

Gender Equality Action Plan 2008-11

Introduction

The Group's Gender Equality Scheme will have the following essential elements:

- An action plan
- A statement of how staff and residents have been involved in developing the scheme
- Information about performance of the Association on gender equality
- An assessment of the impact of the Housing Association on gender equality
- Ongoing and inclusive review of the effectiveness of the action plan and revising the scheme

At the heart of our Scheme will be our gender equality action plan. It will enable us to meet the following core objectives:

1. To promote equality of opportunity between men and women and those who are transgender
2. To eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the basis of gender or transgender

Stage 1 – Developing the Action Plan

- Reviewing existing plans and gap analysis (February 2008)
- In-house consultation to complete action plan (February/March 2008)
- Consultation with residents on priorities for improvement (April 2008)
- Approval by GST (April 2008)

Stage 2 – Launching the Action Plan

- In-house launch and briefings to staff (from May 2008)
- External launch with partners and residents (from July 2008)
- Communicating to CSC, JBHA, SWHA and Group Board (from June 2008)

Stage 3 – Review of the Action Plan

- Annual staff consultation on service delivery and employment approach (from March 2009)
- Annual resident consultation on plan and progress (from March 2009)

Functions	Priorities	Action	Outcome	Responsible	Timescale	Objective
Employment and Governance - Karen Harvey						
Governance	Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify any barriers to men, women and those who are transgender to becoming Board or Committee members ▪ Positively encourage the recruitment of men, women and those who are transgender when and if appropriate ▪ Monitor and report on Board and Committee membership 	Increased accessibility to Board and Committee positions	Company Secretary	April 08	1 & 2
	Understanding role and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure Board and Committee members know the legal and regulatory changes with regard to gender equality ▪ Build the gender equality duty into strategic planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure the duty is implemented and acted upon ▪ Deliver consistent message that gender equality is integral to the Group 	Company Secretary	March 08	2
	Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Launch gender equality training for all Board and Committee members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attendance at training sessions 	Company Secretary	March 08	1 & 2
	Groupwide reporting requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Produce reports against gender equality action plan to Board and Committee members on progress ▪ Report on-going Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to the Board and Committees 	Enable Board and Committees to monitor performance and progress against Group's action plan	Company Secretary	April 08	1

Functions	Priorities	Action	Outcome	Responsible	Timescale	Objective
Employment and Governance - Karen Harvey						
Employment	Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify and remove any barriers to the recruitment of men, women and those who are transgender when and if appropriate ▪ Train all staff involved in the recruitment process in gender equality. ▪ Use recruitment process to challenge gender stereotypes in job roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equality of opportunity ▪ More applications from under-represented groups ▪ Eliminating gender stereotypes 	Head of HR and Recruitment Business Partner	April 08 and on-going	1 & 2
	Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review part-time and job share practices to identify and address any discrimination on the basis of gender or transgender using an equalities survey ▪ Promote part-time / flexible working to all staff on an annual basis, regardless of gender ▪ Conduct an equal pay audit (every 3 years) in relation to gender and eliminate any discrepancies found ▪ Promote access to management as and when appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eliminate any gender pay gap ▪ Continual assessment of representation within management roles 	Head of HR	June 09 April 08 Sep 09	1 & 2

Functions	Priorities	Action	Outcome	Responsible	Timescale	Objective
Employment and Governance - Karen Harvey						
	Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Integrate gender equality training into all training strategies ▪ Provide all staff with gender equality training ▪ Train managers to be able to effectively respond to victims of harassment, including employees who are victims of domestic violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased awareness of gender equality ▪ Promoting a positive attitude towards gender equality 	Head of HR and Learning & Development Business Partner	June 08	1 & 2

Functions	Priorities	Action	Outcome	Responsible	Timescale	Objective
Employment and Governance - Karen Harvey						
Employment	Staff support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that Worklife Plus is available and appropriate for all members of staff ▪ Understand what staff with caring responsibilities need through an equalities survey ▪ Understand what staff who are transgender require through an equalities survey ▪ Support for women and men returning from paternity/maternity leave and those returning from carers leave ▪ Conduct health and safety risk assessments for groups of staff who are particularly vulnerable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All staff are aware of their benefits under the law and under Worklife Plus ▪ No discrimination against: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ pregnant women/those returning from maternity leave; ○ men taking up/returning from paternity leave; or ○ carers ▪ All staff feel supported and valued 	Head of HR	<p style="text-align: center;">June 09</p> <p style="text-align: center;">March 08</p> <p style="text-align: center;">March 08</p>	1 & 2
Employment	Transgender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Set up systems which can record gender identity of staff and applicants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ability to identify transgender staff and applicants 	Head of HR and Recruitment Business Partner	April 08	1 & 2

Functions	Priorities	Action	Outcome	Responsible	Timescale	Objective
Employment and Governance - Karen Harvey						
	Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor job role by gender profile ▪ Take account of transgender in monitoring approach ▪ Monitor staff awareness of gender equality through an equalities survey ▪ Monitor experience of transgender staff through an equalities survey ▪ Monitor the number of harassment and sexual harassment complaints and tribunals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fairer representation at all levels ▪ Findings of equalities survey are included in gender equality action plan and acted upon 	Head of HR	June 09	1

Functions	Priorities	Action	Outcome	Responsible	Timescale	Objective
Employment and Governance - Karen Harvey						
Procurement	Setting standards and expectations for contractors and suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Procurement policy to be reviewed to include gender impact ▪ Where appropriate specify certain gender equality matters into contracts ▪ Apply performance condition that contractors must comply with anti-discrimination provisions of SDA/EqPA ▪ Exclude tenders who have serious findings against them in employment tribunals unless effective steps have been taken to resolve the issue ▪ Compose an equalities commitment statement for all services and contracts the Group procures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compliance with gender duty ▪ Emphasis of gender duty will be proportionate to particular procurement contract 	Group Procurement Executive and Head of Compliance	Oct 08	1 & 2
	Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training for all employees involved in the procurement process ▪ Aware that contractor staff have had appropriate sexual harassment training 	Awareness of implications of gender duty on procurement process	Group Procurement Executive and Head of Compliance	Oct 08	1
	Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure contract reviews address any equality issues that may arise ▪ Set up mechanisms to monitor standards (e.g. inspections, periodic satisfaction surveys, etc) 	Ensure contractors are meeting requirements of gender duty	Group Procurement Executive and Head of Compliance	Oct 09	1

Functions	Priorities	Action	Outcome	Responsible	Timescale	Objective
Asset Management – Jonathan Fitch						
Asset management	Design brief review	Ensure that the design brief takes account of the diverse needs of local communities	The design of new build and reinvestment schemes reflects cultural expectations and practices where possible and appropriate, including gender	Reinvestment Director Head of Development	Dec 08	1
	Impact assessments	Carry out impact assessments on new build and reinvestment programmes	Positive outcomes following Housing Corporation 'Scheme Assessments' relating to gender issues Introduction of new 'Service Standard' for contractors and consultants working on occupied dwellings, incorporating gender-specific requirements	Head of Development Reinvestment Director	Mar 09 Mar 09	1 & 2

Functions	Priorities	Action	Outcome	Responsible	Timescale	Objective
Customer Services - Peter Day						
Lettings	Analysing lettings profile according to gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use the lettings profile to identify any unequal outcomes of our processes (including CBL, nominations, etc.) ▪ Address any discrimination identified in our internal processes ▪ Work with LAs to address any external discrimination identified 	Our lettings processes do not discriminate on the grounds of gender or transgender	Head of Lettings	April 09	1 & 2
	Promoting joint tenancies	Encouraging partners to sign up to joint tenancies	Greater security of tenure and rights for both partners	Head of Lettings	April 09	2
	Reviewing appointment times	Ensure viewing, visit and appointment times take account of individual circumstances and do not discriminate against anyone on the basis of gender or transgender	Flexible appointment times which take account of individual needs where possible	Head of Lettings	April 09	1

Functions	Priorities	Action	Outcome	Responsible	Timescale	Objective
Customer Services - Peter Day						
Sales	Analysing sales profile according to gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use the satisfaction survey to identify any unequal outcomes of our processes ▪ Address any discrimination ▪ Work with LAs and other partners to address any external discrimination 	Our sales process does not discriminate on the grounds of gender or transgender	Sales Managers	April 08 and on-going	1 & 2
	Use of marketing material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop our marketing material so that it promotes positive images about all gender roles, which challenges stereotypes, and is not discriminatory 	Our marketing approach is non-discriminatory and promotes positive images of all genders	Marketing Manager	April 08 and on-going	1 & 2
Services to residents	Repairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analyse the take up and satisfaction of the repairs service according to gender ▪ Work with contractors on a Respect for Residents agenda which covers all strands of diversity, including gender and transgender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Better understanding of the experience of the repairs service according to gender ▪ Using data to identify and address any areas of discrimination 	Group Maintenance Manager	Sept 09 Sept 09	1 & 2

Functions	Priorities	Action	Outcome	Responsible	Timescale	Objective
Customer Services - Peter Day						
Services to residents (cont.)	Domestic violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete review of current approach to domestic violence (DV) ▪ Update DV policy and procedure to take account of gender and transgender ▪ Explore SP resources for people who experience DV ▪ Work with LAs and other organisations to access support for our residents that experience DV ▪ Signpost advice and referral to support agencies ▪ Develop a clear approach to rehousing victims of DV ▪ Prioritise health and safety repairs for people who experience DV and ensure that the maintenance budget covers these repairs ▪ Work with LA and other partners to explore potential of sanctuary/safe room provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved levels of recording and reporting DV ▪ An approach to DV that does not discriminate on the grounds of gender or transgender ▪ An approach to DV that better understands and meets the needs of those experiencing DV ▪ Effective working with LA and other partners to meet the needs of those experiencing DV ▪ Increased awareness among staff and residents on how we approach DV and what actions we take 	Anti-Social Behaviour Manager	<p>Dec 08</p> <p>Dec 08</p> <p>June 09</p> <p>June 09</p> <p>August 08</p> <p>March 09</p> <p>Dec 08</p> <p>Mar 09</p>	1

Functions	Priorities	Action	Outcome	Responsible	Timescale	Objective
Customer Services - Peter Day						
Services to residents (cont.)	Harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review our approach to dealing with harassment to ensure that it tackles gender and transgender harassment ▪ Make adjustments to our approach where necessary ▪ Signpost advice and referral to support agencies ▪ Ensure that our tenancy agreement/lease covers the harassment of people who are transgender ▪ Investigate use of an out-of-hours report line for gender and transgender harassment and DV (and other types of serious ASB complaints) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transgender and gender harassment are tackled effectively by current processes ▪ Increased awareness among staff and residents on how we tackle gender and transgender harassment 	Anti Social Behaviour Manager	<p>Dec 08</p> <p>Aug 08</p> <p>Aug 08</p> <p>Dec 08</p> <p>Mar 09</p>	1
	Equality and diversity resident summary	Produce equality and diversity resident summary and include in lettings pack	Residents are confident of our commitment to equality and diversity, including gender and transgender	Head of Service Development	April 09	2

Functions	Priorities	Action	Outcome	Responsible	Timescale	Objective
Customer Services - Peter Day						
Services to residents (cont.)	Communication and providing information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review formal and informal communication to ensure that it does not discriminate on the basis of gender or transgender ▪ Use formal and informal communication to promote positive images about gender roles, which challenge stereotypes 	Communication approach which is non-discriminatory and helps to promote gender equality	Head of Communications	June 09 June 09	2
	Transgender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Set up systems to record the gender identity of our residents ▪ Capture and record the experience of people who are transgender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ability to record gender identity ▪ Ability to understand how people who are transgender experience our service 	Head of Service Development	Sept 08 June 09	1 & 2
	Service monitoring	Include gender and transgender as a standard measure for all service monitoring	Report on gender and transgender as part of service monitoring	Head of Service Development	June 09	1
	Service offer	Review current service offer to ensure that it does not discriminate on the basis of gender and transgender	A service offer which is relevant to all residents	Research Manager	Dec 08	1
	Women's Housing	Review the service provided to the properties known as WHT schemes in the light of the gender and transgender legislative requirements	Services which meet the needs of all residents of these properties	London Regional Director	Oct 08	

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Customer Services - Peter Day						
Sustaining tenancies	Signposting support advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide advice and referral to appropriate support agencies ▪ Ensure that support packages accessible to all 	Provide support and advice which is accessible by all	Anti Social Behaviour Manager	August 08	2
	Sustainable communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify specific barriers faced by any gender in terms of accessing employment training opportunities ▪ Ensure the Foundation training programme takes account of all aspects of diversity, including gender ▪ Set up a system to record transgender experience where relevant /appropriate ▪ Identify/track projects & the outcomes based on diversity criteria 	<p>Employment and training strategy and targeting of resources to overcome barriers</p> <p>Projects that reflect the needs of all genders</p>	Community Regeneration Manager Community Regeneration Manager Director of the Southern Housing Foundation Grants Officer	Dec 08 Sep 08	2
Resident involvement & inclusion	Inclusion framework	Identify and address any barriers to resident involvement on the grounds of gender	Resident involvement reflects our resident profile	Resident Involvement Manager	Dec 08	1 & 2
	Equality Impact Assessment framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create an Equality Impact Assessment Framework for staff to follow ▪ Introduce training for key members of staff on EIAs 	Policies and procedures include equality impact assessments	Head of Service Development	July 08 Dec 08	1
Policy and practice	Inclusion in policy review process	Ensure that resident involvement in policy development reflects our resident profile	A review process that's open & accessible to residents & reflects our resident profile	Head of Service Development	Sept 08	2