Arneway
Housing Co-operative

Issue No:8

ARNEWAY HOUSING POLICY AND PROCEDURE ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

REGISTERED WITH HOUSING CORPORATION NO: C3115
REGISTERED FINANCIAL SERVICES AUTHORITY 22252R

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Policy
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This document outlines the Equal Opportunities Policy procedure for Members and Tenants, and Staff of the Co-op.

One of the key corporate conditions in any organisation in today's environment is the issue of Equal Opportunities Policy. That deals with people fairly allowing equal access to jobs services and homes. No fear of discrimination and removing barriers and complying with regulations.

The value of Equal Opportunities and the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 makes it unlawful to discriminate against worker because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation; it also makes it unlawful to discriminate because of their religion or belief. The statutory Agency that oversees these laws is known as the Commission for Equality and Human Rights. Related laws are Housing, Employment, Mental Health, Rehabilitation of Ex-Offenders, Children Act, Protection from Harassment, Anti-Social Behaviour and Civil Partnership.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

1.0. Arneway Housing Co-op wishes it to be known that it is seeking to work for equality.

1.1 The Co-op recognises the problem of discrimination including racial and sexual discrimination and is committed to play its part in ending it. This means that:

1.2 In the provision of housing services and employment of staff to provide these services, the Co-op will seek to ensure equality of opportunity

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and access for all persons.

1.3 No person or group of persons applying for housing or for a job, or for contracts with the Association, will be treated less favourably than any other person because of race, colour, gender, age, ethnic or national origin or because of their religion, disability, marital status or sexual orientation.

1.4 The Co-op will seek to identify where possible, the needs of disadvantaged minority groups in its area of operation by establishing close relationships with those groups and will then attempt to assist minority groups to benefit from its housing services, if this is practicable.

1.5 The Co-op will then seek actively to encourage applications for vacancies from suitably qualified persons from ethnic minority groups and the disabled. men and women will be encouraged to apply for posts which hitherto may have been staffed by a single sex.

1.6 To help fulfil its commitment to equal opportunity, the Co-op will collect and monitor records of the ethnic/racial origin and gender of all those applying to it for housing and allocated. Including all those seeking employment and employed by the Co-op. Confidentiality of information about individuals will be maintained at all times.

1.7 Action to combat any form of harassment of staff and tenants will be accorded high priority.

1.8 In hiring contractors and other agencies to work for it, the Association will be aware of its commitment to equality of opportunity.

1.9 In the composition of its Management Committee, the Co-op will be aware of its commitment to equal opportunity.

1.10 An annual report of progress in matters of equal opportunity will be made to the Management Committee to ensure the effectiveness of the policy.

1.11. The Association will develop and maintain an Equal Opportunity action plan.

1.12 The purpose of this statement is to highlight the Co-op's commitment to eliminating unfair discrimination from all aspects of its work.

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2.0 POLICY OBJECTIVES

2.1 The objective of the Equal Opportunity Policy is to eliminate unfair discrimination, redress the effects of past and present discrimination and to highlight the measures that the Co-op is adopting to ensure that this commitment is followed through.

3.0 SCOPE OF THE POLICY:

3.1 The policy applies equally to the following areas:

- The provision of housing and delivery of services.
- Recruitment, employment and training.
- Housing development and contractors and consultants.
- Management Committee and Members of the Co-op.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITY

4.1 Staff at all levels should attend Equal Opportunities Training. The overall responsibility for the development and implementation of an Equal Opportunities Policy is with the Co-op's Management Committee and also with the Housing Services Manager and other staff employed by the Co-op.

4.2 All staff and members of the Co-op however have collective and individual responsibility for equal opportunities. This is particularly important at the point of service delivery.

5.0 MONITORING:

5.1 In order to ensure commitment and adherence to the policy throughout the Co-op a

Management Committee member along with the HSM will review and monitor the Policies, Procedures, being undertaken.

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5.2 The Housing Services Manager will be responsible also for co-ordinating the equal opportunities activities and initiatives being undertaken within the Co-op's various work areas and report progress to the Management Committee. The HSM will b responsible for progress towards the Co-op's respective agreed targets set by the Management Committee.

5.3 The Management Committee must make staff aware of the corporate commitment to Equal Opportunities and the staff responsibility for implementing this in all work areas.

5.4 The Management Committee will review progress towards targets and initiatives on a bi-annual basis.

5.5 The Management Committee will receive an annual report on statistics, initiatives and an update on new legislation or practices where applicable.

5.6 Where there is a sub-group of the Employment Committee in operation this group will make recommendations to the Management Committee

6.0 COMMITMENT:

6.1 The Association's approach to Equal Opportunities is set against legislation and Codes of Practice. Arneway is committed to the principles set out below and will endeavour to comply with these guidelines and codes of practice.

7.0 RACE RELATIONS ACT 1976

7.1 The Act renders racial discrimination whether direct or indirect as unlawful.

Sections 20 and 21 of the Act are aimed at providers of housing, employment and services. Section 25 covers membership of Co-ops with over 20 members.

7.2 Section 20: It is unlawful for any person concerned with the provision of accommodation to discriminate on racial grounds by refusing to provide

accommodation of like quality, or by providing accommodation of different quality or on different terms, in for example a hotel, boarding house of similar establishment.

7.3 Section 21:

(1) It is unlawful for any person with the power to dispose of premises to discriminate against another on racial grounds:

- in terms on which such premises are offered; or
- by refusing an application for such premises; or
- in the treatment of a person in relation to any list of people needing such premises.

(2) It is unlawful for a person who manages premises to discriminate against the occupiers of those premises on racial grounds:

- in the way access is afforded to any benefits or facilities, or by refusing or deliberately omitting to afford such access; or
- by evicting the occupiers or subjecting them to any other detriment.

8.0 HOUSING CORPORATION:

8.1 The Corporation expects Associations and Co-op's to comply with the law and all Corporation, CRE and NFHA best practice guidance on Race Equality and Equal Opportunity.

8.2 As part of its performance ***standards*** it also expects Housing Associations and Co-op's to:

- *RSLs should adopt, publish and regularly review at governing body level equal opportunities policies covering the recruitment of governing body members and employees,*
- *the letting of their homes, the provision of housing and service to residents and applicants, and the appointment of consultants and contractors. These policies should comply with the law and be backed up by effective procedures, recording and monitoring.*
- *The law includes the Disabilities Discrimination Act 1995 and Protection from Harassment Act 1997, as well as the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and Race Discrimination Act 1976.*
- *RSLs should let their homes in ways that are fair and non-discriminatory. They should avoid restrictions on access to their housing which are irrelevant to housing or support needs.*

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8.3 Equal Opportunity:

- Comply with the law and ensure equal opportunity in all activities for women, people with disabilities and others vulnerable to discrimination.

9.0 SUMMARY:

9.1 The Co-op will allocate appropriate resources to ensure full and effective implementation of this policy.

9.2 This would include training, and regular policies reviews

10.0 PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES POLICY:

10.1 INTRODUCTION:

10.2 The Co-op recognises its obligations to ensure that people with disabilities are afforded equal opportunities to enter employment and ***to receive equal access to the services provided.***

11.0 AIM:

11.1 Employment:

11.2.1 The Co-op will follow procedures designed to provide fair consideration and selection of applicants with disabilities and to satisfy their training and career development needs ***in accordance with the recruitment and selection procedure. There will also be policies and objectives in relation to service provision, where practical and appropriate.***

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11.2.2 The policy applies equally to registered and non-registered disabled employees.

12.0 LEGISLATION

12.1 The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 now introduces measures aimed at ending discrimination towards disabled people.

12.2 The Act gives new rights in the areas of:

- ***employment***
- ***access to goods, facilities and services and the management, buying or renting of level of land or property***

13.0 RECRUITMENT

13.1 The Co-op is an equal opportunities employer and this is stated in all job advertisements.

13.2 Applications from people with disabilities will be particularly encouraged. Only skills, qualifications and experience that are necessary to do the job in question, are demanded of applicants. *A* ***disability will not bar a person from employment.***

13.3 Information relating to applicants with disabilities is kept for monitoring purposes.

Any applicant with a disability meeting the basic requirements for the job will be guaranteed an interview.

14.0 TRAINING

14.1 Regular reviews and annual appraisals will be carried out to ensure that employees with disabilities make the best use of their abilities and that the Co-op is making the best use of these staff

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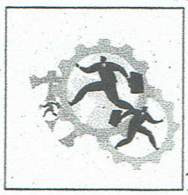
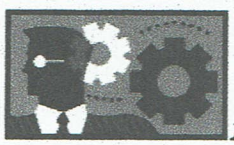
15.0 FACILITIES:



15.1 The Co-op will make every effort to provide the appropriate facilities to cater for an employee's specific disability. Particular attention is given to access to administrative office buildings, office related aids and adaptation such as telephone, large print documents, etc.

16.0 *SERVICE PROVISION:*



16.1 Arneway Housing Co-op will seek to be sensitive to the needs of people with disabilities in the provision of its services. Where possible, this will be integrated into the appropriate policies and procedures.

INTERNAL REFERENCE DOCUMENTS -

- *RACIAL HARASSMENT PROCEDURE*
- *ALLOCATIONS POLICY*

(This is the end of the Policy) Please keep this Policy safely for future Reference