



CHISEL POLICY AND PROCEDURES EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1 Statement of Intent

1.1 CHISEL recognises that some groups and individuals experience disadvantage and discrimination and is working to redress discrimination based on gender, sexuality, race, ethnic or national origin, religion, culture, disability, age, health status, marital status, political beliefs (except where such beliefs are based on discriminatory practices) and responsibility for dependants.

1.2 We aim to recognize the needs of individuals in carrying out our roles as both an employer and a provider of services and will seek to adapt our employment practices and our services to take account of individuals' needs wherever possible. We will always treat everyone we have dealings with with dignity and respect.

1.3 CHISEL is mindful of its responsibilities under the appropriate legislation including the Race Relations Act 1976 as amended 2000 and 2003, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 as amended 2005, the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005, and the Employment Equality Regulations 2003 and 2006. We also operate within the Housing Corporation's regulatory framework and seek to follow the guidance and good practice recommended by the Housing Corporation, National Housing Federation and Human Rights Commission.

1.4 CHISEL seeks to ensure equal service, fair treatment and freedom from harassment for all its residents, staff, contractors and consultants. This means that CHISEL expects that all its Board and committee members, employees and those providing services on CHISEL's behalf will adhere to and positively promote the association's Equality and Diversity Policy.

1.5 CHISEL invites comments from anyone affected by our policies or services who feels that we have discriminated against them on any of the above grounds.

2 Housing Management and Maintenance Services

2.1 CHISEL monitors its housing management service with regard to gender, ethnic origin, disability and age. We seek and record diversity information when we let our housing, arrange transfers or let contracts.

2.2 Once a year, CHISEL's Board of Management receives a report providing a statistical breakdown of lettings and transfers. This information is provided in the form of statistics, which cannot be traced back to individual names or addresses. If it appears that we are not offering equality of opportunity compared with local population statistics, appropriate action will be taken to address this.

2.3 CHISEL has an Anti-Social Behavior policy that covers problems of racial or sexual harassment and neighbour nuisance.

2.4 We will work to ensure that no individual or group is disadvantaged in terms of selection for housing, or in the quality of housing or service they receive. When providing services, we will take into account the specific needs of groups and individuals such as vulnerable or elderly tenants, those with disabilities or those from Black or Minority Ethnic groups. We will keep appropriate records of any tenant's specific needs to ensure delivery of this aim.

3 Staff Recruitment

3.1 CHISEL monitors its staff recruitment with regard to gender, ethnic origin, disability and age.

3.2 When inviting applications for a post, we send out an equal opportunities monitoring form to every potential applicant. These monitoring forms are used for statistical purposes only. They are detached from the application on receipt and do not form part of the selection process.

3.3 Following every staff recruitment exercise, a report based on the above categories is presented to CHISEL's Board of Management. If a particular group is consistently under-represented in recruitment exercises, CHISEL will investigate ways of redressing the imbalance.

3.4 We will value and respect the identities and cultures of all employees and, wherever practical and within the resources available to us, will endeavor to meet all employees' cultural, religious or physical needs.

4 Recruitment to the Board of Management and its Committees

4.1 CHISEL maintains statistics on the ethnic origin and gender of its Board and Committee members, derived from an annual, self-assessment questionnaire. CHISEL is obliged to provide statistics on the ethnic origin of Board members to the Housing Corporation as part of its annual Regulatory and Statistical Return.

4.2 Where these statistics demonstrate that a relevant group is under-represented, CHISEL will attempt to recruit additional members to rectify the imbalance, within the constraints of the constitutional provisions for CHISEL's Board membership.

5 Service Providers, Consultants and Contractors

5.1 CHISEL expects all agencies and individuals providing it with services to respect the spirit of its Equality and Diversity Policy. Where appropriate, we request and agree the Equality and Diversity policy of the service provider. Where not appropriate (for example, where we are using the services of a private individual), our letter of appointment will enclose a copy of this policy and require a commitment on the part of the service provider to respect its contents in the provision of the service.

5.2 More information about appointment and regulation of service providers can be found in our Recruitment of Partners, Consultants and Contractors Policy.

6 Monitoring

6.1 Once a year, CHISEL's Board of Managements will receive an Equality and Diversity Report covering Board and Committee membership, staff and consultant recruitment and service delivery.

Policy agreed by CHISEL Board of Management 30 October 2008

This Policy replaces CHISEL's Equal Opportunity Policy agreed by the CHISEL Board of Management on 22 September 2005.