



'Ground rules' for working with FRESH

1. Introduction

FRESH was established to champion effective equality, diversity and anti-discrimination practice in Shropshire. Equality, diversity and anti-discrimination are our foundations; the core of what we are about, how we should be judged, and a reference point for all our policies and action plans. Our approach to equality is based on reflection and learning, and appropriately challenging discriminatory behaviour.

2. Ground rules

It follows that all of us who work for and with FRESH need to do so in a way that reflects this commitment. The following Ground Rules have been drawn up to provide guidance for FRESH's employees, volunteers, Directors, Members and contracted service providers on the standards of behaviour expected of all of us.

2.1. Organisational culture

We should all:

- Avoid becoming part of any cliques
- Be friendly and helpful, particularly to people who may be new to FRESH
- Challenge behaviour that contravenes these ground rules, by addressing the behaviour and not the person

2.2. Equality

- Regardless of our role or organisational status, we all have the right to be treated as equals; everybody must be treated with the same respect and consideration, without regard to their race, religion, sex, gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, class background or other identities.
- No-one should be made to feel uncomfortable by having to listen to comments that are inappropriate.
- We have the right to challenge being treated as less than equal.



- In meetings and discussions we must not interrupt each other. Everyone's contribution should be listened to and respected. Those of us who know we often have a lot to say should think about sometimes saying less. Those of us who tend to say little should be supported in sometimes saying more.
- There is no such thing as a stupid question or suggestion. We have the right to ask about things we don't understand and to make suggestions.

2.3. Language

- We should avoid using language that may cause offence, particularly around age, class, disability, gender identity, race, religion, sex, or sexuality
- We should check with others any language we are unsure about
- However, we need to remember that these ground rules are about learning from each other, and not about stifling communication or debate
- We should respectfully challenge anyone's use of inappropriate or offensive language, while being aware that it may have been used unintentionally
- We must be open to challenges from others and try to respond positively.

2.5. Confidentiality

Any information or opinions given in confidence should be respected, except when there may be statutory or management reasons otherwise. In such cases the person giving the information or opinion must be told that it will not be possible to keep it confidential, and the reason(s) why.

2.6. Accessibility

We should all be aware of and sensitive to the accessibility of:

- The buildings we use, including stairs and other structural and environmental issues
- Written and other visual materials
- The language used
- Acoustics and audibility



3. **When things go wrong**

Inevitably, things sometimes go wrong. When they do, all of us should try to raise the issues as soon as possible with the person concerned, although waiting until we feel calmer can sometimes help. If something happens which makes your time with FRESH uncomfortable, difficult, or prevents you from doing your work properly, **please** take action. If you can't resolve the matter with the person concerned and it feels important, please talk to a Director, or if that feels difficult, talk with someone who can raise it with a Director.

4. **Review**

- This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board on or around the anniversary of its adoption.
- Date of next scheduled review: November 2014

