



North Midlands LGBT Older Peoples Group
Registered Charity 1186844
Web: olgbtstoke.org.uk
Email: olgbt2009@gmail.com

Bullying and Harassment Policy Oct 2023

Everyone will be treated with dignity and respect at North Midlands OLGBT Group. Bullying and harassment of any kind will not be tolerated; this includes bullying or harassment of members by visitors to North Midlands OLGBT Group.

This policy applies to all Trustees, members and volunteers attending meetings, activities or undertaking work on behalf of the organisation.

Allegations of bullying and harassment will be treated seriously, and investigated following the procedures in our complaints policy. If bullying or harassment has taken place the person(s) responsible may have their membership and/or volunteering roles with us terminated.

What are Bullying and Harassment?

Harassment, in general terms is unwanted conduct affecting the dignity of men and women, where actions or comments are viewed as demeaning and unacceptable to the recipient.

It may be related to age, gender, race, disability, religion, belief, sexuality, nationality or any personal characteristic of the individual, and may be persistent or an isolated incident.

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.

Bullying or harassment may be by an individual against an individual or involve groups of people. It may be obvious or it may be insidious. It may be face to face or in written communications, electronic (e)mail, phone. Whatever form it takes, it is unwarranted and unwelcome to the individual. It may take place in private or in public.

Examples of bullying/harassing behaviour include:

- spreading malicious rumours, or insulting someone by word or behaviour (particularly on the grounds of race, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation and religion or belief);
- copying memos that are critical about someone to others who do not need to know;
- ridiculing or demeaning someone – picking on them or setting them up to fail;
- exclusion or victimisation;
- unfair treatment;
- overbearing supervision or other misuse of power or position;

- unwelcome sexual advances – touching, standing too close, the display of offensive materials;
- making threats or comments about job security without foundation;
- deliberately undermining a competent worker's efforts by overloading and constant criticism;
- preventing individuals progressing by intentionally blocking training opportunities.

Legitimate, constructive and fair criticism of a member's performance or behaviour is not bullying. An occasional raised voice or argument is not bullying.

Why do we need to take action?

Bullying and harassment are not only unacceptable on moral grounds but may, if unchecked or badly handled, create serious problems:

- Poor morale and poor membership relations;
- Loss of respect for others in the group;
- Poor activities;
- Lost enjoyment of being a member;
- Absence;
- Resignations;
- Damage to group's reputation;

Procedures

Complaints of bullying and/or harassment, or information from members relating to such complaints, will be dealt with fairly and confidentially and sensitively using the general format set out in North Midlands OLGBT Group's complaint procedures.

Investigation

Complaints will be taken seriously and investigated promptly, objectively and independently. Decisions can then be made as to what action needs to be taken.

Informal action

If appropriate, the matter will be dealt with informally; sometimes people are not aware that their behaviour is unwelcome, and an informal discussion can lead to greater understanding and an agreement that the behaviour will cease.

Formal action

Serious allegations of bullying or harassment will be dealt with under the North Midlands LGBT Older Peoples Group's complaints procedures.

Unfounded allegations

Members lodging a complaint in good faith will not be challenged for doing so. However, if it is suspected that an allegation of bullying and/or harassment has been made **for malicious reasons** this will be investigated and dealt with under the complaints procedure.

Board Responsibilities

Our board of trustees should be clear about the standards of behaviour expected, set a good example in their own behaviour and ensure that individuals are fully aware of their responsibilities to others.

Bullying is a serious issue and must be treated as such. Complaints of bullying and / or harassment, or information from members relating to such complaints, must be dealt with fairly and confidentially and sensitively using the general format set out in our complaints procedures.

Members and volunteers should be mindful of their behaviour and the effect that it can have on others. Please help keep our group free from bullying and harassment.

----- End of policy -----

Acknowledgement is made of the use of the support from for this policy document.

Small Charities & Voluntary Groups.

www.smallcharitysupport.uk

Version History

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