



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 We are committed to embracing equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work and employment, which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination.
- 1.2 Equality - is ensuring individuals or groups of individuals are treated fairly and equally and no less favourably, specific to their needs.
- 1.3 Diversity - means valuing the differences between people and the ways in which those differences can contribute to a richer, more creative and more productive environment.
- 1.4 Inclusion - means ensuring everyone feels comfortable to be themselves at work and feels the worth of their contribution.
- 1.5 We recognise that some people face exclusion, discrimination and harassment as a result of any one or more aspects or perceived aspects of their characteristics or by association with people with different characteristics, such as:
 - Religion or belief
 - Gender re-assignment
 - Age
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
 - Marriage and civil partnerships
 - Disability
 - Pregnancy or maternity
 - Race, colour, nationality & ethnic or national

These are known as protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

- 1.6 As a housing service provider and employer, we have the ability to reduce the disadvantages that some people experience, by making our services and recruitment process more responsive and accessible for a diverse range of individuals and community needs.
- 1.7 We recognise that equal opportunities mean treating everyone fairly based on their individual needs, it is not about treating everyone the same. We will therefore seek to meet individuals' needs where practicable and will not make assumptions that all needs are the same.
- 1.8 This policy addresses both the statutory responsibilities and our commitment to promote equality of opportunity and access for all.

2. Who does this Policy apply to?

- 2.1 This Policy applies to every Board member, member of staff and customer of Tai Tarian, and to those who provide goods and services on our behalf.

- 2.2 The term customer used in this Policy applies to all our applicants, tenants and leaseholders. The term staff used in this Policy includes all employees, agency workers and consultants.

3. Legislation

- 3.1 This Policy will demonstrate our commitment to ensure we meet our legal obligations as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and any associated legislation.

- 3.2 As a housing association we are required to comply with the general equality duty as detailed in the Equality Act 2010. The purpose of the general equality duty is to integrate consideration of equality, diversity, and inclusion into day-to-day business activities.

The duty states we should:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

4. Definitions

There are four types of discrimination prohibited by the Act:

4.1 Direct discrimination

Occurs when an individual or group of people are treated less favourably, than others because:

- They have a protected characteristic.
- It is perceived that they have a protected characteristic (known as discrimination by perception); or
- They are connected to someone with a protected characteristic (known as discrimination by association)

An example of direct discrimination is, not employing an individual who is the best candidate for a role as they have declared they have a medical condition which could mean they will potentially need a lot of time off work.

4.2 Indirect discrimination

Is when a working condition or policy disadvantages an individual or group of people who share a protected characteristic. For example, saying that all applicants for a job must be clean shaven puts members of some religious groups at a disadvantage.

4.3 Harassment

Is unwanted behaviour that must have the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity, or creating a degrading, humiliating, hostile, intimidating or offensive environment.

This could be because:

- An individual or group of people have a protected characteristic (except marital and civil partnerships status and pregnancy/maternity): or
- The behaviour violates the dignity of an individual
- It creates an environment which is hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive.
- The individual has a connection with a protected characteristic. For example, making assumptions that an individual is gay because their friends are gay.
- The individual who the behaviour is aimed at does not personally have to be aware of the behaviour for it to be harassment. For example, comments made about the individual when they are not present or on closed social media forums.

4.4 Victimisation

Occurs when an individual faces discrimination because they have made an allegation of unlawful discrimination or because of assisting or supporting a complainant relating to the Equality Act.

4.5 To be unlawful, all the above treatments must have happened in one of the situations that are covered by the Equality Act. For example, in the workplace or when receiving goods or services.

4.6 This Policy applies to all conduct in the workplace and also to conduct outside of the workplace that is related to your work (e.g., at work or professional meetings, social events and in some circumstances, may include social interactions with colleagues). It also extends to other actions which may be linked to the organisation and includes expressions of views on social media contrary to the commitments expressed in this Policy.

5. Our Commitments to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

5.1 We have identified three areas (corporate, service delivery, recruitment and employment) which are central to our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion. Within these areas we give some clear statements of how we will operate across all areas of the business.

5.2 **Corporate:**

To ensure that we are free from discrimination

- We will have due regard to the Equality Act 2010. Housing Associations are covered in their functions of a public nature by the General Equality Duty but are not listed under schedule 19 of the Act; however, we will have consideration for the Wales specific equality duties.

- We will ensure that the partners/contractors with whom we work have due regard to the Equality Act 2010.
- We respect the diversity of all individuals and have a desire that the diversity in our community is reflected in our staff, our customers, and our Board.
- We aim to promote a positive environment and culture among our staff, our customers, and our Board whereby everyone is valued, and no-one is treated less favourably for any reason which cannot be shown to be reasonably justified.
- We will work towards eliminating all forms of discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for everyone. Our aim is that all those associated with us feel valued and respected, are encouraged to participate, and contribute. We believe that everyone has an individual role to play and that we are enriched by the unique contributions that different people can make.

5.3 **Service Delivery:**

To create sustainable tenancies

- We will take a strong stance where discriminatory behaviour is found to be taking place. We have robust policies and procedures in place which support individuals who experience discriminatory behaviour and take action against individuals who initiate discriminatory behaviour where necessary.
- In all areas of service delivery, we will work in partnership with our customers and support specialist agencies where we are able.

Access to services

- We will ensure access to services is fair to all our customers; that they are provided free from discrimination and in a format understandable to the individual.
- We will ensure that access to our homes is fair and that all applicants receive support and advice if we are unable to assist them.
- We will collect information about our customers to enable us to monitor the fair and equitable delivery of services. Where legislation allows us to do so.

Tailoring our services to customers

- We will work to understand the needs of our customers and communities when planning and reviewing services.
- We will ensure as far as possible that our properties are adapted for tenants' needs and suitable for their individual requirements.

5.4 Recruitment and employment:

To ensure that our staff adhere to our values

- We will ensure that our recruitment and selection practices are fair and non-discriminatory.
- We will ensure that all staff and Board members are aware of and fulfil their obligations with regard to equality and diversity issues.
- We will challenge and investigate discriminatory behaviour and take appropriate disciplinary action when necessary.
- We will ensure that all staff receive equality, diversity & inclusion training and guidance as part of their role.
- We will encourage all staff to fulfil their potential by giving fair access to training and development opportunities.
- We will make reasonable adjustments for staff to their employment arrangements where required.

6. How to report an equality concern

- 6.1 Anyone who has experienced or witnessed discrimination or harassment has a responsibility to report it:

If you are a customer or supplier	If you are a member of staff	If you are a Board member
<p>Contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Any member of staff, who will pass your concern onto their line manager or Corporate Services▪ Corporate Services on corporate.services@taitarian.co.uk or 0300 777 0000▪ Write to the Corporate Services department at our head office address	<p>Contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Your line manager▪ HR▪ Speak in Confidence▪ Trade Union	<p>Contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Chair of the Board▪ Any Director▪ Head of Corporate Services

7. What happens after an equality concern is reported

- 7.1 We recognise that people's own perception of discrimination and harassment is important and that people are able to judge for themselves whether or not they feel they or someone else is being discriminated against or harassed. We understand that harassment can be obvious but can also be experienced in subtle ways. In all reported cases, we will:

- Investigate the concern
- Support the individual effected
- Support the individual reporting the concern including providing feedback
- Take appropriate action in line with relevant procedures.

7.2 For more information on harassment refer to our Harassment and Bullying guidance.

8. Responsibilities

8.1 The table below outlines areas of specific responsibility.

Board Members and EMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leadership in ensuring Tai Tarian's culture embraces equality, diversity and inclusion and that this policy underpins all aspects of our work
Management Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensuring this policy is implemented ▪ Supporting objectives with resources
Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation of this Policy in their service areas, including Equality Impact assessments ▪ Incorporating recommendations from the Equality Impact assessments into service action plans ▪ Promoting the importance of equality and diversity to teams and reinforcing adherence to this Policy ▪ Addressing inappropriate behaviour ▪ Ensure that any partners comply with this Policy
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Take personal responsibility for and a positive approach to, understanding this Policy and putting it into practice, seeking training as appropriate ▪ Set an exemplary standard for others ▪ Promote equality and diversity with customers and ensure that actions do not wittingly or unwittingly lead to unfair or discriminatory treatment of others ▪ Challenge discriminatory behaviour ▪ Support colleagues who may be experiencing discriminatory behaviour by encouraging them to report it

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Bring any concerns regarding discrimination in the workplace or service delivery to the attention of their manager, Corporate Services, People and Culture Team or the Trade Union. |
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9. Consequences of Non-Compliance

- 9.1 Non-compliance with equality, diversity & inclusion legislation could result in financial regulatory and reputational damage to the organisation and in certain instances fines and prosecution.
- 9.2 For staff it could result in disciplinary action.

10 Welsh Language Implications

- 10.1 This Policy complies with our Welsh Language Scheme.

11 Policy Monitoring

- 11.1 This Policy will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure it remains fit for purpose reflects our practices and any changes in legislation.

12 Accessibility

- 12.1 A copy of this Policy will be made readily available to stakeholders on the intranet.
- 12.2 We will in all reasonable circumstances make information available in a variety of information formats, including: large print; audio media; and community languages.

13. Links to other documents

- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Framework
- Employee Code of Conduct
- Staff Handbook
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Code of Conduct for Board Members
- Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Policy
- Harassment and Bullying guidance
- Sexual Harassment Policy