affected by such conduct.
Indirect Discrimination	Applying a provision, criterion or practice which, on the face of it, applies equally to all but which, in practice can disadvantage individuals with a particular Protected Characteristic. Such requirements or conditions are lawful only if they can be objectively justified.
Positive Action	Taking steps to overcome current disadvantage or under representation. This might involve advertising to encourage candidates from a particular group to compete for jobs; or training to help develop the potential of under-represented groups
Protected Characteristics	These are the grounds upon which discrimination is unlawful. The characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
Reasonable Adjustment	When any decision is made about an individual, the only personal characteristics that may be taken into account are those that are consistent with any legislation and are relevant to the substance of the decision being made. Employers and service providers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities.
Victimisation	Subjecting someone to a detriment because he or she has in good faith taken action under the Equality Act 2010 (or equivalent legislation) by bringing proceedings, giving evidence or information in relation to proceedings, making an allegation that a person has contravened the Equality Act 2010 (or equivalent legislation).

