

Equality and Diversity Policy



Equality and Diversity Policy



Statement of Intent

Cornerstone is committed to treating all people with equal fairness, courtesy and respect and endeavour to eliminate any unfair discrimination internally or with any of the partners we work with. The Equality and Diversity Policy applies to all areas of Cornerstone's work, including:

Governance, the membership and operation of the organisation's board and committees.

Employment and training, recruitment and selection procedures and the provision of training and development opportunities.

Housing, the access to housing, quality of accommodation offered to people in need, provision of maintenance and other related services to tenants. This includes the protection of tenants' rights in relation to racial and other forms of harassment.

Development the design and development of all new housing and the practices of consultants and contractors.

The policy will be implemented according to statutory provisions and amended from time to time. Cornerstone complies with the Equality Act 2010 (and as amended). It also takes into account good practice guidance as provided in the Statutory Code of Practice on Racial Equality in Housing in England.

Cornerstone opposes all forms of discrimination including:

- **Direct discrimination:** treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity)
- **Indirect discrimination:** a provision or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a protected characteristic more than others.
- **Harassment:** unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic with the purpose of violating someone's dignity or creating a hostile or humiliating environment.
- **Victimisation:** treating someone badly because they have raised concerns about discrimination

Equality and Diversity Policy



Our Commitment

- To create an environment where individual differences and contributions from staff and tenants are recognised and valued.
- To ensure that appropriate equality and diversity training is available and accessible to all staff
- To promote an environment of dignity and respect for all.
- To take steps to address inequality
- To deal with complaints about staff or tenants breach of this policy in accordance with the anti-social behaviour policy or disciplinary procedure
- To review the equality and diversity policy on a regular basis.

Responsibilities

Board

The Board has the primary legal and moral responsibility for ensuring discrimination does not take place and will monitor the effectiveness of the policy.

Chief Executive and Management Team

The Chief Executive and the management team have the day to day responsibility for the policy's implementation, but all staff have the responsibility to ensure the positive application of the policy.

The management team will make staff aware of the equality and diversity policy and provide training. Should any employee breach the policy, they will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure. Allegations of discrimination by staff or board members will be considered under the Grievance Policy in the first instance.

Staff

All staff must:

- co-operate with measures introduced to ensure equal opportunities and prevent discrimination
- not harass, bully, victimise, abuse or intimidate fellow employees, potential employees, customers or the general public.
- not make remarks or commit acts of a racist, ageist or sexist or other discriminatory nature.
- carry out their duties in accordance with this policy.

Equality and Diversity Policy



Tenants

Acts of discrimination leading to harassment by our tenants or occupants will be a violation of their contractual tenancy agreements.

Cornerstone recognises its responsibility to protect tenants who are suffering discrimination and harassment from other tenants and deals with these incidents under the Anti-social Behaviour Policy and Complaints Policy.

Cornerstone will seek to ensure that representative bodies comprise of a reasonable cross-section of the tenant profile.

Training

Training will be provided, in order that all staff and board members understand equality and diversity and its implications. If invited or required to attend a training course parties are expected to participate unless the reason for not doing so is agreed beforehand with the Chief Executive.

Monitoring and Review

To ensure the equality of employment decisions, Cornerstone will remove the equal opportunities monitoring section from the body of various application forms before decision makers have access to application forms.

A report will be produced each year for the Board which summarises the results of the monitoring of the employment of new staff.

Details of new tenants will be monitored but it is recognised that the issue of Equality & Diversity among applicants is largely determined by factors beyond our direct control such as Devon Home Choice policy.

Cornerstone will monitor the effects of this policy through evaluation and review the policy regularly. This will include comparing the policy to all relevant legislation and sector good practice and updating accordingly.