Stand up for equality
Citizens Advice Equality and Diversity strategy
If not us who? if not now when?
Citizens Advice: our approach to equality

Stand up for equality: Is about everyone in the service working together to be a stronger champion on equality.

- It is about achieving the breakthroughs and improvements in services that our clients need;
- It is about using evidence and stories from our clients to contribute constructively to policy-making and debates.
Overview of Stand Up for Equality 2015-20

**Aim:** To be a stronger champion for equality, by:

- Challenging discrimination through advice
- Championing equality through research and campaigns
- Valuing diversity as an employer and volunteer agency
Who we help and how we help them

Who we help

- 6.2 million issues dealt with directly
- 2.7 million people helped face to face, by phone, email or webchat
- 36 million visits to our website to get

How we do this

- 2,900 locations where we provide free and independent support across England and Wales
- 23,000 volunteers donated an estimated £114 million worth of volunteering hours
Current priorities:

Gender Violence and Abuse
- Training support programme for the whole Citizens Advice network
- Encourages clients to disclose any gender-based violence or abuse
- Only in a face to face setting when they are unaccompanied and at an early stage
- 1 in 5 clients do disclose some form of abuse
- About 1/3 of these disclose current or recent abuse

Discrimination advice
- identifying and uncovering inequality, discrimination, disadvantage and unfairness which is practical and problem solving
- Discovering inequality helps to solve clients problems by using discrimination advice
- Discrimination can happen to any of our clients - it can affect any of us – you, me, everyone

Strategic change priorities
Strategic change priorities

Current priorities:

British Sign Language - National strategy

- Ground-breaking project (in the Midlands) to train Deaf BSL people to become advisers and deliver advice in BSL
- Part of national strategy to make local offices more Deaf aware and Deaf friendly
- Pilot new technology to improve access and advice “virtual CAB”

Improve access: hate reporting centres and working with Gypsies and Travellers

- All local offices to review their services to Gypsies and Travellers and take steps to improve
- All local offices to become active hate reporting centres and adopt one of our models

People

- Improve our diversity monitoring and the diversity of our workforce
- Build capacity to deliver leadership in equality
Strategic change priorities

Phase 2 priorities

● Empowering clients to have more voice and influence

● Improving public and Citizens Advice services for people with mental health problems

● Promoting fair treatment of migrant communities and community cohesion
Key concepts in Citizens Advice equality work

● These key concepts help us be more effective in implementing Stand up for equality

● They underpin our work on equality

● They are a vital part of our strategy because how we do things are just as important as what we do

Key concepts

● Equality

● Mainstreaming equality
How do we make equality real?

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**Key concepts**

- Equality - for me for you for everyone

- Mainstreaming equality - dual track approach - make visible and embed

- The social model of disability - people are disabled by society’s barriers
How do we make equality real?

As an individual or organisation, you can make equality real by:

- Leading on equality - leaders can talk about equality in a way that helps everyone connect their work to how the organisation stands up for equality
- Being passionate about equality
- Believing we can make a real difference
- Placing our clients or service users at the heart of what we do
- Involve clients more in our work
- Share client experiences and stories - these can be more powerful
We need equality because……..

- Everyone matters
- Everyone has the potential to inspire positive change
- Equality is for you, for me, for everyone
- Our diversity is our strength
- Gypsies and Travellers deserve to be treated with respect
- Deaf people who use British Sign Language need equal access to services as hearing people
- Rural communities really are diverse
Top tips to take away......

Everyone is or can be an everyday leader on equality in your work, personal lives and communities

Find ways to talk about equality in your organisation that resonates with your colleagues and helps connect their daily work with equality priorities

Put your clients or service users at the heart of your work, involve them in shaping your services

Be passionate and know you really do make a difference

Always remember........
“Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home - so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm, or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.”