



Homes for Haringey

Equalities and Diversity Strategy

2011-2013

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What we want to achieve

1. Our vision

We want to be an outstanding housing provider - an organisation of which our residents and our partners are proud.

2. Homes for Haringey Equality and Diversity Statement

Equalities is core to what we do

Equality means treating everyone with equal dignity and worth. We recognise that people have different needs and circumstances and that achieving equality requires the removal of the discriminatory barriers that limit what people can do and be. We aim to achieve equality of opportunity for tenants, leaseholders, employees, partners and stakeholders

3. Introduction

We will work with our partners to provide services and opportunities in a fair and equitable way to meet the needs of diverse groups and will continue to address any imbalances that exist in relation to our operations to enhance the services we provide. This strategy is an integral part of every aspect of our activities.

In 2010 we worked closely with customers to develop a Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan which clearly sets out how Homes for Haringey addresses our responsibilities for promoting equalities and diversity in areas of our business.

The successful implementation of this strategy is dependent on the integrity of our governance framework. We will set short, medium and long term plans to deliver our commitments. Clear performance indicators and monitoring mechanisms have been put in place and the outcomes of our activities will be shared.

Our equality impact assessment process provides us with a framework through which we systematically analyse all policies, practices and functions. Homes for Haringey is committed to working with customers and partners to gain the achieving level of the local Government Equality Framework by the end of 2012. Our Equalities Forum will plan and monitor our success in achieving these goals.

How we will do it

Our diversity objectives:

- Know our residents and their needs
- Deliver excellent and responsive services accessible to all
- Involve our residents in everything we do
- Work in partnership to deliver stronger, safer communities
- Ensure procurement is transparent and fair
- Value diversity in our workforce and be an employer of choice

4. Know our customers

We are developing a detailed understanding of our customers to help us tailor our services. We have made progress in this area and now hold ethnicity data for 89% of our tenants. We aim to have a full picture of our customers by 2012. Homes for Haringey started collecting information relating to religion and sexual orientation from all customers in 2009 we now hold information relating to religion for 38% of residents and on 39% of residents in relation to sexuality. We store our customers' information safely and only collect information that we use to improve customer care.

We aim to ask customers for this information only once and are helping them to understand that our motivation for asking questions that may seem personal is only to provide housing and services fairly to the people who need them.

5. Our staff team

Our diverse team is our most important asset linking Homes for Haringey with customers. We are committed to attracting and retaining talented people who reflect the communities we serve. As an employer, we strive to make Homes for Haringey free from all forms of discrimination and harassment. To support this we:

- monitor the make up of our staff and candidates applying to work with us
- Regularly review all recruitment and selection practices
- Consult employees on equality and diversity issues
- Deal with all forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying
- Provide equalities and diversity training for all staff

6. Equalities impact analysis

Equalities Impact Analysis helps us to look at the services we provide and test whether these affect different groups of residents differently, and if it does, whether this difference is fair. We aim to carry out equality impact analysis at the same time as developing a service so that the learning can be used to inform its development.

We use equality impact analysis to help mainstream equalities into our policies and practice, target resources more effectively and increase transparency in the way services are developed and delivered. Outcomes are published on our website.

7. Contracted services

We are working towards embedding equalities and diversity principles within our procurement processes. We will make sure that our contractors and external service agencies providing services on our behalf behave respectfully towards all our customers. We provide essential individual needs information to contractors and expect that their staff will use the information sensitively and effectively.

8. Partnerships

We work with our partner organisations across Haringey to improve the quality of life for customers. Partnerships provide opportunities to extend our commitment to promoting equalities and diversity. We work in partnership with Haringey Council to achieve the Haringey Sustainable Community Strategy.

Homes for Haringey are key participants in Haringey Anti Social Behaviour Team, the Hate Crime Steering Group and Haringey Domestic Violence partnership. We share best practice with our contractors and are committed to promoting equal opportunities as a fundamental part of good management practice. We work with third sector organisations to improve the quality of life for vulnerable groups, for example families living on low incomes.

Our effective Resident Involvement Strategy has effectively resulted in engaging residents from diverse backgrounds including those which have been considered hard to reach.

We learn from other registered providers to ensure that our approach to diversity incorporates and promotes best practice.

9. Our Single Equality Scheme

There are many pieces of legislation addressing service delivery as well as employment. Our comprehensive equalities scheme was developed with the input of residents in 2010. The scheme sets out what Homes for Haringey will do to address the priorities in relation to age, race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion/faith, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership. This scheme clarifies how we address our public duties and fulfil our legal responsibilities.

10. Communications

Our relationship with our customers is dependent on good communications. Homes for Haringey aims to make it easy for all residents to contact us by establishing a range of contact options. Our information is available in a range of formats including translated, large-print or Braille where needed. We have clear guidance in place for staff providing information in different formats. Responsive services and good customer care will be developed by effective communication with all residents.

11. Participation and involvement

Our Resident Involvement Strategy has effectively engaged residents from diverse backgrounds including those which have been considered hard to reach. We will

continue to work with our residents, community and voluntary groups and others to remove any barriers to participation.

We will ensure that we respond to requests to provide information in a variety of formats and different ways.

How we will measure how we are doing

12. Performance Management-Monitoring success

We have developed a comprehensive set of equality and diversity targets for all aspects of our service delivery and employment. The targets measure whether services are accessible and appropriate for all sections of the community. We evaluate and review our performance and use the information to more develop inclusive services and opportunities.

At a service level, we will monitor and review achievements through review of the Business Plan, team plans and our equalities performance indicators. At the individual officer level, we will monitor and review equalities and diversity performance and achievements as an integral part of work reviews and the performance appraisal process.

13. Equalities Framework for Local Government

Homes for Haringey has adopted the Equalities Framework to progress our commitment to equalities and diversity. The framework assesses organisations at three levels; Developing, Achieving and Excellent. We have self assessed at the Achieving level and aim to undertake a peer assessment in 2012 and to achieve the excellent level by 2014.

14. The Tenant Services Authority

In April 2010 the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) became the single regulator for social housing, introducing a common set of standards that apply to landlords:

- Tenant involvement and empowerment
- Home
- Neighbourhood and community
- Value for money
- Governance and financial viability

Equality and diversity is included in the tenant involvement and empowerment standard. Explicit standards and specific outcomes for equality and diversity are set out in the customer service and choice element.

These are to:

- design and deliver housing services that tenants can access easily
- treat tenants with fairness and respect
- consider equality issues and the diversity of tenants, including tenants with additional support needs
- understand the need of tenants and use this information to design and deliver housing services and communicate with tenants.

15. Single Equality Scheme Action Plan

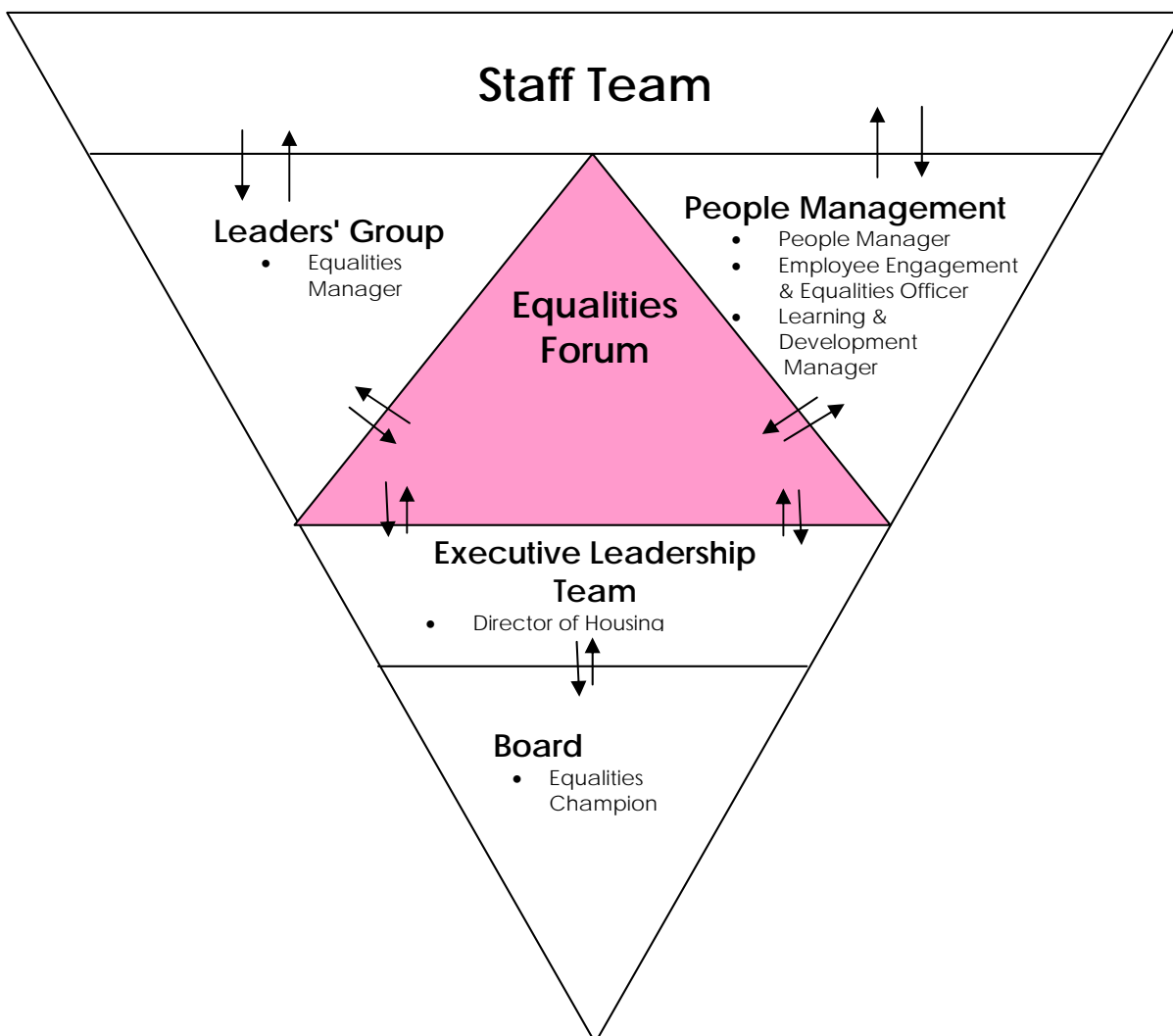
Progress on our equalities and diversity goals is identified and updated in the Single Equality Scheme Action Plan which is monitored by the Equalities Forum.

17. Feedback from Customers

We collect and monitor feed back from customers in a variety of ways, including the biennial STAR (Survey of Tenants and Residents) survey which measures residents' satisfaction with services.

Ownership

17. Homes for Haringey accountability and responsibility for promoting equalities and diversity



Board

Board members are responsible for the overall strategic management of the organisation. The Equalities Champion is responsible for promoting equalities and diversity issues at Board level.

Executive Leadership Team

The Executive Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring that Homes for Haringey is accountable by fulfilling our legal obligations and the corporate commitment to equality set out in this scheme and that we actively promote best practice models which go further than legislative compliance. The Director of Housing Management has a key role for promoting equalities and diversity within this senior management group.

Equalities Forum

The forum includes managers from across services, a resident and the Board Equalities and Diversity Champion. The forum takes a leadership role in promoting equalities and diversity internally and externally, receives regular updates from managers implementing the strategy, signs off equality impact assessments and ensures that equalities and diversity work is mainstreamed across Homes for Haringey. The Equalities Forum reports back to the Executive Leadership Team on progress towards equality and diversity goals

People Management Team

The People Manager takes responsibility for ensuring that equalities and diversity are promoted in all aspects of recruitment and employment. The Employment Engagement and Equalities Officer advises staff on issues relating to equalities and diversity. The Learning and Development Manager takes responsibility for providing equality and diversity training programmes to all staff members.

Equalities Manager

The Equalities Manager has responsibility for:

- coordinating the diversity programme
- drafting equality schemes and policies in consultation with stakeholders
- promoting good practice equality models across the organization
- providing advice and assistance to members of staff on equalities issues
- working with Learning and Development to develop relevant training for staff and Board members
- reporting to the Executive Management Team, Equalities Forum and the Board on progress against diversity and inclusion targets.

Homes for Haringey staff

Staff are responsible for understanding and implementing the Equalities Scheme and for:

- understanding their individual responsibilities in relation to equalities legislation and the Equality Scheme
- Working professionally and to the standards of legislation and Homes for Haringey policies
- Embedding equalities principles and standards into all aspects of their work.