



## **The Langstane Group**

### **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**

Approved by Leadership Team	25 June 2025
Board of Management	21 August 2025
Implementation Date	August 2025
Review Date	August 2028
Version	V4

<b>Policy Version</b>	<b>Date of Approval</b>	<b>Changes made to Policy</b>
Version V1	10 November 2009	First issue
Version V2	15 July 2019	Re-write
Version V3	24 August 2022	Minor Changes: policy amended to meet policy template; Roles and Responsibilities added; grammatical change; change relating to the Association's Human Rights Approach to Housing and an amendment from Support Services to Customer Services
Version V4	21 August 2025	Minor changes: addition of inclusion to align with strategy

## 1. Introduction

Langstane Housing Association is a Co-operative and Community Benefit Society and a registered social landlord with charitable status.

The Langstane Group consists of Langstane Housing Association Limited, and its wholly owned subsidiaries. This policy applies to the Langstane Group.

Langstane Housing Association is committed to promoting equality both in the provision of services and in employment practices and ensuring that services are accessible to everyone.

Characteristics which are protected are set out in the Equality Act 2010 in respect of which discrimination, harassment or victimisation is unlawful. The protected characteristics are defined as:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The Association is committed to opposing and eliminating all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

This policy is not, however, restricted to just protected characteristics. The Association recognises that factors such as socio-economic status, background, income, education, employment, tenure and a person's life experience, can impact their ability to access opportunities and their sense of inclusion. We will take this into consideration wherever possible, specifically when identifying and developing service improvement initiatives, our approach to recruitment and retention and employee learning and development.

### Legal and Regulatory Framework

The Equality Act 2010 provides a single framework to strengthen the law around discrimination and remove inconsistencies which previously existed.

The Association is not a Public Body as described in the provisions of the Equality Act (2010) but will adopt the following general duties to ensure no individual or group is disadvantaged:

- eliminate any type of discrimination, harassment or victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not

## **Human Rights Act 1998**

The Human Rights Act 1998 sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to and includes protection of these rights under Article 14, 'Protection from Discrimination'. The Association will adopt the human rights principles of accountability, participation, transparency and non-discrimination. The Association will have regard to a 'Right to Adequate Housing' and the seven 'dimensions' a home should meet to be considered adequate as set out in the United Nation's International Convention on Economic Social and Cultural Rights.

## **Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 s39**

The Housing Association has a duty to act in a manner which encourages equal opportunities and complies with legislation.

The Scottish Housing Regulator expects, under standard 5.3 of the Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management, that the Association:

'pays due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations across the range of protected characteristics in all areas of its work, including its governance arrangements.'

## **Scottish Social Housing Charter**

Section 31 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010, created the Scottish Social Housing Charter which set the standards and outcomes that all social landlords should aim to achieve when performing their housing activities. Outcome 1 mandates that every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.

## **2. Aims and objectives of the policy**

The aim of this policy is to provide a framework within which the strategic aims of the Association's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Business Plan can be met.

The Association as a landlord, service provider and employer will ensure respect, fairness and understanding is delivered across all areas of the business and will embrace diversity and eliminate discrimination. To achieve these aims the Association will:

- gather and analyse information that enables the Association to understand the needs and preferences of tenants, residents and other customers and use this to shape policies and services
- identify and remove barriers preventing or restricting access to services
- ensure services meet the diverse needs of customers
- eliminate all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- ensure equality of opportunity is embraced and promoted across the Association through training and working practices.

### 3. Links to other strategic documents and policies

The Group's Equality and Diversity Policy is linked to a number of strategic documents. Every policy, including human resources and recruitment policies will contain a statement promoting the Association's commitment to equality and diversity across all areas of work and will confirm that discrimination or harassment of any kind is not tolerated.

In particular this policy links to the Business Plan; Tenancy Sustainment Strategy; Tenant Participation Strategy; Community Investment Strategy and Communication Strategy.

### 4. Policy

Equality is not always about treating everyone the same but about recognising differences and treating people accordingly, so that the outcome for each person is the same and they are not disadvantaged as a result

Diversity is the range of individual differences demonstrated amongst the population. By embracing diversity the Association attaches value to individuality, including background, culture, skills, attitudes and experience as well as personal characteristics.

Inclusion means creating an environment where everyone feels respected, valued, and able to fully participate, regardless of their background, identity, or circumstances. The Association is committed to fostering a culture where individual differences are recognised and celebrated, and where barriers to participation and opportunity are actively removed.

This policy reflects a number of the strategic aims set out in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy:

- A range of communication methods, appropriate to the needs of a diverse society are used to provide equality of opportunity
- A diverse, talented and motivated governing body and workforce that understand and reflect the needs of the communities, is recruited, developed and retained
- The local and national agenda is shaped and influenced to improve equality, diversity and inclusion
- Robust and comprehensive equality evidence is available for the design and delivery of services

The Association collects data in accordance with the requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator relating to the protected characteristics, for existing tenants, new tenants, housing applicants on the waiting lists, governing bodies and employees .

The Association will analyse this information to understand the needs and preferences of the tenants, employees , governing body members and other customers in order to provide continuous improvement in the delivery of services, to ensure that there is no conscious or unconscious bias in the delivery of services and to remove any barriers preventing or restricting access to services and activities.

In addition the Association will engage contractors, consultants and partners that can demonstrate a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion through upholding the values of respect, fairness and understanding.

The Association will actively promote activities and services including identifying and engaging with minority or hard to reach groups, ensuring that a range of communication methods are available to facilitate this. Translation and interpretation services will be provided where required.

The Association will ensure that employment opportunities are accessible to all.

The Association will provide a working environment that recognises the individual needs of employees, where each employee feels respected and able to give their best. Employees will be trained and equipped to respond to specific individual needs of tenants, residents and other customers.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

An Equality Impact Assessment allows the Association to take proactive steps to identify and remove potential discrimination or adapt a policy or practice to better advance equality.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission in Scotland states that a policy or practice which proactively considers equality, particularly using relevant evidence and consultation or involvement, is likely to be a better quality policy in terms of it being more responsive to the needs of those affected.

When new policies are produced or existing policies reviewed consideration will be given to whether the policy affects tenants, employees or the wider community, whether there is a significant impact in terms of equality or if there are known inequalities.

Where this is the case an Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out and appended to the policy.

## **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

Board of Management and Chief Executive

The Board of Management has overall responsibility for the Policy with day to day implementation and adherence delegated to the Chief Executive.

Directors

Directors are responsible for:

- promoting the Equality and Diversity Policy at every opportunity and ensuring that employees are trained and equipped to deal with any form of discrimination.
- identifying and removing barriers preventing or restricting access to services
- ensuring services meet the diverse needs of customers

All employees

Equality and Diversity is every employees' responsibility. Employees must ensure they adhere to the policy, attend training and champion equality and diversity in their every day working lives.

## **6. Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed every three years. An annual report will be provided to the Board of Management in relation to how the Association meets the requirements of the policy, including how the Association works with others to shape and influence the local and national agenda to improve equality and diversity across the north-east of Scotland and beyond.

## **7. Equality and Diversity**

The Langstane Group / Langstane Housing Association is committed to promoting equality and diversity across all areas of work. Discrimination or harassment of any kind is not tolerated.

### **Right to Complain**

In the event you are not satisfied with the service you have received, please contact the Association for a copy of our Complaints Policy. This can also be viewed on Langstane Housing Association's website – [www.langstane-ha.co.uk](http://www.langstane-ha.co.uk)

If you would like this document sent to you in large print, please contact Customer Service on 01224 423000