

Second Quarterly Report (2024/2025) on the Implementation of the Equality Scheme

1.0 Compliance Issues

1.1 Equality Screening/Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) Screening

From 1st July – 30th September 2024 the following policies have been screened:

- Driving for Work and Workplace Transport Policy
- Draft land Disposals Policy
- Revised Land Transfers to Housing Associations Policy
- Home Improvement Grants Policy
- Draft Signing and Sealing of Document Policy

Screening reports are available on request.

EQIA

No Equality Impact Assessments were initiated.

1.2 Training

Safeguarding Training

There were 4 Safeguarding training courses held during 1st July – 30th September 2024.

Equality Awareness Training

There were 5 Equality Awareness training courses held during 1st July – 30th September 2024.

1.3

Access to Information and Services

Communication Support (Translation & Interpreter Services)

A total of 3,989 telephone based interpreting sessions were held from 1st July to 30th September 2024. The top 3 most requested languages are listed below:

- Arabic
- Somali
- Tigrinya

Translation tasks totalled 52 and face to face interpreter sessions (including Sign Language) totalled 13. There was 1 request for alternative formats and 114 calls were made using the Video Relay Service (VRS).

1.4

Monitoring

Equality Monitoring waiting list and allocations data is available up to the 30th September 2024.

1.5

Consultation

The Housing Executive's full Consultative Forum on Equality was held on 20th March 2024. The next meeting is due to be held on 17th October 2024.

2.0

Key Equality/Good Relations Programme

2.1

Irish Traveller Project Team:

The next Irish Traveller Project Team update is scheduled to be in the 3rd Quarterly Report 2024/25.

Community Cohesion

The next Community Cohesion update will be in the 3rd Quarterly Report 2024/25.

2.2

Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Steering Group and Workstreams

The EDI Steering Group provides oversight and challenge on the AAP and Outreach Plan, including recruitment trend performance and outreach activities. The group also oversees and receives regular feedback from EDI workstreams, which provide colleagues with the opportunity to share their own lived experiences and help identify actions to help promote a more inclusive workplace.

The following EDI work stream meetings were held in 1st July – 30th Sep 2024:

- **Disability work stream: 4th September 2024**
Key activity: Engagement session with the Director of Corporate Services, reviewing success of Autism Bus training, update on JAM Card partnership and planning for the first Neurodiversity Support Group meeting.
- **Gender work stream: 4th July 2024**
Key activity: Scoping new WISE (Women Inspiring and Supporting Each Other) sessions, planning Men's Health Month activities, update on Domestic Abuse Policy action plan.
- **LGBTQ+ work stream: 19th July & 16th August 2024**
Key activity: Planning for summer pride festivals including Belfast and Newry Pride.
- **Race work stream: 30th July, 10th Sept 2024**
Key activity: Planning meetings for Belfast Mela Festival and Small Worlds Event as part of Good Relations Week.

EDI Outreach Activity / Events and Awareness Raising

Over the summer period the Housing Executive attended several community events to provide an opportunity to promote ourselves as fair and inclusive employer, and to raise awareness of our career opportunities.

This included attendance at Belfast Pride festival in July, with the Housing Executive once again taking part in the pride parade and holding a stall at the pride market. The LGBTQ+ work stream were also keen to ensure support at other pride events, and as a result we also took part in the Newry Pride festival for the first time on Saturday 31st August.

In August the Housing Executive were again proud to be official friends of Belfast Mela, with colleagues taking part in the Carnival procession on Saturday 17th August as well as hosting a stand at Mela Day on Sunday 25th August.

In September the Housing Executive also attended the Belfast Refugee Job Fair, ensuring that we are promoting our careers opportunities to our culturally and ethnically diverse community members. We also attended pathway careers events in secondary schools, including at Banbridge Academy and Methodist College.

In Quarter 2 of the financial year our EDI workstreams also supported the launch of some exciting new initiatives for colleagues. The Disability Workstream launched a new Neurodiversity Peer Support Group for colleagues. This group was established following feedback from our Autism Awareness Training that colleagues would value having a safe space to come together and share their lived experiences and give each other some peer support. The first meeting was held online in August, with a second in person meeting held in September.

Our Gender Workstream also launched a new series of events for female colleagues. The series is called WISE (Women Empowering and Supporting Each Other), and aims to bring female colleagues together to learn from each other and also from speakers on key themes such as confidence and self-esteem, imposter syndrome and menopause awareness. The first session was held in September and the event was really well received and attended. In September the Race Workstream organised a Small Worlds event as part of Good Relations Week. Small Worlds is an event where people can come along and hear first hand stories from refugees and asylum seekers on their experiences of coming to Northern Ireland. The event was really well attended and we are currently looking into more events in the new financial year.

2.3 Key Documents

The following documents can be viewed and downloaded by accessing the links below:

NIHE Equality Scheme

[Housing Executive Equality Scheme](#)

NIHE Disability Action Plan

[Housing Executive Disability Action Plan](#)

4th Comprehensive Irish Traveller Accommodation Survey

[Irish Traveller Accommodation Survey 2018/19 Report and Tables](#)

If you require any further information on any of topics discussed in this report or if you require the report in an alternative format please email your request to EDISTeam@nihe.gov.uk