

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy explains Red Kite Community Housing's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion in relation to the provision of our services.
- 1.2 The policy aims to ensure that our equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded into our organisational culture and day to day working practices.

2. References

- 2.1 This policy has been drafted in line with our vision and values, relevant legislation and best practice.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1 The Board of Red Kite Community Housing has a key role in ensuring that Equality and Diversity is championed within the organisation.
- 3.2 The Director of Customer Services is responsible for ensuring that this policy is kept up to date and consistent with any new Red Kite strategies. It will be reviewed every three years or following a change in legislation or regulatory requirements, to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.
- 3.3 The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented.
- 3.4 All staff have a responsibility to adopt the principles of the policy and ensure they work to complement our policy statement.
- 3.5 Any breaches of this policy should be reported to the Director of Customer Services and the Head of Governance.

4. Legal & Regulatory Framework

- 4.1 Red Kite is a Community Benefit Society which is registered in England with the Financial Conduct Authority. Red Kite is an unregistered provider of housing but regulated by the Charities Commission.
- 4.2 This policy supports our compliance with the Equality Act 2010.
- 4.3 The Regulator of Social Housing expects all landlords to comply with its Consumer standards, including the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard (April 2024).

5. Definitions

- 5.1 Equality is about ensuring people have equal rights and creating a level playing field so that they have equal chance and are not disadvantaged.

- 5.2 Diversity can be described as the differences both within and between groups of people but also the characteristics that define them as individuals.
- 5.3 Inclusion is about making sure that people are not segregated, isolated or marginalised in services and the community, this requires us to provide personalised responses to meeting people's needs.
- 5.4 Protected characteristics refer to any of the following 9 characteristics which are protected by the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation
- 5.5 Direct discrimination is when you treat someone worse than another person because they either have a protected characteristic, you think they have that protected characteristic, or they are connected to someone with that protected characteristic
- 5.6 Indirect discrimination happens when there is a policy or practice that applies in the same way for everyone but disadvantages a group of people who share a protected characteristic. If this happens, you must show that there is a good reason for the policy.
- 5.7 Equality Impact Assessments are an evidence-based approach designed to help organisations ensure their policies and practices are fair and do not discriminate against people on the grounds of the protected characteristics.
- 5.8 Harassment occurs when you engage in unwanted (meaning unwelcome or uninvited) behaviour which is related to a protected characteristic, and which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment.
- 5.9 Victimisation is treating someone badly because they have done a 'protected act' or you believe they have done a 'protected act.' A protected act means:
 - Making a claim of discrimination.
 - Providing evidence or information to someone else to make a claim.
 - Making an allegation that you or someone else has breached the Equality Act.
 - Doing anything else for the purpose of or in connection with the Equality Act.

6. Key Principles

- 6.1 Red Kite Community Housing understands that providing equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and promoting a culture of inclusion are vital to our success and that of the communities we serve.
- 6.2 Our leadership team will ensure that there is a strong ethos for equality and diversity within the organisation that can be seen in the way we deliver our services.

- 6.3 We will seek to understand the diverse needs of our tenants, including those arising from protected characteristic, language barriers, and additional support needs. By mutual agreement we will collect, retain and manage information about tenants, so that we can make sure that we are providing services in a fair manner.
- 6.4 We will ensure that the services we provide are developed and then monitored to ensure that they do not unfairly discriminate or operate less favourably to any individual or group of people that fall within the scope of the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010. We will ensure they are accessible, and that the accessibility is publicised to tenants.
- 6.5 Our commitment to equality and diversity recognises that people may be discriminated against or disadvantaged for reasons other than the protected characteristics and therefore we also consider other things that may impact on our tenants such as responsibility for dependents and work status.
- 6.6 We will tailor engagement with our tenants so that we reflect their diversity and enable and encourage diverse groups to engage and participate in designing and influencing our services.
- 6.7 We will ensure that communication with and information for tenants is clear, accessible, relevant, timely and appropriate to the diverse needs of tenants.
- 6.8 We will ensure that our equality and diversity commitments are embedded into our organisational culture and day to day working practices and that we meet our legal and regulatory obligations. Our staff will receive training and development to provide the right tools to ensure that equality and diversity are an integral part of how we deploy services in the community.

7. Policy Statement

Living our values

- 7.1 Members of our board, committees, our Senior Leadership team and customer groups, will role model and champion our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- 7.2 All our main contractors and other agencies we hire must adhere to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy and we expect key contractors to ensure their staff have had adequate training.
- 7.3 Our core values are partnership, respect and pride and we expect all our staff to be respectful and empathetic when working with our tenants.
- 7.4 We will carry out Equality Impact Assessments on the development of new policies and strategies or where an existing policy or strategy is undergoing a review. This will help us in ensuring that our services are free from direct and indirect discrimination,

help us assess whether our services are delivering fair and equitable outcomes for tenants, and identifying any actions we need to take.

Accessibility

7.4 We will

- promote our services proactively and through a range of channels
- provide a range of contact methods to reflect our tenants needs and preferences
- provide information which is clear and written in plain English
- ensure that our website is accessible to those with differing needs
- provide information in alternative formats or languages where a need is identified
- ensure our main office is accessible for those that visit us
- work with our tenants and prospective tenants who wish to be supported by a representative or advocate in their interactions with us around our services.

Engagement

7.5 We will

- use the information we have to identify how we can engage positively with our tenants
- encourage and promote diversity of views and experiences when consulting with our tenants
- seek to involve hard to reach groups through our community engagement work
- promote inclusion and community cohesion.

Service delivery

7.6 We will

- seek to capture key information about our tenants that will help inform our Equality Impact Assessments so that we can ensure our key tenant facing strategies and policies have due consideration to equality and diversity and are fair and non-discriminatory
- use the information our tenants share with us to help us to tailor our services and make reasonable adjustments, recognising that a one-sized approach will not reflect the needs of everyone. This will include taking an anticipatory approach
- ensure our staff and contractors are respectful to our tenants
- consider how we can support tenants to remain independent in our homes and support this through our Adaptations Policy
- support tenants to feel safe in their homes, listening to any concerns or suggestions they have related to improving services
- take effective action to tackle victimisation and harassment, and we will always adopt a victim centred approach. This is detailed in our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- seek feedback from our tenants about the delivery of our services.

8. Related Policies and Strategies

8.1 This policy directly supports, and is supported by, other policies, procedures and strategies that we have in place. These include:

- Equality and Diversity Strategy (to be published in 2025)
- Resident and Community Engagement Strategy
- Adaptations Policy
- ASB Policy
- Exceptional Hardship Funding Policy
- Mobility Scooters Policy
- Priority Moves Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Unacceptable Behaviour Policy

8.2 The list above is not exhaustive as our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy interlinks with all our service-based policies which can be found on our website.

Document Controls			
Version	1	Effective date	October 2024
Subject matter expert drafter	Sarah North Director of Customer Services	Process owner	Sarah North Director of Customer Services
Related Pod	Relationships Community	Related Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptations Policy • ASB Policy • Exceptional Hardship Funding Policy • Mobility Scooters Policy • Priority Moves Policy • Safeguarding Policy • Unacceptable Behaviour Policy
Review period	3 years	Next review due by	October 2027
Delegated approvals			
Approved by ELT	Sarah North Director of Customer Services	Approved Date	15 October 2024
Approved by Board/ Committee/ RRT	N/A	Approved Date	N/A