

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Policy ref:

Policy author /holder: Inclusion, Reward and Wellbeing Manager

Date approved: 24 November 2022

Approved by: Board

Effective date: November 2022

Review date: November 2026

1. Purpose and anticipated outcome

We are aware that we live in a world that is not always fair or equal, where privilege assists some, and the lack of it can be a barrier for others. As a housing association with a social purpose, we are taking proactive steps to correct these imbalances and to be a positive example of equality, diversity and inclusion best practices within our communities and the wider sector.

We are committed to being fair and inclusive, supporting diversity and providing inclusion for all our customers, colleagues and stakeholders.

We are all different, and these differences contribute to our success. We are committed to understanding and addressing the diverse needs of our customers and colleagues to ensure we have equity.

We recognise organisations who focus on building a more inclusive culture attract and retain a wider diversity of talented colleagues and we are able as a result, to provide a more inclusive service for our customers.

To help us build our inclusive culture we will:

- Understand and remove barriers of inequality.
- Eliminate discrimination and inequality, including unconscious bias.
- Address disadvantage our customers and colleagues face.
- Provide equality, diversity and inclusion education opportunities through colleague and customer lived experiences.
- Promote good relations among colleagues and our customers.

The purpose of this policy is to not just meet our legal obligations of The Equality Act 2010, but to exceed our own expectations that we have on Equality Diversity and Inclusion for our colleagues and customers.

This includes, but is not limited to, those who share a protected characteristic as we understand that inequalities are more complex and intersecting such as:

- Socio-economic background
- Formal education
- Digital access
- Housing
- Citizenship.

The Equality Act 2010 identifies the protected characteristics as:

- Race and ethnicity
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Religion or belief
- Marriage and civil partnership

We want Equality, Diversity and Inclusion to be championed, valued and celebrated by all colleagues across the organisation. This work will be led by our Board and Leadership team and owned by everyone. We will ensure our services meet the diverse needs of our customers. We will ensure no colleague, customer, housing or job applicants experience unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation during their experience with LiveWest.

2. Scope and definitions

Our values are a key part of who we are and what we do. In delivering our policy we will ensure that:

- We are fair, open, and transparent and communicate honestly
- We take time to listen to and understand our customers' individual needs
- We embrace different viewpoints
- We are inclusive and treat everyone with respect.

This policy applies across LiveWest, to all our customers and colleagues.

- This policy also applies to the way in which we will work with third party providers and partners
- All our policies, procedures, training and actions will be guided by this policy and its principles.

3. Our policy principles

We are ambitious in our expectations to support an inclusive workplace for our colleagues and to deliver services that best meet the diverse needs and aspirations of our customers:

- We will best serve our communities by ensuring our workplace reflects the diversity of our customers.
- We proactively seek to promote inclusion through our approach, behaviours, practices and policies at every opportunity.
- We will be compliant with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation.
- We will actively challenge behaviours that do not respect the diversity of our customers and colleagues.
- We will constantly review our services to ensure that they remain relevant.
- We will actively promote diversity and inclusion learning opportunities.
- We will be open to challenge.
- We will look for equality of outcome and opportunity.
- We will expect companies working with us or on our behalf to adopt the same principles on equality, diversity and inclusion.
- We will monitor our progress towards achieving our aims.
- We will ensure that there is no unjustified discrimination in our recruitment and allocations processes, and service offer.

4. Responsibilities

- Our Board is responsible for championing equality, diversity, and inclusion. Ensuring the policy is delivering the principles and that resources, support and leadership is provided to ensure the policy is implemented.
- Our Executive Team is responsible for championing and modelling our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. Ensuring all colleagues are compliant with this policy and that equality, diversity and inclusion is at the forefront of all decisions made.
- Our Management Team is responsible for their individual and team's understanding and commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. To manage their team in an appropriate and fair manner, supporting those who feel they are not being treated equally by colleagues and customers.
- Our colleagues are responsible for their understanding and commitment to this policy. They are encouraged to notify LiveWest when they feel they are not being treated equally, fairly or with respect by any colleagues or customers.

5. Laws and regulations

This policy ensures our compliance with the requirements of relevant UK legislation including, but not limited to the following:

- The Equality Act 2010
- Equal Pay Act 1970
- The Employment Rights Act 1996
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Work and Families Act 2006
- Modern Slavery Act 2015

Colleagues can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, LiveWest for any act of unlawful discrimination. Colleagues who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

6. Service standards, monitoring and review

- The Board and Executive team are responsible for ensuring the operation of this policy is regularly monitored.
- The Board will receive an annual report on the progress towards delivering our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy which will include an update on compliance with this policy.
- Some of the key measures used to monitor the effectiveness of this policy include, but are not limited to, monitoring access to housing, reviewing customer satisfaction and learning from complaints, understanding our gender pay gap, monitoring the diversity of our colleagues and their satisfaction.

7. Linked / associated policies and other references

For all policies that are introduced or reviewed, an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) will be completed and approved by the relevant Exec Director. This ensures equality, diversity and inclusion is considered in all our approaches, policies and guidance that we provide to both colleagues and customers.

8. Review

The effectiveness of this policy and associated arrangements will be reviewed annually or in the event of significant change. The next full review of the policy will be November 2025.

Version control:

Version	Date of review	By whom	Reason
V0	Sept 2019	Board	Original document
V1	Sept 2020	EDI Group	Desktop review - no changes made
V1.1	March 2021	Reward Adviser	Transferred to LiveWest policy template
V2	Sept 2022	EDI Group	Review and update
V2.1	November 2022	Board	Review and Board Approval
	December 2025	LiveWest Board Ref: LB55/23	Review date extended to November 2026