

Second 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 1st July – 30th September 2023 the following policies have been screened:

- Financial Inclusion Strategy 2023 – 2028
- Reducing Needle Stick Injuries Policy

Policy Screening reports are available on request.

EQIA

There were no EQIAs completed during this quarter.

1.2 Safeguarding Training

There were 4 Safeguarding training courses held during 1st July – 30th September 2023.

Equality Awareness Training

There were 4 Equality Awareness training courses held during 1st July– 30th September 2023.

1.3 Access to Information and Services Communication Support (Translation & Interpreter Services)

A total of 2,243 telephone based interpreting sessions were held from 1st July to 30th September 2023. The top 3 most requested languages are listed below:

- Arabic
- Somali
- Tigrinya (Spoken in Eritrea)

Translation tasks totalled 95 and face to face interpreter sessions (including Sign Language) totalled 39. There were 7 requests for

alternative formats and 76 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 2023.

1.5 Consultation

The Housing Executive's Full Consultative Forum on Equality was held on 5th 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 4th October 2023. This meeting will include updates on Fundamental Review of Allocations and Homelessness.

2.0 Key Equality/Good Relations Programmes

2.1 Community Cohesion Team:

The next Community Cohesion Team update will be in the 3rd Quarterly Report 2023/24.

2.2 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 4 objectives and 12 key actions which will guide the Housing Executive's strategic direction on the provision of accommodation for Irish Travellers.

Implementation has commenced on Year two of the Strategy as follows:

1. The Housing Executive commissioned research to develop an Accommodation Needs Assessment model to determine need for Irish Traveller specific accommodation. NIHE are currently reviewing the final report.
2. Two Irish Travellers Accommodation Fora have been held.

3. A review of Floating Support provision to Irish Travellers has resulted in a draft report being produced in April 2022. The report was brought to the Housing Executive's Irish Travellers Joint Divisional meeting and recommendations were made. The report has now completed and NIHE's Irish Travellers Policy Unit are developing a Business Case for submission to Supporting People to fund the recommendations.
4. A draft housing policy for allocations to service and group housing sites is progressing.
5. The development of a good relations pilot scheme has been initiated.

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

(Services 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 and pending decommissioning)

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. Daisyfield, Derry/Londonderry is going through the decommissioning process and will be passed to North Placeshaping to determine future use. The only outstanding review is 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 to deliver a 5 pitched serviced site. Work continues to progress on this scheme with completion scheduled for 2024/25.

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 2024/25.

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

2.3 EDI Steering Group

The EDI Steering Group held its quarterly meeting on 7th September, and received reports on AAP performance within recruitment, outreach activity and actions arising from EDI work streams. The following EDI work stream meetings were held in Qtr. 2:

Community Background work stream: 26th July

Key activity: Exploring opportunities arising from new partnership with DfC Employer Services

Disability work stream: 4th July / 18th August

Key activity: Members involved in a social media campaign promoting Disability Awareness Month in August; comments on Autism strategy and updates on autism training. Members also visited Stormont on 18th August to learn more about their Autism Friendly accreditation – feedback given to Accommodation Strategy review group.

Gender work stream: 24th August

Key activity: feedback on internal policy reviews (including flexible working and DV Policy); responses to consultations on Free Period Products and Strategic Framework to end Violence against Women and girls; planning activities for baby loss and miscarriage awareness week and men's health month.

LGBT+ work stream: 25th July

Key activity: focused on planning involvement at Belfast Pride

Race work stream: 8th August

Key activity: focused on planning participation at Belfast Mela colour procession and Mela Day

Outreach Activity

Regular meetings continue to take place with HR and Comms to review upcoming recruitment activity and ensure opportunities for affirmative action are identified and planned in advance. The Housing Executive continues to develop its partnership working with DfC Employer Services, with all vacancies now being advertised through their JobApplyNI website. The Housing Executive is also now attending DfC Job and Careers fairs on a regular basis. Job/Careers fairs attended in July/August/September included Carrickfergus, Cookstown and Enniskillen. The Housing Executive also hosted a 'meet the employer' session at Portadown Jobs & Benefits office. Upcoming fairs have been booked in Belfast and Mid/East Antrim.

EDI Events and Awareness Raising

Belfast Pride

The LGBT+ work stream were involved in the planning and delivery of our entry to Belfast Pride on Saturday 29th August. The Housing Executive had a stall at the Big Fish, providing us with an opportunity

to engage with the LGBT+ community and promote the range of career opportunities we have to offer. We also took part in the pride parade, helping to raise our profile as an inclusive employer and service provider. The EDI Outreach Manager also took part as a panel member in the LRA's 'Encouraging Respectful Conversations' event during Pride week.

Belfast Mela

The Housing Executive took part in a range of activities to support this year's Belfast Mela festival. We became official 'Friends of Mela' which meant that we were included within promotional material for the festival. The race work stream were also actively engaged, organising our participation in the Mela colour procession on 19th August and our stall at Mela Day on 29th August.

Autism Awareness Training

The final session of Autism Awareness training was delivered in person as an 'Inspiring Leaders' masterclass on 21st September. The Department of Health and Cedar Foundation have now trained around 400 colleagues on autism awareness.

Discussions are now taking place on how to include autism awareness within regular, ongoing training for colleagues.

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](#)

4th 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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