

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

### Statement of Intent

- Huntingdon Area Money Advice (HAMA) is committed to equal opportunities and will challenge discrimination. This Equal Opportunities Policy provides detailed criteria against which performance can be judged and showing how it will achieve its aims.
- HAMA acknowledges that the grounds by which people can be discriminated against include the following: age, nationality, race/ethnicity, caste, class, physical or mental state, appearance, gender, HIV status, religion, illness, sexuality, marital status, political beliefs and criminal convictions.
- HAMA will provide services that are fully accessible to the general public including the disabled. Personal advice will be available at specific times as arranged by debt advisers to fit with the availability of the facilities for consultation and as convenient as possible for the client.
- HAMA will provide a procedure whereby any complaints or comments (whether by volunteers or clients) regarding its policy or the way it is carried out will be properly considered and acted upon.
- Subject to the provisions of the following clause HAMA recognizes, respects and values diversity in its Trustees, volunteers, staff and clients.
- As an organisation based on Christian principles and doctrine, HAMA reserves the right, where there is an occupational requirement to do so, to ensure that certain staff and volunteer posts are held by those who subscribe to HAMA's Ethos Statement (available from our website).

### Statutory Requirements

HAMA accepts the statutory requirements as laid down in the:

- Equal Pay Act 1970;
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974;
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975;
- Race Relations Act 1976 and the Race Relations Amendment Act Feb 2000;
- NHS Community Care Act;
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995;
- Asylum and Immigration Act 1996;
- Human Rights Act Nov 1998;
- Employment (Religion or Belief) and Sexual Orientation Regulations 2003.

HAMA recognises that it has moral and social responsibilities that go beyond the provisions of the above-mentioned Acts and Regulations, and that it should support and contribute to the wider process of change through its day-to-day work and practices in order to eliminate discrimination and promote equality and diversity.

HAMA is committed to taking positive steps to ensure that:

- All clients, volunteers, staff and trustees are treated with dignity and respect, and the diversity of all is respected;
- Equality of opportunity is promoted.

### **Objectives**

HAMA's objectives are to realise its aims by:

- Regularly evaluating and improving our service to ensure equality and diversity principles and best practice are embedded in our work;
- Ensuring that our service is accessible and relevant and responds to meet the identified need;
- Ensuring that volunteers, staff and trustees are encouraged in their development to increase effectiveness of service delivery;
- Recognising and valuing differences and individual contributions that all people make to HAMA;
- Challenging discrimination.
- Being accountable.

### **Management**

HAMA is managed by trustees. The trustees are comprised of people from local churches who have relevant skills and experience. The day to day operation of HAMA is overseen by the Centre Manager in conjunction with the trustees.

- The planning, implementing and monitoring of this Equal Opportunities Policy for HAMA is carried out regularly by the trustees with inputs received from the Centre Manager and other volunteers.

### **Details of service delivery**

HAMA is committed to delivering services that are accessible as follows:

- HAMA will operate at locations within the Huntingdon/Godmanchester area for consultations to assist accessibility to the client. Details will be available by telephone or by reference to our website [www.huntsmoneyadvice.co.uk](http://www.huntsmoneyadvice.co.uk)
- Times and location of consultations will be determined by discussion with the adviser allocated to the client.
- The HAMA office provides a 24-hour telephone answering service that is accessed by volunteers on a daily basis during weekdays.
- Details of the service provided by HAMA are made available through its website ([www.huntsmoneyadvice.co.uk](http://www.huntsmoneyadvice.co.uk)), leaflets distributed in public places and through local online listings.
- Each consultation facility will provide a private room for the interview, toilets and wheelchair access.
- HAMA requires each client to sign an agreement concerning the client's and HAMA's right to withdraw services and the client's freedom to talk over with advisers anything they are unhappy with in connection with debt advice.
- The HAMA Code of Practice is available at all of our locations.

Approved by trustees December 2017