

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy	
<b>Document Owner:</b> Director of People	<b>Document No:</b> HR-PL-018
<b>Date Approved:</b> October 2023	<b>Review Date:</b> October 2026

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### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 By everyone embracing and living our EDI policy we believe that we can play a massive part in developing our local communities, improving customer and staff satisfaction and encourage everyone to be themselves.
- 1.2 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is the fundamental principle underpinning behaviours we expect our colleagues to display in their dealings with customers, colleagues and other stakeholders.
- 1.3 This policy sets out our commitment to EDI, and the responsibilities of all colleagues.

### 2.0 Policy objectives, key performance indicators (KPI) and reporting

- 2.1 This policy aims to set out that we intend to meet or exceed legislative requirements, contribute to our local communities, improve customer and colleague satisfaction and encourage everyone to be themselves through good EDI practice.
- 2.2 Annual equalities reports and pay gap reports will be approved by the board and published on relevant government and Beyond Housing websites.

Key Performance Indicator	Owner (job role)	Policy objective alignment
Equalities pay gaps	Director of People	
Customer satisfaction	Director of Customer Service	
EDI action plan completion	Director of People	

### 3.0 Definitions

- 3.1 **EDI:** Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- 3.2 **EIA:** Equalities Impact Assessment

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### 3.3 Protected Characteristics<sup>1</sup>:

3.3.1 **Age:** A person belonging to a particular age (for example 32 year olds) or range of ages (for example 18 to 30 year olds).

3.3.2 **Disability:** A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

3.3.3 **Gender Reassignment:** The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

3.3.4 **Marriage and Civil Partnership:** Marriage is a union between a man and a woman or between a same-sex couple. Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except where permitted by the Equality Act). This right has now been extended to opposite-sex couples.

3.3.5 **Pregnancy and Maternity:** Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

3.3.6 **Race:** Refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins

3.3.7 **Religion or Belief:** Religion refers to any religion, including a lack of religion. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

3.3.8 **Sex:** A man or a woman

3.3.9 **Sexual Orientation:** Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

3.4 **Cultural:** relating to the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a society, or group of people

3.5 **Sub-Cultural:** a group of people within a culture that differentiates itself from the parent culture to which it belongs, often maintaining some of its founding principles.

## 4.0 Legislative, regulatory and strategic alignment

4.1 Beyond Housing is committed to EDI through its people plan, supporting two of the four main strategic aims of the company:

<sup>1</sup> **Definitions:** <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics>

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4.1.1 **Places** - to invest in our neighbourhoods to create great place to live and work; and

4.1.2 **People** - to be a great place to work for our people.

4.2 This policy aims to understand and meet our obligations in relation to:

4.2.1 The Equality Act 2010

4.2.2 Regulatory Framework such as the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

4.2.3 Care Act 2014

4.2.4 Modern Slavery Act 2015

4.3 While Beyond Housing is not considered a 'public body' under The Equality Act 2010, we aim to adopt the additional requirement of public bodies, who are also required to have due regard to the need to:

4.3.1 Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act

4.3.2 Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

4.3.3 Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

## 5.0 Responsibilities

5.1 **Everyone** is responsible for acting within the values of the organisation in relation to EDI.

5.2 **Board** are responsible for scrutiny and approval of this Policy.

5.3 The **Senior leadership team** are responsible for overall implementation of this Policy.

5.4 All **managers** are responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the policy, working in line with the relevant procedures and ensuring adherence and compliance with the policy. This includes ensuring appropriate reasonable adjustments are made for colleagues who may be considered disabled under the terms of The Equality Act 2010.

5.5 The **EDI Champions** are responsible for the promotion of EDI across the business, for scrutinising EIAs and other items as detailed in the groups Terms of Reference (Appendix 1). The EDI Champions Forum will monitor the effectiveness of this policy.

5.6 **All colleagues**, (including employees, workers and contractors) are responsible for behaving in line with this policy at all times.

## 6.0 Policy delivery

6.1 By being committed to providing equality of access to services, we aim to ensure that everyone receives the best quality standard of service.

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- 6.2 It's also important we recognise that in order to achieve equality of service, we need to understand the differences that exist across our communities and people. We should always look to recognise how these differences can have an impact on how we can interact and deliver services, and find ways to meet the wider variety of needs that our customers may have.
- 6.3 It is vital that we find ways to make sure everyone feels included in the work of Beyond Housing. We aim to be an open, transparent and inclusive organisation which doesn't discriminate based on any protected characteristic, cultural (and sub-cultural) identity or any other personal characteristic which may lead to someone feeling isolated in our communities or workplaces.
- 6.4 To do this everyone at Beyond Housing will act in accordance with our company values of being Considerate; Collaborative; Accountable, and Ambitious.

#### **Considerate:**

- 6.5 We want you to be treated as an individual by the business and by your colleagues; but this extends to how you should treat everyone you work with whilst being employed by Beyond Housing. You should recognise the difference in your colleagues and in our customers and adapt your approach accordingly. This could include understanding that a customer who has mobility issues may take longer to answer the door to sending a letter in large print to a customer who may have a visual impairment. Being considerate is about recognising that all of these differences will be beneficial to us realising our ambitions, and understanding that it will never be "one size fits all"; especially if we want to be seen as a landlord, service provider and employer of choice.

#### **Collaborative:**

- 6.6 Different ideas and perspectives are proven to make projects more successful. By championing diversity within our work, engaging with different colleagues and recognising their past experiences, differences and perspectives it will help us to be more successful in everything we do. This inclusive approach should be a natural part of our work at Beyond Housing. It's not just about your colleagues; think about how you can tailor your approach to the needs of specific customers; for example, understand what they view as a successful outcome from their complaint. By taking a collaborative approach to your work you'll be better placed to empathise and understand what might work for individual customers to meet their specific needs.

#### **Accountable:**

- 6.7 Every decision we make should be done with accountability at its heart. This means taking responsibility for our actions. If we don't understand why a customer may want us to take a course of action to solve their problem we need to listen to them and explain what we are able to do. Being accountable extends much further than one-to-one interactions with customers.
- 6.8 Beyond Housing will ensure that any internal policies and procedures are delivered with EDI as a central theme. This is especially true when considering the following services:

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- 6.8.1 Safeguarding
  - 6.8.2 Housing Management policies and procedures
  - 6.8.3 Delivery of all repairs services, policies and procedures
  - 6.8.4 Complaints policy and procedures
  - 6.8.5 Recruitment and selection processes
  - 6.8.6 Performance management, disciplinary and other colleague related processes
  - 6.9 All policies and new services will undergo an Equality Impact Assessment; this will help us to understand which customers and customer groups will be affected by us changing our services and we will endeavour to mitigate any negative effects as soon as they are identified.
  - 6.10 All colleagues will receive training on EDI to ensure there is an understanding across all teams about the issues and the part everyone has to play in ensuring the aims of this policy are met.
  - 6.11 All suppliers are required to demonstrate their approach to EDI. If a supplier does not have an appropriate policy, we ask them to adopt our own. Failure to do so may lead to a supplier not being approved. This approach forms part of our supplier selection process.
- Ambitious:**
- 6.12 By everyone embracing and living our EDI policy we believe that we can play a massive part in developing our local communities, improving customer and staff satisfaction and encourage everyone to be themselves. If we want to be different we have to be different. We aim to be a leader in diversity and recognised as operating at the forefront of equalities issues both within the sector but also regarded as a centre of excellence to businesses operating outside of the sector. We also aim to tailor our services to meet the needs of our different communities and endeavour to be at the forefront of using equalities research and practice to help benefit our people and our communities.

## 7.0 Consultation

- 7.1 If a policy review is required due to legislative or regulatory changes, or there is a change to the principles of approach to this policy then we will consult, as appropriate, on these changes with customers, relevant local authorities and other internal and external stakeholders as part of the review process to continually develop good practice.
- 7.2 During any policy review, the EDI champions will have a clear voice in steering the content. Consultation will also take place with colleagues through established consultation forums: Colleague Forum, and Joint Consultation and Negotiating Committee.
- 7.3 This policy will be subject to review after three years or in response to changes in legislation or good practice, whichever is the sooner.

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## 8.0 Approval

Consultation	
Colleague Forum	06 June 2023
Joint Consultation and Negotiation Committee	23 May 2023

Approval and revision Criteria	Information
Document written by:	Director of People
Document approved by:	Governance & Review Committee
Version No.	2

Version no.	Revision date	Reason for revision
2	May 2023	3 year review, into new policy format