North Midlands LGBT+ Older Peoples Group
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# Bullying and Harassment Policy Updated Aug 2026

## 1. Purpose and Scope

**Everyone will be treated with dignity and respect at North Midlands LGBT+ Older Peoples Group.**

Bullying and harassment of any kind is harmful and will not be tolerated. This policy applies to all trustees, members, volunteers and visitors who are attending or participating in activities organised by the Group.

## 2. What Are Bullying and Harassment?

**Harassment** is unwanted behaviour that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Harassment may relate to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or any other personal characteristic. It may consist of a single incident or a pattern of behaviour.

**Bullying** is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or the misuse of power or position, intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure another person.

Bullying or harassment may be carried out by an individual or a group. It may be obvious or subtle and may occur face to face, in writing, by email, telephone, social media or any other form of communication. It may take place in public or in private.

Examples of bullying or harassing behaviour include:

- spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone by words or behaviour;
- ridiculing or demeaning someone;
- deliberately excluding or victimising someone;
- misuse of a position of trust or authority;
- unwelcome physical contact or unwanted sexual advances;
- persistent or unjustified criticism intended to undermine someone's confidence.

Legitimate, constructive and respectful feedback about a person's behaviour or contribution is not bullying. Nor is an occasional disagreement or difference of opinion, provided it is expressed respectfully.

## 3. Why 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;
- Lost enjoyment of being a member;
- Absences or resignations;
- Damage to our group's reputation;

## 4. Procedures

All complaints will be taken seriously and investigated promptly, fairly and, wherever possible, by trustees who are independent of the matter being considered. Following the investigation, appropriate action will be determined.

- **Informal Resolution:** Where appropriate, individuals are encouraged to resolve minor misunderstandings informally by letting the person know their behaviour is unwelcome.
- **Formal Complaints:** Allegations of bullying or harassment will be investigated promptly and confidentially under our Complaints Policy.
- **Outcomes:** If substantiated, the person responsible may have their membership or volunteer role terminated.
- **Malicious Allegations:** Anyone raising a complaint in good faith will not be criticised or disadvantaged for doing so. However, where there is evidence that a complaint has been made maliciously or deliberately without foundation, this will be investigated under the Group's Complaints Policy.

## 5. Board Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees will promote a culture of dignity and respect, lead by example in their own behaviour and ensure that concerns are dealt with fairly, promptly and confidentially.

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 ----------

The original draft of this policy was created using resources from "Small Charity Support" (*www.smallcharitysupport.uk*)

**Version History**

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| 24/02/2021 | Maurice Greenham |
| 17/08/2021 | Reviewed and readopted without amendment by OLGBT+ Board |
| 25/10/2023 | Amended version approved by OLGBT+ Board of Trustees |
| 03/08/2026 | Reviewed and amended to remove direct and indirect references to employees (jobs, workers, staff). |