

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

Guiding Standard GS2.1:

We embrace diversity, promote equal opportunities and fairness for all and eliminate unlawful discrimination in all areas of our work.”

Document Control

Title	Equality & Diversity Policy			
Responsible Person	Chief Executive			
Date of Board Approval	27 th September 2011			
Review by	Remuneration Committee			
Review Frequency	3 Yearly			
Next Review	October 2014			
Consultation Required	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equalities Impact Assessment	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rights	Public			

Associated Documents

This document should be read in conjunction with:

Single Equality Scheme and Equality Scheme Action Plan
Dignity at Work Policy

Translation Statement

If you have any difficulties reading this information or need further help understanding our processes please call us (01450 364200) or visit our office (27 North Bridge Street, Hawick, TD9 9BD). We can make this document available in a variety of formats. All you need to do is let us know what you need and we will try to assist.

Compliance

This policy has been drafted to ensure that it complies with the Regulatory Code of Governance Guidance Standards (GS2.1) and current legislation.

Openness & Confidentiality

Waverley Housing believes that its members, tenants, and other interested parties should have access to information on how it conducts itself. This means that unless information requested is considered commercially sensitive or personally confidential it will be made available on request.

Data Protection

Waverley Housing recognises that the Data Protection Act 1998 is an important piece of legislation to protect the rights of individuals in respect to any personal information that we may keep about them, whether on computer or in manual systems.

We are registered with the Information Commissioner as a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act, and must ensure that our practices in the handling of personal information are of a high standard and comply fully with the Act.

1 Introduction

1.1 Waverley Housing is committed to supporting diversity, delivering equality of opportunity and recognising the human rights of everyone we work with. As a provider of housing services within the Borders and an employer of over 40 staff we are acutely aware of our responsibility for promoting equality and diversity principles and practice.

2 Purpose

2.1 The new Equality Act 2010 has replaced all previous discrimination legislation. In light of this change in legislation Waverley Housing has made a strategic commitment to adopting a Single Equality Scheme (SES) approach. Our SES sets out the framework within which we will deliver our commitment to equality and diversity. This policy complements our Single Equality Scheme and is a statement of our intention to promote diversity and equality of opportunity in everything that we do.

3 Aims

3.1 Our aim is that the equality and diversity principles underpin everything we do and are at the heart of our day to day business.

4 Responsibilities

4.1 Board Members have overall responsibility for approval of this Policy and the Single Equality Scheme.

4.2 The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the proper application and monitoring of this Policy and the Single Equality Scheme.

4.3 The Management Team is responsible for taking equality and diversity into account in decision making and service planning and carrying out Equality Impact Assessments.

4.4 All employees are responsible for ensuring that they provide services in a way that treats everyone equally and that they do not discriminate against people they work with regardless of their gender, disability or race.

5 Definitions

5.1 Equality and Diversity

Equality is about making sure people are treated fairly and given fair chances. Diversity is about valuing individual differences. For a fuller definition of Equality and Diversity please refer to our Single Equality Scheme.

5.2 Protected Characteristics

These are the grounds on which discrimination claims can be made:

Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.

5.3 Direct Discrimination

Is treating someone less favourably than others based on a protected characteristic.

5.4 Indirect Discrimination

A policy, practice, procedure, provision or criteria that applies to everyone in the same way but might disadvantage a particular protected group and which cannot be objectively justified in relation to the job.

5.5 Associated Discrimination

Discrimination against a person because they have an association with someone with a particular protected characteristic, e.g. a non disabled person is discriminated against because of the action they need to take care of disabled dependent.

4.11 Perceptive Discrimination

Discrimination against a person because the discriminator **thinks** the person possess that characteristic. E.g. a person is not shortlisted for a job on the basis that the recruiter assumes the applicant does not have the correct VISA to work in the UK as they have a foreign looking name on their application form.

6 Consultation and Communication

6.1 Our Single Equality Scheme outlines the methods we intend to use to consult and communicate. Please refer to this for further guidance.

7 Training

7.1 We intend to hold regular staff briefing sessions and appropriate training to raise awareness and ensure staff are fully committed to the concept of equality and diversity for all.

8 Reporting

8.1 Regular reports on progress of all aspects of our Equalities Scheme Action Plan will be made to the Remuneration, Property and Audit and Internal Control Committees.

8.2 Any barriers to implementation and the reasons will be reported via the Committees to the Board.