

Nottingham City Homes

Equality and Diversity Policy Statement 2010

Nottingham City Homes is committed to work in partnership with Nottingham City Council, partners and stakeholders to discharge our responsibilities in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and related equality legislation and European Directives. Public Sector Equality Duty and the Code of Practice for Employment. Nottingham City Homes will not tolerate the less favourable treatment of anyone on the grounds of age or disability, or considering, undergoing or have undergone gender re-assignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, pregnancy or maternity, marital status, civil partnership, sex, sexual orientation, responsibility for dependents, trade union or political activities, religious or other beliefs, or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

To achieve this we will:

- Work with Nottingham City Council's Equality Scheme as it relates to our housing management responsibilities
- Make sure our staff are aware of equality and diversity issues and work towards creating a workforce representative of the local population
- Promote support services such as Age UK, Disability Direct, Women's Aid, Child Line, and English courses for speakers of other languages
- Make sure our offices are accessible and meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
- Provide induction loops, arrange sign language facilities, interpreters or translation services where these are needed
- Use plain English in our letters and leaflets, and provide written information in Braille, on audio tape, in large print or other languages where necessary
- Keep a record of the diverse make up of our customers to help us target and tailor our services to meet your needs
- Take action against hate crime including racial, religious or homophobic harassment and domestic violence
- Monitor and assess the impact of our policies, practices and services and make adjustments if they are found to be treating any group or community unfairly, or if they fail to meet your needs
- Consider the potential impact on customers and communities of our policies, practices and decisions, taking action if they may result in discrimination or disadvantage to any groups or communities

- Meet regularly with our Black and Minority Ethnic (BME), Homes 4 Us (Disability), Ethnic Minority Employee (EME) and Disabled Employee and Carers (DEC), Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Forums and take action on areas for improvement they identify.
- Use the feedback we receive from the City's diverse communities to help shape future plans, decisions and policies
- Have regard to equality and diversity in all aspects of employment, from advertising vacancies, recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment, training and personal development, to reasons for ending employment. We will do this by:
 - Asking only for the skills, abilities and qualities needed to do the job;
 - Including in all jobs a requirement to implement equality of opportunity and respect diversity, with all job applicants being assessed against this requirement
 - Advertising jobs using methods that reach all communities and in particular methods that allow all groups who are currently under-represented in the workforce to be targeted
 - Providing job details and accepting job applications in formats such as large print, Braille and audio and making arrangements for the use of interpreters if required in the selection process
 - Interviewing all disabled applicants who, at the short-listing stage, show that they meet the requirements to do the job
 - Valuing skills gained through non-traditional or informal work, such as voluntary work and caring responsibilities
 - Making sure that all job applicants, existing employees or people who do not currently work for the Company demonstrate that they are qualified, motivated and competent to do the job
 - Recognising and supporting the potential of all employees by offering opportunities for training and personal development
 - Accessing funding to provide workplace adaptations and aids to enable disabled people to obtain and retain employment with the Company
 - Making every effort if employees become disabled to ensure they retain their employment with the Company
 - Promoting Work-Life Balance policies and procedures for employees
 - Monitoring all cases of disciplinary action and carry out work to ensure that this action does not disproportionately affect any specific group of employees
 - Monitoring all cases where employees bring a grievance against the Company, their manager or a work colleague and take appropriate action to ensure that grievances do not unfairly or adversely affect any specific group of employees

- Insist that our customers respect our staff and conduct themselves in an acceptable and non-threatening way. We will take action where their behaviour is unacceptable
- Require any company or business that wishes to be one of our contractors or suppliers to have developed policies on equalities in relation to employment and service delivery
- Monitor the practices of any contractor or business we employ, contract or purchase from to ensure they act in accordance with our policies on equality and diversity
- Cease issuing contracts to, purchasing from or commissioning any contractor, business or organisation, where we believe they fail to comply with our values in relation to equality and diversity
- Monitor and review our equality and diversity policy annually.

Specific steps we will take to meet the needs of different communities

Specific steps we will take to meet the needs of employees and customers to whom the protected characteristic relating to Age (which includes people of all ages) apply:

- challenge ageism by our employees, Board Members, contractors, partners, other organisations and users of our services
- carry out our duties under the laws as they develop to stop discrimination and provide equality of opportunity
- review our own policies in relation to the retirement of staff and the employment of people over retirement age
- deal effectively and consistently with any harassment and violence towards young people or older people
- support campaigns and activities for achieving full equality, including legal equality, for people of all ages
- work with others to make Nottingham a safe place for people of all ages to live, work, study and in which to spend their leisure time
- Supporting the formation of groups, networks and services for young and older employees of the Company and service users.

Specific steps we will take to meet the needs of employees and customers to whom the protected characteristic relating to Race, that is Black and minority ethnic communities as defined by race, colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality and immigration status apply. Travellers are included within this category as a distinct racial group – we will:

- carry out our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to stop unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations within communities.
- challenge racism by any of our employees, Board Members, contractors, partners, other organisations and users of our services
- deal effectively and consistently with racial harassment and violence, both in the workplace and in the neighbourhoods in Nottingham
- support campaigns and activities for achieving full equality for Black and Minority Ethnic people
- work with others to make Nottingham a safe place for Black and Minority Ethnic communities to live, work, study and spend their leisure time
- support all Black and Minority Ethnic employees to fully develop their potential
- aim to develop an overall workforce that better reflects Black and Minority Ethnic communities in Nottingham, especially at senior manager level
- carry out specific work to ensure that Black and Minority Ethnic employees are not adversely affected by the Company employment procedures
- support the formation of groups, networks and services for Black and Minority Ethnic employees and service users
- review all our policies, services and functions in order to identify objectives and targets for improving race equality
- make sure the steps we take to tackle other equality issues (for example disability or sexuality) include ways to address the needs of Black and minority ethnic communities.

Specific steps we will take to meet the needs of employees and customers to whom applies the protected characteristic relating to disability (including Deaf people, blind people, people with learning difficulties, people with a mental illness, and people living with HIV and AIDS) – we will:

- use the “Social Model of Disability” as the basis for our work to improve equality for and tackle discrimination against disabled people
- carry out our duties under the law, including the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, to stop discrimination and to provide equality of opportunity
- promote positive images of disabled people and challenge attitudes that patronise or discriminate against them

- deal effectively and consistently with any harassment and violence towards disabled people
- develop our services and the environments we deliver them from, to remove barriers preventing disabled people from having the same access as other people
- specifically recognise British Sign Language as a main method of communication for Deaf people and increasing the number of frontline employees who can communicate proficiently in British Sign Language
- support campaigns and activities for achieving full equality for disabled people
- work with others to make Nottingham a safe and accessible place in which disabled people can live, work, study and spend their leisure time
- aim to develop a workforce that better reflects the disabled communities in Nottingham
- support all disabled employees to fully develop their potential
- support the formation of groups, networks and services for disabled employees of the Company, service users with a disability or who care for people with disabilities
- work in conjunction with the City Council's Equality Scheme as it relates to disability
- make sure the steps we take to tackle other equality issues (for example race or sexuality) include ways to address the needs of disabled people.

Specific steps we will take to meet needs around employees that are thinking about, are undergoing, or completed gender reassignment – we will:

- Tackle behaviours and attitudes that may unlawfully discriminate against transsexual employees and customers
- Support employees through the period of gender transition and ensure they remain protected from discrimination, bullying and harassment from other employees and customers.
- Ensure equal access to housing and related services, employment, pay and vocational education.

Specific steps we will take to meet the needs of employees and customers to whom applies the protected characteristic relating to pregnancy and maternity:

- ensure that all rights are protected in accordance with the Code Of Practice for employment
- ensure that employees that are pregnant or on maternity leave are consulted and kept informed about any changes in the workplace
- ensure that women on maternity leave have a right to an annual assessment

Specific steps we will take to meet the needs of employees and customers to whom applies the protected characteristic relating to sex, we will:

- carry out our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to stop unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations within communities.
- challenge sexism by our Board Members, contractors, partners, employees, other organisations and users of our services
- deal effectively and consistently with sexual harassment and violence
- support campaigns and activities for achieving full equality for all genders
- work with others to make Nottingham a safe place in which all can live, work, study and spend their leisure time
- support all employees to fully develop their potential
- aim to develop an overall workforce that better reflects an equal balance of women and men, especially at senior levels
- support the formation of groups, networks and services for all employees of the Company and for all genders
- support all genders in areas where they experience inequality and discrimination

Specific steps we will take to meet the needs of employees and customers to whom the protected characteristic relating to sexual orientation, that is lesbians, gay men and bisexuals (LGB) apply:

- challenge homophobia by our employees, Board Members, contractors, partners, other organisations and users of our services
- carry out our duties under the law including the Employment (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 and the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 to stop discrimination and provide equality of opportunity

- deal effectively and consistently with any harassment and violence towards heterosexuals, lesbians, gay men, or bisexuals, including in neighbourhoods
- support campaigns and activities for achieving full equality, including legal equality, for lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals
- work with others to make Nottingham a safe place for lesbians, gay men, bisexual and transgender people to live, work, study and spend their leisure time
- support the formation of groups, networks and services for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender employees of the Company and service users
- support the right of lesbian, gay, and bisexual service users, employees and others we work with to be open about who they are by creating an atmosphere and environment where it is safe for them to do so, by acknowledging that relationships between people of the same gender are equally valid to those between men and women, and by not assuming that employees or users of services are heterosexual
- specifically provide the same tenancy rights to lesbians, gay men and bisexual people as heterosexual people
- recognise that the ways we deal with other forms of discrimination may not be appropriate to deal with homophobia and that lesbians, gay men, and bisexual employees and users of services may not always feel able to disclose who they are
- work with individuals and groups who are part of the wider lesbian, gay, and bisexual communities to make sure our policies in this area are effective
- make sure the steps we take to tackle other equality issues (for example race or disability) include ways to address the needs of lesbians, gay men or bisexuals.

Specific steps we will take to meet the needs of employees and customers to whom the protected characteristic relating to religious and other beliefs apply:

- seek to ensure that people can worship and express their religious and other beliefs freely, without fear of intimidation and that an individual's choice to practice their religion or belief is respected
- respect individuals' choice to practice their religion or belief and the right of every citizen and employee to hold political and other beliefs, or to be a member of a Trade Union
- not permit our employees to impose on others, their religious, political or other views or philosophies, where these seek to limit the dignity or rights of others, cause offence, or incite racial, religious or other hatred, whilst carrying out their employment

- challenge religious and other intolerance by our employees, Board Members, contractors, partners, other organisations and users of our services;
- carry out our duties under the law including the Employment (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 and the Equality Act 2006, to stop discrimination and provide equality of opportunity
- deal effectively and consistently with any harassment and violence towards people practicing their chosen religion or belief
- support campaigns and activities for achieving full equality
- work with others to make Nottingham a safe place for people from all religions and beliefs to live, work, study and in which to spend their leisure time
- campaign against organisations who incite religious, racial and other hatred

Our commitment to human rights

We will meet our obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998 by:

- considering human rights issues as part of equality impact assessments of services, policies and decisions
- supporting the right to a fair trial through the appeals processes in our service and employment procedures
- supporting the rights of tenants, leaseholders and employees to freedom of speech and assembly through our involvement forums
- respecting our tenants right to privacy in their home and family life and correspondence, and not interfering with this unless it is necessary and legally appropriate to do so
- supporting the right to respect for home life by ensuring that wherever possible disabled people are able to live in properties that are suitable for their needs
- delivering on the other commitments to promote equality and prevent unlawful discrimination set out in this policy

Specific steps we will take to meet the needs of employees to whom the protected characteristic relating to civil partnership and marriage apply:

- Ensure we do not discriminate against employees on the basis of civil partnership or marriage.

Specific steps we will take to meet the needs of employees and customers to whom the protected characteristic relating to pregnancy and maternity apply:

- ensure that all rights are protected in accordance with the Code Of Practice for employment
- ensure that employees that are pregnant or on maternity leave are consulted and kept informed about any changes in the workplace
- ensure that women on maternity leave have a right to an annual assessment

Overall responsibility for the effectiveness of this policy lies with the Company's Board. The Diversity and Community Cohesion Champions Group which is chaired by the Chief Executive and includes representatives from across the company is responsible for developing and delivering this policy and the Company's equality and diversity objectives generally, on an ongoing basis.

For further information

- Members of the public

If you think we are not providing a service in line with this policy or you think you have been treated unfairly in any way, you can complain to the Company. Our complaints procedure explains how you can do this. You can obtain a copy of this procedure from Nottingham City Homes offices, by telephoning 0115 915 7400 or emailing customer.services@nottinghamhomes.org.uk.

- Company employees

If you are concerned about any equality issues relating to your employment you can speak to your line manager, or to the Company's HR section. If you are in a Trade Union, you can also contact them for advice and support.

Let us know what you think

We welcome your comments and suggestions at any time. You can contact the company's Equality & Diversity Team on 0115 915 7213 or email us at actionondiversity@nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk. We are happy to provide copies of this document in other formats such as in large print, in Braille, on disk or in community languages.

