

First 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 April – 30th June 2024 the following policies have been screened:

- Control of Noise at Work Policy
- Title Deeds Handling Policy
- Place Making Policy
- Call Recording Policy
- Title Rectifications Policy
- Fire Door and Procedures Policy
- Incident Reporting and Investigation Policy
- Community Safety Strategy
- Revised Land Transfers to Housing Associations Policy
- Housing Executive Land Aquation (HELA) Project
- Wider Amendments to the House Sales Scheme
- Work at Height Policy

Screening reports are available on request.

EQIA

No Equality Impact Assessments were initiated.

1.2 Training

Safeguarding Training

There were 5 Safeguarding training courses held during 1st April – 30th June 2024.

Equality Awareness Training

There were 3 Equality Awareness training courses held during 1st April– 30th June 2024.

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

A total of 4,031 telephone based interpreting sessions were held from 1st April to 30th June 2024. The top 3 most requested languages are listed below:

- Arabic
- Tigrinya
- Somali

Translation tasks totalled 87 and face to face interpreter sessions (including Sign Language) totalled 26. There were 10 requests for alternative formats and 81 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 June 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 in October 2024.

2.0 Key Equality/Good Relations Programme

2.1 Community Cohesion Team:

Flags, emblems, sectional symbols - Re-imaging

Community Groups are finding 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. 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 43 estate based projects funded in total. Further details available on request.

Segregation / Integration

The 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. We are currently in the process of selecting the 2024/25 programme.

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 26 sites over 21 locations:

- 20 locations works are completed
- 4 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 9 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

A review of the Strategic Cohesion Forum is underway. 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.

Community Cohesion

The next Irish Traveller Project Team update will be in the 2nd Quarterly Report 2024/25.

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

The EDI Steering Group held its first meeting of the 2024/25 financial year on 7 May. The group provides oversight and challenge on the AAP and Outreach Plan, including recruitment trend performance and outreach activities. At its meeting in May members also received an update on the Autism Strategy and the development of a new Domestic Abuse Policy in line with the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy.

The following EDI work stream meetings were held in Qtr 1 2024/25:

- **Disability work stream, 16 April 2024 (informal coffee morning) and 21 June**
Key activity: Informal meeting to allow opportunities to engage in person and explore ideas for peer support, planning meeting in June for the upcoming Autism Bus training and a briefing from H&S Team on DSE assessment procedures
- **Gender work stream: 23 April and 17 June 2024**
Key activity: Meetings held with EDI Outreach Manager and workstream leads to discuss follow up actions from international Women's Day and plans for engaging male colleagues
- **LGBTQ+ work stream, 31 May (informal get together) and 9 June 2024**
Key activity: Informal get together to encourage connection and new membership, session in June to start planning for summer pride festivals
- **Race work stream: 29 May 2024**
Key activity: Planning for upcoming events, including Belfast Mela, and discussions around cultural competency training for colleagues

EDI Outreach Activity

Meeting held with DfC Employment Team on 23 April to explore new outreach opportunities in the 2024/25 financial year. DfC careers fair attended in Newry and Housing Executive also present at the Belfast City Council careers fair in the Belfast Islamic Centre.

EDI Outreach Manager held meetings with the Princes' Trust to explore partnership working for work placements and careers inspiration. Meetings also held with BITC to discuss employment initiatives and Race at Work Charter.

Work Inspiration / Generation Innovation

In June 2024 the Housing Executive delivered another Work Inspiration programme. 15 students from 8 different local schools took part in the two-day sessions, which included a Q&A panel with our senior leaders and 'speed careers' session with a range of colleagues from across the business. Feedback has been great, and a full report will be presented at the next EDI Steering Group meeting in September. The Housing Executive also took part in Generation Innovation for the second year running, with Customer Experience tasking students on how they think they can better engage with younger tenants.

EDI Events and Awareness Raising

JAM Card Partnership

The Housing Executive are becoming JAM Card partners and will be delivering a series of training sessions to all colleagues to ensure the business is JAM Card friendly. The Just A Minute (JAM) card was developed by the NOW Group in 2012. The JAM Card allows people to ask for a minute of patience in any situation they need it including shops, restaurants, public transport and accessing public services. As part of the partnership all colleagues will be required to do a 15 minute e-learning on JAM, with more in-depth training for front line staff. Training was carried out with CSU colleagues in May, as well as a Train the Trainer session for colleagues supporting the roll out. A publicity launch for the JAM Card partnership is being planned for September/October.

BSL Sessions

A Housing Executive colleague who is Deaf very kindly volunteered her time to help teach fellow staff members some basic BSL signs. There were around 20 people taking part in the first session, with more informal sessions now planned in the coming weeks. Colleagues have appreciated being able to learn from a colleague with lived experience, helping increase their understanding of the communication barriers faced by people who are Deaf/have hearing loss.

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