



Baldock Allotment and Leisure Gardeners' Association

Equality and Diversity Policy

This policy applies to all members of the association, all of whom are responsible for compliance with this policy. All external persons connected with BALGA are expected to hold the same responsibility and commitment.

Our Commitment

BALGA is committed to providing equality, fairness and respect for all. This applies to how BALGA conducts its business and how BALGA members treat each other. BALGA aims to treat every plot holder and member of the association equally, regardless of the following protected characteristics by law:

- Age
- Disability or health status
- Gender, including gender reassignment
- Marital or civil partnership status
- Pregnancy/maternity
- Race, skin colour or ethnic origins
- Religion, belief or lack of belief
- Sexual orientation

All BALGA members are expected to treat each other with dignity and respect. BALGA will not tolerate any form of bullying, harassment, victimisation or discrimination. Unacceptable behaviour extends to online comments via email or social media sites.

Bullying can be characterised as either one-off or persistent incidents involving offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour.

Harassment is where a person unlawfully engages in unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic (see above) that has the purpose of violating another person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that other person.

It may be possible for a member affected by the behaviour of another simply to ask the person to stop, or make it clear that the behaviour is unwelcome. If this feels safe and appropriate then the member should do this. However, such an approach may not feel safe or appropriate and members should feel able to raise matters at any time with a member of the General Committee. It is important that members should feel able to raise concerns without fear and in the knowledge that their complaint will be taken seriously. Any allegation of

harassment, bullying, victimisation or discrimination will be dealt with sensitively and in accordance with the BALGA Complaints Procedure.

Responsibilities of the BALGA General Committee

- We will make sure that all our members and contractors are aware of the Equality and Diversity Policy, and where applicable will make them aware of their responsibilities.
- All members and others who work for us will be treated fairly, with dignity and respect and will not be discriminated against on any of the protected characteristics named above.
- All decisions, including letting of plots, will be made objectively and without discrimination.
- An equality impact assessment will be carried out on all new and revised BALGA policies to check that they do not unlawfully discriminate against any protected characteristic group.
- Responsibility for making sure that BALGA fulfils its obligations under this Policy rests with the General Committee.

Responsibilities of all BALGA members

- All BALGA members are expected to treat their fellow members and other allotment holders with dignity and respect.
- Inappropriate, offensive or unlawful conduct, which is brought to the attention of the General Committee, may lead to action in accordance with the BALGA Complaints Procedure.

Dealing with complaints

It is recognised that an individual may be unwilling to make a complaint regarding equality and diversity for a variety of reasons, including:

- Fear that others will consider the behaviour trivial
- Fear that the complaint will not be taken seriously
- Fear of retaliation and/or public humiliation
- Fear that the complaint will not be dealt with in total confidence

It is important that members should feel able to raise concerns without such fears and in the knowledge that every complaint will be taken seriously. All complaints will be fully investigated in confidence and in accordance with the BALGA Complaints Procedure. A confidential written record will be kept of each complaint received, the action taken and any resolution achieved.

Monitoring of this Policy

The Equality and Diversity Policy will be monitored by the General Committee on an annual basis, or as necessary. This policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

Signed Chairman

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