

# First Quarterly Report (2023/2024) on the Implementation of the Equality Scheme

## 1.0 Compliance Issues

### 1.1 Equality Screening/Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) Screening

From 1<sup>st</sup> April – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023 the following policies have been screened:

- Control of Vibration at Work Policy
- Extinguishment of Public Rights of Way Policy
- Energy Performance Certificates for House Sales Policy

Screening reports are available on request.

#### EQIA

There were no EQIAs completed during this quarter.

### 1.2 Safeguarding Training

There were 6 Safeguarding training courses held during 1<sup>st</sup> April – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

#### Equality Awareness Training

There were 6 Equality Awareness training courses held during 1<sup>st</sup> April – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

### 1.3 Access to Information and Services

#### Communication Support (Translation & Interpreter Services)

A total of 2,007 telephone based interpreting sessions were held from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023. The top 3 most requested languages are listed below:

- Arabic
- Tigrinya (Spoken in Eritrea)
- Polish

Translation tasks totalled 93 and face to face interpreter sessions (including Sign Language) totalled 33. There were 12 requests for

alternative formats and 93 calls were made using the Video Relay Service (VRS).

#### **1.4 Monitoring**

Equality Monitoring waiting list and allocations data is available up to the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

#### **1.5 Consultation**

The Housing Executive's full Consultative Forum on Equality was held on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022. The topics discussed included an update on the new Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) function in the Housing Executive, the EDI Steering group and Work Streams, the 5 year review of the Equality Scheme and the role of the Financial Inclusion Team. The next meeting is scheduled for 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

### **2.0 Key Equality/Good Relations Programmes**

#### **2.1 Irish Traveller Project Team:**

The next Irish Traveller Project Team update will be in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarterly Report 2023/24.

#### **2.2 Community Cohesion Team**

##### **Flags, emblems, sectional symbols - Re-imaging**

Community Group are finding creative ways to engage with their local areas to deliver reimagining projects with the Housing Executive's support in Ballymena, Mid and East Antrim, Derry and Strabane, Lisburn & Castlereagh, Antrim & Newtownabbey, North Belfast and Ards & North Down. Further details are available upon request.

##### **Estate Based Cohesion Funding**

The Housing Executive has delivered a number of projects across our 70 areas, working closely with local communities to support and assist them. There have been 64 estate based projects funded in total. Further details available on request.

##### **Segregation / Integration**

The Shared Housing Programme currently supports 69 shared schemes (1973 homes) and we are currently programming 23/24 with a target of 200 units.

Each shared neighbourhood is supported through the development and delivery of a five-year Good Relations Plan. The Good Relations Plan is managed by the Housing Association developing the shared

scheme and includes 'bonding' programmes which are delivered to residents in the new shared neighbourhood and 'bridging' programmes which are delivered within and between new and surrounding communities.

A key support mechanism to the delivery of the Good Relations Plan is the establishment of an Advisory Group to inform the plan. The Advisory Group is made up of local stakeholders from the Housing Executive, Council, Political representatives, Community and Voluntary organisations and other statutory bodies working in the area.

## **Interfaces**

### **Housing Executive Interface sites**

The Housing Executive continue to work with our partners in the Department for Justice to reimagine and reimage interfaces.

This is done by taking a people centred, community led approach and working with key stakeholders in each of the areas in Belfast and Derry/Londonderry.

We currently have 21 sites over 26 locations:

- 17 locations works are completed
- 7 locations currently operational
- 2 locations where there has been no community agreement to pursue at present.

### **Communities in Transition - Areas at Risk**

The Community Cohesion Unit manage the Areas at Risk programme in both Greater Whitewell and Glenbank areas in North Belfast on behalf of Department for Communities (DfC). Details on this scheme are available on request.

### **Race Relations**

Race Relations is an important part of the Housing Executive's work.

We work closely with BME Sector, Area Offices and the Good Relations Officers to support work on the ground promoting integration and supporting the development of race relations programmes. We have delivered 7 Race Relations projects with a view to raising awareness and promoting integration across and between our estates. Details are available on request.

## **Strategic Cohesion Forum**

The Strategic Cohesion forum continues to work together in partnership, to influence, shape and inform the Housing Executive's Community Cohesion Strategy and Policies.

### **2.3 EDI Steering Group**

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Steering Group meets quarterly and held its first meeting of the 2023/34 financial year on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023. Reports were on Affirmation Action plan performance within recruitment, outreach activity and actions arising from EDI work streams. Members also received feedback on Autism Training sessions which were being delivered by the Department of Health (DoH) and the Cedar Foundation, with over 300 colleagues taking part. The EDI Steering Group also receives update from EDI work streams in the areas of Community Background, Disability, Gender/Sex, LGBTQ+ and Race.

Key activity has included:

- Colleague feedback on workplace culture, update on radio/billboards campaign and outreach planning (apprenticeship and CSU roles)
- Training and awareness day planning including Disability Pride month, Belfast Pride, Belfast Mela
- Input into HR policy reviews including domestic abuse, flexible working,
- Update on Health & Well-Being policies including domestic abuse policy, flexible awareness

### **Outreach Activity**

Monthly meetings take place between Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Safeguarding (EDIS), HR and the Communications Team to review upcoming recruitment activity and ensure opportunities for affirmative action are identified and planned in advance. A new radio campaign was piloted in May-June 2023 including a new radio and billboard ad campaign. Targeted action was also taken to promote electrical/plumbing apprenticeship opportunities and CSU roles. This included attendance at job fairs in Ballymoney and Portadown. Through our partnership with Women's Tec opportunities were also promoted directly to their students.

## **Engaging with Young People**

In partnership with Business in the Community the Housing Executive launched a new Work Inspiration Programme in June 2023. The programme provided 17 students from 8 different schools with an opportunity to learn more about careers at the Housing Executive, and to engage with our senior leaders and managers to discuss skills and qualifications required for roles on offer.

In June the Housing Executive also took part in Generation Innovation for the first time. The programme is organised by Catalyst and Big Motive, and adopts a design thinking approach. Students from 7 different schools presented a pitch to our senior leaders on how we can attract more diverse talent and promote ourselves as an inclusive employer. Their feedback is now being used to inform our employee branding review.

### **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](#)

Black Minority and Ethnic (BME) and Migrant Worker Report

[Black and Minority Ethnic and Migrant Worker Mapping Update](#)

4<sup>th</sup> Comprehensive Irish Traveller Accommodation Survey

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

[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 contact:

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