



Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy

Approve: Board January 2021
Final amendments February 2021
Reviewed: Dec 2022

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Glossary

Equality: Equality is ensuring that everybody gets the same opportunities, which may mean adjusting things to accommodate individual needs.

Diversity: Diversity describes the different traits and characteristics of individuals that make them unique.

Inclusion: Is an individual's experience within their workplace and in wider society, and the extent to which they feel valued and included.

Executive Summary

This strategy has been developed alongside the organisation's annually reviewed equality, diversity, and inclusion policy statement and action plan. The strategy aims to provide Arawak Walton with a framework in which it will operate and perform providing equality, diversity, and inclusion in employment and service delivery.

In developing this strategy consideration has been given to the equality, diversity, and inclusion legislation, duties, good practice and guidance.

Action which has been carried out to implement this strategy will be identified within an annual report to the Board.

Section 1 – Introduction

Explains why this strategy was developed and what it covers. The strategy is a key document to demonstrate performance across the organisation.

Section 2 - Performance requirements

Highlights equality, diversity, and inclusion external performance requirements.

Section 3 – Principles and Aims

Outlines the principles and aims which will underpin Arawak Walton's commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

Section 4 – Policy priorities and implementation

Provides a clear outline of the equality, diversity, and inclusion implementation areas, which Arawak Walton will prioritise.

Section 5 - Implementing, monitoring and reviewing this strategy

Provides outline of the process of implementing, monitoring and reviewing this strategy

1. Introduction

This strategy has been reviewed alongside the organisation's reviewed equality, diversity, and inclusion policy statement and action plan 2021. The strategy aims to provide the organisation with a clear approach to providing services designed by and delivered for all the diverse communities for which Arawak Walton Housing Association provide a service.

In developing this strategy due consideration has been given to the Equality Act 2010 its statutory codes and guidance and its nine protected characteristics: race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, age, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity explicitly.

As a Black and minority ethnic housing association, Arawak Walton's ethos is already committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion for all and we wish to lead in all areas of equality, diversity, and inclusion.

We work predominantly in the inner-city areas of Manchester and Trafford. Since our inception as an organisation we have focused on the challenges of social deprivation and exclusion associated with inner cities.

With our specialist knowledge of the African-Caribbean community and its cultural needs, we work with partner agencies to improve community cohesion by developing sustainable multi-cultural neighbourhoods.

1.1 Why have an Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy?

equality, diversity, and inclusion recognise the strengths and potential of each individual. It broadens the working culture so that a variety of thinking and styles can be accommodated for the benefit of the individual and the organisation's performance. Pursuing equality, diversity, and inclusion goals opens new ideas, attracts new people and creates new networks. It also improves services to communities and customers as well as improving relations with the wider public.

Arawak Walton's organisational and social responsibility and legislative requirements means that is a key business priority. The advantages of embracing equality, diversity, and inclusion cannot be achieved unless it is incorporated into every aspect of our organisation's objectives and goals.

1.2 What does the Strategy cover?

This strategy has been developed to provide a framework for action to develop services and implement equality, diversity, and inclusion in a way which not only meets current needs but will be appropriate in the future.

1.3 Arawak Walton strategic objective and statement of values

This strategy sits firmly within Arawak Walton's overall mission. Our primary objective is to deliver good quality affordable housing and associated services.

Our Statement of values are that:

- **We value people**
We shall listen and respond to the needs of all people involved with Arawak Walton.
- **We aim high**
We shall improve the quality of our services
- **We are proud of our roots**
We provide homes; not houses, and support and promote our communities whenever we can
- **We move with the times**
We stay alert to changing circumstances and respond to them with imagination and innovation
- **We rely on teamwork**
We look for partners and alliances to help us achieve our aims both inside and outside the Association
- **We are keen financial managers**
We need financial strength and effective financial management to underpin and expand our work; we use our resources to add value and release potential.
- **We are open and accountable**
We provide user-friendly information about our performance as a housing association.

2. Performance requirements

Achieving equality, diversity, and inclusion remains a main priority for all public organisations from local authorities, ALMO's, housing associations and other social housing providers so the level of performance pressure has never been higher. The main commissioning bodies of the sector, legislative guidance and good practice requirements have been developed to guide and support organisations in their day to day activities. Even where guidance and performance requirements are not directly aimed at an organisation all Auditing Authorities consider non performance of any legislative or other requirement or guidance as evidence of poor performance.

3.0 Principles and Aims

The following draws together the principles which will underpin Arawak Walton's commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion

- Arawak Walton supports the business agenda of promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion and access to services which provides people with the support and services they need to continue live independently in their own homes.
- We will actively engage and empower our full diverse range of customers to contribute to decisions about the future design and delivery of services to ensure these meet their requirements.

Develop services which support the individual and create a fair and flexible service for all.

- We recognise the need to develop services, provide high quality services which meet individual and community needs.
- We will ensure customers are offered services appropriate to their needs and will refer customers requiring specialist support to service providers with particular expertise in this area, where these exist.

In order to achieve these strategic aims we will:

- Ensure that all decision-making structures consider equality, diversity, and inclusion issues.
- Ensure the widest possible representation and involvement of customers, staff and Board member.
- Ensure that equality, diversity, and inclusion is a fundamental principle in all policies and procedures.
- Ensure that no job applicant receives less favourable treatment than any other, and that only the most capable individual is recruited by

assessing the effectiveness of our processes by monitoring all recruitment.

- Ensure that all employees and Board members are supported in developing the skills and abilities they require to carry out their current and any likely future duties in the organisation by creating equal of access to training.
- Ensure that there is an environment where everyone feels valued and is able to perform to their best potential.
- Ensure that the Board, staff, customers and visitors understand and follow the standards of behaviour that are necessary for the proper management of equality, diversity, and inclusion.

4.0 Policy priorities and implementation

Arawak Walton is committed to ensuring that it has the right policies and procedures in place so that equality, diversity, and inclusion is mainstreamed throughout all its functions. Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken on all policies and procedures and outcomes will be reported to the Board.

4.1 Employment

Flexible working and our family friendly employment policy guides our overall approach to employment. Our policies include:

- Flexible working hours
- Term-time leave
- Part-time working
- Job sharing
- Home- working
- Carers leave
- Special leave (Religious or Compassionate)
- Maternity, Adoption, Paternity and Parental leave, including shared parental leave
- Sickness and Absence from work policy
- Disciplinary and Grievance policies

Wherever practical we will endeavour to meet the needs of those employees, who may have particular cultural/religious need. For example: to observe prayer times, during fasting or to go on a pilgrimage (subject to the delivery of the service).

We will also give consideration to requests for annual leave that employees may require in order to observe their religious holidays or festivals.

People with disabilities – We will ensure that employees or applicants with disabilities are not discriminated against on the grounds of disability. And will follow the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 when asking positive questions about the employment of people with disabilities. If any employee becomes disabled whilst in employment and unable to carry out their normal duties, wherever possible, suitable employment will be offered in full discussion with them and other interested parties. Any necessary training needs will also be addressed.

Harassment, Victimization & Discrimination – We are committed to ensuring that the workplace is free from harassment, victimisation and discrimination by ensuring that all staff are fully aware of their rights, responsibilities and expectations with regard to their conduct.

Direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation and instances of harassment or abuse, which are in contravention of policies and/or the law, will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

Recruitment & Selection Policy – We are committed to ensuring equality, diversity, and inclusion for all candidates. A Recruitment & Selection Policy sets down the processes and standards required for all recruitment.

- All applicants will be selected against objective, non-discriminatory criteria in the form of written person specifications, based on up to date job descriptions.
- The chair of every selection panel must have attended a recommended recruitment and selection training.
- All permanent posts will be advertised via the Website. In addition, advertisements will be placed in the relevant local or national or specialist media.
- We will not discriminate directly or indirectly when advertising posts by including any requirements, or criteria, which are unnecessary to the post and may unintentionally, exclude certain groups of potential applicants from applying.

Monitoring Recruitment – Monitoring data at all staff levels and recruitment will be presented to the Board annually. This will include a summary of applicants for all posts by sex, age, race, ethnic origin, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Training and staff development – We aim to ensure that all employees are supported in developing the skills and abilities they require to carry out their current, and any likely future role in the organisation.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion awareness for staff – We will continue to promote and improve awareness of equality, diversity, and inclusion issues throughout our functions and operations.

Appraisals/performance review - We will ensure that procedures are non-discriminatory and that any system promotes equality, diversity, and inclusion for all staff involved. Managers responsible for appraising will be trained in the use of appraisals and performance review as necessary. Objectives will be set and agreed between an individual and their line manager.

4.2 Service Delivery

Access to services - Arawak Walton will continue to develop services that meet the needs and aspirations of local communities. We will use existing consultation to ensure this is achieved for existing communities and the new emerging communities.

Customer involvement and consultation – We will ensure that the involvement processes enable all customer/tenants groups to be fairly represented in participation, communication and decision making.

Allocations and Applications – We will monitor the number of approved and refused applications on a quarterly basis. Applicants are assessed on a 'points' system to assess housing need. This system is in place to eliminate discrimination during the application and allocation process.

Allocation will be monitored and analysed to ensure equality, diversity, and inclusion in allocation standards and quality of housing provision.

Communication and Access to information – We recognise that access to information is essential in achieving diversity of service and empowerment. We will do everything in its power to make all communications fully accessible to all customers and communities we work with.

Translation & Interpretation services- We will continue to develop an equality, diversity, and inclusion communications process which enables the organisation to fully communicate with all the communities we serve.

Partnership working - We expect all suppliers to work within a commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion. We have a supplier code of conduct, which they are required to comply with. We are committed to supporting and promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion with all our suppliers, contractors and partners.

Antisocial behaviour and harassment (including racial harassment and hate crimes) - We will monitor allegations of anti social behaviour separately from all other complaints. Reports will be taken to the Board on at least an annual basis.

A global harassment strategy (incorporating racial harassment and dealing with hate crimes) is in place and we will vigorously investigate and deal with any form of harassment or discrimination.

5.0 Implementing, monitoring and reviewing this strategy

Implementation

Arawak Walton's Chief Executive has the responsibility for ensuring that equality, diversity, and inclusion is embedding within all the activities of the organisation.

Resources

We will ensure that appropriate budgets are set to deliver this strategy, and where necessary, that specialist skills are employed to support existing staff.

The Board

We will ensure that the Board has appropriate skills to fulfil their governance role in respect of this strategy. This will include appropriate equality, diversity, and inclusion governance training.

The Staff

We will ensure that all staff have appropriate skills to fulfil their employment responsibilities in respect of this strategy. This will include appropriate equality, diversity, and inclusion training.

Monitoring

Annual and where appropriate quarterly updates on equality, diversity, and inclusion and data monitoring of recruitment and service delivery will be reported to the Board.

Reviewing

This strategy will be subject to a review every year.