

A guide for Voluntary and Community Organisations in the London Borough of Bromley

Foreword

Dear Colleague,

Diversity is at the heart of our values as the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector. Community Links Bromley is firmly committed to promoting diversity across the borough and to supporting our members and other organisations in ways which enable them to understand and implement diversity policies.

The 'Open Space on Diversity' is a network which has brought together organisations and individuals who are passionate about making a difference to the lives of different communities across the borough. Community Links Bromley, in partnership with this network, has led on the development of a single document which brings together best practice on diversity issues.

It is in this spirit that I am pleased to recommend this Diversity Good Practice Guide to you. I hope you will find it a useful source of information and ideas on how to put the principles of diversity into practice.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you think we can be of further support to your organisation.

With best wishes,



Colin Maclean Director

What does diversity have to do with me?	4
Local context	5
Promoting diversity in your organisation	6
Staff and volunteers	8
Services and Activities	11
Monitoring	13
Developing a Diversity Strategy	15
Diversity Checklist	16
Appendices	
1. Diversity and the Law	17
2. Glossary	19
3. Resources	21



What does diversity have to do with me?

Society is diverse. Some people are older, others are younger, some have physical disabilities, some are black, some are white, some are gay, some have children, some are married, some are religious and some aren't, some are male and some are female. If you started making a list of differences between people, it would be difficult to know when to stop.

The voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE) embraces the concept of diversity. This means that organisations recognise the differences between people and aim to provide services and activities that take this into account. Embracing diversity is broader than the concept of equal opportunities. Diversity encompasses staff, volunteers, beneficiaries or service-users and trustees. It can also include the way the organisation relates to the wider community.

Diversity can seem more immediately relevant for organisations that deliver a package of services and activities across a community. However, all organisations or projects – however small – should take steps to ensure they are welcoming and inclusive.

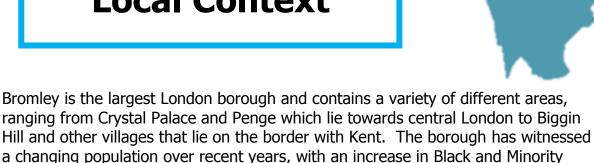
This Diversity Good Practice Guide was developed by the Open Space on Diversity group co-ordinated by Community Links Bromley. The Open Space on Diversity was set up in 2012 with the aim of raising awareness of diversity and equalities issues across the borough, including the voluntary sector. Membership is open to all voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) based in Bromley.

The idea for the Good Practice Guide came from recognition of the challenges involved for VCOs in responding to diversity issues. Changing legislation, different requirements from funders, and shifts in the local population and public attitudes all contribute to the changing environment in which VCOs work. This guide offers a clear structure and guidelines which VCOs can use to ensure that their services, staff, volunteers and decision-making processes reflect the particular nature and diversity of the borough.

Although there are already existing resources on diversity, we believe there is great value in a guide that applies local knowledge and brings the concept to life. If you have any questions on the guide, or would like support in developing your work around diversity, please contact Community Links Bromley on 020 8315 1900, or visit our website www.communitylinksbromley.org.uk

Local Context

Gypsy/Traveller population in the whole of Europe.



In addition, Bromley has an aging population. It is estimated that there are around 20,000 people of working age in Bromley who have a physical disability or sensory impairment, about 10% of the population aged 16-64. This figure is projected to increase to 21,750 by the year 2020. The UK Government estimates that 6% of the population in Bromley identify as Gay, Lesbian or Bisexual.

Ethnic (BME) communities. The Cray Valley is home to the largest settled

VCOs working to support these communities have shared the challenges they face in supporting the diversity of Bromley's communities, both in terms of attitudes and in the direct provision of services.

They have suggested that the following might help to maximise the work that they are doing:

- A better understanding within the community generally, and by service providers of the experiences and challenges that some communities face e.g. disabled people, including those with learning disabilities and mental health issues; Gypsy and Traveller Community; those people living in deprived areas; older people; lesbian women, gay men, bi-sexual and transgender people; and black and minority community members
- More awareness within communities of their rights and of the services that they are able to access e.g. disabled people who are victims of hate crime
- Safe spaces where organisations supporting the range of equalities communities, and indeed members of those communities, to come together to share the experiences, challenges and opportunities they face
- A greater diversity of voices being heard at decision making arenas

Monitoring of the uptake of services to enable gaps in access to services by the diversity of the community to be understood and addressed

Promoting Diversity in your Organisation

Organisations that embrace diversity recognise and value the differences and variety that exist amongst individuals and within communities. Organisations that understand these differences are better placed to ensure that they meet the needs of the communities in which they are based, and that they are able to respond effectively to potential changes in their user profile and needs.

UK equalities legislation recognises and protects nine characteristics of an individual's identity - age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation. You can read more about this in Appendix 1 – Diversity and the Law. However, we all have many more aspects to our lives and embracing diversity starts with thinking about what are the different building blocks that make up our identity.

The image over the page charts the different aspects which make up an individual's identity. In any one organisation, people will have different characteristics – ranging from their personality, to their age, gender, income level etc. – and organisations that embrace diversity will be able to acknowledge this and create an environment in which people are able to be open about different aspects of their identity. The image shows how our identities include: internal dimensions such as race, gender and sexual orientation; external dimensions such as marital status, educational background and parental status; and organisational dimensions such as level of seniority and management status.

The characteristics identified in the image are not set in stone and are not exhaustive. One interesting exercise in an organisation is to take some time to discuss which internal, external

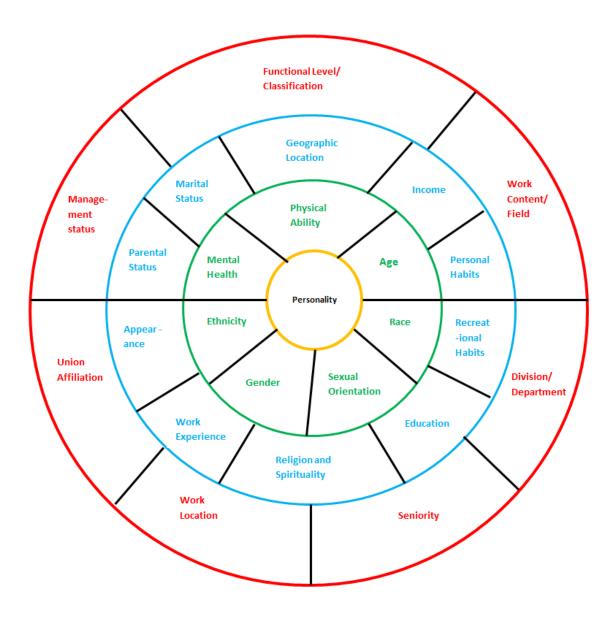
CASE STUDY



"A few weeks ago one of our youth workers did a project on diversity with our young people and where they have connections. She started off looking at how they communicate with their peers then asked how people communicated before social media and email. Obviously people used telephone and letters. She asked the young people to bring in stamps and then they looked at where they came from and how they have relatives and friends from all across the globe.

She then looked at where the young people are now in Bromley. She asked them to make a giant stamp at what makes them a person i.e. .their hobbies, friends, families, sports etc.). The end result was to make a montage in the form of a giant stamp of us as people."

and organisational dimensions staff, volunteers and community members identify as important to them.





Staff & Volunteers

Organisations need to comply with relevant UK equalities legislation around employment. However, promoting diversity means going beyond that. It means ensuring that all staff and volunteers feel the organisation is a safe and welcoming place to be – regardless of their gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, disability etc. Organisations that do that also reap the benefits of fresh ways of thinking, new points of view and broadening horizons, and an understanding of the challenges and barriers facing different sections of the community.

What do we need to think about?

> Recruitment

Organisations need to think about how they recruit new staff and volunteers, and whether they are encouraging applications from all sections of the community. To promote diversity, think about the following:

- Where do you advertise your vacancies?
- Do you use community media, posters in community venues, etc. as well as national and local media?
- Is the application form written in plain English?
- Do you state your commitment to diversity in the advertisement?
- If you want to encourage applications from particular sections of the community, do you need to translate the advert into other languages, easy read, etc.?
- What else can you do besides adverts? If you want to encourage volunteers from certain sections of the community are there any groups or meetings you could attend in order to spread the word?

Access issues

Are you able to accommodate staff and volunteers with additional access issues, whether these are physical or communication based? Organisations specialising in disability issues will be able to offer advice on practical steps that you can take (see Resources appendix for contact details). In addition, there are a number of schemes that you can sign up to if you want to improve access for certain sections of the community – for example, the Mindful Employer Charter sets out actions in order to support mental health awareness at work.

> Creating a welcoming environment

How can you make the organisation a place where people feel able to be open about different aspects of their identity at work? Think about the following:

- Do all staff and volunteers receive diversity training?
- Do all managers receive diversity training, and guidance/support on how to manage diversity in the workplace?
- How does the organisation clearly signal its commitment to diversity? For example, you could put up posters, or a diversity statement, or celebrate events in the diversity calendar such as Black History Month or Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender History Month.

What could be the challenges?

It is worth taking a moment to identify what could be the particular challenges for your organisation in promoting diversity amongst staff and volunteers, as all

organisations are different. Key challenges may include:

> Different opinions/ conflict

Diversity can be a sensitive issue and may provoke strong opinions and emotions from different members of the team. It is important that managers are able to respond appropriately and sensitively to any differences of opinion or conflict, and that they seek guidance where necessary. Where there are deep-rooted differences of opinion on an issue, it is important that staff and volunteers understand the organisation's commitment to diversity and the need to keep personal viewpoints out of the workplace.

Lack of contacts with particular communities

You may feel that your organisation lacks the contacts needed to encourage applications for employment and volunteering opportunities from all sections of the community. In this case, you may need to spend some time proactively seeking to develop relationships with the organisations that represent those communities.

CASE STUDY



In order to provide opportunities for learning about diversity issues in an informal environment, CLB runs "Brown Bag Lunches" for staff and volunteers. Everyone brings their lunch and someone leads a discussion on a subject relating to diversity. So far, topics have included 'the social model of disability', 'sexual orientation' and 'mental health issues for the Gypsy Traveller community'. Everyone is free to organise a session on an issue that interests them, and to organise a speaker from another organisation where appropriate.

A note on Trustees

The Trustees or management committee members are the people who ultimately decide what an organisation is going to do. How can you ensure that the make-up of your Trustee board reflects the community you work with? Can you offer extra support to individuals who might be interested in becoming a Trustee but might have difficulties in doing so? If you want your Trustee board to be more diverse, are there key individuals you could invite?

Services & Activities

Many voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) run services or activities for individuals and/or groups of people. Some organisations run activities for the whole community whereas some have a particular focus, such as services for the elderly, or sports classes for young people, or welfare advice for women, or a choir in a particular village. Even if your organisation has a specific focus you will still want to ensure that it is reaching and welcoming to all the individuals and groups within that remit.

For example, an organisation that runs parenting activities could publicise its courses using different languages to ensure that parents from different ethnic communities find out about them.

What do we need to think about?

Organisations need to think about how they ensure their services are appropriate for and meeting the needs of all sections of the community. To promote diversity, think about the following:

Consultation/ needs analysis

When you are consulting with the people who use your services or activities, how can you make sure that you capture possible needs related to diversity? For example, do people have additional access needs? Is the timing of the service/activity or the place where you run it making it difficult for some people to attend

> Staff/volunteer training

Everybody who is involved in running a service or activity needs to be aware of diversity issues so that they will understand the challenges facing particular individuals, and respond appropriately.

> Hidden issues

Not everybody feels comfortable talking about certain issues, for example sexuality, but it may be important that the worker/volunteer knows about this in order to be able to provide the best advice or care service possible. Your organisation needs to ensure that individuals are sensitively prompted to disclose such information if it is important to their case.

> Publicity

Where are you advertising your services, and what media do you use? Do you take advantage of community media, community hubs etc.? Do you have any publicity in easy read or in different languages? What about word-of-mouth publicity, like attending events?

How services are organized

Think about what time you run your services or activities, and where they are held. Could a mixture of day and evening activities draw in more people? Is the space accessible for people with a disability?

How to create a welcoming environment

A public statement that you support diversity can ensure people know they are in an environment where they can be themselves. Posters and pictures relevant to all members of the community can also help.

Keep yourself informed

Are you sure you are aware of the different issues facing particular sections of your community? Take advantage of training, workshops, the media and just talking to people to make sure you are able to identify and understand particular challenges that people might experience.

CASE STUDY



MindCare (Bromley Mind's specialist dementia arm) ensures that the specific cultural needs of clients attending the Dementia Support Centres are met. This is particularly important given the stigma which is attached to dementia amongst some Black and Minority Ethnic communities. Recent examples of the efforts made include providing culturally appropriate food at mealtimes, celebrating a range of cultural events in the Centres and researching different cultural backgrounds to enable the provision of reminiscence work that is relevant to the background and experience of each individual.



Monitoring

Monitoring and equal opportunities forms can sometimes seem like an extra task to do, but they are vital in order to get an idea of who is involved in your organisation. The information they provide is vital to help you evaluate your services and activities, identify possible gaps, and develop new projects. It is also very useful for funding bids.

Monitoring can involve:

- Monitoring participation at events, i.e. through equal opportunities forms
- Monitoring participation of activities and programmes
- Equal opportunities forms for job and volunteer applications
- Detailed monitoring when offering services in order to get a full picture of the individual

What do we need to think about?

Organisations need to think about how they ensure their monitoring activities are meaningful and appropriate for the activities they run and the individuals and communities they work with. Larger organisations that run several services will probably need more detailed information, but all organisations should keep records of who attends their activities.

Which information?

What information do you need to record and why? Your monitoring information should feed into future planning, so the first step is to think about what kind of thing you need to know. Organisations often use standard equal opportunities forms, but some may need more detailed information about a particular area. Also, check what information your funder will require.

> Format

How do you get the information that you need? There is a wide range of forms and tools available, so do some research or design your own. In some cases people can complete their own form, but what do you do if they need support?

> Sensitivity

It is best practice for equal opportunities and diversity monitoring to be anonymous and optional. Some people do not like what they see as personal

questions. Your organisation needs to think about how it presents its monitoring forms so that people understand why you are asking them to complete them.

What could be the challenges?

> How to get people on board

You need to make sure that all staff and volunteers know why you undertake monitoring, and that they see why the information is useful. Otherwise they will not be able to explain this to other people.

> Talking about all issues

Staff and volunteers need to be able to feel comfortable talking about the kind of questions asked for on any monitoring form. This should be covered in diversity training.

CASE STUDY



The Positive Steps Service User Involvement project supports people with mental health needs to have a voice in the community, helping them to overcome the diversity issues associated with having a mental illness and providing training on how to value and respect other people's differences. It provides training and skills development for anyone interested in becoming a voice for service users in Bromley.

Developing a Diversity Strategy

Managing diversity is a continuous process rather than a one-off initiative or event. It should be an integral part of organisational strategy, and be integrated in the management of all aspects of your organisation.

Some organisations find it useful to develop a diversity strategy in order to prioritise the issues, and focus everyone's minds on what needs to be done. Other organisations prefer to include diversity as a section in existing organisational strategies. What is important is that your organisation considers the diversity implications of different management areas.

CASE STUDY



Bromley Mind works hard to ensure that its services are accessible to everyone who might benefit from them, and uses person-centred approaches to ensure that the needs of each individual are responded to. One example of this has been the work done within our Community Wellbeing Services for people with mental health problems to ensure that they can be accessed by people with agoraphobia. Staff from the service have taken a range of approaches to this, depending on the individual. For some, offering one-to-one support over the telephone enables them to begin planning for their future at a time when coming to our premises isn't realistic. For another, staff have held a meeting in the client's car as a first step to enabling them to come into the service in a safe and supported way. Once through the door, staff and volunteers remain sensitive and responsive to what will help being in that environment as comfortable as possible, all the time listening to the individual service user about what will work for them.



Diversity Checklist

The following questions will support your organisation's journey towards promoting diversity. Organisations will be at different stages of the process, so use the answers to support the development of new policies and ways of working. Different kinds of organisations will need to develop different kinds of tools and policies. This is not an exhaustive list.

Do you have a vision of what diversity means for your organisation? Have you discussed diversity issues at Board meetings, staff meetings and with volunteers?
Do you have a diversity mission statement, and is this public for all staff, volunteers and users/community members?
Have all of your staff and volunteers attended diversity training? Are you sure that everyone feels comfortable and confident about diversity issues?
Do you know who uses your services? Are there any gaps, any sections of the community which are not accessing your services and should be?
Have you identified why particular groups are under-represented?
Does your organisation have a diversity policy? Does this cover: staff and volunteer recruitment, and service provision? Does it include all of the protected characteristics? Who is responsible for making sure it is implemented?
Have you undertaken a diversity audit of your staff and volunteers? Do you know how comfortable and welcome different people feel working in your organisation?
Does your organisation have a diversity strategy? If not, is it something you should work towards – and who should be doing it?

Appendix 1 – Diversity and the Law

Diversity and the Law

This section gives a brief overview of current legislation on equalities. Please be aware that the law can change; every effort has been made to ensure that this is correct at the time of going to print (January 2014).

I. Protected characteristics

The **Equality Act 2010** brought together and strengthened existing discrimination law. In general terms, it prevents discrimination on the ground of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

These categories are known in the Act as protected characteristics.



The Act sets out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone, such as direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation. These terms and other definitions of unlawful treatment are explained in more detail below (see II)

The Act makes it illegal to discriminate against anyone with a protected characteristic in the following situations:

- at work
- when providing goods, facilities and services
- when carrying out public functions
- when managing premises
- in education
- in associations, such as private clubs

The Act also introduces a new public sector equality duty which places a general duty on public bodies, such as local authorities, to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- actively promote equality of opportunity between people of different groups and foster good relations between them

This also applies to private and voluntary organisations if they are contracted by the local authority to provide services.

Public authorities also have to publish their equality objectives and information on how well they are complying with their duty.

II. Legal definition of discrimination

UK law identifies and explains different forms of discrimination. The main ones to be aware of are the following.

Direct discrimination

This means treating one person less favourably that another on the grounds of one of the protected characteristics. It is the fact of the less favourable treatment that is important – not whether or not the discrimination was intended. *Example: an employer appoints a man rather than a better qualified woman.*

Associative discrimination

This is direct discrimination against someone because they are associated with another person who falls into one of the protected characteristics.

Discrimination by perception

This is direct discrimination against someone because others think that they fall into one of the protected characteristics – whether or not they actually have that characteristic.

Indirect discrimination

This occurs when a general rule or criteria appears to be neutral, but actually has the effect (intentionally or not) of putting some groups of people at a disadvantage.

Victimisation

This means treating a person less favourably because they have made a complaint about discrimination, or have supported someone else to make a complaint, or are thought to have made a complaint, or are intending to do so.

Harassment

This means subjecting another person to unwanted conduct related to one of the protected characteristics.

Discrimination arising from a disability

This is different from direct discrimination which happens if the person with a disability is treated less favourably because of the disability itself. Discrimination arising from a disability is when the discrimination is due to something connected to the disability, i.e. a further health complication.

Appendix 2 – Glossary

This section explains common terms and language used in diversity and equalities work.

Access issues

This refers to how to make it possible for different types of people to access an organisation's services or activities. Access is more than physical access, such as for wheelchair users, and can include communication needs and language barriers.

Black and minority ethnic (BME)

This refers to people who belong to a visual racial minority or to a minority ethnic group.

Disability

Under current legislation, disability is a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Diversity

This term recognises and values the differences that exist in the factors that make up a person's identity, such as sex, race, ethnicity, physical and mental ability, sexuality, gender identity, age, economic status, language, religion, nationality, education and family status.

Easy Read

Easy read documents have been designed to be more accessible and easily understood, including by people with learning disabilities, older people, people who have dementia, and people who have missed out on schooling

Equality

Where each person in relation to a particular aspect of their lives has equal rights, freedoms and opportunities and where their different needs are recognised and barriers are removed.

Equality monitoring

Collecting information that shows how well an organisation or project is meeting its equality aims.

Equal opportunities

Ensuring that there are no barriers based on factors defined by law (i.e. the list of protected characteristics, see Appendix I) that prevent people from securing employment or having full access to an organisation's services.

Positive action

In some circumstances organisations are allowed to take special measures to prevent or compensate for disadvantage linked to the protected characteristics.

Reasonable adjustments

Making relevant changes to premises, forms of communication or service provision to enable people with disabilities to be employed or have access to information and services. "Reasonable" depends upon the circumstances such as the size and resources of the organisation, and the nature of the employment or services.

Religion or belief

This refers to a person's religious or similar philosophical belief, or the lack of a religion or belief.

Sexual orientation

This is whether someone is heterosexual, homosexual (lesbian or a gay man) or bisexual.

Social model of disability

This sees the disability as arising from the barriers existing in society rather than from the individual; it is society's responsibility to ensure equal access to all individuals.

Transgender

This term applies to individuals whose gender identity (i.e. self-identification as a man, woman, neither or both) does not match the physical gender into which they have been born.

Appendix 3 – Resources in Bromley

Age

Age UK Bromley and Greenwich

http://www.ageuk.org.uk/bromleyandg
reenwich/

Advice hotline: 020 8315 1878

Bromley Council on Aging

http://www.bromleycoa.org.uk/

Tel: 0208 325

Email@ mail@bromleycoa.org.uk

Disability

Advocacy for All

http://www.advocacyforall.org.uk/

Tel: 020 8300 9666

Email: info@advocacyforall.org.uk

Deaf Access

http://www.deaf-access.co.uk/ Telephone: 020 8315 2550 Minicom: 020 8315 2552 SMS Text: 077 3244 9349 Fax: 020 8315 2554

Email: information@deaf-access.co.uk

Kent Association for the Blind

http://www.kab.org.uk/ Tel: 020 8464 8406

Email: rehab.bromley@kab.org.uk

Bromley Sparks

http://www.bromleysparks.btik.com/

Tel: 020 8315 2508

Email: sparks@advocacyforall.org.uk

Experts by Experience

http://www.xbyxbromley.com/ 0208 650 2102

Burgess Autistic Trust

http://www.burgessautistictrust.org.uk

/about-asd/

Tel: 020 8464 2897

Email: info@burgessautistictrust.org.uk

Hate crime

Victim Support

http://www.victimsupport.org.uk

https://www.facebook.com/victimsupport

Support line tel: 0845 30 30 900

Support line email: supportline@victimsupport.org.uk

Ethnic Minorities

Bromley Ethnic Communities Project

Tel: 020 8676 5666

Email: lulu_pearce@yahoo.co.uk

Bromley Gypsy Traveller Project

Tel: 01689 839052

Email: thebgtp@yahoo.co.uk

Mental Health issues

Bromley Mental Health Forum

Email evelyn.collington@ntlworld.com

Community Options

http://www.community-options.org.uk

Tel: 020 8313 9725

Email: enquiry@community-

options.org.uk

Bromley Mind

http://bromleymind.org.uk

Tel: 01689 811222

Email: email@bromleymind.org.uk

Women

Bromley Women's Aid

http://www.bromleywa.org.uk/

Tel: 020 8313 9303

Email: info@bromleywa.org.uk

Youth

JusB

http://www.jusb.org.uk/

Tel: 8464 2722

Children & Families Voluntary Sector Forum

http://www.cfforum.org.uk

Tel: 020 8315 1909

Email: cfforum@btconnect.com

And beyond...

The Equalities and Human Rights Commission

For information about equalities legislation and current affairs http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/

The Metro Centre

Information and advice on issues relating to sexuality, including transsexuals and intersex https://www.metrocentreonline.org/

Stonewall

For information and advice on issues relating to Gay men, Lesbians and Bisexuals https://www.stonewall.org.uk/

Women's Resource Centre

Information and advice for organisations working specifically with women, or on women's issues http://thewomensresourcecentre.org.u k/

The Interfaith Network for the UK http://www.interfaith.org.uk/



Community Links Bromley
Community House
South Street
Bromley
BR1 1RH

020 8315 1900 admin@communitylinksbromley.org.uk

