



# Williamsburgh

## HOUSING ASSOCIATION

• Limited •

Equality and Diversity Policy

This policy can be made available in different languages and other formats such as Braille, large print or tape, on request.

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1. Foreword

Unfortunately, inequality and discrimination still exist within our society. Recognising this, Williamsburgh Housing Association has introduced an equal opportunity policy which seeks to ensure matters of equality are part of, or 'mainstreamed' into, all our plans, policies and procedures, including services and employment.

We are fully aware that implementation of this policy requires sustained commitment at all levels within the organisation, as well as regular monitoring of what is happening in practice. For this reason, the policy details not simply our policy commitments, but also the methods we use to monitor actual performance. In addition, the policy specifies a detailed action plan to ensure that policy objectives can be realised in practice.

Equal opportunity issues are fundamental to the strategy of the Scottish Government and this is reflected in the Scottish Housing Regulator's commitment to assess the promotion of equality, as part of their regulation and inspection work. In this context, Williamsburgh Housing Association is committed to promoting an environment of respect, understanding, encouraging diversity and eliminating discrimination by providing equality of opportunity for all.

Chairperson: .....

Director: .....

## 2. Introduction

Many individuals and communities experience unlawful and unfair discrimination. This can be on the grounds of their gender, relationship or marital status, race or ethnic origin, faith or religious belief, disability, sexual orientation, age, HIV status, language, background, physical appearance, political opinions or other factors.

We believe that equality for all is a basic human right and actively oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. Exclusion from opportunities not only disadvantages those who experience discrimination and harassment but also deprives the wider community of the full contribution of valuable talents and energies.

We celebrate the diversity of society and strive to promote and reflect that diversity within our organisation. This policy sets out how we will eliminate discrimination and promote equality in our role as an employer and service provider.

Williamsburgh Housing Association is committed to the provision of quality housing and an environment that promotes the well-being of all our residents. We are committed to the promotion of communities that are popular and inclusive, to the creation of areas where people can live and work, free from any form of discrimination or harassment.

This policy, therefore, is a working document that reflects our commitment to the mainstreaming of equality issues into all of our activities. Meeting both legal requirements and good practice guidance will be an essential part of this commitment.

## 2. Introduction Contd.

In particular, we aim to meet regulatory standard GS2.1 – Equal opportunities, which states:

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

(Performance Standards for Social Landlords and Homelessness Functions, November 2006).

Of equal importance, is the need to enhance general awareness of a broad and diverse range of cultural issues. As such, the provision and dissemination of information will be an important part of our equality strategy.

This policy will, therefore, serve as a practical guide to be applied comprehensively throughout all areas of our services. It is further anticipated that our equality and diversity policy will evolve in line with legislative change and good practice guidance.

### 3. Definition

The legal definition of equal opportunities is diverse and covers a broad range of issues:

'Equal opportunities' means the prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between persons on the grounds of sex or marital status, or racial grounds, or on the grounds of disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or of other personal attributes, including beliefs or opinions, such as religious beliefs or political opinions.

(The Scotland Act 1988, Schedule 5, L2).

## 4. Aims and Objectives

### (a) Introduction

Williamsburgh Housing Association recognises that we have the power to assist in reducing the disadvantage that people experience, by making our services more responsive to the communities we serve and the individuals therein.

The Association values the diversity of all communities and wants its services, facilities and resources to be accessible.

The Association also recognises that our ability to meet these diverse needs is improved by having a diverse workforce which has the skills and understanding to achieve our objectives. While recognising the limitations of a small organisation with low staff turnover, we are nevertheless committed to valuing diversity in our workforce.

The Association has a commitment to be an organisation that:

- Develops services to achieve equality and diversity in all our activities.
- Has a workforce generally reflecting the communities we serve.
- Understands how valuing diversity can improve our ability to deliver better services.
- Actively consults with all our customers to ensure the delivery of our goals.
- Provides all employees with the training and development they need to enable them to achieve organisational goals.
- Provides a supportive, open environment where all employees have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

## 4. Aims and Objectives Contd.

### (a) Introduction Contd.

- Listens to our customers and involves them in the development of services that recognise and value diversity.
- Believes that both customers and employees have important parts to play in making this happen.

We will apply this policy in carrying out our statutory, corporate and other responsibility. We will also seek to apply it to work undertaken for us by external consultants and contractors.

### (b) Legal Requirements

We will ensure that we comply with good practice guidance, including all relevant codes of practice and all legal requirements (Appendix No.(i)). We will have regard to the numerous legislation covering the areas of race, sex, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation and age discrimination, equal pay and human rights.

Acknowledging that Section 106 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 imposes a statutory duty to promote equal opportunities, we will incorporate into practice, relevant legal provisions as contained in Acts such as the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (as amended), the Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended), the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005 and the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.

### (c) Partnerships

We will liaise with a broad range of agencies such as Renfrewshire Council, Disabled Persons Housing Service, Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health etc., to encourage active partnerships which foster the development of equal opportunities.



#### 4. Aims and Objectives Contd.

##### (d) Contractors

The Association will encourage contractors and other suppliers to adopt and implement equal opportunity policies. All contractors will be required to provide details of such policies, as part of the procurement process. Contractors who do not meet appropriate standards, for example, where a contractor is guilty of harassment or discrimination, may be removed from the approved list.

##### (e) Membership

Williamsburgh Housing Association will seek to ensure that the composition of both our general membership and our management committee, is as representative as possible, of all sections of the communities we serve. For example, the membership should reflect the diverse range of households in the Association's areas of operation, such as single person households, older people, people from ethnic minority communities and disabled people.

In order to promote membership, we shall ensure that committee meetings are accessible to all sections of the community. For example, by holding meetings in barrier-free venues which cater for disabled people.

##### (f) Discrimination, Racism, Aggravation and Harassment

The Association will seek to eradicate any form of discrimination, racism, racial aggravation and/or harassment in all our areas of responsibility. We shall make use of all available means to achieve this objective, including legal and non-judicial remedies.

#### 4. Aims and Objectives Contd.

##### (g) Publicity and Communication

We will ensure that our communications promote diversity of needs and the views of all community groups. We shall enhance general awareness of equality issues through the establishment of publicity campaigns and positive action programmes.

We will promote equality by producing documentation in different languages and a range of formats such compact disk, video and Braille, as required. All application forms and materials published, will be in simple jargon-free language and, where appropriate, help will be given to complete the relevant forms.

##### (h) Standards

We shall strive to attain accreditation in the principal areas of equality, such as Double Tick and Investors in People. Major policies will, for example, be assessed to ensure that they are clear and written in plain language.

In order to meet equality objectives and attain the standards expected of us, we will address the key issues which include:

- Setting out our approach to action planning on equality issues.
- Having a commitment to consultation and participation on equality issues.
- Having a means to monitor equality issues.
- Having a mechanism by which we can review the equality issues in our service delivery.

#### 4. Aims and Objectives Contd.

##### (h) Standards Contd.

- Having a commitment to a staff team, governing body and wider membership which reflects the communities we serve.

We have also responded to the challenge statements as promoted by the Scottish Housing Regulator (see Appendix No.(ii)).

##### (i) Policies

All Williamsburgh Housing Association policies contain a commitment to equality issues, however, certain key organisational policies deal specifically with equality matters. These include:

- Recruitment and selection.
- Training and staff development.
- Complaints.
- Employment policy relating to harassment in the workplace.

#### 4. Aims and Objectives Contd.

##### (j) Consultation

The Association employs various means by which to consult stakeholders. These arrangements are detailed within our Tenant Participation Strategy but will include the following:

- Comments/complaints/suggestions.
- Satisfaction returns for reactive maintenance.
- Development questionnaires.
- Surveys/questionnaires.
- Face-to-face contact with tenants.
- Close/open meetings.
- Open days.
- Surgeries.
- Resident satisfaction surveys.
- Register of interested parties.
- Annual meetings such as the A.G.M.
- Residents Conferences.
- Area committees.
- Focus groups.

We will consult with tenants, prospective tenants and other residents with regard to the provision of appropriate housing and to promote an environment that takes into account the specific needs and aspirations of all households.

#### 4. Aims and Objectives Contd.

##### (j) Consultation Contd.

In order to encourage meaningful participation by all sections of the community, we will be sensitive to the diversity of community needs.

We will endeavour also to develop consultation with groups representative of equality issues.

##### (k) Complaints

Given that Williamsburgh Housing Association is committed to establishing communities that are socially inclusive, where people live without fear of discrimination or harassment, we shall ensure that all complainants are treated equally irrespective of their sex or marital status, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or other social attributes, including beliefs or opinion, such as religious beliefs or political opinions.

We will deal quickly and appropriately with any complaints concerning discrimination or harassment. Complaints will be monitored by frequency, type of complaint and by outcome. We shall ensure that the complaints system is accessible to all, for example, by ensuring that it is publicised in different languages and appropriate formats, as required.

## 5. Equality and Diversity Strategy

### (a) Introduction

Our overall strategy in respect of Equality and Diversity is to ensure that this policy is applied fully, fairly and consistently across the Association, as an integral part of our staffing and business planning processes and the services we provide.

It recognises that all people are different and aims to ensure that we treat each individual with dignity and respect.

In addition, we recognise that some kinds of difference, discrimination or disadvantage are widely shared and experienced. Where individuals have common needs, we also require equality and diversity strategies specific to particular groups of people.

To achieve the aims of our overall strategy, we will take action to address discrimination experienced by particular groups, as well as action to promote and achieve diversity in employment, governance and service delivery. Action will be based on the effective use of resources.

All the specific strategies, actions and outcomes apply across the whole organisation, all functions and all departments.

We wish to achieve mainstreaming of equality and diversity issues, which will contribute to our organisation's culture and our performance generally.

### (b) Service Accessibility

The Association will evaluate the extent to which all our services are accessible. This will include the assessment of office premises, facilities and the ways in which we provide information to the public. Appropriate remedial steps will be taken, wherever practical, to make services accessible.

## 5. Equality and Diversity Strategy Contd.

### (c) Employment

Recruitment procedures will comply with all relevant law and with codes of practice in employment matters.

We aspire to a diverse workforce which has the skills and understanding to achieve our goals, providing a quality service to meet individual and community needs. As an employer, we aim to ensure that all employees treat each other with dignity and respect. As such, we will strive to make the workforce free from any form of discrimination or harassment. This will include taking immediate action to eliminate any form of ageism, sexism, racism or discrimination against disabled people.

To achieve our aims, we will:

- Ensure vacancies will be aimed at as wide a group as possible and any advertisement will state that Williamsburgh Housing Association have an equality and diversity policy in place. The advert will also display the equality bodies to which Williamsburgh Housing Association is affiliated.
- Provide full and fair consideration to all job applicants.
- Require all our employees to undergo relevant training, including equality and diversity awareness training, before taking part in recruitment and selection.
- Whenever possible, modify employment practices and procedures to reduce barriers experienced by members of disadvantaged communities whilst seeking and during employment.

## 5. Equality and Diversity Strategy Contd.

### (c) Employment Contd.

- Issue all contracts of employment in accordance with the job role and not the job holder.
- Ensure terms and conditions are standard across all employees regardless of their race, gender, disability, nationality, religion, belief, sexual orientation and age.
- Ensure employees do not receive less favourable terms and conditions for any reason other than relating specifically to the job role and the grade it attracts.
- Incorporate equal opportunity standards into job descriptions as core elements of job competences with comprehensive training provided to meet these standards.
- Ensure that our expectations in respect of equality and diversity apply throughout all training activities and resources.
- Provide training and development opportunities to all employees according to their job role. Every attempt will be made to ensure learning materials provide a positive image of people, reinforcing equality of opportunity.
- Develop vigorous harassment, bullying and dignity at work processes which can operate within a safe and open environment.



## 5. Equality and Diversity Strategy Contd.

### (c) Employment Contd.

- Ensure redundancy selection is made according to the statutory requirements and in line with Williamsburgh Housing Association's Terms and Conditions of Service. The criteria set out will be objective, fair and consistent. This will ensure that employees identified for redundancy are selected according to the chosen criteria and not in any discriminatory way, either directly or indirectly.

### (d) Carers

We wish to create an environment where employees, both women and men, are free to share their needs and concerns as carers and are not disadvantaged in the workplace by doing so.

We acknowledge that there is no one view of what constitutes caring responsibility, though it may include caring for children, a person with a disability or older people.

To achieve our aims, we will:

- Through consultation, work to identify the needs of all carers and develop appropriate arrangements to meet those needs.
- Within the constraints of effective service delivery, make the best use of flexible working practices to support carers in our workforce.
- Promote awareness of what flexibilities there are in our working practices, which can be used to support carers.
- Develop an organisational culture, which provides a supportive environment for carers, where work and carer balance requirements are recognised and supported in all areas and levels.

## 5. Equality and Diversity Strategy Contd.

### (e) Race

We are committed to achieving racial equality. We recognise our duties under the Race Relations Acts and related Codes of Practice and undertake to strive for racial equality in service provision and employment and to promote good relations between all racial groups and organisations, wherever the Association is able to exert any influence. To achieve our aims, we will:

- Provide services relevant to people's needs, which respect their cultural and social identities.
- Make sure that our services are accessible and available to all members of the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities.
- Strive to have a representative workforce that can sensitively address the needs of all communities.
- Work with others and community organisations to promote racial equality and eliminate racial disadvantage and racial harassment.
- Strive to create an environment, which is free from racial harassment and racist behaviour.

## 5. Equality and Diversity Strategy Contd.

### (f) Religion

The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 took effect on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2003 and the Association is aware that our policies and strategy must be developed within this context. Consequently, the Association is aware that religion or belief is defined as being any religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief. It does not include political belief. As well as the more familiar religions such as Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Sikhism and Islam, it will also include the more 'alternative' beliefs such as Rastafarianism. This is different from the race discrimination legislation which protects people from suffering discrimination on the grounds of their race, nationality, colour or ethnic origins. To achieve our aims, we will:

- Strive to create an environment which recognises and respects religion and belief and is free from unlawful discrimination or harassment.
- Develop employment practices and services in ways which recognise and respect religion and belief.
- Improve the understanding of religion and belief among our staff so that they can sensitively address the needs of individuals and of different faith communities.
- Work with other agencies and community organisations to promote understanding and good relations between people of different faith communities.
- Follow appropriate guidance on applying the relevant legislation.

## 5. Equality and Diversity Strategy Contd.

### (g) Gender

We are committed to achieving gender equality. We recognise our duties under the Sex Discrimination and Equal Pay legislation and codes of practices and undertake to strive for gender equality in service provision and employment. (This includes trans-gender equality, which is also covered under the Sex Discrimination Act). To achieve our aims, we will:

- Strive to create an environment which is free from harassment, sexist language and behaviour.
- Introduce action to encourage women to take up employment and training opportunities in areas and levels where they are under-represented. Introduce development opportunities to encourage progression.
- Work with other agencies and community organisations to promote gender equality and eliminate disadvantage.
- Create a flexible working environment where work and home balance requirements are recognised and supported in all areas and levels.

### (h) Sexuality

We recognise the very real discrimination that people face in their lives due to their sexuality and life choices and we are committed to working to remove this unfair treatment. We want to create an environment where lesbians, gay men and bisexual people are free from unfair treatment and harassment and feel safe to be open about their sexuality and difference, if they choose to do so. The Association has undertaken to make its service accessible to everyone and we will work to ensure that our employment policies and service delivery are not based on the assumption that everyone is heterosexual. To achieve our aims, we will:

## 5. Equality and Diversity Strategy Contd.

### (h) Sexuality Contd.

- Develop policies and procedures to end unfair treatment and harassment of lesbian, gay and bisexual staff and service users.
- Work towards the equal application of all terms and conditions of service, irrespective of any employee's sexuality.
- Consult agencies and community organisations for gay men, lesbian and bisexual people on the services we provide and where appropriate, develop services to meet the needs of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals.

### (i) Disability

The Association is committed to achieving disability equality by eliminating both unlawful discrimination on the grounds of disability and the disadvantage experienced by people with a disability, wherever reasonably possible. We recognise that people with a disability are disadvantaged both by an environment and by social attitudes, which reflect principally the needs of non-disabled people. We further recognise that improvements in the operation of our services can reduce this disadvantage. To achieve our aims, we will:

- Recognise our responsibilities under Disability Discrimination legislation.
- Strive to provide services which are relevant to the needs of people with a disability.
- Make sure that all our services and all documentation are accessible and available to people with a disability.

## 5. Equality and Diversity Strategy Contd.

### (i) Disability Contd.

- Whenever possible, modify our procedures or equipment to make full use of an individual's ability and adapt our facilities, as necessary, to accommodate people with a disability.
- Regularly audit our premises, services and processes to make sure Disability Discrimination Act requirements are met.
- Train managers, staff and governing body members in awareness, giving them confidence to support people with a disability.
- Continue employing, whenever practicable, employees who become disabled during their employment and assist in their retraining.
- Guarantee people with a disability an interview for any employment vacancy for which they meet the minimum essential criteria.

### (j) Age

The Association is committed to opposing age discrimination. We recognise that age discrimination can affect all age groups and both genders, that age is no indicator of effectiveness in most work activities, that employment decisions should not be based on age alone and that services should be sensitive to the needs of all age groups. We will value people regardless of their age. We will seek to ensure that our employment policies are relevant and fair to all age groups. We will work to create an environment where people are judged on their talent, skills and experience, rather than on misconceptions and prejudices about age.

## 5. Equality and Diversity Strategy Contd.

### (j) Age Contd.

To achieve our aims, we will:

- Remove age-related criteria in our employment practices.
- Provide recruitment, promotion, training and working arrangements, on the basis of need, regardless of age.
- Work with other agencies and community organisations to eliminate age discrimination.
- Work to ensure that older workers are enabled to leave the organisation with dignity and flexibility in the timing.
- Recognise that the needs of those to whom we provide services may change throughout their lifetime.

## 6. Responsibilities

### (a) Introduction

A copy of Williamsburgh Housing Association's Equality and Diversity Policy will be provided as part of the induction process for all new staff and committee members.

### (b) Staff

All staff have a responsibility to ensure that this policy is put into practice. We expect a personal commitment from all employees to make it effective and set an exemplary standard for others to follow.

All members of staff have a responsibility to:

- Make sure that they understand the values and benefits of equality and diversity.
- Familiarise themselves with this policy, ensuring its implementation, both by themselves and by staff for whom they are responsible.
- Draw to the attention of their line manager any instances of apparent discrimination or any perceived problem, in relation to employment or in the provision of services.
- Attend training on equality issues.

Additional and specific responsibilities apply to those who manage staff and to those who are involved in recruitment, promotion, training and development.



6. Responsibilities Contd.

(c) Management Committee and Senior Staff

The management committee has corporate responsibility for ensuring that this policy underpins all aspects of our work. The director has responsibility for developing the organisational culture in which this policy can operate effectively and for ensuring that it is implemented. The director will report annually to the management committee on its effectiveness. Additionally, members of the senior management team are individually and corporately responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented in their particular areas of responsibility.

## 7. Training and Development

On an annual basis, the Association produces a Staff Training and Development Plan for incorporation within our Internal Management Plan. Similarly, the annual Training Needs Assessment for committee members results in a programme for the delivery of appropriate training.

We will ensure that both employees and committee members receive appropriate equal opportunities training. This training will take a variety of forms, including:

- Induction.
- Awareness raising, including anti-racist training.
- Policy and good practice issues, including positive action programmes.
- Legal Training.

Training for tenants will also be encouraged with training issues being considered as part of our Tenant Participation Strategy. Of particular importance, in this respect, will be developing awareness of cultural issues, in order to promote a community that is inclusive in nature.

## 8. Evaluation and Monitoring

Williamsburgh Housing Association seeks to promote equality in all areas of our activities. Having identified our aims and objectives in this respect, we will ensure the policy is being implemented effectively through the appropriate monitoring and reporting arrangements, which will include:

- Access to housing.
- Allocations.
- Shareholding and committee membership.
- Recruitment.
- Staff training and development.

(See Appendix No.(iii))

While outcomes under each of these areas will be reviewed annually, current actions and anticipated outcomes are set out in a separate action plan (Appendix No.(iv)). This identifies the key organisational activities that we are undertaking in order to satisfy the expectations of the challenge statements (Appendix No.(ii)) which assess how effectively we are implementing equality into all our activities. In essence, this involves the implementation of an holistic strategy that recognises the inter-relatedness of all the individual elements of the plan. Indeed, our objective of mainstreaming equality can only occur when all elements are progressed together. For example, having a well produced equality document will be ineffective unless the other key areas of equality strategy are implemented, such as comprehensive employee training to advise and assist clients, or the establishment of comprehensive information and monitoring systems that enable practices to be evaluated accurately.

The action plan will be subject to annual review, in order to ensure the appropriate progress has been made with regard to achieving the objectives identified therein.

## 8. Evaluation and Monitoring Contd.

Unless the monitoring arrangements recorded above identify serious breaches of the policy, the Management Committee will be advised, at the time of the policy review, whether we are achieving our objectives or whether more effective measures require to be introduced.

## 9. Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Association's Management Committee every three years to ensure that it responds to any changing circumstances.

This review will take place following the appropriate consultation with residents, as outlined in our Tenant Participation Strategy.

10. Appendices

## Appendix No.(i) : Legal and Good Practice Framework

This section provides an indication of the extensive legislation that governs disability, gender, race, age, religion and sexual orientation and our statutory duty to promote equal opportunities.

- Section 106 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975, 1986 Amendment and Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 1995
- Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005
- Race Relations Act 1976, 2000 Amendment and 2003 Amendment Regulations
- Race Relations (Formal Investigations) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/1102)
- Race Relations (Formal Investigations) Regulations 1977 (SI 1977/841)
- Race Relations (Interests and Awards) Regulations 1994 (SI 1994/1748)
- Race Relations (Statutory Duties) Order 2001
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

## Legal and Good Practice Framework Contd.

- Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) and Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality in Scotland (CRE 2002)
- Code of Practice in Rented Housing (CRE 1991)
- Code of Practice in Non-Rented Housing (Owner Occupied) Housing (CRE 1992)
- Code of Practice for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Promotion of Equal Opportunity in Employment (CRE 1984)



## Appendix No.(ii) : Challenge Statements

'Communities Scotland' established eight challenge statements for RSLs to use in assessing how effectively they implement equality into all areas of organisational activity. These statements help us to judge whether we are achieving, in practice, the Association's general policy commitment to ensure the delivery of quality services as far as possible. We have sought to incorporate the individual challenge statements throughout our equality and diversity policy and within our action plan.

A summary of the challenge statements are provided below, along with an assessment of how Williamsburgh Housing Association is seeking to respond.

### Challenge 1 : Commitment Statements and Documents

We have published documents that clearly and specifically set out our commitments and approach to equality issues and that enable us to comply with legislative requirements and statutory guidance.

### Challenge 2 : Information About Social and Other Contexts

We have reasonable information about the context in which we operate. We are, however, seeking to improve our understanding of the needs and aspirations of both individuals and equalities groups in our areas of operation and of the challenges which members of equalities groups may face in accessing social housing resources. This is illustrated in the current research being promoted by Renfrewshire Council and FLAIR.

### Challenge 3 : Consultation with Stakeholders

We consult service users about their needs, their views of the services being delivered and what can be done to improve them and take due care to include all sections of the community.

## Challenge Statements Contd.

### Challenge 4 : Objectives and Targets

We have identified clear objectives and targets for all service areas to drive and demonstrate continuous improvement.

### Challenge 5 : Fair Services

We provide information and deliver services that respond to the requirements of the diverse range of our existing and potential service users.

### Challenge 6 : Fair Employment and Governance

We are able to demonstrate that we are an equal opportunities employer and that our employees, governing body and wider membership reflect the communities we serve.

### Challenge 7 : Monitoring

We have systems in operation to collect the information we need to measure our achievements against objectives and targets and to identify the effectiveness of service delivery.

### Challenge 8 : Continuous Improvement

We can demonstrate clearly our commitment to continuous improvement by reviewing and revising our policies and activities regularly, on the basis of the information we collect or receive.

## Appendix No.(iii) : Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Information is gathered and recorded, as follows:

### Service Delivery

- Applicants by ethnicity, gender and disability.
- Lets by ethnicity, gender and disability.
- Complaints by category and outcomes.

### Organisational and Employment

- Profile of committee by age, ethnicity, gender and disability.
- Profile of tenant groups by age, ethnicity, gender and disability.
- Recruitment by age, ethnicity, gender and disability.
- Employees, committee members and (shareholding members) by age, ethnicity, gender and disability.
- Training provided to committee and employees by age, ethnicity, gender and disability.
- Promotion by age, ethnicity, gender and disability.
- Complaints by category and outcomes.

## Appendix No.(iv) : Equality and Diversity Action Plan

Williamsburgh Housing Association's strategy in respect of Equality and Diversity is to effectively implement our policy in this area across the Association as an integral part of our staffing, planning and service provision. In order to achieve the objectives as outlined within the policy, we will take action to address discrimination as well as action which promotes diversity in employment, governance and service delivery.

## Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2008/09

Aims and Objectives	Action to Achieve Objective	Lead Officer	When By	Review/Date	Outcome
<b>Governance</b>					
Undertake equality audit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commission consultant (Montgomery Housing Consultancy) to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ undertake comprehensive review of policies and procedures,</li> <li>▪ deliver equality training to committee and staff.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Director	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2005	26 <sup>th</sup> November 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have policies and procedures that comply with legislation and good practice in respect of equalities and diversity.</li> </ul>
Complete the review of our Equality and Diversity Policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present draft for Management Committee's consideration.</li> <li>• Consult area committees on content of draft policy.</li> <li>• Consult staff through One Team on content of draft policy.</li> <li>• Obtain Management Committee's adoption of final draft.</li> </ul>	Director	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have policy adopted and endorsed by Management Committee, staff and customers.</li> </ul>
Review our equal opportunity targets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use statistical and empirical data from current research to establish credible targets in respect of equal opportunities.</li> </ul>	Director/Housing Manager	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• W.H.A.'s provision for BME and other groups reflect the communities in which we operate.</li> </ul>

<b>Aims and Objectives</b>	<b>Action to Achieve Objective</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>When By</b>	<b>Review/Date</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<b>Membership</b>					
Seek to ensure that composition of general membership and management committee is as representative as possible of all sections of community. Put in place mechanisms to address any under-representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote membership using various mechanisms to encourage active participation e.g. newsletter, annual report, web site, open days, residents conference.</li> <li>• Review format of membership information and application forms.</li> </ul>	Director  Admin. Officer	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009  31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010  31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To establish a membership representative of all sections of the community.</li> </ul>

Aims and Objectives	Action to Achieve Objective	Lead Officer	When By	Review/Date	Outcome
<p><b>Consultation</b></p> <p>Consult with tenants, prospective tenants and other residents to provide appropriate housing and to develop an environment that takes account of specific needs and aspirations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out comprehensive residents satisfaction survey every 3 years. Include questions relating to needs and aspirations, access to service, service delivery, etc. Ensure surveys undertaken involve all sections of the community.</li> <li>• Analyse needs of residents within regeneration areas.</li> <li>• Analyse needs of housing applicants.</li> <li>• Analyse output from BME research.</li> <li>• Carry out development satisfaction questionnaires in order to establish satisfaction with housing design, layout, fixtures etc.</li> <li>• Evaluate responses and initiate action for addressing areas of concern (including amendments to specification where necessary).</li> </ul>	<p>Director</p> <p>Development Manager Housing Manager</p> <p>Housing Manager</p> <p>Development Manager</p> <p>Development Manager</p>	<p>31<sup>st</sup> December 2007</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>31<sup>st</sup> March 2009</p> <p>31<sup>st</sup> March 2009</p> <p>Six months following completion of development contracts.</p> <p>Six months following issue of questionnaire.</p>	<p>31<sup>st</sup> December 2010</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>31<sup>st</sup> March 2010</p> <p>31<sup>st</sup> March 2010</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure client's needs are met.</li> <li>• Ensure development proposals respond to identified needs.</li> <li>• Ensure existing stock or development proposals respond to identified needs.</li> <li>• Ensure housing stock meets identified needs.</li> <li>• Ensure housing provided meets needs of client groups.</li> </ul>

Aims and Objectives	Action to Achieve Objective	Lead Officer	When By	Review/Date	Outcome
<b>Consultation Contd.</b>					
Ensure consultation is carried out by various mechanisms to enable maximum participation and feedback from all areas of the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employ methods including surveys, face-to-face contact, open meetings, open days, surgeries, area area committees, register of interested parties.</li> <li>• Assess effectiveness of various methods of consultation.</li> </ul>	Director   Senior Management Team	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009   31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010   31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To maximise effective participation and feedback from all areas of the community.</li> </ul>



Aims and Objectives	Action to Achieve Objective	Lead Officer	When By	Review/Date	Outcome
<b>Accessibility</b> Ensure that meeting places are accessible, e.g. for public meetings, membership meetings, committee meetings, area committees, area surgeries, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carry out access audit of Ralston House and all meeting places used to ensure compliance with Disability Discrimination Act requirements.</li> </ul>	Maintenance Manager	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximise accessibility.</li> </ul>

Aims and Objectives	Action to Achieve Objective	Lead Officer	When By	Review/Date	Outcome
<b>Employment</b> Provide full and fair consideration of all job applicants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt EVH's model recruitment and selection policy for W.H.A.</li> <li>• Ensure there are no religious/belief/gender/sexual orientation/disability/age barriers etc. to people being employed by the Association.</li> </ul>	Admin. Officer	√	13 <sup>th</sup> December 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality of opportunity and a diverse workforce. Remove barriers to people accessing employment with W.H.A.</li> </ul>
Strive to have a representative workforce sensitive to the needs of all communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure vacancies are advertised as widely as possible.</li> </ul>	Admin. Officer	√	13 <sup>th</sup> December 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove barriers to members of minority groups accessing employment with the Association.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require all employees to undergo relevant training before taking part in recruitment selection. Delivered through Training and Development Plan.</li> </ul>	Admin. Officer	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness of equality and diversity issues in the recruitment and selection process.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain recruitment records.</li> </ul>	Admin. Officer	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that accurate and up-to-date records are maintained.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regularly review and report on recruitment/selection/training/promotion.</li> </ul>	Admin. Officer	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify areas of inequality and enable our policies/procedures reflect current legislation/good practice.</li> </ul>

Aims and Objectives	Action to Achieve Objective	Lead Officer	When By	Review/Date	Outcome
<b>Employment Contd.</b> Develop Training and Development Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide sufficient training and support.</li> </ul>	Admin. Officer	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure staff can effectively discharge their responsibilities as identified within equal opportunities policy.</li> <li>• Ensure equal access to training for all.</li> <li>• Assist all employees achieve their full potential.</li> </ul>
Support staff with a disability, where needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where possible, modify procedures, facilities or equipment to make full use of individual's ability.</li> <li>• Continue employing, wherever practicable, staff who become disabled and assist in their retraining.</li> </ul>	Senior Management Team	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove barriers.</li> <li>• Enhance abilities.</li> <li>• Achieve a stable workforce.</li> </ul>
Ensure our employment practices do not discriminate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review our employment practices and related policies.</li> </ul>	Director	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove discrimination directed towards any individual or groups within the workforce.</li> <li>• Ensure dignity at work.</li> </ul>

Aims and Objectives	Action to Achieve Objective	Lead Officer	When By	Review/Date	Outcome
<b>Carers</b>					
Identify the caring needs of staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make staff aware of the support available from the Association.</li> </ul>	Senior Management Team	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that staff who have caring responsibilities can carry these out and not be disadvantaged in the workplace.</li> </ul>
Within the constraints of effective service delivery, make best use of flexible working practices to support carers in our workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review appropriate policies and operation of flexi-time system.</li> </ul>	Director	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove barriers for those with carer responsibilities.</li> </ul>

Aims and Objectives	Action to Achieve Objective	Lead Officer	When By	Review/Date	Outcome
<p><b>Services</b></p> <p>Provide services relevant to people's needs which respect their culture and social identity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop multi-lingual leaflets/posters about the Association and its services.</li> <li>• Work with others and community organisations to promote racial equality and eliminate racial harassment.</li> <li>• Promote research to better inform the Association and our partners on the needs of particular groups, including people from minority ethnic communities.</li> </ul>	<p>Admin. Officer</p> <p>Housing Manager</p> <p>Director</p>	<p>31<sup>st</sup> March 2009</p> <p>31<sup>st</sup> March 2009</p> <p>31<sup>st</sup> March 2009</p>	<p>31<sup>st</sup> March 2010</p> <p>31<sup>st</sup> March 2010</p> <p>31<sup>st</sup> March 2012</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove barriers to people accessing our services.</li> </ul>
<p>Improve the understanding of religion and belief among staff and committee members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training for staff and committee members.</li> </ul>	<p>Admin. Officer</p>	<p>31<sup>st</sup> March 2009</p>	<p>31<sup>st</sup> March 2010</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through better understanding, committee and staff can develop a more sensitive approach to people who hold different beliefs to them.</li> </ul>
<p>Consider whether there are services particular to the needs of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals to which W.H.A. can provide.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact representative organisations to gain a better understanding of need.</li> </ul>	<p>Director/Housing Manager</p>	<p>31<sup>st</sup> March 2010</p>	<p>31<sup>st</sup> March 2011</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure equality of opportunity in respect of the services provided by W.H.A. to all residents.</li> </ul>

Aims and Objectives	Action to Achieve Objective	Lead Officer	When By	Review/Date	Outcome
<b>Services Contd.</b>					
Ensure all our services and documentation are available and accessible to people with a disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review our communications and accessibility policy.</li> <li>• Audit our premises, services and processes to ensure Disability Discrimination Act requirements are met.</li> <li>• Respond to need for adaptations within tenants' homes.</li> </ul>	Director  Maintenance Manager/ Admin. Officer  Maintenance Manager	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2008  31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009  31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2011  31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010  31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comply with legislation.</li> <li>• Achieve ease of accessibility in everything we do.</li> <li>• Meet specific housing need.</li> </ul>

Aims and Objectives	Action to Achieve Objective	Lead Officer	When By	Review/Date	Outcome
<b>Agency Working and Partnerships</b>					
Encourage contractors and other agencies with whom we work to adopt and implement an equal opportunities policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include within letter of appointment, requirement that equal opportunities policy in place.</li> </ul>	Senior Management Team	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To promote the development of and their compliance with good practice in the area of equal opportunities.</li> </ul>





