
**EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY
FRAMEWORK
2008 - 2011**

Introduction

This document outlines Herefordshire Housing's Equality & Diversity Framework for 2008-2011. It is an overarching document that incorporates our Equality & Diversity Action Plan, Equal Opportunities Policies for Service Delivery and Employment, as well as our approach to discrimination, harassment and domestic abuse.

Our Equalities Framework will be reviewed every three years and performance against our targets will be reported to our Board regularly. The Action Plan will be reviewed quarterly by the Diversity Working Group and progress communicated via our intranet, website and tenant newsletter.

We recognise that different communities and neighbourhoods have different needs and our aim is to treat everyone fairly. We are committed to providing equality of opportunity in all areas of our business – service delivery, customer consultation, employment and governance. By setting out our future plans in this open and transparent way, we hope to make Herefordshire an even better place to live and work.

Our values - the things we hold dear - which are based on teamwork, customer focus, continuous improvement and being passionate about diversity. These will be central to our approach in delivering this plan and reviewing it in the future.

The Framework has been prepared by the Diversity Working Group in consultation with Herefordshire Council's Equality & Diversity Team, the Rainbow Forum, Herefordshire Carers' Support, Age Concern, ABLE, Mencap, Mind and Womens' Aid.

Our definitions of Equality and Diversity

Whilst there are no universally agreed definitions of Equality or Diversity, the two terms are used frequently and we need to ensure that we have a shared understanding of what they mean.

Equality is about breaking down the barriers that block opportunities for certain groups of people. Equality policies aim to identify and minimize the barriers that exclude people and take action to ensure equal access to services and employment opportunities.

Elimination of discrimination is also important in achieving equality since it is not just the physical environment or poor policies that prevents equality from being achieved but also ways of working, and the attitudes towards and stereotypes about different groups of people.

Herefordshire Housing has adopted the definition of **equality** as being:

Equality – everyone being able to enjoy the same opportunities whilst free from discrimination

Diversity is about recognising the differences between different groups of people, celebrating these differences and managing different needs appropriately. Managing diversity effectively means that every individual has a better chance of being able to live and work in the way that works best for them. This reduces the risk of indirect discrimination against groups of people and allows better access to opportunities for all.

Herefordshire Housing has adopted the definition of **diversity** as being:

Diversity – understanding, respecting and celebrating the differences between people

Our Commitment in Service Delivery Equality and Diversity Policy

This policy relates to Herefordshire Housing's activities as a provider of housing and other services. It also applies to services provided on its behalf by contractors and consultants.

At the heart of our Equality and Diversity Policy is a commitment to valuing diversity, treating people with dignity and respect, eliminating discrimination and promoting social cohesion.

We value the individual contribution made by all people in our communities and are committed to eliminating discrimination on the grounds of:

- * Age
- * Race
- * Ethnic or national origin
- * Belief
- * Gender
- * Sexual orientation
- * Being a single parent
- * HIV status
- * Disability
- * Colour
- * Nationality
- * Religion / Spirituality
- * Gender re-alignment status
- * Marital or civil partner status
- * Being pregnant or on maternity leave

In addition to legislative requirements laid out at **Appendix One**, we expect all colleagues employed at Herefordshire Housing to promote the spirit of our Equality and Diversity Policy and to recognise that they have a duty not to discriminate against anyone in carrying out their duties.

We will not tolerate acts that breach this duty and all cases of such behaviour, or alleged behaviour, will be taken seriously, be fully investigated and, if proven, may be subject to our disciplinary procedures.

Our aims

Herefordshire Housing aims to:

- * actively contribute to achieving the vision of the Herefordshire Equality Partnership
- * promote equality of opportunity in all that we do and promote good relations between people in our diverse communities
- * ensure that the needs of our diverse communities are identified and taken into account in the planning and delivery of our services.
- * work towards the elimination of harassment on our estates, supporting victims and taking action against perpetrators.
- * work towards increasing the representation of residents from hard to reach groups in our customer involvement activities.
- * Ensure that membership of the Board and its committees adequately reflects the local community
- * ensure that the information we provide is accessible to service users, in languages and/or formats that they can understand.
- * provide an accessible service by removing or altering any physical barriers to access.

Implementation

In order to meet the above aims we will:

- * fulfil all of our statutory duties and comply with legislation on equality, diversity and discrimination. In addition we will comply with all codes of practice and codes of guidance on equality, diversity and discrimination published by the Housing Corporation, the Department of Communities & Local Government, the Charities Commission, and the Equality and Human Rights Commission
- * implement the actions laid out in our equality & diversity action plan
- * implement the Equality Impact Assessment timetable as laid out at **Appendix Two**
- * ensure that all of our agreements and contracts conform to the aims and objectives of this policy
- * regularly undertake research to determine the housing and other needs of the diverse communities within our own customer base as well as in the wider community
- * develop and maintain monitoring systems that help to identify discriminatory practices or outcomes across all service areas
- * regularly review the results of monitoring and report on performance and modify systems, processes and working practices accordingly
- * comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act in the collection and use of sensitive personal data

Monitoring & Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Board to ensure that implementation of the Equality and Diversity policy is monitored.

Our Chief Executive is responsible for delivering the policy and will be accountable for its implementation and colleague training.

Every Herefordshire Housing colleague has the responsibility to read, understand and implement this policy.

All contractors, consultants and partner organisations are responsible for operating in accordance with this policy when delivering services on behalf of Herefordshire Housing.

Approved by:	Diversity Working Group
Effective date:	22 nd July 2008
Review date:	22 nd July 2011
Policy developed by:	Business Excellence Manager
Associated Procedure:	None

Our Commitment in Employment Equality and Diversity Policy

Policy Statement

Herefordshire Housing Ltd (HHL) believes that our success is a direct result of the experience and quality of our colleagues. We are, therefore, committed to focusing our employment policies and procedures on maximizing the potential of each unique individual. We believe this is best achieved by developing our colleagues' talents, whilst recognizing their differences.

By treating people fairly and equally and by accepting and embracing their diversity, we can also improve our market competitiveness, foster innovation and thereby provide better services for our customers.

It is the policy of the Company that no person acting on our behalf shall discriminate in any situation against another individual or group, directly or indirectly, on the grounds of their colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, age, disability, HIV status, religion or belief, membership or non-membership of a trade union or other representative body. HHL endorses the principle that the workforce should reflect, as far as is reasonably possible, the composition of the local community.

These principles apply to recruitment and selection, learning and development, promotion, transfer, pay and benefits and colleague development procedures, in addition to all terms and conditions of employment.

Scope of the Policy

This policy covers all HHL colleagues, regardless of position or status, and to contractors and sub-contractors.

Aims of the Policy

The main aims of the policy are:-

- * To ensure equality and diversity in the workplace
- * To offer fair treatment in every aspect of working life in HHL, from our written procedures through to every decision made
- * To promote a culture where each colleague is treated with respect and dignity and recognizes the value that a diverse workforce can bring.

To achieve these aims, HHL commits to the following:-

- * Ensure that the principles of this policy are embedded in the HR strategy and all policies and procedures are regularly monitored and reviewed
- * Provide awareness training and guidance to all colleagues and managers to ensure HHL's commitment to diversity is known and understood. This will be achieved mainly through induction, training, our colleague handbook and the Company's intranet
- * Monitor and measure diversity at every stage of employment to remove any direct or indirect discrimination
- * Challenge and investigate discriminatory behaviour and enforce the disciplinary procedure, when this is considered necessary
- * Communicate and regularly review the positive initiatives that have been implemented and ensure ever wider access to them
- * Support and uphold the communities in which we live and work to ensure that we are involved, accessible, socially responsible and perceived as a positive presence
- * Work with external groups and advisory bodies to keep up to date and aware of the necessary issues and best practice.

Recruitment and Selection

HHL's recruitment and selection procedure is based solely on the necessary and justifiable job requirements and the individual's suitability.

Job descriptions and person specifications are drawn up for every post to be filled. Where posts are advertised externally, consideration is given to the most appropriate outlets to ensure that a wide range of potentially suitable applicants have the opportunity to apply.

Selection methods, including interviews, are conducted in accordance with documented and standardized procedures and checklists, designed to ensure that discrimination forms no part of the recruitment process. The objective is to make each appointment on the grounds of selecting the most suitable candidate for the post.

Learning and Development

HHL ensures that all colleagues are given an opportunity to take part in both job specific training and have an individual Personal Development Plan (PDP) designed to promote their opportunities and career advancement. The colleague development process is carried out in accordance with clear and laid down criteria to ensure that its application is free from discrimination at every stage.

Disability and Special Needs

When a disabled person or anyone with special needs applies for a job with HHL, we always consider their application based on relevant skills, experience and knowledge. If you are disabled or have special needs, the Company will do its best to adapt the job and the workplace to meet the needs of individuals. HHL has been accredited with the "Positive about Disabled People" symbol which recognizes the Company's commitment to good practice in employing people with disabilities.

Grievance and Dignity at Work

While it is hoped and intended that most problems relating to employment in HHL can be resolved on an informal basis, the Grievance Procedure exists so that causes of genuine concern can be dealt with equitably.

Any colleague who believes has been discriminated against should raise the matter under the Grievance Procedure, or where appropriate, the Dignity at Work Policy, or by using the Whistle-Blowing Policy (where any colleague can discuss any matter with their line manager or another manager or any Director, in complete confidence).

Disciplinary Procedure

HHL takes a serious view of discrimination in employment and breaches of this Policy are deemed as misconduct or, in certain circumstances, gross misconduct. Any such actions will be investigated as possible disciplinary offences and dealt with in accordance with the Company's disciplinary procedure.

All colleagues have a shared responsibility to ensure that the Equality and Diversity in Employment Policy is adhered to and to promote dignity and equality at work.

Pay and Benefits

HHL's arrangements for determining colleagues' pay and benefits are based on the principle of providing equality of pay and reward for all colleagues.

We operate a variety of pay and benefit review mechanisms, many of which incorporate union involvement and these arrangements are designed to ensure that any enhancements are based on objective criteria, free from discrimination and have due regard to the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.

Responsibilities

Whilst we all have a collective responsibility to ensure this policy is successfully adopted, there are special responsibilities within this:-

The Senior Management Team

The Senior Management Team (SMT) fully endorses this policy and holds ultimate responsibility for reviewing and achieving its aims. SMT recognizes its role in being responsible and accountable for the development of diversity awareness in HHL and, as such, will lead by example.

Managers

All managers are responsible for implementing and enforcing this policy and ensuring that their teams and colleagues are aware of their responsibilities. Managers should promote, respect and encourage each colleague to reach their full potential and deal appropriately with any breach of this policy.

Colleagues

All colleagues of HHL, at every level, have an individual responsibility for ensuring equality of opportunity and adherence to this policy. This can be achieved by respecting the right to work in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination, exhibiting the correct behaviours and challenging colleagues who fall short of these expectations.

Monitoring

We continuously review this policy, together with all of our employment policies and practices to maintain our focus on equality of opportunity.

To ensure that this policy and other procedures are operating effectively, HR will continue to monitor and measure the records of our colleagues, benchmark our performances as a Company and ensure that any patterns or trends are identified and resolved.

To achieve the aims and commitments of this policy, the HR team will ensure that regular monitoring will take place. This will be in the form of:-

- * A Diversity Monitoring Questionnaire for all colleagues
- * Regular statistics, broken down into diversity categories to be reviewed by the Board. Where necessary, targets and performance management objectives will be set for specific areas in need of improvement, along with the necessary support and training.
- * HR monitoring of our colleague database, to ensure the application and effectiveness of this policy.

Approved by:	Human Resources and Remuneration Committee
Effective date:	22 nd July 2008
Review date:	22 nd July 2011
Policy developed by:	Human Resources Manager
Associated Procedure:	None

Our Hate Incidents Policy

INTRODUCTION

This policy forms part of HHL's equality and diversity agenda as set out in our Equality and Diversity Framework 2008-2011. Its specific purpose is to clearly identify the aims and principles, which will apply in respect to hate incidents and how we will respond to reports of any such occurrences.

Hate incidents refers, in this context, to a range of criminal and/or offensive behaviours motivated by hostility towards someone because of his or her race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief.

This policy and its associated procedure covers all types of hate incidents because they share a high potential for harming the victim; for harming the victim group; and for harming neighbourhoods, communities and society. Many hate incidents also share other common features relating to under-reporting and repeat victimisation.

POLICY STATEMENT

HHL condemns all forms of hate incidents and will not tolerate any such behaviour, whether perpetrated by its tenants, its occupants of leasehold properties, its employees, or anyone contracted to carry out work on its behalf.

HHL's Tenancy Agreement includes a specific clause, which clearly states that the tenant, anyone living with, or visiting, the tenant must not commit any form of discrimination or harassment, which may cause offence to a person residing, visiting or otherwise engaging in lawful activity in the locality. All Leases issued by HHL also contain similar clauses.

The policy and its associated procedure have been drawn up to comply with the recommendations made in the following:

- § Tackling Racial Harassment: Code of Practice for Social Landlords
- § Housing Corporation Good Practice Note 8: Equality and Diversity
- § CRE Code of Practice on Racial Equality in Housing (England)
- § Housing and Disability Equality Duty
- § Home Office Code of Practice on Reporting and Recording Racist Incidents

Definitions

A hate incident is where the perpetrator's prejudice against any identifiable group of people is a factor in determining who is victimised.

A hate crime is a crime in which the perpetrator's conduct is motivated, in whole or in part, by hatred, bias or prejudice, based upon the actual or perceived race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief of another individual or group.

For the purposes of this policy and its associated procedure we will adopt the same definitions of hate incidents and hate crime as used in the publication 'Hate Crime: Delivering a Quality Service,' Association of Chief Police Officers.

i. A Hate Incident is defined as:

'Any incident, which may or may not constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated by prejudice or hate.'

ii. A Hate Crime is defined as:

'Any incident, which constitutes a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated by prejudice or hate.'

The above are broad and inclusive definitions. The emphasis is placed on the perception of the victim, or any other person and as such, for the purposes of this policy, they also encompass any actions or series of actions perceived by the victim, or any other person to constitute harassment that is driven by prejudice or hatred.

Other forms of harassment, which are not motivated by prejudice or hatred are not covered by this policy and will be pursued through HHL's Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Procedure.

Hate incidents perpetrated by colleagues of Herefordshire Housing, during the course of their work, are also outside the scope of this policy and its procedure. Internal disciplinary procedures will be followed in response to any allegations of work based incidents.

Hate Incidents

Hate incidents can take many forms. The following list constitutes examples only and is not intended to be exhaustive:

- § Physical assaults and threats.
- § Damaging or threatening to damage property or possessions, the dumping of rubbish or other offensive materials in the victim's home, garden or surrounding area.
- § Verbal abuse, derogatory or unwelcome remarks, including the use of negative stereotypes of particular groups, inappropriate language and 'jokes.'
- § Threatening or abusive letters, telephone calls, texts or e-mails.
- § Hate related graffiti, defacing notices or posters, the display and/or circulation of offensive written or printed literature/material.

IMPLEMENTATION

In order to meet the aims and principles that the Hate Incidents Policy sets out HHL will:

- § Support victims and witnesses.
- § Work in a multi-agency environment.

- § Undertake preventative activity and widely publicise information relating to our policy on hate incidents.
- § Take enforcement action against perpetrators.
- § Ensure that all HHL colleagues dealing with hate incidents are fully trained.
- § Set performance targets and undertake performance monitoring.

Supporting Victims and Witnesses

We will do all that we can to support our tenants who are experiencing hate incidents and any witnesses. We will also do all that we can to support our leaseholders and occupants of leasehold properties where the perpetrator is an HHL tenant, or HHL Leaseholder, or an occupant of an HHL Leasehold property. To achieve this:

- § We will provide a service where complainants can contact us 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to report a hate incident.
- § We will fully support victims, their families and any witnesses by taking a complainant centered approach.
- § We will deal with all reported incidents sensitively, fairly and impartially.
- § We will ensure that the victim's wishes are paramount in determining what action will be taken.
- § We will advise victims of the support services that we and other agencies such as the Police, Victim Support and the Council's Corporate Diversity Team can provide.
- § We will make referrals to Victim Support as appropriate to the wishes of the tenant, or occupant of a leasehold property.
- § We will ensure that we have access to interpreters, signers and use appropriate formats of communication for anyone who has difficulty reading or writing English.
- § We will discuss all action to be taken with the complainant, give an explanation of the options available to us, including likely outcomes and set this down in an agreed Action Plan.
- § We will maintain appropriate confidentiality and will seek the victim's written permission before contacting the alleged perpetrator, legal representatives or any other agencies.
- § We will provide regular updates on progress from the onset of the case to case closure and beyond, if appropriate.
- § We will always try to minimise the burden on complainants in collecting evidence through:
 - Ø the short, focussed use of log sheets rather than their prolonged use with no clear outcomes.

- Ø the use of hand-held voice recording and noise monitoring equipment and CCTV, where appropriate.
- § We will enable the provision of increased security, where this is considered necessary, by applying, on the tenant's behalf, for a police Home Security Check. We will take all reasonable steps to comply with any resulting recommendations. For occupants of HHL leasehold properties we will provide advice and support and, where agreed, will take reasonable steps to comply with any recommendations resulting from a police Home Security Check.
- § Where court action is taken:
 - Ø We will provide transport to court for witnesses, pay expenses for refreshments and child care and any other reasonable costs where these are needed to facilitate the attendance at Court of the witness.
 - Ø We will arrange for an accompanied visit to court, prior to attendance, to familiarise witnesses with the court environment and proceedings.
- § We will aim to create a climate where people feel confident in coming forward with information, but should complainants wish to remain anonymous we will still investigate the complaint. However, we also have a responsibility to ensure that complainants are aware that, if they wish to remain anonymous, this may limit the types of action that we are able to take.
- § We will, in extreme cases, where there are fears for a tenant's safety, attempt to facilitate relocation. The recommendations and assistance of statutory agencies will be required in considering such a move. For occupants of HHL leasehold properties we will offer support and provide information about the potential options available.

Work in a multi-agency environment

- We will take an active role in a multi-agency approach to tackling hate incidents through full involvement in the Herefordshire Community Safety Drugs Partnership.
- § We will work in partnership with the Police, Herefordshire Council and the other signatories to the Herefordshire Community Safety and Drugs Partnership Information Sharing Protocol.
- § We will ensure that links are developed and maintained with a range of community groups, voluntary and statutory agencies so as to enhance our expertise in dealing with hate incidents and enable the provision of effective support to victims and witnesses.
- § We will, where relevant legal powers are not available to HHL, work in partnership with those statutory authorities with whom such power resides in order to meet the aims and principles set by this policy.
- § We will contribute to any arrangements whereby local agencies work together to map incidents in order to enable the identification of any trends and 'hot spots' of activity.

Undertake preventative activity

- § We will ensure that the clauses in our tenancy agreement prohibiting discrimination and harassment are clearly explained to tenants at the sign up of their tenancy.
- § We will ensure that our Hate Incidents information leaflet is included in Lettings Packs for new tenants.
- § We are aware that hate incidents often go unreported. We will encourage the reporting of incidents through the wide publicity of our policy and will work with tenants to encourage them to play a part in the prevention and the reporting of incidents.

Action against perpetrators

- § We will make full use of the range of enforcement measures and legal options available to us to effectively address hate incidents, always being aware of the wishes of the victim.
- § We will, where there is sufficient evidence, apply the exclusions clauses in our Lettings Policy relating to applicants, or members of their household, who have previously been responsible for hate related incidents.

Training

- § We will ensure that all HHL colleagues receive training to make sure that the definitions of hate crime and hate incidents are fully understood and that colleagues respond effectively, sensitively and in accordance with HHL procedures when dealing with reported incidents.
- § We will utilise the expertise of statutory and voluntary agencies, where appropriate, for colleague training purposes.

Performance targets and monitoring

- § We will set targets for responding to incidents and will monitor and report on our achievement against these targets to our Customers Services Committee and to HHL's Diversity Working Group.
- § We will ensure that all reports of hate incidents are recorded and monitored from receipt to case closure and that this information is analysed on a regular basis.
- § We will implement the Home Office Code of Practice on the reporting and recording of racist incidents.
- § We will undertake regular satisfaction surveys of complainants who have reported hate incidents.

MONITORING AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the Board to ensure that implementation of the Hate Incidents Policy is monitored.

The Business Excellence Manager is responsible for delivering the policy and will be accountable for its implementation and colleague training.

Every relevant Herefordshire Housing colleague has the responsibility to read, understand and implement this policy.

All contractors, consultants and partner organisations are responsible for operating in accordance with this policy when delivering services on behalf of Herefordshire Housing.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- § Hate Incidents Procedure
- § Equality and Diversity Framework
- § Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Procedure
- § Anti-Social Behaviour Statement of Policy and Statement of Procedure

Approved by:	Customer Services Committee
Effective date:	September 2008
Review date:	September 2011
Policy developed by:	Business Excellence Manager
Associated Procedure:	Hate Incidents Procedure

Our Tackling Domestic Abuse Policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out the aims and principles, which will apply when incidents of actual or threatened domestic abuse are reported to us by our tenants.

Herefordshire Housing believes that none of its tenants should live in fear of domestic abuse and will take steps to assist and support any tenant in this situation.

Domestic abuse is defined as violent behaviour, actual or threatened, within a family or relationship context. It includes not only physical and sexual abuse but also behaviour, which is threatening to a person's mental or emotional health. The perpetrator may or may not reside at the tenant's home.

Our aims

The Company's aim is to ensure that Herefordshire Housing tenants experiencing domestic abuse receive a fair, sympathetic and supportive service and, within the constraints of the law and the resources available to it, are provided with all reasonable assistance in helping to resolve their situation.

Implementation

In order to meet the aims and principles of this policy, Herefordshire Housing will:

- * Adopt a victim-centered approach whereby all actions are directed to providing the necessary support and protection to the victim
- * Ensure that tenants experiencing domestic abuse have access to appropriate advice about their housing options and about their legal rights and responsibilities
- * Ensure that, through liaison with specialist agencies such as Women's Aid, victims of domestic abuse have access to appropriate support.
- * Make referrals, as appropriate, to West Mercia Constabulary Domestic Violence Unit and to Herefordshire Women's Aid Outreach Support Project.
- * Be guided by the wishes of the victim in determining the most appropriate course of action in responding to reported incidents
- * Take firm action against perpetrators of domestic abuse, as appropriate to individual circumstances and within the legal framework available to the Company. This may include possession proceedings where other members of the household have left the home as a consequence of the domestic abuse.
- * Respect confidentiality and ensure that all information obtained is treated in accordance with the Company's Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy.
- * Where the tenant wishes to remain in occupation of their current home, enable the provision of increased security by applying, on their behalf, for a police Home Security Check and take reasonable steps to comply with these recommendations. Where more substantial works are required, and as appropriate, we will make a referral to the Local Authority Homelessness Prevention Team's 'Sanctuary' Project.
- * Make those at risk of domestic abuse aware of the services of the Careline Emergency Alarm service and to make this available as required.
- * Abide by the principles of multi-agency collaborative working.

Monitoring & Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Operations Director to ensure that:

- * all relevant colleagues are aware of the Domestic Abuse Policy
- * all relevant colleagues are trained on the Domestic Abuse Policy and any other relevant Legislation
- * customers are aware of the Domestic Abuse Policy

It is the responsibility of all colleagues to ensure that this policy is applied.

Approved by:	Board of Management
Effective date:	March 2007
Review date:	March 2010
Policy developed by:	Head of Housing
Associated Procedure:	Domestic Abuse Procedure

Disability Equality Scheme

Herefordshire Housing's Equality and Diversity Framework sets out our general commitment to valuing diversity, treating people with dignity and respect and eliminating discrimination. We recognise that discrimination and inequality occurs in our society and that it is important to find ways to tackle discrimination and promote equality.

In addition to the Framework, our Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan sets out our plans for making equality happen specifically for disabled people, both in terms of the services we provide and employment opportunities. Our approach is based on the 'Social Model of Disability' which underpins our approach to access and inclusion.

Copies of our Disability Equality Scheme and Action plan can be found on our website and at all reception areas. Please contact Christine Duggan on 01432 384008 to request a copy.

Gender Equality Scheme

Herefordshire Housing recognises that we have a role as a service provider and employer to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

Our Gender Equality Scheme sets out our plans for implementing gender equality through service planning, equality impact assessments, and monitoring.

Copies of our Gender Equality Scheme and Action plan can be found on our website and at all reception areas. Please contact Christine Duggan on 01432 384008 to request a copy

Turning Policy into Action

Our Equal Opportunities Policies are supported by an action plan, which is reviewed annually. The action plan sets out a schedule of actions and targets designed to measure the effectiveness of our policy and to ensure improvements in outcomes for our customers, potential customers and colleagues.

The Action Plan identifies action in seven key areas:

- * Governance
- * Service Delivery
- * Access to Information & Services
- * Asset Management & Procurement
- * Resident Involvement
- * Harassment, Discrimination & Domestic Abuse
- * Employment

The action plan will be reviewed quarterly by the Diversity Working Group with results reported to our Board via a bi-annual Equalities Report. In addition, progress against the plan will be reported to customers via the website and tenant newsletter.

The action plan is attached as **Appendix Three**.

In order to effectively manage our approach to Equality and Diversity, Herefordshire Housing has introduced a suite of performance indicators. These indicators are shown at **Appendix Four**.