

Hastings & St. Leonards Equality & Human Rights Charter



Vision

The Local Strategic Partnership in Hastings is committed to promoting and upholding equality and human rights.

This Charter outlines our vision, our aims and the actions we will take to support this commitment.

The vision is founded on the full recognition of the inherent dignity of all human beings.¹

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from unlawful discrimination considering age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.²

This charter also recognises that socio-economic factors such as education, income, occupation or where you live³ can contribute to inequality.

We recognise that all people possess human rights to be treated fairly, equally, autonomously and with dignity and respect.

We recognise our duties to advance equality of opportunity, protect human rights, eliminate unlawful discrimination and foster good community relations. We will place this at the heart of what we do, and of what we commission others to do on our behalf.

We value the diversity of communities within Hastings. Our aim is to provide goods, facilities and services that recognise, understand and respond to the experiences and needs of our town's diverse population. We aim to do this so that everyone in the town has equal opportunity to access and benefit from high quality services.

1 Taken from the European Convention on Human Rights.

2 The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination on the basis of 'protected characteristics'. There are 9 protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010 as outlined here. These are grounds upon which discrimination is unlawful).

3 The Government decided not to take forward the socio-economic duty on Public Bodies (17th November 2010) but we have chosen to include it in the Charter.

Introduction

This Equality Charter for Hastings provides a set of shared principles for improving services in response to the diversity of communities in the town.

The partners signing the Charter make a commitment to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act.

Advance Equality by taking steps to:

- remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by people due to their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or socio-economic status.
- meet the different needs of people from these groups where their needs are different from the needs of other people.
- encourage people from these groups to participate in public life or in other activities where participation is disproportionately low.

Foster good relations between different people by:

- tackling prejudice
- promoting understanding

Share details of information considered and analysis undertaken including evidence of Equality Impact Analyses or their equivalent, details of community engagement, national and local research and monitoring data to:

- demonstrate the effect that policies and practices have had on people
- design better services.
- establish what information we have and identify the gaps.
- improve the use of equality information when developing policies, strategies and processes.
- develop a shared understanding of the reasons for disadvantage, low participation rates and poor relations.
- improve our understanding of those who share a relevant protected characteristic where currently we have limited understanding. Specifically, identifying the barriers these groups face in accessing services.

Safeguard Human Rights by:

- working across organisations and developing an understanding of key human rights issues.

We are committed to listening to local people's ideas, involving them in decision-making and showing how these views influence the choices we make.⁴

We want Hastings to be a town where people know that they are treated fairly and feel they can influence decision making.⁵

These commitments apply to everyone using or providing services, goods or facilities.

4 Hastings Borough Council's Communications & Engagement Strategy (draft)

5 The Government decided not to take forward the socio-economic duty on Public Bodies (17th November 2010) but we have chosen to include it in the Charter.

This Charter provides a way of working to:

- improve understanding of communities and barriers they may face,
- take steps to provide good quality, effective goods, facilities and services for all sections of our community.
- develop good practices and opportunities for joint working across partners.

It will enable us to work together to:

- improve access to and the experience of services,
- improve the outcomes for all people based on evidence.
- demonstrate corporate leadership to promote equality.

Each organisation also has 'equality objectives' which provide more detail about their specific actions to improve services. These are available from the contacts listed below.

This charter will be reviewed annually to respond to the changing needs of all the partners and the communities they serve.

Partnership Working

We will work together to deliver the Hastings and St. Leonards Sustainable Community Strategy 2009 – 2026 and tackle inequality through our commitment to take our most deprived neighbourhoods out of the worst 10% in the country and create a prosperous town where people enjoy a good quality of life and feel a strong sense of belonging.

Employment

We will:

- employ and support staff that better reflect the diverse communities in the town in line with the new Equality Act 2010 which allows an employer, if faced with making a choice between two or more candidates who are of equal merit to take into consideration whether one is from a group that is disproportionately under-represented within the workforce. This is called 'positive action in recruitment'.
- ensure that staff are skilled and confident in addressing fairness and access when planning and delivering services in the town.

Contact details for questions or complaints about services

Hastings Borough Council

Customer Care and Complaints
commentsandcomplaints@hastings.gov.uk
Tel: 01424 451479
www.hastings.gov.uk/complaints

East Sussex County Council

General enquiries – 0345 60 80 190
<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/contactus/emailus/feedback.aspx>

Amicus Horizon

Tel: 0800 121 6060
contactus@amicushorizon.org.uk
contactus@amicushorizon.org.uk

Sussex Coast College Hastings

Phone: +44 (0)1424 442222
Complaints: quality@sussexcoast.ac.uk

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service

enquiries@esfrs.org
Tel: 0845 130 8855

Sussex Police

contact.centre@sussex.pnn.police.uk
Tel: 0845 60 70 999
www.sussex.police.uk

Surrey & Sussex Probation Trust

Director Human Resources:
01273 627800
Elspeth.Hayde@sspt.probation.gsi.gov.uk
or Judith.Berrill@sspt.probation.gsi.gov.uk

University of Brighton

Equality and Diversity Adviser (staff),
Personnel Department Equality@brighton.ac.uk
Tel: 01273 642835
Student Equality and Diversity Adviser,
Student Services: Equality@brighton.ac.uk
Tel: 01273 642852

1066 Enterprise

Email: info@1066enterprise.co.uk
Tel: 01424 205501

Hastings Voluntary Action

Steve Manwaring - Director
Hastings Voluntary Action
Tel: 01424444010
Email steve@hvauk.org

Hastings Community Network

Sylvia Bennett - Chair,
Hastings Community Network
vicechair@gcsl.org.uk Tel: 01424 438291
Fran Mckeown
Hastings Community Network Development Officer
fran@hvauk.org Tel: 01424 444010

Ore Valley Forum

Chair, Ore Valley Forum
Email: orevalleysforum@talk21.com
Ore Centre, 455 Old London Road, Hastings TN35 5BH

Gensing & Central St. Leonards Community Forum

office@gcsl.org.uk
01424 438291

Hastings and Rother Rainbow Alliance

HRRA, C/O Ore Community Centre, 455 Old London Road, Hastings, TN35 5BH
Phone: 07505 819344
Email: info@hrra.org.uk
www.hrra.org.uk

Hastings & Rother Health and Social Care Forum

The chair c/o HVA Jackson Hall, Portland Place, Hastings TN34 1QN
roger.sweetman@hotmail.co.uk

Autism Sussex

Jan.young@autismsussex.org.uk
Operations Manager East Sussex

East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust

Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS)
Telephone: (01424) 758090
palsh@esht.nhs.uk
Head of Equality & Human Rights: equality@esht.nhs.uk

NHS Hastings & Rother

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)
esdw-pct.pals@nhs.net
Tel: 0300 1000 891

Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Patient Advice and Liaison Services (PALS)
pals@sussexpartnership.nhs.uk
Tel: 01323 446042
Programme manager, equality, diversity and human rights
scott.durairaj@sussexpartnership.nhs.uk
Tel: 01903 843024