

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

What you need to know about our commitment to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace.

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 We value diversity and inclusion (D&I) and we passionately believe that everyone can bring their true selves to work, regardless of what you look like, who you love or where you are from.
- 1.2 This policy confirms our commitment to diversity and inclusion in our services and working practices. As an employer and through our work in providing homes and services, we will help ensure fair treatment for all members of the community regardless of race, ethnic origin, nationality, gender, disability, religion, marital status, maternity, sexuality or sexual orientation, or age.
- 1.3 Our Values guide the way we all work every day. They are:
 - Create trust
 - Be curious
 - Make it happen
 - Achieve impact and
 - Have fun!

2. The Legal Bits

- 2.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, we are responsible as a social housing provider for promoting equality of opportunity. The Act makes discrimination unlawful in relation to the nine 'protected characteristics' (these are shown in Table 1).
- 2.2 While we're not a public body, we take account of the Public Sector Equality Duty and regulatory requirements when delivering services that are public in nature. Under this Duty we must give due regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
 - Advance equality of opportunity.

- Foster good relations (tackling prejudice and promoting understanding).

2.3 The Regulator of Social Housing sets out the Regulatory Standards which require registered housing providers to respond to the needs of diverse residents. Registered providers are required to treat all residents and tenants with fairness and respect, including those with protected characteristics and those with additional support needs.

Table 1 - Equality Act 2010 - protected characteristics		
Age	Marriage and civil partnership	Religion and belief
Disability	Pregnancy and maternity	Sex
Gender re-assign	Race	Sexual orientation

3. Our principles

3.1 We aim to be open, inclusive and diverse. We believe everyone has a right to be treated with dignity, fairness and respect. These principles guide our work:

- We value the diversity and talents of all individuals.
- We support and empower people to succeed.
- We're aiming to create a diverse workforce and inclusive workplace, which reflects the communities we serve.
- We understand the diverse needs of our customers.
- We promote equity and equality for the accessibility of our services.
- We encourage people to 'Call Out' and challenge prejudice, discrimination and harassment.
- We promote diversity and inclusion with our customers, partners, stakeholders and supply chain.

4. Our approach

Employment

4.1 We're committed to creating a positive and inclusive workplace culture. To help achieve a diverse workforce, we use various sources of information to undertake action, which includes:

- Monitoring our recruitment to help us make our recruitment practices as inclusive as possible and understand any barriers.
- Reporting our Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gaps externally.
- Gathering and reporting our colleague D&I data to help us understand the diversity of our workforce.
- Reviewing colleague survey data to monitor and understand issues.

4.2 Our aim is to enable colleagues to be themselves at work. We have set up colleague networks and have D&I champions to provide a safe space and support for colleagues and enable concerns and issues to be raised.

4.3 We also commit to embedding D&I in our learning and development of colleagues through various methods. This is not to simply meet regulatory requirements but to enable colleagues to be ‘customer obsessed’ and build a truly inclusive culture.

Positive action

4.4 We recognise that overcoming barriers to diversity and inclusion can require positive action. We’ll consider measures where we believe we can address such barriers, for example:

- Ensuring fair representation of minority communities in the workforce and governance structure.
- Setting targets for recruitment of under-represented groups.
- As a ‘Disability Confident’ employer, we support recruitment of people with disabilities.
- Using apprenticeships and other training opportunities to encourage applications from under-represented groups.
- Promoting social mobility, including taking positive action to recruit customers.

Harassment, anti-social behaviour and domestic violence

4.5 We have a zero tolerance to any forms of bullying, harassment or discrimination. We’re committed to dealing promptly and effectively with harassment (racial and other), anti-social behaviour and domestic violence affecting customers and colleagues. We employ a specialist team to deal with serious cases and support colleagues in tackling issues affecting customers and communities where we work. We have effective policies and procedures on dignity at work (our ‘Call It Out’ policy) and whistleblowing.

Procurement

4.6 We’re committed to achieving best value in procurement while upholding our diversity and inclusion principles. We ensure this policy is reflected by all suppliers or contractors working on our behalf and our principles are maintained in their dealings with customers and colleagues. Where we can, we’ll look for opportunities that arise through procurement to achieve social impact and inclusive outcomes for communities.

Data protection

4.7 The use of personal information will be treated with full regard to data protection legislation. We’ll ensure data is processed lawfully, accurate, secure, relevant and retained for the appropriate period.

Governance

4.8 This policy is approved by the Board of Yorkshire Housing, who with the Chief Executive are responsible for policy and compliance with equality legislation and regulation. The Executive are responsible for implementation and monitoring of performance. The Colleague Forum is consulted on policy and practice.

5. Diversity and Inclusion Implications

5.1 Making sure that our policies are inclusive and ensure fair treatment for all colleagues and customers, regardless of race, ethnic origin, nationality, gender, disability, religion, marital status, maternity, sexuality or sexual orientation, or age is important to us. When developing this policy, we've considered the implications for people with any of the nine equality characteristics and we've assessed that there are no known negative effects. If you think we've got this wrong, please contact the policy owner.

6. Reporting and monitoring

5.2 This policy will be reviewed regularly to reflect current legislation and good practice. It will be reviewed every two years.

Date approved	14 August 2024
Approved by	YHL Board
Recommended / scrutinised by	Governance and People Committee, 31 July 2024
Summary of changes	Checked for compliance with legislation including the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and reflects current business strategy and practice.
Frequency of review	Every 2 years
Next review date	June 2026
Policy owner	Director of People and Culture
Policy author	EDI Lead
Associated policies or guidelines	Grievance (Resolving Concerns) Policy, Disciplinary Policy, Call it Out Policy, Unreasonable Customer Behaviour Policy, Whistleblower Policy
Associated procedure	None