

Third 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 October – 31st December 2024 the following policies have been screened:

- Programme Management Office Guidelines
- Tenancy Support & Sustainment Strategy 2024 – 2030
- NIHE Exemption for DFI Caravans Act NI 1963
- Manual Handling Policy
- Affordable Warmth Policy Guide
- Revised Safeguarding Policy

Screening reports are available on request.

EQIA

No Equality Impact Assessments were initiated.

1.2 Training

Safeguarding Training

There were 18 Safeguarding training courses held during 1st October – 31st December 2024.

Equality Awareness Training

There were 4 Equality Awareness training courses held during 1st October – 31st December 2024.

1.3

Access to Information and Services

Communication Support (Translation & Interpreter Services)

A total of 5,083 telephone based interpreting sessions were held from 1st October to 31st December 2024. The top 3 most requested languages are listed below:

- Arabic
- Tigrinya
- Somali

Translation tasks totalled 92 and face to face interpreter sessions (including Sign Language) totalled 27. There were 6 requests for alternative formats and 89 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 December 2024.

1.5

Consultation

The Housing Executive's full Consultative Forum on Equality was held on 17th October 2024. The next meeting is due to be held on 19th March 2025.

2.0

Key Equality/Good Relations Programme

2.1

Community Cohesion Team:

Flags, emblems, sectional symbols - Re-imaging

Community Groups continue to find creative ways to engage with their local areas to deliver reimagining projects with the Housing Executive's support in Mid and East Antrim, Antrim & Newtownabbey, and Ards & North Down. Local engagement and partnership working has supported the removal of a number of murals from the period of Oct-Dec 2024. Further details are available upon request.

Estate Based Cohesion Funding

The Housing Executive's Community Involvement and Cohesion Unit continues to support community based projects across our 70 areas, working closely with local communities to support and assist them. There have been 40 estate based projects funded in this quarter. Further details available on request.

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

centered, community led approach and working with key stakeholders in each of the areas in Belfast and Derry/Londonderry.

We currently have 26 sites over 21 locations:

- 21 locations works are completed
- 3 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 8 Race Relations projects between Oct-Dec 2024 with a view to raising awareness and promoting integration across and between our estates. Details are available on request.

Strategic Cohesion Forum (SCF)

The Cohesion team will be meeting with the original members of the Strategic Cohesion Forum in Quarter 4 to discuss the way forward. The members feel it is important to keep the SCF as a separate forum so that the focus on the community issues and Cohesion won't get diminished within the new merged Community Involvement and Cohesion Strategy. This review is currently looking at the membership of the group, the Terms of Reference for the group and future working arrangements. This review will align itself to the new Community Involvement and Cohesion Strategy action plan and a basis for the work moving forward.

2.2

Housing For All:

The 'Housing for All' Shared Housing Programme currently supports 77 shared schemes (2,490 homes), working with 12 Housing Associations and 32 local Advisory Groups across the shared housing communities. A further 8 schemes (441 households) are joining the programme during 2024/25, increasing the overall total households to 2,931.

The benefits of shared housing however extend far beyond those 2,931 homes as the Housing Associations work on delivery of the programme with the Local Advisory Groups across the shared housing communities. The HAs manage and administer the local Advisory Groups to support the

development and delivery of pre-Handover and five year Good Relations Plans.

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.

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. The 'bridging' enables benefits to communities and individuals who live, work and socialise within a five-mile radius of each of these developments.

Irish Traveller Update

The next Irish Traveller update will be in the 4th Quarterly Report 2024/25.

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

The EDI Steering Group provides oversight and challenge on the Affirmative Action Plan 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 the 3rd Quarter of 2024/25:

- **Gender Workstream: 31st October, 12th November 2024**

Key activity: The key focus of these meetings was to plan the Men's Health Event on 16th November to help mark Men's Health month in November.

- **Disability Workstream: 7th November 2024**

Key activity: Members reviewed progress on actions achieved in the year to date, including training delivery and feedback around reasonable adjustment processes. An update was also received from the Neurodiversity Peer Support Group which held its second meeting prior to the workstream Meeting.

- **LGBTQ+ Workstream: 5th November 2024**

Key Activity: The Director of Corporate Services attended the meeting to hear feedback from members about their involvement and thoughts on key priority

areas for the business.

- **Community Background Workstream: 6th November 2024**

Key Activity: Review of key outreach activities in the year to date, and discussion on new opportunities to promote a better representation of applicants from a Protestant Community Background.

- **Race work stream: 14th November 2024**

Key activity: Planning session for involvement at Black History Month Expo, review of actions to date.

EDI Outreach Activity

The Housing Executive took part in the annual School Summit at the Eikon Centre, Lisburn, on 7th and 8th October. This event was attended by schools across Northern Ireland.

The EDIS Team hosted a stall the Community Conference on 23rd October 2024 to raise awareness of our career opportunities. The Housing Executive also attended Department for Communities job and careers fairs in Banbridge, Antrim and Newtownabbey.

EDI Events and Awareness Raising

Menopause Awareness Event: 16th October 2024

The Gender Workstream and Health & Well-Being (H&WB) Team organised an event in the Housing Centre to mark World Menopause Day. Roisin Burns, Co-Founder of Menopause Together and colleague at the Housing Executive, delivered the session.

Black History Month Expo: 29th October 2024

The Housing Executive took part in the Expo for the second year running, hosting a stall at the event in Royal Avenue. Colleagues volunteered to help promote career opportunities and the work of our Community Cohesion Team.

Men's Health Event: 20th November 2024

The Gender Workstream and H&WB Team organised an event at the Housing Centre to mark Men's Health Month, including guest speakers and info stalls.

WISE Session: 11th December 2024

The second WISE (Women Inspiring & Supporting Each Other) session was held in the Newtownards Office in December.

British Sign Language Learn to Sign Sessions:

A Housing Executive colleague who is Deaf continues to deliver informal sessions for fellow colleagues to help them learn basic signs for communicating with Deaf people. Sessions were held in November and December, and will run again in the next quarter.

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