

Fourth 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 January 2025 – 31st March 2025 the following policies have been screened:

- Health & Safety in Construction Policy.
- New & Expectant Mothers Strategy.
- FOI Policy & Procedures.
- Dignity at Work Policy.
- Grievance Policy.
- Disciplinary Policy.

Screening reports are available on request.

EQIA

No Equality Impact Assessments were initiated.

1.2 Training

Safeguarding Training

There were 3 Safeguarding training courses held during 1st January – 31st March 2025.

Equality Awareness Training

There were 7 Equality Awareness training courses held during 1st January – 31st March 2025.

1.3

Access to Information and Services

Communication Support (Translation & Interpreter Services)

A total of 5,480 telephone based interpreting sessions were held from 1st January to 31st March 2025. The top 3 most requested languages are listed below:

- Arabic
- Somali
- Tigrinya

Translation tasks totalled 99 and face to face interpreter sessions (including Sign Language) totalled 25. There were 10 requests for alternative formats and 119 calls were made using the Video Relay Service (VRS).

1.4

Monitoring

Equality Monitoring waiting list and allocations data is available up to the 31st March 2025.

1.5

Consultation

The Housing Executive's full Consultative Forum on Equality was held on 19th March 2025. The next meeting is due to be held on October 2025.

2.0

Key Equality/Good Relations Programme

2.1

Irish Traveller Project Team:

The following update provides a brief synopsis of the Housing Executive's accommodation strategy for Irish Traveller families across Northern Ireland.

Irish Traveller Accommodation Strategy 2021-26

The Housing Executive's Irish Travellers Accommodation Strategy 2021-2026 was approved by the Housing Executive Board in April 2021 and was published on the Housing Executive website in July 2021. The Strategy has four objectives and 12 key actions which will guide the Housing Executive's strategic direction on the provision of accommodation for Irish Travellers.

Year four of the Strategy has completed. Key projects were as follows:

1. The Housing Executive commissioned research to develop an Accommodation Needs Assessment model to determine need for Irish Traveller specific accommodation. The final report has been completed. NIHE are working with colleagues in IT to develop an electronic system to capture data on Irish Traveller applications which will be used in the proposed Needs Assessment calculation.
2. A draft housing policy for allocations to service and group housing sites is progressing and will help inform the electronic system above.
3. Following a review of all NIHE owned Irish Traveller sites, work continued on the redevelopment of two NIHE owned Irish Traveller sites. The eight pitch Emergency Halting site at Legahory close, Craigavon will become a five pitch

served site. The eleven pitch transit site at Ballyarnett, Derry/Londonderry will become a seven pitch served site.

4. Work continues on adding two new sites, one in Belfast and one in Mid Ulster.

Group Housing:

(Specifically designed housing schemes where large extended families live together based on Traveller's shared identity.)

- Radius Housing Association, Omagh (8 units) and Magherafelt (6 units).
- Clanmil Housing Association, Glen Road, Belfast (6 units) and Father Cullen Park, Bessbrook (6 Units).
- APEX Housing Association, Monagh Road Belfast (21 Units) and Labre Park, Derry/Londonderry/ (10 units).
- NIHE Ballinamullan, Omagh (6 units)

Serviced Sites

(Serviced sites are managed accommodation with permanent bases to park caravans or erect timber framed buildings, where electricity, water and sewerage are provided and where other facilities such as communal or individual amenity units may be provided.) The Housing Executive currently have serviced site/s situated at:

- Acorn Grove, Craigavon
- An Tearmann, Coalisland
- Daisyfield, Derry/Londonderry/ (currently closed)

The improvement of amenity units at An Tearmann, Coalisland has been a delayed. NIHE are working to resolve issues associated with the delay to allow the scheme to progress.

A full review of all NIHE owned sites has completed with the exception of one site; An Tearmann which will commence following completion of the improvement scheme on site.

Transit Sites/Emergency Halting Sites

(Transit sites are basic facilities where Irish Travellers may park their caravans on a temporary basis and where electricity, water and sewerage are provided.)

NIHE Transit Sites/Emergency Halting Site are as follows:

- Ballyarnett Park, Derry/Londonderry
- Legahory, Craigavon
- Greenbrae, Strabane (currently closed pending vesting)

The Irish Travellers Policy Unit submitted a review paper of the Ballyarnett Park Transit site to the Irish Traveller joint divisional meeting in September

2021. The agreed preferred option was the redevelopment of site. NIHE's Irish Traveller Policy Unit are finalising a business case to gain approval for the scheme. A planning application for submission to council will follow business case approval.

Following the completion of a Latent demand test on 24th November 2021 the review of Legahory was submitted to the NIHE Irish Traveller Joint Divisional meeting in January 2022. The meeting agreed the redevelopment of Legahory to a 5 pitched serviced site as the preferred option. Work continues to progress on this scheme with completion scheduled for 2025. Works experienced a delay due to potential decant options. This has since been resolved and a planning application is due to be submitted to council.

Greenbrae, Strabane will remain closed pending vesting for proposed A5 scheme. An alternate site will be sought in Strabane should need be identified.

Community Cohesion

The next Community Cohesion Team update will be in the 1st Quarterly Report 2025/26.

2.3 Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Steering Group and Workstreams

EDI Steering Group/EDI Workstreams

The EDI Steering Group met on 29th January and 27th March 2025. At its meeting in January members welcomed a representative from SPHERE to present findings from the Violence against Women and Girls homelessness research. Updates were also received in January and March on progress against Autism Strategy actions, as well as information from the Executive Office on race relations legislation and proposed ethnic equality monitoring. Updates were also received on outreach activity and current recruitment performance.

The EDI Workstreams held their annual away day on Friday 31st March. Members welcomed a representative from the Education Authority to share experience and lead a discussion on current good practice in creating inclusive workplaces. Workshops were also held for each workstream to explore priorities for the 2025/26 financial year.

The following EDI work stream meetings were also held in Quarter 4 2024/25:

- Gender Workstream
- Disability Workstream
- Community Background Workstream

EDI Outreach Activity

Housing Executive were in attendance at a range of careers fairs and events as part of Apprenticeship Week 2025, and to promote wider recruitment exercises.

Colleagues attended events at regional colleges in Bangor, Lisburn, Newtownards, Coleraine, Magherafelt and Newtownabbey. We also supported Antrim and Newtownabbey's careers and apprenticeship fair at Mossley Mill, a Department for Communities Apprenticeship Fair in Ballymoney and an apprenticeship event in W5. The Housing Executive also attended job fairs in Lisburn & Castlereagh on 27th February and Coleraine on 12th March.

Colleagues from the Housing Executive also took part in 'interview skills' days for students at Methodist College and Dromore High School.

EDI Events and Awareness Raising

BSL Learn to Sign Sessions

A Housing Executive member of staff continues to deliver informal sessions for colleagues to help them learn basic signs for communicating with Deaf people.

JAM (Just A Minute) Card Launch

A promotional event was held on 27th January to mark the re-launch of the Housing Executive as a JAM friendly organisation. Mandatory JAM Card e-learning is now being rolled out across the organisation, with further training scheduled for front line colleagues throughout 2025/26.

International Women's Day

The Gender Workstream hosted a panel event and coffee morning on 6th March. The panel discussion explored a range of issues including domestic abuse, tackling misogyny on social media, male allyship and coming together to challenge gender inequality.

Inclusive Language Session

The BBC's Inclusion Portfolio Manager, delivered the BBC's training on inclusive language for our EDI Workstream members on 12th March as a showcase of good practice and to help members consider how this can be incorporated into awareness training in the Housing Executive.

Menopause Awareness Event

Co-Founder of Menopause Together and colleague from the Housing Executive, delivered an awareness session to colleagues on 13th March.

2.4 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