

# **Lochfield Park Housing Association Equality Strategy**

## **1.0 Introduction**

Lochfield Park Association is a relatively small organisation with a small staff team, however it is aware of responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 to promote equality of opportunity in all of its core business areas.

As a Registered Social Landlord, regulated by the Scottish Housing Regulator, Lochfield Park Housing Association is also bound by the requirements of The Scottish Social Housing Charter particularly regulatory standards 2 and 5 in relation to Equality and Diversity.

Furthermore, the “Scottish Executive Equality Strategy” sets out a vision of “...an *open, just and inclusive Scotland where respect and understanding are fostered and where everyone is encouraged and enabled to live, work and take part in society to their full potential, free from prejudice and discrimination. The Association strives to carry out its business activities in the spirit of this vision.*

## **2.0 Equality – Aims & Objectives**

Lochfield Park Association will attempt to integrate equality into every aspect of our everyday work and will view equality as something that affects everyone’s abilities to fulfill all of their potential.

Lochfield Park realises that mainstreaming equality into its business activities is an ongoing process and it will seek to improve through networking and discussions with a variety of forums.

Finally, Lochfield Park strives to be an equal opportunity employer and a non discriminatory landlord and will continue to work towards the achievement of these two objectives.

## **3.0 Participation, Collaboration, and Partnership Working**

Lochfield Park Association will involve as many people as possible in the development and implementation of our Equality Strategy. We will take these views on board to develop and promote Equal Opportunities.

Lochfield Park’s ultimate aim is to ensure there are no barriers to people who want to use our services, irrespective of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender etc.

Lochfield Park will seek networking opportunities with other employers to share Good Practice.

## 4.0 Being a Good Employer

Lochfield Park is committed to valuing its people as individuals and making the best use of everyone's talent and potential to assist not only the individual but the organisation as a whole.

Lochfield Park appreciates, as a small organisation that we have limited opportunity to reflect national issues of diversity within our small workforce, however, we will give full and fair consideration to all job applicants and ensure that our recruitment processes are carried out competently and fairly.

Lochfield Park will advertise any job vacancies within our organisation to as wide an audience as possible, bearing in mind the cost to the organisation.

Lochfield Park will promote equality of opportunity by encouraging disabled people and those from ethnic minority communities to consider applying for posts within our organisation.

Lochfield Park will guarantee to interview any disabled applicants who meet the minimum requirements for a vacancy.

Lochfield Park will ensure that candidates selected for interview are invited to advise us of any specific arrangements they require to enable them to attend.

Lochfield Park Association will comply with all principle legislation governing equality issues including:

- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Scotland Act 1998
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion & Belief) Regulations 2003
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Employment Equality (age) Regulations 2006 (not yet in force)
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
- Local Government in Scotland Act 2003
- Equality Act 2010

Lochfield Park will provide a supportive, open environment where all employees have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

All staff will receive training on equality issues.

Lochfield Park will carry out a system of staff appraisals and will maintain records on recruitment, training and employment and these reports will be provided annually to the Staffing Sub-Committee.

Lochfield Park will carry out an annual audit of its office facilities to ensure compliance with Disability Discrimination and Health & Safety legislation.

## **5.0 Our responsibilities as a Landlord**

As a Registered Social Landlord, Lochfield Park is aware of our responsibility to ensure the widest possible access to our housing and services.

Lochfield Park will ensure that our housing waiting list is available to all sections of the Community and we will endeavor to ensure that information relating to our housing and services will be made available to as many disadvantaged groups as possible.

Lochfield Park will mainstream an assessment of equalities into all aspects of its housing services, particularly in relation to the allocation process.

Lochfield Park will look at ways of improving access to the information we provide by:

- Making our published material available in a variety of formats including community languages, audio tape, large print and Braille (Free of charge, where requested)
- Improving our website to ensure it is as accessible as possible. (Subject to cost constraints)
- Producing all of our Newsletters, Annual Reports and policy documents in plain English.

## **6.0 Equality Action**

Lochfield Park will offer our services to as wide a range of customers as possible. We will do this through publicity and in co-operation with equality organizations, where possible.

Lochfield Park will undertake an audit of its office premises each year to ensure compliance with all disability and health & safety legislation.

Lochfield Park will ensure equal access to its offices and services to all members of the public.

Lochfield Park will ensure all of its literature, publications, policies and documentation are produced in an easy to understand manner and all of these documents will be offered in various formats including Braille,

tape and translated into other languages, as required. This will be provided free of charge.

Lochfield Park will encourage diversity and inclusion through the provision of an open waiting list, available to anyone over the age of 16.

Lochfield Park will try to engage with as many disability and minority groups, as possible, through networking with other housing providers and housing agencies.

Lochfield Park will guarantee to interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum requirements for any job vacancies.

Lochfield Park will ensure training is available to all staff and Committee on equality issues.

Lochfield Park will ensure there are no barriers to attending meetings of the Association. This will include arranging transport to and from all Management Committee, Sub-Committee, Working Groups and Annual General Meetings, to those who need it.

## **7.0 Monitoring Progress**

Lochfield Park is aware that mainstreaming equality is about continually monitoring the services that we provide to ensure that our policies and practices are working. To this end, we will produce an annual statement on equality issues to our Governing Body and highlight any areas for action or improvement.

This report will be produced by the Association's designated Equality and Diversity Officer. (Liz Cumming, Office Manager)