

Paragon Housing Association Limited

Equalities Policy and Action Plan Review – Consultation 2022

Background & Purpose

This document provides a summary of what we are trying to achieve through reviewing our Equalities Policy and developing an updated Action Plan. We welcome the views of tenants, owners, service users and partner organisations on this.

See how you can get involved on Page 4

Taking Account of the Law

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 sets out the protected characteristics and these are the grounds on which discrimination is unlawful.¹

The nine protected characteristics, in alphabetical order, are:

- age;
- disability;
- gender re-assignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex; and
- sexual orientation.

The Act also has a Public Sector Equality Duty so we require to do the following

- eliminate unlawful discrimination;
- advance equality of opportunity between people with – and those without – a protected characteristic; and
- foster good relations between people with – and those without - a protected characteristic.

¹ Discrimination has different meanings under in law and so discrimination can take different legal forms.

This is about taking positive steps to achieve equality and eliminate discrimination

Other Legislation

Other Acts require that

- every social landlord is to “act in a manner to encourage equal opportunities.”
- there is “prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between persons on the grounds of sex or marital status, or racial grounds, or on grounds of disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or of other personal attributes, including beliefs or opinions such as religious beliefs or political opinions”

Regulatory Standards

These also apply and the Scottish Social Housing Charter (Tenants Charter) requirements state

“Every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.

Starter for 10

We have set out 10 key policy objectives

- Make sure we comply with the Regulatory framework
- Promote equality commitments in our services
- Comprehensive approach with procedures to support what we are trying to do
- Collect and use equality data
- Information and publications will be assessed for accessibility and use positive language to promote respect
- Partnership working with others to promote equalities
- Equality training for staff and management committee member
- Considering Performance management
- Tenant participation and consultation on equality matters including our Tenant Participation Strategy
- Policy review every 3 years or sooner if the law or other requirements

Our Approach

Here is the approach we are taking to implementing our policy objectives and some examples

Legal & Regulatory Requirements

We are using the services of a specialist consultant to help us develop the revised policy and put procedures in place so we get a good level of understanding of requirements to get it right.

Promotion of Equality

We are using opportunities such as newsletters and consultations to promote the Equality agenda. We ensure staff and Management Committee are aware of our approach to equality and buy into this. We have a Code of Conduct in place which covers equality issues.

Procedures

We are developing detailed procedures to make sure we know what to do and how to do it eg use of Happy to Translate Service is in place

Data Collection & Use

The Association recognises the 9 protected characteristics and will collect data from service users, staff and governing body members on this in accordance with the relevant data protection requirements. This is also a regulatory expectation.

Providing this information will be voluntary and based on people giving their consent. We will only share details on individuals with a limited number of authorised staff.

This information is important so we can better target services to people and plan ahead. We believe that we need to use any data collected to shape services – it is not just about collecting statistics.

Example of use of data

A service user advises that they have a medical condition that affects their vision so find it difficult to read some material. While we would hold this information most staff will only be aware of the need to produce information in big print for this person

Making Information Accessible & Positive Promotion

We do a number of things currently like providing materials or services in a different format, interpreting and translation services. Going forward we plan an accessibility audit of our web site and we are developing an appropriate language guide.

Partnership Working

We will work with partners to promote equality – one recent example is that we have signed up to be a partner in Clackmannanshire Council 's Community Anchor Partnership which is looking at social inclusion and gender equality.

Equality Training

Our staff and Management Committee members have had equality training and we are putting together an updated programme for this.

Performance Management

We have Key Performance Indicators in place for certain areas of our work eg satisfaction with the provision of adaptations, timescales to complete these etc. We aim to review and expand these KPI's and it would be good to get your ideas on what we can report on to you.

Tenant Participation

We will take account of equality issues in any planned service changes or policy reviews

Policy Review

We will undertake a review of this policy in 3 years or sooner if circumstances change

How to get involved

This is where we are at currently with the review and some ideas of what we are planning going forward. You can help us shape this in a number of ways – you can do some of them or all of them

- Filling in our on line survey
 - o Link to survey [Equalities Consultation 2022 \(paragonha.org.uk\)](https://paragonha.org.uk/equalities-consultation-2022)
 - o We can provide a paper copy on request – just get in touch
- Giving us your views by letter/email/Facebook Message
 - o Email enquiries@paragonha.org.uk
 - o Facebook Link [Paragon Housing Association Ltd | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ParagonHousingAssociationLtd)
- Taking part in a discussion group - If you are interested give your contact details in the survey

January 2022

- E mail enquiries@paragonha.org.uk or message on Facebook
- Call us on 01324 878050 and give us your contact details

We would love to hear from you about what you have experienced from us by way of service and where we could improve.

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