



# TERMS OF REFERENCE



EAST RENFREWSHIRE  
**EQUALITIES  
FORUM**

## BACKGROUND

In East Renfrewshire we have a diverse mix of people, culture and experiences and it is important that we embrace individuality, value diversity, and promote understanding and acceptance of difference.

The East Renfrewshire Equality Forum brings local residents and community groups from all backgrounds together to raise awareness of equality issues, share knowledge and information and to give voice to our diverse and underrepresented communities.

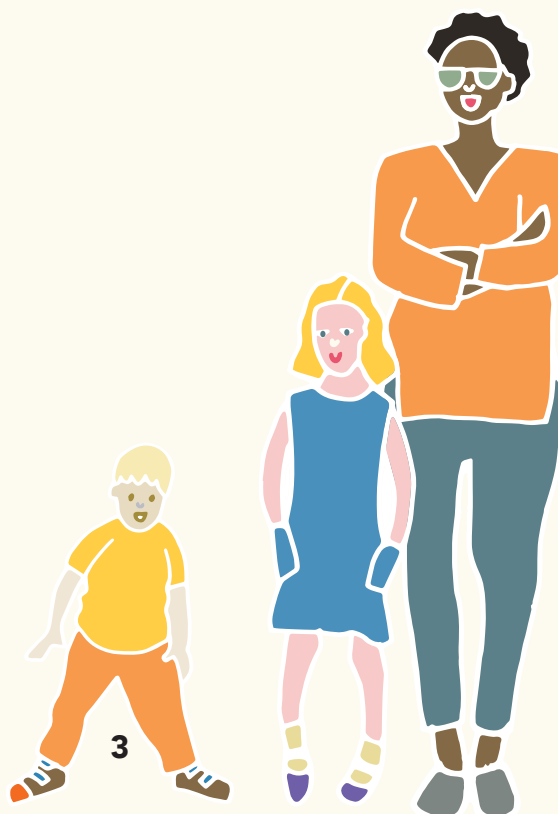
We have developed these Terms of Reference through a series of community meetings and an online survey with people from across East Renfrewshire. It sets out how things will work and who will be involved to provide a starting point for the new Forum, which will be taken forward by our members. We will review the Terms of Reference every year to make sure it is still relevant and make changes when needed.



## WHY DO WE WANT AN EAST RENFREWSHIRE EQUALITIES FORUM AND WHAT WILL IT DO?

People said they want to have an Equalities Forum so that together, we can:

- Share good practice and ideas locally and nationally and connect with other equalities forums to help support this.
- Share information, resources, opportunities, funding, and events.
- Take part in consultations and help to influence local decision-making. The Forum will work with organisations to help shape and design plans and services.
- Raise awareness about issues around equality and share experiences to promote more understanding.
- Provide opportunities for members to take part in relevant training.



## WHO CAN BE A MEMBER?

Forum membership will be open to anyone who wants to be a member and has a connection to East Renfrewshire. We will encourage and welcome:

- **Individuals**
- **Community groups**
- **Third sector organisations (such as registered charities)**
- **Statutory agencies including council, police, and NHS.**

We will keep membership open so that new members can join at any time.

We will promote the Forum in communities to reach out to where people are and be mindful of any gaps in terms of who is participating.

Equity between members is important. This means that nobody has a bigger say than anyone else. It is also important that members do not presume to speak for other members and everyone is given the opportunity to speak for themselves.

Any activities or actions agreed to by members will be voluntary, with no pressure; everyone will participate according to their own ability and capacity.



## **HOW WILL WE COMMUNICATE WITH PEOPLE ABOUT THE WORK OF THE FORUM?**

To make sure everyone knows about the Forum's work and how to take part, members will work together to make sure information is accessible. This means it will be easy to find the information, and resources will use clear language, free from terminology, and available in community languages, where required. Visual information, such as diagrams and pictures, will also be used, where helpful.

## **HOW WILL EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL BE INVOLVED?**

It was widely agreed that Council support is needed to start the Forum and help keep it going. To begin with, the Forum will need help with planning, admin, and facilitation, including arranging meetings and taking minutes. The Council's role will be to support the Forum and help build capacity so that, in future, the Forum will become fully independent and self-managed. The Forum will be led by its members who will take forward all actions.

Forum meetings will be independently facilitated by different members each time. This will help build the Forum's capacity, share responsibility, and give members the opportunity to facilitate meetings.

## HOW WILL THE FORUM MEET, WHERE AND HOW OFTEN?

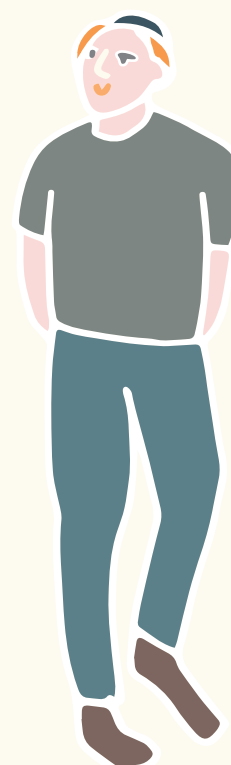
We will meet in-person, online and a mixture of the two (hybrid). As East Renfrewshire covers a large area, we will meet across the local authority in different areas and venues each time. This will enable more people from across East Ren to find out about the Forum and take part. We will meet in member's venues based in communities.

The Forum will meet a minimum of every three months. Members may want to start an email list or WhatsApp group to stay in touch and support the work of the Forum where actions need to be taken sooner.

How will we make sure that Forum meetings are accessible and effective?

When arranging Forum meetings, the organisers will carefully consider:

- Religious dates, cultural, school, and public holidays – so that meetings do not take place on these dates.
- Accessibility – ensuring venues are accessible to wheelchair users, and there is adequate parking available.
- Members will create a shared agreement on appropriate behaviour to help ensure meetings are respectful and everyone is listened to. Members will help to uphold this agreement at every meeting so that everyone follows it.



## WHAT ARE OUR VALUES?

To help guide Forum decision-making and explain what we stand for, we created a list of values. This list can be added to or changed over time.

- Equality and respect
- Experience – both lived and professional
- Humanity – treat everyone with empathy, kindness and understanding
- Accessibility and inclusion – so that everyone can take part
- Sharing, collaborative and accountable.

We also value:

Cultural sensitivity, human rights, education, learning, aspiration, empowerment, integrity, engagement, dignity, honesty, confidentiality, clarity, openness, friendliness, and flexibility.



Thank you to everyone who took part and shared their knowledge and opinions.



EAST RENFREWSHIRE  
**EQUALITIES  
FORUM**

For more information on the Forum, please contact [listening@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:listening@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk)



Developed in partnership with Outside the Box  
[www.otbds.org](http://www.otbds.org)  
Supported by East Renfrewshire Council