

NAWRA Equality and Diversity working group meeting 15 March 2025

Present -

Atif Kaudri – chair
Keith Thompson (Northumberland Council)
Will Hadwen
Pamela Carysforth (Jigsaw Housing)
Kelly Smith (CPAG & NAWRA Secretary) – minutes

Apologies -

Phil Jew (ASA)
Jane Eberhart (Salford Council)
Paula Beaton (Advice UK)
Sangeeta Enright (Cystic Fibrosis Trust)
Bhavani Sarma (Central Bedfordshire Council)
Daphne Hall (rightsnet)

1. Researching and adopting good practice guides written by other organisations

Thanks to everyone who has sent in helpful documents.

Action: Please send Kelly a link to any more useful resources. Kelly will add them to the NAWRA website at <https://www.nawra.org.uk/about-nawra/equality-and-diversity/>

2. Results of equality monitoring survey of members

Keith Thompson (Northumberland Council) and Pamela Carysforth (Jigsaw Housing) have analysed the results of the survey of members conducted in summer 2024.

There were some design flaws in the survey which made it difficult to rely on the results.

Action: Pamela to re-draft an email to go to members.

Agreed that the next survey of members will be conducted in Sep 2025 with a deadline in Oct 2025. This will give us time to analyse the findings and present them at the Dec 2025 NAWRA conference.

Agreed that we would appeal for someone with data expertise to help draft the questions and analyse the results.

3. Further updates to allow small organisations with little funding to join NAWRA for free

No free membership applications have been made since our last meeting.

Action: Please send details of any small organisations that might benefit from a free NAWRA membership to kelly@nawra.org.uk.

4. Contributing to work on equality and diversity in the wider rights and advice sector

At the NAWRA conference on 5 and 6 Dec 2024, Nick Whittingham from Kirklees Citizens Advice and Law Centre and Dan Manville from Greater Manchester Law Centre gave a presentation on how to use the Equality Act to challenge discrimination within the DWP. NAWRA is keen to log cases where members are making equality challenges. We requested that anonymised case studies were sent to daphne@nawra.org.uk. **Action:** Daphne to report back on how many have been received.

5. Equality and diversity considerations at NAWRA conferences

NAWRA held a conference on Zoom on 11 and 12 March 2025. No equality and diversity issues were raised. The next conference will be held at Stockport Town Hall on 6 June 2025, with the advice summit at the same venue on the previous day. Kelly has asked members with accessibility needs to get in touch by 23 May.

6. AOB

NAWRA is 50 years old in 2025. We are hosting an advice summit in Stockport on 5 June 2025. **Action:** contact kelly@nawra.org.uk if you would like to be part of the planning group.

Will Hadwen has stepped down from the working group. The chair thanked him for all his work, especially on getting the profile for a welfare rights adviser updated on the national careers service website.

7. Date of next meeting – TBC. Action: Kelly to circulate a calendar invitation with Zoom link.