



Westfield Housing Association

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

1.0 Policy Statement

This policy outlines how Westfield Housing Association (WHA) will promote equality, diversity and inclusion across our organisation. This commitment is embraced by our governing Board and informs all of our activities and their impact on our customers, employees and other stakeholders.

2.0 Purpose

WHA aims to be an organisation where equality, diversity and inclusion is part of who we are and how we work. We will:

- treat everybody fairly, with dignity and respect.
- be tolerant, understanding and not judge others.
- comply with our legal and regulatory equality duties.
- take strong action against discrimination, bullying, harassment and hate crime and provide support to customers and staff who experience it.
- deliver appropriate, accessible and responsible services.
- get to know our customers so we can shape services to meet their needs.
- build an inclusive and supportive workplace where everyone can bring their whole self to work and succeed in being their best.
- consider how the decisions we make impact of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- promote equality, diversity and inclusion with our customers, suppliers, partners and other organisations who we work with.

3.0 Definitions

Equality is about making sure that everyone has the same opportunities to achieve the same or similar outcomes. It is not about treating 'everyone the same' but recognising that "one size doesn't fit all" and that services should be tailored to meet individual needs. Promoting equality is about behaving in a way that tackles inequalities, aiming to ensure that all staff and customers are treated fairly and do not experience discrimination.

Diversity is about respecting, valuing and celebrating people's differences. Promoting diversity is about creating a working environment that values each employee and provides services that are accessible to our customers to meet their needs.

Inclusion is about making sure that people feel comfortable to be themselves, that they belong and can reach their full potential without disadvantage or discrimination

This policy sets out our framework for how we want to work and meet our equality duties. It supports our EDI Plan which identifies our ED&I objectives and the action we will take to achieve them.

4.0 Our Commitment

4.1 Customers – as a Service Provider we will:

- Seek to ensure that we are governed by board members whose understanding of our customers is key to their board member role.
- Seek to understand who our customers are and provide a range of services and housing options for people in the communities in which we work.
- Actively seek the views of customers and potential customers, when planning, reviewing or making significant changes to our services, ensuring that our services are accessible, relevant and of use to our customers.
- Provide clear and meaningful information in ways that are accessible and which meet the diverse needs of our customers.
- Investigate promptly any complaint and take immediate action where there is evidence of direct or indirect discrimination.
- Work with others to contribute to an environment and community free from harassment and violence.
- Monitor and evaluate the services that we provide to ensure they do not discriminate or exclude individuals or people from different groups.

4.2 Employees – as an Employer we will:

- Provide relevant training and skills for employees and managers to ensure we value diversity and reduce inequality.
- Monitor our employment policies and practices to ensure that they are fair and demonstrate our commitment to diversity.
- Wherever practicable, provide reasonable adjustments for any employees who are disabled to enable them to fulfil their full potential.
- Not tolerate prejudice, discrimination or harassment. Breaches of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

4.3 Stakeholders and Partners – when working with others we aim to:

- Promote, share information, experiences and examples of good practice of equality and diversity through links with other organisations.
- Encourage and support people to be active in community life by celebrating contributions and respecting the variety of lifestyles and cultures.
- Ensure that equality and diversity is embedded throughout our procurement activity and is reflected in all suppliers or contractors working on our behalf. Where appropriate, we will use opportunities that arise through procurement to achieve social value and inclusive outcomes.

As an organisation, we aim to embed these commitments in our every-day work. This is the responsibility of board members, our leadership team, employees and others who represent WHA.

5.0 Reporting & Risk

We will report quarterly to Board on ED&I Action Plan progress and key measures of success.

We will provide an annual ED&I Report to Board in September, providing data and information across services areas, including lettings, access to services, aids & adaptations and Board and staff ED&I monitoring data.

6.0 Legal Framework/References

Our policy covers all aspects of equality including, race, religion or belief, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation, disability and age as specified by the Equality Act 2010 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents> as well as human rights legislation - <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights/human-rights-act>

The policy also requires equality considerations to be reflected into the design of policies and the delivery of services, including internal policies, and for these issues to be kept under review, as part of the Public Sector Equality Duty - [Public Sector Equality Duty | Equality and Human Rights Commission \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights/human-rights-act)

Social housing regulation requires providers to treat all tenants with fairness and respect, and demonstrate understanding of the different needs of its customers in relation to the protected characteristics, additional support needs, service provision and communication with customers - <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/regulator-of-social-housing>

7.0 Linked Documents

Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form - [here](#)
 Employment of Disabled People Policy Statement - [here](#)
 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan - [here](#)
 Plus all other WHA policies & procedures.

To be completed by Corporate Services Officer

Document Control

Business Owner (name & job title)	Heather Wilson, Corporate Services/HR Officer
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8 Sept 2022	V1	H Wilson	Updated Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy. Separate ED&I Action Plan created.