

Equality and Diversity Policy Statement

THH is committed to promoting equality and diversity among our customers, staff and the wider community.

Our Equality and Diversity Policy Statement drives our Diversity Strategy and Action Plan, which sets out our current priorities to improve the living and working environment for all of our residents, staff and partner organisations.

These three principles support our vision for equality and diversity:

- ▶ **Accessible:** We will provide services that are appropriate but flexible enough to meet people's needs and preferences so that all our resident and staff can access the services they need and want.
- ▶ **Inclusive:** We will tackle poverty and inequality and help our residents and staff fulfil their individual potential, to be part of communities and able to participate in wider Tower Hamlets life.
- ▶ **Fair and seen to be fair:** We are a fair and ethical organisation and place to work. Decisions we make are fair, and everyone can see and understand why we made them.

As a public body the Equality Act 2010 requires us to meet certain statutory duties. The purpose of the statutory duty is to assist public bodies to tackle persistent and long-standing issues of disadvantage. In line with the Equality Act 2010, we are committed to:

- ▶ Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- ▶ Advancing equality of opportunity between people;
- ▶ Fostering good relations between people.

We seek to be an inclusive and diverse organisation so that all THH's current and future residents, staff (paid and unpaid) and contractors are treated fairly and equally and receive equal services and opportunities regardless of the following characteristics:

- ▶ Age

- Disability
- Caring responsibility
- Gender
- Gender reassignment status
- Gypsy or traveller heritage
- Medical status, including HIV/AIDS Status
- Marital, Civil Partnership or relationship status
- National origin
- Parental responsibility
- Physical abilities
- Physical appearance
- Pregnancy and maternity status
- Race, ethnicity or colour
- Refugee status
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Employment status
- Trade union membership and activities

No resident, employee, board member, visitor or applicant should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of these characteristics. Nor should people be disadvantaged by other conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

This commitment applies to our service provision, communications, recruitment and selection, training, and all terms and conditions of employment and customer relations.

THH will actively encourage and support measures to meet the needs of all stakeholders, and maximise engagement, achievement and good practice that brings benefit to individuals and communities.

THH recognises that discrimination can take a number of forms including direct and indirect discrimination that can often be subtle. THH urges staff, residents and partners to be aware of the less obvious types of discrimination which result from general assumptions and pre-conceptions about the capabilities, interests and characteristics of individuals and groups. This can often include references in parts of the media which are commonly held to be acceptable, but in fact are exclusionary or derogatory to particularly groups in the community.

THH also recognises the definition of institutionalised racism as defined by the MacPherson Report following the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry and will extend it

to apply beyond racism to all other forms of illegal or unjustifiable discrimination.

We encourage all people – including staff and residents - to contribute to an environment in which everyone can feel comfortable expressing who they are, how they feel and what they need, knowing that they will be treated with respect and that their contribution will be valued.

The way we work, train and learn within THH should reflect both the vision and objectives of THH, and the spirit and intentions of legislation that outlaws discrimination and promotes equality and diversity.

THH will make reasonable adjustments to working practices, equipment and premises and offer, where appropriate, additional support to staff and residents in accordance with its Disability Two Ticks accreditation. More details can be found in THH's Recruitment and Selection Policy.

We will endeavour to deliver services in a way that genuinely recognises the importance of an inclusive society that brings opportunities and access to individuals and seldom heard groups. This will include vulnerable residents, new migrant groups, those leaving looked after care or custody and those at risk of becoming involved in criminal activity.

We will work within all current and relevant anti-discrimination laws. This is not an exhaustive list, but includes:

- ▶ Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- ▶ Human Rights Act 1998
- ▶ Fixed Term Employees (prevention of less favourable treatment) Regulations 2002
- ▶ Civil Partnership Act 2004
- ▶ Gender Recognition Act (GRA) 2005
- ▶ Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006
- ▶ Equality Act 2006
- ▶ Work and Families Act 2007
- ▶ Equality Act 2010