

Equality & Diversity Policy

“ You are the customer, we at Sentinel want to give you an excellent service.”



Equality & Diversity Policy

This policy sets out our approach to Equality and Diversity and the principles that we will follow in all that we do.

Equality and Diversity Statement

We:

- are committed to treating everyone we come into contact with, fairly and with dignity and respect
- do not tolerate discrimination and will not discriminate against any person on the grounds of their gender (including transgender), sexuality (whether lesbian, gay, heterosexual), race, religion, belief, disability, marital or civil partnership or pregnancy or paternity or maternity status or for any other reason which may cause a person to be treated with injustice
- aim to recognise, respond to and value the diverse needs of our customers, communities, employees and individuals with whom we work
- are committed to the promotion and advancement of equality of opportunity and community cohesion and the elimination of unfair and unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation
- expect everyone who works for us or with us to share our beliefs and be part of our commitment to equality and diversity.

Promotion of Equality and Diversity

We will promote equality and diversity and ensure that our services are free from discrimination and meet the needs of our current and future customers and employees by:

Customers

Customers and their Homes

- identifying, assessing and understanding customers' needs at sign up or when we become aware that their circumstances have changed and work with customers and, where appropriate, other organisations to seek to provide additional advice and support services to those who need it
- ensuring that our development, lettings and sales policies and practices are fair, transparent and non-discriminatory
- providing services to customers tailored to their particular needs including co-operating with relevant organisations to provide an aids and adaptations service that meets customers' needs

Customer Involvement and Empowerment

- providing choices and ensuring our services are accessible, responsive and sensitive by offering a variety of ways for customers to easily contact

us, obtain information and access our services, including translation and interpretation services, braille, large print and audio information

- offering a wide range of opportunities to be involved in the management of customers' homes and the scrutiny of our performance to ensure all our customers have the ability to influence priorities, housing related policies and the delivery of housing related services
- aiming for the membership of our residents' association to reflect the diversity of the communities we serve
- recording, monitoring and evaluating the diversity of our customer profile to understand who our current customers are their needs and who our future customers might be
- conducting regular surveys and analyse results against our customer data to ensure that no minority groups are adversely dissatisfied with the service they receive
- conducting equality impact assessment across all key areas of the business to ensure diverse groups can access services

Neighbourhood and Community

- taking action against all forms of harassment, victimisation, direct and indirect discrimination, domestic abuse or anti-social behaviour where our customers are victims or perpetrators and offer support to victims, working in partnership with other organisations where it is effective to do so
- working with our partners and helping to achieve equality and diversity and community cohesion

Contractors

- seeking to ensure our contractors, consultants and suppliers understand and adhere to our equality and diversity requirements, have appropriate equality and diversity arrangements in place and are sensitive to the differing needs of our customers through our contracting and procurement procedures

Employees

- ensuring equality of opportunity for all employees and applicants in our recruitment, selection, training and conditions of service and encourage and support the recruitment of people from a wide range of backgrounds to reflect the communities we serve
- ensuring regular training and updates in equality and diversity issues are given to employees to develop skills that enable them to provide quality services which are sensitive to the needs of customers and adhere to our regulator's Standards

- creating a work environment free from harassment, offensive language and other discriminatory behaviour at all times and inspire confidence in our employees that justified complaints will be dealt with without fear of unfair prejudice or reprisal
- taking immediate action against any employee found to be in breach of their equality and diversity responsibilities

Governance Arrangements

- aspiring for the membership of our governing body to reflect the communities we serve, with a range of skills, experience and up to date knowledge to help meet our targets
- complying with our governing body's Code of Governance
- maintaining an Equality Action Plan with measurable goals that is reviewed regularly to continually progress our promotion of equality and diversity.

Reporting Discrimination

We take all complaints concerning discrimination, harassment or victimisation very seriously. If you are a customer and you think you've been treated unfairly because of your gender (including transgender), sexuality (whether lesbian, gay, heterosexual), race, religion, belief, disability, marital or civil partnership or pregnancy or paternity or maternity status, you can contact us in confidence through your Neighbourhood Co-Ordinator or contact our Customer Service Centre on 0800 195 5515.

If you are an employee, please bring your concern to the attention of your line manager. If you feel you need to come forward on a confidential basis, then contact our HR Manager or the Chief Executive through our staff whistleblowing policy.

If you are a Board Member, please bring your concern to the Chair of the Board or the Board's Non-Executive Director for Confidential Reporting, details of whom can be obtained from the Company Secretary.

Produced by: Company Secretary

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If you would like this policy in large print, braille or translated, please contact the Customer Service Centre on 0800 195 5515 from a landline or 0300 666 5515 from a mobile