

# Equality and Diversity Policy

Approved on: 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2006  
Amended on: 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2009  
Board of Management



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

## **BIELD HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED**

Registered Office: 79 Hopetoun Street, Edinburgh EH7 4QF  
Scottish Charity No SC006878

## **Equality and Diversity Policy**

Equality is central to the values and mission of Bield. This policy statement sets out the Association's Equality and Diversity Policy within this general context.

### Statement of Values

Bield believes that people of all ages, including older people, are valuable individuals with equality of rights and responsibilities. Older people should be able to live with dignity and security, have freedom of choice and independence in their daily living, enjoy privacy, and be able to realise their potential in diverse ways as respected members of society.

### Mission Statement

Bield's primary objective is to enable older people to live independent and fulfilling lives by being a leading and innovative provider of high quality appropriate housing, care and support services.

### Equality and Diversity Policy

Bield is committed to contributing to the achievement of a Scotland where everyone can participate fully and be treated equally and fairly without disadvantage arising from their gender, disability, race or any other personal characteristic.

Equality of opportunity will apply to all of the Association's activities in terms of:-

- Governance
- Landlord functions
- Service provider
- Employment
- Procurement of services

### Governance

The Association seeks a balanced representative membership and is open to all irrespective of colour, race, nationality, ethnic origins, gender, disability, age or sexuality. The Association seeks to achieve equality of opportunity and to this end membership is open to all sections of the community including;

- Black and minority ethnic community members
- Individuals who have experience of a disability
- Tenants of the Association and persons occupying a property, owned by the Association, by virtue of an Occupancy Agreement
- Older people and those who care for older people.

### Landlord Functions

Applications for housing are encouraged from all parts of the community. Our assessment of applications and allocation criteria give particular priority to older and disabled people and we aim to take positive action to redress any imbalance of representation of members of black and minority ethnic groups.

We will act in a non-discriminatory manner in the management of our housing, and in particular will:-

- Normally grant joint tenancies to two-person households
- Include a condition in tenancy and occupancy agreements that prohibits harassment or discrimination against neighbours
- Act to support tenants who are victims of harassment or discrimination.

## Service Provider

We encourage applications, and referrals or nominations from other agencies, for non-housing services, such as community alarm, day and home care, from all parts of the community. Our assessment of applications and allocation criteria give particular priority to older and disabled people and we aim to take positive action to redress any imbalance of representation of members of black and minority ethnic groups.

## Procurement of Services

Bield wishes to encourage those from whom we procure services to have good equal opportunities policies and practices. To this end we will:-

- Review the equal opportunity policy of building contractors and consultants employed by the Association
- Only employ building contractors and consultants who have policies at least equivalent to Bield's own policy, or, in the case of smaller firms, are willing to adopt Bield's policy.
- Any building contractor or consultant who is found to be subjecting any Bield tenant, service user or staff member to harassment or discrimination will be dismissed or not offered further work as appropriate.

## Employment – Equality and Diversity Policy

The Board approved a revised Equality and Diversity Policy relating to Employment in April 2009. The Equality and Diversity Policy (Employment) contains the following;

The Association recognises that in society groups or individuals have been disadvantaged in the past and some have not attained equality of opportunity. The working environment should be one of fairness, respect and understanding where the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is valued. The Association considers any form of discrimination, i.e. treating a person on less favourable grounds than others, to be unacceptable in terms of good practice, social justice and legal duty.

All employees and casual workers are expected to act in accordance with the terms and the spirit of this policy. This means treating colleagues, agency workers, service users and suppliers/contractors with dignity and respect at work or at work related events (e.g. conferences, staff party). Words, behaviour or actions that breach this policy will not be tolerated and will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy.

The Association will seek to ensure equality of opportunity and that employees and casual workers are not treated less favourably on the grounds of age, gender, marital or civil partnership status, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion, religious or similar philosophical belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender re-assignment.

The Association will:

- endeavour to ensure that job vacancies are accessible to all sectors of the community.
- endeavour to ensure that all individuals will be treated fairly and equally and any decision on recruitment and selection or training opportunities will be based on the essential job criteria.
- provide equality and diversity training for all employees and committee members.
- Identify and undertake activities with the aim of achieving a workforce which is reflective of local communities.
- comply with existing relevant anti-discrimination legislation and codes of practice in employment.

- monitor this policy, performance indicators and related policies and procedures to ensure they are appropriate to the achievement of performance targets and are legally compliant.

#### Approval, Implementation and Monitoring of Policy

Responsibility for approval of the Equality and Diversity Policy and monitoring of the Policy and of the implementation of the Equality Action Plan is the direct responsibility of the Board of Management.

Preparation of an Equality Action Plan as part of the Association's Business Plan each year, and implementation and reporting on progress against that Plan and of the Equality and Diversity Policy generally is the responsibility of the Chief Executive and Directors of Bield.