



Equality, diversity, and inclusion Policy Statement

Watford Community Housing is dedicated to ensuring equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) is reflected in all that we do, in regard to customers, staff and other stakeholders, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

As a provider of social housing, we cater to vulnerable groups and it is imperative that protected characteristics (that may act as factors of inequality) are considered, to ensure we support our tenants, as well as our staff.

Our organisation should reflect the communities we serve and the values that we place at the heart of our work, including championing diversity, inclusivity, wellbeing, and positive staff engagement, celebrating all of our differences.

Maintaining equity is important to us, recognising that we do not all have equal access to opportunities and as an organisation, we must make adjustments to ensure these imbalances are managed appropriately.

To ensure EDI is kept at the top of Watford Community Housing's agenda, we:

- **run a voluntary EDI group**, featuring employees from across the business. This group is made up of four networks: sexuality and gender identity, disability and wellbeing, race, religion and culture, and family and carers. At the monthly staff EDI meetings, each network updates the rest of the group on initiatives, events, and accreditations specific to their theme that Watford Community Housing can get involved in across the community.
- **publish a quarterly EDI newsletter**, ensuring all our colleagues are aware of what we are doing to support and engage both staff and our communities.
- **keep EDI on Group Board's radar**, having an 'EDI champion' on the Board to keep up momentum and ensure EDI matters are kept at the forefront of the organisation's strategic direction. The EDI team also present their work to the Board on an annual basis.
- **work towards gaining accreditations to ensure we are honouring our EDI commitments.** We possess a Disability Confident Employer award and are working towards a HouseProud Pledge Pioneer accreditation, which proves a housing provider's dedication to LGBTQ+ resident equality and support. We are also in the midst of obtaining Herts

Healthy Workplace accreditation which evidences an organisation's commitment to developing a wellbeing led culture.

- **provide inclusive, accessible services that meet the varied needs of our diverse tenant community.** We make reasonable adjustments as required to support tenants with disabilities. We have zero tolerance for any form of unlawful discrimination or harassment towards tenants or GRT.
- **have authored a number of policies which tackle discrimination.** We strive to ensure that Watford Community Housing is free from bullying and harassment and proactive in ensuring everyone is treated fairly, and with dignity and respect.
- **make EDI a key feature within every People Strategy,** linking with staff recruitment, equal opportunities for candidates, retention, and wellbeing. It is ensured we have a diverse and inclusive workforce who feel comfortable to be who they are in the workplace.
- **aim to be an employer of choice,** with fair pay, promotion, and training opportunities for all employees. Our company policies and procedures promote flexibility, work-life balance and family-friendly employment practices. We make reasonable adjustments as needed to support employees with disabilities or other needs. Discrimination, bullying and harassment are not tolerated.
- **seek to understand lived experiences of colleagues and customers,** through the sharing of stories and experiences, while also celebrating awareness events and acknowledging initiatives.
- **maintain a robust and equitable recruitment process.** Shortlisting, interviewing and selection will always be carried out without regard to any protected characteristics possessed by the candidates. We aim to have a Board and Senior Leadership Team that reflect the diversity of our communities, using inclusive recruiting practices and actively seek out candidates with a broad range of backgrounds, experiences and perspectives.
- **actively seek partnerships** with contractors, suppliers and other agencies that share our commitment to equality and diversity. We will not work with organisations that do not uphold anti-discrimination laws.
- **regularly collect, monitor, analyse diversity data across our organisation** to evaluate the effectiveness of our EDI practices. We identify areas for improvement and implement effective EDI initiatives. Regular reviews help ensure our EDI statement remains relevant.
- **publish EDI data, through corporate publications such as financial statements,** illustrating transparency to prospective partners and employees.