

# A GUIDE

## to Equality and Diversity



This Document has been Read and Approved by the  
**Tenants Editorial Panel**

We use the term 'resident' to describe anyone living in one of our homes or receiving one of our services. This includes tenants, leaseholders and shared owners.



# Equality and Diversity

Cosmopolitan Housing Association is committed to the development of communities and their sustainability. We aim to ensure all our services are consistent with our established Equal Opportunity policy.

Cosmopolitan Housing Association in pursuing this policy will comply with all appropriate legislation and attempt to achieve the highest professional 'best practice' standards as recommended by the Tenant Services Authority, Equality and Human Rights Commission, Audit Commission and those interest groups representing the needs of those most disadvantaged in society.

Tenants are expected to adhere to matters of law in relation to equality and diversity and the terms of their tenancy agreement and to fulfill a 'good neighbour' role respecting the needs and circumstances of all people in their community

## What is Equality & Diversity?

**Equality** requires Cosmopolitan Housing Association to respond to the needs of individuals and groups according to their needs, which may at times involve engaging in positive action.

The principles behind an approach in support of "equality" is one where an individual's or group's diverse background does not prevent them from receiving services, obtaining employment or simply being treated equally and in accordance with the same high level of standards as any other person.

Equal opportunity will be provided to all, regardless of race, nationality or ethnic origin, religious belief, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, culture, gender, class, appearance, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activity, HIV, AIDS, income or spent convictions.

**Diversity** is concerned with recognising and valuing difference amongst the individuals and groups.

This applies to the full range of services in which Cosmopolitan Housing Association engages.

Our strategy recognises that:

- All people are different and have differing needs and these will be taken into account when planning services and developing employment policies.
- We aim to treat each individual with respect and consistent with the standards defined in the Association's stated core values.
- Action plans need to be implemented to address discrimination experienced by particular individuals or groups.
- Action needs to be taken to promote and achieve diversity in employment, service delivery, working with communities and formulation of business plans.
- Actions to achieve our stated aims will be supported by appropriate budget provision and resources.
- All aims are applicable, applying to all functions and relevant action plans.
- We aim to ensure that equality and diversity issues are treated as part of the 'mainstream' services and practices of the Association which will help develop existing organisational culture and performance.





## What is Discrimination?

Unlawful discrimination can take many forms, including:

**Direct discrimination** - when a person is treated less favourably than others

**Indirect discrimination** - would occur if we applied a requirement that adversely affects a particular group and we could not reasonably justify this.

**Harassment** - this can take many forms such as abusive remarks, intimidation and physical abuse

**Racial harassment** - includes physical attacks on people and damage to property, verbal abuse and any form of bad behaviour on the grounds of racial origin.

**Victimisation** - treating a person less favourably than we would otherwise treat them because they had pursued, or we think they may pursue their rights under our Equality and Diversity Policy or the law.

**Cosmopolitan Housing Association opposes all forms of discrimination and will work hard to eliminate it and promote good relations between people.**

## Corporate Responsibility and Commitment

### Corporate Responsibility

The Board will:

- Monitor performance.
- Ensure compliance with the strategy.
- Challenge existing practice.
- Regularly review the Strategy.

Chief Executive and Management Team will:

- Implement the Strategy.
- Develop clear action plans.
- Ensure all reports on policy matters to the Board identify equality and diversity implications.

- Ensure training and development on equality and diversity matters is received by Board members, staff, tenants, and contractors to sustain competencies and maintain knowledge.

Managers will:

- Actively promote equality and diversity.
- Challenge discrimination within their areas of responsibility.

Staff will:

- Ensure they work in accordance with the Equality & Diversity policy.
- Give full commitment to the principles contained within the policy.

## **Commitment**


Board

- Regularly review the constituency of the Board by disability, ethnicity, gender, age, religion and sexuality and set targets.
- Provide regular training and development opportunities for Board members, particularly in relation to equality and diversity issues.
- Encourage persons from under-represented groups to apply to become Board Members, provided that they also meet the requirements of the role.
- Advertise opportunities to become Board members widely, in a range of locations that are likely to attract interest from a diverse range of people.

Employment

- Aim to have a workforce that is reflective of the communities served by the Association.
- Include positive statements about the Association's commitments to equal opportunities in all job advertisements.



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- Regularly review the Association's recruitment and selection processes to ensure that they are fair and transparent and accord with legislation and best practice.
  - Provide training for all staff on equality and diversity, including awareness raising as part of the staff induction process.
  - Seek ways to develop cultural awareness within our organisation.
  - Involve staff at all levels of the organisation in the development and review of the Association's approach to promoting equality and diversity.
  - Develop policies and procedures for staff which take into account and respectful of the needs and requirements of diverse groups.

## Equality and Diversity Service Standards

The Association will endeavour to ensure that all individuals and groups are able to access the Association's services, irrespective of any disability, vulnerability or disadvantage.

This requires an understanding and requirements of the communities served so that these can be responded to in terms of the knowledge and skills of staff, the services provided, and the buildings from which services are delivered.

The Association will undertake and regularly re-visit & review information about the diverse needs that exist within the communities that it serves.

This approach will enable the Association to identify the housing needs and aspirations of the communities that the Association serves, both in terms of existing residents and the needs of people who aspire to live our properties.

To achieve its objectives, the Association will:

- Ensure that all offices comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act through property audits and inspections.


- Make our organisational information widely available and where practical in relevant community languages, braille, large print, on tape, provide and advertise signing and other translation facilities, to ensure that all sections of the community, particularly disadvantaged individuals or groups, can gain access to services.
- Maintain links with community groups that work with or represent the diverse groups that fall within the ambit of this strategy and contact on a regular basis representative groups to offer support with regards to issues facing the community and to confirm proper access to information and advice.
- Ensure that the diverse needs of existing tenants are fully understood through the capturing of information via the Tenant Census and other profiling activities.
- Operate an efficient and effective Aids and Adaptations service, accessing match funding wherever possible to maximise the scale of works that can be delivered.
- Ensure that the Design Brief for new developments take into account the needs of vulnerable, disabled and other diverse groups' needs.
- Monitor levels of satisfaction with services.
- Adopt a partnership approach with other housing providers, local authorities and community groups to enhance the opportunities for meeting the specific needs of disabled, vulnerable or disadvantaged groups. This will also involve responding promptly to partners in relation to local research, assessments in relation to the needs of diverse groups, the furtherance of local strategic partnership aims and actively participating in local initiatives.





- Undertake regular reviews of our allocation policy and procedures.
- Seek ways to actively promote involvement of residents in both formal and informal structures to a diverse range of customers, particularly where we are aware of under-representation (e.g. disabled persons; younger people; particular BME groups).
- Be sensitive to the needs of different groups and individuals when planning and organising events.
- Ensure that the complaints procedure is easily accessible and easy to use by all customers.
- Monitor complaints received by gender, transgender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, and religion to identify if any particular groups are being disadvantaged or discriminated against either directly or indirectly by the activities of the Association, taking corrective action where any trends are identified.
- Ensure that no person that has made a complaint will be treated any differently by virtue of them having made the complaint so as to constitute victimisation of that person.
- Undertake regular satisfaction surveys, including a STATUS survey at least every three years in addition to service specific satisfaction monitoring that is undertaken on an on-going basis.
- Regularly review policies and procedures that are in operation across the Association to ensure that they comply with legislation, regulation and best practice.



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- Widely publish the Association's approach to dealing with incidents of anti-social behaviour, take efficient and effective action against the perpetrators of anti-social behaviour, ensuring the needs of the victim are upheld at all times and provide a range of additional services and resources that provide support and assistance to the victims of anti-social behaviour.
  - Promote the principles of equality and diversity as part of the selection process for contractors, consultants, suppliers and partners.
  - Offer equality and diversity training to contractors on a regular basis, particularly smaller service provider that require assistance and support.
  - Establish clear standards and targets to be met by the contractors, consultants and suppliers.
  - Operate systems that allow for monitoring the performance of contractors, consultants and suppliers in relation to equality and diversity and their progress against agreed targets.

## Performance Monitoring

Overall, the Association will monitor equality and diversity performance to ensure that it does not discriminate against any particular groups. This will be reported to the Association's Board of Management, staff, residents and stakeholders annually through appropriate communication channels such as Board reports, the Association's websites and newsletters.

In fulfilling this requirement, particular attention will be given to each of the diversity strands for all service area commitments outlined in the policy document. Whilst monitoring against these core areas shall remain, they will be monitored within a broader suite of Equality and Diversity performance indicators.

If you wish to obtain further information on equality of service please contact us at the address overleaf.





**This document is available translated into your own language and in large print, braille and audio tape on request.**

यह दस्तावेज़ आपकी भाषा में अनुदित रूप में भी उपलब्ध है। विवरण के लिए कृपया इस कार्यालय से उपलब्ध "हमारी सेवा पुस्तिकाओं की गाइड" प्रकाशन देखें।

ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦਾ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ। ਵੇਰਵਿਆਂ ਲਈ ਦੇਖ ਪੁੱਛਾਸਨ "ਸਾਡੇ ਸੇਵਾ ਲੀਫ਼ਲੈਟਾਂ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਗਾਈਡ", ਜੋ ਇਸ ਦਫ਼ਤਰ ਤੋਂ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।

یہ دستاویز آپ کی زبان میں ترجمہ شدہ شکل میں بھی دستیاب ہے کتابچہ بعنوان "ہماری خدمات" (گائیڈ تو اور سروس لیفلٹس) دیکھیں

هذا المستند متوفر أيضا، رجماً إلى لغتكم،  
للمزيد من التفصيل برجاء إطلاع على نشرة " دليل خدماتنا"  
المتوفر من هذا المكتب

এই ডকুমেন্টটি /সেবাটি আপনার নিজের ভাষায় অনুদিত পাওয়া যাবে, 'গাইড টু আওয়ার সার্ভিস লিফলেটস'  
(আমাদের পরিষেবা পরিচকার নির্দেশিকা) প্রকাশনা দেখুন, বিশদ বিবরণের জন্য, যা এই অফিসে পাওয়া যাচ্ছে।

這份資料冊已有中文譯本，請參閱《我們的服務 介紹資料冊指引》，  
請向我們 辦公室詢問這份 摺 之詳情。

Waxaad kaalood heli kataa dukumeentigani oo ku qoran luqaddaada, fadlan waxaad eegtaa "Kaalayaha xaashida adeegyadena" oo laga heli karo xafiiskani.

Ky dokument është poashtu i përkthyer në gjuhën tuaj, ju lutemi shikoni botimin "Udhëzime për shërbimet tona në fletpalosjet", që mund t'i gjeni në këtë zyrë, për të dhëna.



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Cosmopolitan Housing Association is a Charitable Industrial and Provident Society.