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1. Purpose and scope

Selwood Housing is actively committed to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). Our aim is to truly represent the communities we serve. We aim for each employee, customer, and stakeholder to feel respected and valued. We want everyone to be able to show their authentic selves.

Selwood Housing also has responsibilities under government legislation, regulation and codes of governance including:

- the Equality Act 2010 (incorporating the Public Sector Equality Duty).
- the Human Rights Act 1998.
- the National Housing Federation Code of Governance 2020; and
- the Regulatory Framework, and any relevant amendments to such legislation or further codes / frameworks of practice.

We will expect everyone we work with to work us on this policy. This includes our external contractors, sub-contractors, agents or anyone else providing services for us. We shall take appropriate action if the policy is ignored.

2. Under-pinning principles

Selwood Housing have a strategy detailing our long-term commitment to EDI. This focuses on the following principles:

EDI is everyone's responsibility. Employees, executive, board and customers need to be aware of the importance of EDI and have the confidence to either challenge or report discriminatory practice or behaviours.

Selwood Housing aim to have a diversity of employees to reflect the customers and communities where we work.

Selwood Housing will work with employees, customers, and other stakeholders to create a place that is welcoming, respectful and helps everyone to reach their potential.

EDI should be proactively celebrated, and everyone should be encouraged to improve their understanding of the subject.

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Processes will be put in place to record customer EDI data so that we can plan and evaluate our progress. Selwood Housing will work with customers to explain the positive reasons for collecting data. Collecting data means we can identify inequalities and work to change this.

Selwood Housing needs to be aware of any EDI barriers and work to reduce them where possible. It is crucial we learn from others to adopt good practice where things have gone well. We also need to learn where things haven't gone to plan, to stop this happening again.

Progress is reported annually to the Board. An action plan will help us keep to the strategy. This will detail the EDI plans and improvements we will make. Selwood Housing will react positively to proposals of how to improve.

3. Legislation

Please see chapter 6 for a glossary of definitions used through the policy

3.1 Equality Act 2010

Selwood Housing's EDI policy is based on national legislation.

For more detail you can read the full legislation: [Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

There is also an easy read version available: [Easy Read: The Equality Act - making equality real - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/672223/equality-act-2010-easy-read-version.pdf)

Selwood Housing is committed to promoting equal opportunities and meeting our duties as defined under the Equality Act 2010. This protects people with 'protected characteristics' from unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.

The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (includes ethnic & national origin)
- Religion/belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

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3.2 Public sector equality duty

As a Registered Provider of Social Housing, Selwood Housing has additional duties under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, this is called the Public Sector Equality Duty.

These duties are to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

3.3 Other duties

Selwood Housing also understands that some diversity and risks of discrimination might not be covered by the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. We have a moral duty to address all discrimination as an employer, a landlord and as a provider of services. We are committed to tackling wider inequality and discrimination including that based on:

- Socio-economic background
- Class
- Appearance
- Language
- Accents
- Education
- Learning styles
- Political affiliation
- Any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice

4. Board Responsibilities

The board takes a lead in its commitment to EDI and understanding the needs of our customers and communities. Once a year a report will go to the board to show progress against the EDI strategy and action plan.

The board is responsible for overseeing our legal and regulatory requirements. The board will support the organisation in meeting its EDI strategy.



Selwood Housing is committed to ensuring that our board is diverse and reflects the communities that we serve. We aim to have some members who have lived in our communities or have a strong knowledge of our communities and customers, so our communities can be best

5. Policy details

represented.

5.1 Commitments to our customers

We are committed to equality of opportunities in all the services we provide to our customers. Further commitments are set out below.

5.2 Meeting housing needs

We will work with statutory agencies such as local councils, to share knowledge of the housing needs of our communities and any groups facing discrimination.

We will review how Selwood Housing can help meet these needs. When appropriate we will partner with specialist agencies to meet the needs of disadvantaged groups of people.

We will consider the needs of a diverse range of communities when designing and developing new homes.

5.3 Access to housing

We will make sure our processes for housing or rehousing customers reflects our equality principles.

5.4 Housing services

We will treat all customers with fairness and respect.

Our employees will have appropriate EDI training in relation to their job.

We will talk to our customers and find out their views on our EDI commitments.

We will make sure our customer involvement opportunities welcome all groups of customers.

We will make sure our policies are clear, simple ,and accessible to all.

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We will have zero tolerance on harassment of customers. We will be pro-active working with other agencies to tackle all forms of harassment.

Where possible, we will make sure all forms of information and communication are accessible to customers.

We will make sure our housing services consider the needs of different groups.

5.5 Governance

We shall make sure our governance structures include or work with people with experience or knowledge of our communities.

6. Definitions

Equality: this means everyone having the same chances to do what they can. Some people may need extra help to get the same chances.

Diversity: this is a mix of different kinds of people. For example, men and women, young and old people, people of different races, disabled and non-disabled people characteristics can be seen and unseen and they can be acquired from birth. These differences can go beyond the protected groups set out in legislation.

Inclusion: this is where people's differences are valued and used to enable everyone to thrive in their communities. An inclusive community is one in which everyone feels that they belong without having to conform, that their contribution matters and they are able to perform to their full potential, no matter their background, identity or circumstances.

Discrimination: this is when someone is treated worse than someone else because of a protected characteristic:

- age
- disability
- gender re-assignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (includes ethnic or national origin)
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

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Indirect discrimination is when there's a practice, policy or rule which applies to everyone in the same way, but it has a worse effect on some people than others.

7. Decision-making record

Date	Meeting/Minute Reference	Version /Amendment
26 th July 2023	EDI customer focus group	V4
22 nd August 2023	Executive Team approved	V5

Please note: Much of this policy has been informed by the work of Penningtons Manches Cooper LLP (**PMC**) and Housing Diversity Network (**HDN**) (the **owners**) whose Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy template is subject to the joint copyright and intellectual property of Penningtons Manches Cooper LLP and Housing Diversity Network 2021