

# Equality & Diversity Policy

## Equality Statement of Policy

1. We, as a provider of affordable housing will ensure that respect and fairness is central to the way in which we work, and that the diverse contributions that our employees and customers bring are valued and their needs are reflected in our work.
2. Diversity, is a strength and is key to the success of Greenoak and we endeavour to make it part of our everyday language and ways of working.
3. We will endeavour to ensure that our facilities, resources and services are accessible and appropriate to each individual or group with which we work.
4. We will strive to ensure that our workforce, Board and Committees generally reflects the localities in which we work in order to maximise the potential benefits and opportunities.
5. We will create an environment where all employees, regardless of status, will be encouraged to develop their full potential.
6. We will expect potential and existing customers, contractors, consultants, employees and partners to respect our vision of diversity whilst working with us.

## 1 Policy

- 1.1 We recognise that our staff, tenants, contractors and customers are central to our success and that we work in a diverse society. We acknowledge our legal and moral obligations to make sure all individuals and groups have equal opportunities.
- 1.2 This Policy covers all aspects of housing, providing services, employment and other areas of work.
- 1.3 Our aim is that our residents, Board and Committee Members, contractors, Resident Forums and staff reasonably reflect the communities in which we work. We will endeavour to address under representation relating to residents, Board and Committee members and our workforce.
- 1.4 The aim of the policy, whether in relation to individuals or groups, is to get rid of unlawful discrimination, promote equal opportunities and take action to tackle the effects of discrimination. In achieving these, we will comply with the Equality Act 2010. In addition, we will adhere to the HCA's new standards and approach to regulation.
- 1.5 The responsibility for the Policy lies with the Board. The Chief Executive and the Management Team are responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the policy. The Chief Executive is the senior manager responsible for the policy, however, each member of staff has a responsibility to make sure they keep to this policy.
- 1.6 We have included a copy of the policy in our Employee Handbook and it is also available on our website.

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### 2 The General Parts of the Policy

- 2.1 In providing housing services and jobs, we will aim to make sure we treat everyone equally.
- 2.2 We will not treat anybody applying for housing, receiving services or working for us less favourably than anyone else.
- 2.3 Where necessary, we will take positive action to enable members of a minority group to receive equal opportunities in housing, services and work.
- 2.4 All main contractors, consultants and other agencies we hire should have adequate equality and diversity policies. If we discover unlawful discrimination, we will do everything possible to influence the partners, consultants, contractors or suppliers to take action to eliminate such discrimination and we may review our agreements with them. Where contractors do not have an adequate equality and diversity policies in place, we will require them to observe our own policy.
- 2.5 We will take effective action to tackle victimisation and harassment and we will always place the victim at the centre of what we do. We will provide support to residents and will follow the processes in the various resident centred harassment policies. Additionally, our staff will follow all our Harassment and Victimisation policies and procedures that apply to the service they provide, and will provide extra support to help employees.
- 2.6 To make sure people have equal access to services, we will use an interpreter service and will translate policies and documents where needed. We aim to build all new housing to Life Time Homes Standard. We will make sure there is equal access to information and services by providing appropriate facilities and equipment in our offices and on our schemes.

### 3 The Housing parts of the policy

- 3.1 In providing services to our clients, we will:
  - (a) make sure our properties are let through a system that aims to produce a fair assessment of housing need and to prevent prejudice or discrimination; and
  - (b) make sure we deal with complaints promptly, fairly and without discrimination.

### 4 The Employment parts of the policy

This section of the policy makes sure we keep to the Equality and Human Rights Commission codes of practice for employment.

#### 4.1 Advertising Jobs

- Wherever possible, we advertise all jobs both inside the organisation and to the public at the same time.
- All job packs will include an appropriate short statement on equal opportunities.
- In determining short-lists and applicants for interview, we will always seek to make decisions which are without discrimination of any kind.

### 4.2 Selection and Recruitment of staff

- More than one person will be involved in the selection process, and all should have received training in recruitment skills and equal opportunities.
- We will record our reasons for choosing and rejecting applicants for jobs

### 4.3 Staff records

- Each year, employees will be able to check or if appropriate, correct their own records. Otherwise, we will restrict access to this information in line with the data protection regulations

### 4.4 General

The aims of the employment section are to:

- make sure that we have access to the widest range of people and get the best employee for the job
- make sure that no applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment and that, wherever possible, we give them the help they need to reach their full potential
- achieve a workforce based on ability, which is as representative as possible of with the working population in the communities in which we work
- make sure all staff co-operate in this policy and
- take appropriate action against anyone who breaches this policy.