



## Equality & Diversity Policy

### 1. Purpose

The Equality and Diversity Policy provides the framework for how Dawson Housing (Dawson) promotes and manages diversity, provides equal outcomes for tenants, staff and partners and puts into practice relevant legislation and regulation.

Scope	The policy applies to all of Dawson Housing's activities especially recruitment, allocations, management, and delivery of housing
Policy relates to	Tenancy policy Anti-Social Behaviour Policy Allocations & Lettings Policy Complaints Policy
Version	1.0
Board Approval	November 2020
Responsible Officer	CEO
Review Frequency	3 years
Review Date	2023

### 2. Introduction

- 2.1 Dawson Housing provides homelessness & supported housing to tenants with complex needs. Dawson values diversity and is committed to promoting equality and welcoming diversity in its actions as an employer, partner and landlord.
- 2.2 Dawson welcomes the duties and responsibilities placed on it by legislation and regulation and embraces these duties proactively as a part of how it undertakes its business. The Board will keep under review changes in the legislative and regulatory environment and review the organisation's success in delivering positive equality outcomes.
- 2.3 The key legislative and regulatory sources for Dawson are the Equalities Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Regulatory Framework for social housing in England.

### **3. Equalities Act 2010**

3.1 The key source of legislative authority in respect of equality and diversity is the Equalities Act 2010 which brought together and revised existing equalities legislation and set a new approach for equalities law across the UK.

3.2 The 2010 Act prohibits discrimination, harassment and victimisation in relation to nine Protected Characteristics which are:

- **Age**
- **Disability**
- **Gender**
- **Religion/Belief**
- **Race**
- **Gender reassignment**
- **Marriage status**
- **Sexual orientation**
- **Pregnancy/maternity**

3.3 The 2010 Act introduced a new duty on public bodies known as the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

3.4 Dawson is not a public body but the 2010 Act and subsequent caselaw has established that registered providers are subject to the PSED as they carry out public functions in the form of the provision, allocation and management of social housing.

### **4. Human Rights Act 1998**

4.1 The Human Rights Act 1998 requires all public authorities and other organisations performing public functions (such as allocating and managing social housing) to treat people in accordance with the rights set out in the European Convention on Human Rights. Article 6 (right to a fair trial), 8 (right to respect for private and family life and home) and 14 (prohibition of discrimination) are those most likely to be relevant to the HA.

4.2 Dawson enforces these rights and its wider duties through its policies including Allocations and Lettings, Income Management, Adaptations, Complaints, Anti-Social Behaviour, Tenancy and Repairs and Maintenance Policies.

### **5. Regulator of Social Housing**

5.1 The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England requires Dawson to:

- Treat all tenants with fairness and respect;
- Understand and respond to the needs of our tenants and demonstrate how it has taken into account the needs of tenants across the equality strands;
- Provide choices, information and communication that is appropriate to the diverse needs of its tenants;

- Cooperate with relevant organisations to provide an adaptations service that meets tenants' needs;
- Cooperate with relevant partners to help promote social, environmental and economic wellbeing in the areas where we own properties;
- Work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhoods where we own homes;
- Let our homes in a fair, transparent and efficient way and develop allocations processes in a way which supports their effective use by the full range of actual and potential tenants, including those with support needs, those who do not speak English as a first language and others who have difficulties with written English.

5.2 Dawson discharges these regulatory requirements through its own policies and through the work of its partners and including MYSHON to ensure that MYSHON and other service providers have a comprehensive set of approaches which meet these requirements.

## **6. Applying the policy**

6.1 Dawson is committed to playing a proactive role in furthering diversity and championing equality and does so through applying this policy in a number of distinct arenas

6.2 Dawson is a progressive employer committed to excellent workplace practices including fairness in recruitment, promotion and training of staff. Dawson employs few people directly but has developed delivery partnerships with other organisations such as recruitment partners. Dawson ensure that all partners have appropriate recruitment, promotion and training policies in place and require that evidence is provided to demonstrate performance in this area.

6.3 Dawson has a suite of policies which are designed to support, protect and safeguard the rights and wellbeing of its tenants. Dawson is proactive in integrating excellent equality and diversity practice into service delivery and is particularly aware of the vulnerability of many of its tenants. Dawson demands high standards from suppliers and partners who deliver services to and support its tenants.

## **7. Governance**

7.1 The Board is the ultimate champion and guarantor of equality and diversity practice in the organisation. The Board plays an active role in the management of equality and diversity in a number of ways:

- Board recruitment and selection will take account of the mix of skills and abilities of the board alongside ensuring that board appointments are conducted in a fair, open and transparent manner with proper regard to Dawson's duties under the 2010 Equalities Act and the Regulator of Social Housing.
- The Board will receive and review an annual report of the performance of the organisation in respect of meeting its duties and responsibilities relating to equality and diversity, take note of areas for improvement and direct the organisation to make changes and improvements as required.

## **8. Management and reporting**

- 8.1 Dawson will monitor the performance of the organisation through the collection of information and performance indicators across a range of areas including:
- Allocations
  - Complaints
  - Anti-social behaviour
  - Income Management (evictions)
  - Adaptations
- 8.2 The data collected will be compared annually against the population of Dawson's tenants as a whole and an Equality Analysis will be undertaken to identify and explain any over or under representation of people with Protected Characteristics.
- 8.3 Dawson's managing agent(s) will provide an annual report that documents that it has appropriate policies in place and that it is monitoring the delivery of services to tenants in respect of equality and diversity outcomes.
- 8.4 The Chief Executive Officer will provide the board with an annual report on Equality and Diversity.

## **9. Communication**

- 9.1 Dawson will publish this Equality and Diversity Policy on its website and make copies of the policy available to all partners
- 9.2 Board members will receive information on this policy and training at a board meeting on their responsibilities and duties as board members.

Responsible Officer	CEO
Author	CEO
Board Approval	June 2021
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