

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

POLICY, OVERVIEW AND PROCEDURE CONTENTS

This Policy, Overview and Guidance comprises the following:

1.	Policy Statement	page 3
2.	Overview	page 4
3.	Procedure	page 7



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

INTRODUCTION

At Hanover, we believe that access to work opportunities, housing and the services we provide should be based on merit, equality, fairness and need and that no one should be treated less favourably on the basis of their sex, racial or ethnic origin, colour, religion, disability, marital status, sexuality or age .

POLICY

At Hanover we believe that our approach to Equality and Diversity is core to our business and we will ensure that this is reflected in all our policies, practices and services.

We are committed to respecting diversity in all aspects of our work and we will not tolerate any form of discrimination – either direct or indirect.

Acts of discrimination, prejudice, harassment and victimisation which occur within the workplace or within the communities in which we work will not be tolerated and will always be challenged.

AIMS

Hanover aims to become fully accessible to everyone valuing the diversity of our customers, staff and stakeholders at all times which eradicating inequality and discrimination.

COMMITMENT AND REVIEW

The Group Board looks to the support & professionalism of staff at all levels in making this policy truly effective. The effectiveness of this general statement of intent & other specific policies & procedures in use, will be regularly reviewed & revised as & when necessary.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce Moore".

Signed:

Dated: 21st April 2009

Name: Bruce Moore, Group Chief Executive



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

POLICY, OVERVIEW AND PROCEDURE

2. OVERVIEW

- [1] Context
- [2] Definitions
- [3] Relevant Legislation
- [4] Links to other relevant Hanover PPG
- [5] Review date for PPG
- [6] Links To Hanover Corporate Value And 4 Strategic Steps

[Back to PPG Contents](#)

[1] CONTEXT

In June 2008 the government published 'Framework for a Fairer Future' which sets out a programme of legislative measures for the Equality Bill. This Bill aims to simplify discrimination laws which at the moment are complex and difficult to understand. It also aims to extend existing discrimination protection.

'This agenda is for everyone, because fairness is the foundation for individual rights, a society at ease with itself and a prosperous economy'. Harriet Harman discussing Framework for a Fairer Future 2008.

Embracing Equality and Diversity brings to an organisation a wide range of experiences, ideas and creativity allowing staff to work to their full potential and meeting the needs of the widest possible resident base.

[2] DEFINITIONS

Equality relates to treating people equally although they may belong to certain groups. Equal Opportunities relate to a legal framework which makes it illegal to discriminate against people of the grounds of group membership i.e. sex, race, sexual orientation, age etc.

Diversity relates to the individual differences that people have and how these are understood. In terms of organisations, it is about respecting, valuing and benefiting from a varied workforce or varied resident background.

Whilst there is a difference between Equality and Diversity, they are nevertheless closely interconnected.

[3] RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Equal Pay Act 1970 and Equal Pay (Amendment) Regulations 1983
Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and 1986
Race relations Act 1976 and Race relations (Amendment) Act 2000
EU employment and Race Directives
Employment Protection (Part-time Employees) Regulations 1995
Disability Discrimination Act 1997 (amended 2005 and 2006)
Disability Equality Duty
Employment Rights Act 1996
Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
Protection from Harassment Act 1997
Human Rights Act 1998
Employment Equality (Age) regulations – implemented Oct 2006
Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulation 2003
Equality Act 2006
Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
Civil Partnership Act 2004

[4] OTHER RELEVANT HANOVER PPG

Aids and Adaptations		
Allocations		
Anti-Social Behaviour		
Housing Management		
Recruitment and Selection		
Safeguarding of Residents and Service Users		

[5] REVIEW OF THIS PPG

This PPG will be reviewed in April 2010. Interim revisions may be required in the light of the changes referred to above.

[6] Links To Hanover Corporate Value And 4 Strategic Steps

4 Strategic Steps (back to Policy Statement)
1. Providing clarity to allow choice
2. Engaging residents in determining quality standards and priorities for improvement
3. Offering new opportunities for rent and home ownership
4. Helping residents to do the things they want

(1) Hanover aims to be fully accessible to everyone, valuing the diversity of our customers, staff and stakeholders at all times.

This will enable residents, staff and stakeholders to make informed choices about their current homes and services and employment opportunities.

Steps 1,2 ,3 and 4

(2) Hanover's approach to Equality and Diversity is core to our business and we will ensure that it is reflected in all our policies, practices and services. Our approach to Equality and Diversity will be at the heart of our everyday work and encompasses all our corporate values.

Steps 1,2,3 and 4 .

(3) Hanover recognises that external Policy, Legislation and regulation is changing in this area. This Policy Statement and supporting documentation will be reviewed and updated to reflect changes

Steps 1, 2 and 4

(4) Hanover is committed to respecting diversity in all aspects of our work and will not tolerate any form of discrimination either direct or indirect.

Acts of discrimination, prejudice, harassment or victimisation which occur within the workplace or within the communities in which we work will not be tolerated and will always be challenged.

Steps 1,2 and 4

(5) Hanover has set up an Equalities and Diversity Continuous Improvement Group who report to the Equalities and Diversity Working Group and up to Group Board. Hanover's commitment to Equality and Diversity is all encompassing and at the core of our business.

Cross cutting Hanover theme.

[END of OVERVIEW]



1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To promote equal treatment of all people in all aspects of our work and to ensure that we comply with (or improve upon) UK legislative requirements

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 All current and potential residents and clients of our housing and services
2.2 All permanent and temporary employees, agency staff, and job applicants
2.3 All Board and Committee members
2.4 Consultants and contractors working for Hanover
2.5 The wider community

3. GOALS

- 3.1 We actively seek to ensure equality of opportunity in terms of:

3.1.1 HOUSING AND SERVICES

- Access to our housing and support services
- Quality of accommodation and other services offered to people in need
- Quality of maintenance and related services provided for residents and clients
- Protection of residents' rights in relation to racial and other forms of harassment such as neighbour disputes, elder abuse
- The design and development of new housing, the refurbishment of existing stock and repairs and adaptations to clients' homes
- Quality and suitability of designs used in the development of new housing and refurbishment of existing stock
- Buying goods and services for Hanover residents, clients and staff

3.1.2 EMPLOYMENT

- Flexible working opportunities to ensure the broadest possible catchment of essential applicants (both internal and external) of suitable calibre. These flexible methods of working will be considered dependent on service needs
- Advertising for suitably qualified candidates for a job role. This will be conducted internally as well as externally in order to provide an equal opportunity for all interested persons to apply. In areas where monitoring has identified an under-representation of particular groups, managers would be expected to place particular emphasis upon encouraging applications from under represented groups
- Recruitment will be conducted according to the terms of the Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Learning and Development will be designed to support the aims of Equal Opportunities initiatives. All employees will be appraised annually and there will be positive encouragement to discuss suitable learning and development opportunities, focusing on looking forwards. We will actively encourage BME staff to take up training opportunities

3.1.3 GROUP BOARD, SUBSIDIARY BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

- To monitor the composition of Boards and Committees and seek to increase membership from under-represented groups
- Recruitment to vacancies will be undertaken in accordance with the principles established for recruiting staff fairly.
- Group Board & Committee members to participate in the organisation's Equalities and Diversity learning programme

3.1.4 CONTRACTORS

- Hanover's policy will be communicated to all contractors, consultants and service providers. We expect major contractors to have equal opportunity policies that conform with Hanover's expectations, and that smaller contractors sign up to Hanover's policy

3.1.5 OTHER POLICIES

- All policies are designed to promote equal opportunity and protection for all residents and employees
- Hanover is also committed to ensuring that it recognises cross-cultural differences. Hanover also acknowledges different

religious/festival requirements and aims to take steps to accommodate reasonable requests for annual leave during such periods

4. MONITORING

- 4.1 Whilst all application forms will be designed to only ask relevant questions, a separate questionnaire will be provided in order to allow for confidential monitoring to take place within HR. This monitoring will apply to ethnic origin, disability, gender and age and will analyse the ratio of applicants to interviewees and the ratio of interviewees to successful candidates, and which candidates are internal. The resultant statistics will be kept and reported on by HR
- 4.2 HR will also monitor the ethnic origin, age, gender and disabled status of employees raising grievance and/or harassment complaints or those receiving disciplinary sanctions
- 4.3 An annual report of progress in the Group will be compiled by the Equality and Diversity Continuous Improvement Group. The report will be provided to the Equality and Diversity Working Group and the Board. The report will contain “action points for the way forward” where appropriate

5. COMMUNICATION

- 5.1 The details of this policy will be produced and communicated to all current employees, new starters (as part of the Induction pack), and to job applicants (the Diversity Policy Statement)
- 5.2 Communication initiative will take account of literacy difficulties, communication disabilities and be aware if the recipients’ first language is not English

6. ADHERENCE TO POLICY

- 6.1 **It is the responsibility of all managers to:**
 - Ensure that the minimum standards established within the policy are adhered to within their area of responsibility
 - Regularly consider the results of the monitoring exercises and implement actions which prioritise where change is necessary and/or where learning must take place
 - Review the effectiveness of the policy and all associated action plans
 - Investigate any suspected discriminatory acts or practices

6.2 **It is the responsibility of all employees to:**

- Co-operate with any measures introduced to ensure equal opportunity
- Work in an equitable way and not discriminate in the workplace
- Report any suspected discriminatory acts or practices

7. **RESPONSIBILITY**

7.1 **HANOVER**

Hanover has a statutory duty not to discriminate and must communicate its policy to:

- contractors and other agencies
- residents and clients
- applicants for housing and support services
- employees (current and potential)

7.2 **GROUP BOARD / GROUP MANAGEMENT TEAM / EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY WORKING GROUP**

- approve the Equalities and Diversity Policies
- support the annual Action Plan(s)
- ensure the implementation of the Action Plan(s)
- monitor the effectiveness of the Action Plan(s)
- authorise revisions, amendments or alterations to the policy
- champion diversity within the Group

7.3 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT GROUP**

- report performance against targets to the Equality and Diversity Working Group
- support departments and subsidiaries in the implementation of the action plans
- consider the impact of new legislation on the policy
- ensure regular review and updating of the policy.

Equalities & Diversity Policy

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Policy Leads: Bruce Moore, Group Chief Executive

Version Control

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45.1	original	Bruce Moore	April 09
45.2	reformatted	Anne Everson	November 2009

