

RAILWAY HOUSING ASSOCIATION

RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

1. Commitment

The Association recognises the importance of race equality and is fully committed to fulfilling our statutory duties. Our Race Equality Scheme sets out how we propose to strive for racial equality and promote positive relations.

The Census 2001 shows that black and minority ethnic (BME) communities represent 10% of the UK population. Although the BME populations in the areas in which the Association operates are relatively small, we still have a key role in promoting equality, tackling racism and achieving good relations between people of different racial groups.

2. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

The Act places a general duty on public bodies to promote race equality. The Association will aim to: –

- Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups

3. Implementation

3.1 Service Delivery

We recognise that the communities in which we work are becoming more diverse and we have an important part to play in ensuring that our services are equally accessible to all. The Association will monitor the take up of services and satisfaction levels by ethnic origin. This information will be used to ensure that our services are being delivered fairly and effectively; and to identify appropriate actions necessary to address any inequalities.

We will ensure that any information we provide is accessible to service users in languages and/or formats that they can understand. We will provide interpretation and translation services as required.

3.2 Employment

The Association aims to ensure equality of opportunity in all aspects of employment, including recruitment, appraisal, training, promotion, redeployment, redundancy and retirement processes.

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3.2 Employment

We will: -

- Collect and monitor information on the ethnicity of current staff and applications for employment. This will be analysed and appropriate actions taken to address any inequalities identified.
- Remove equal opportunities information prior to short-listing applicants for interviews
- Enforce codes of conduct and the racial harassment policy to ensure that the workplace is free from racial harassment and behaviour.
- Value and respect the identities and cultures of all employees and wherever practical endeavour to meet the needs of those employees who may have particular cultural and/or religious needs.

3.3 Governance

The Association aims to have a Board that with a diverse range of backgrounds, skills and experience that is broadly reflective of the communities that we serve. The current profile of the Association's Board shows that 9% are B&ME, compared to an average of 4% in the communities where we have most stock.

The Association will continue to strive to ensure equality of opportunity in the recruitment of new Board members. Training will be provided for all Board members to aid their understanding of racial issues and assist them to lead the promotion of equality and diversity.

3.4 Harassment

The Association's Racial Harassment policy states that harassment will not be tolerated. The Association will: –

- Publicise the policy,
- Provide training for front-line staff on identifying and dealing with racial harassment
- Set and monitor targets for the level of satisfaction that victims of racial harassment have with the Association's response

3.5 Resident Involvement

We will collect and analyse information on the ethnicity of those residents involved in 'Resident Involvement' forums and set targets to ensure that the profile of these groups reflects the ethnic profile of our current residents.

We will also analyse the STATUS (Satisfaction) survey by ethnicity and recommend actions to address any inequalities identified.

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3.6 Procurement

The Association will require contractors, consultants and suppliers to provide evidence of their commitment to race equality or to adopt the principles of the Association's Equality and Diversity policy.

4. Training

All staff will receive equality and diversity training appropriate to their role and responsibilities.

5. Equality Impact Assessments

The Association will carry out equality impact assessments as a way of identifying whether an existing or proposed policy or service affects, or is likely to affect, different equality groups.

Where an adverse effect is identified that cannot be justified objectively, alternative actions will be considered, in order to promote equality of opportunity more effectively or to lessen the adverse impact.

6. Equalities Action Plan

The Race Equality Scheme is supported by the Equalities Action Plan which includes action points for all strands of equality. The rationale for taking this approach is to minimise duplication and overlap between equality documents and provide a single focus for equalities.

Performance against specific targets will be monitored bi-annually by the Board and the plan will be reviewed annually in consultation with staff and residents.

7. Responsibility

The Chief Executive and Senior Management Team are responsible for the effective implementation of this scheme

8. Monitoring

Progress will be monitored against the Equalities Action Plan and will be reported bi-annually to the Board. The results will be publicised to residents.

9. Review

The Race Equalities Scheme will be reviewed annually in consultation with residents and staff.

March 2009