



CITYWEST HOMES

Single equality scheme

2015-2016



This document is CityWest Homes single equality scheme. It sets out how we promote equality, how we value diversity and how we ensure our policies and procedures are fair and free from discrimination.

If you would like a copy of this document in your own language please email aravenscroft@cwh.org.uk or phone 020 7245 2236.

Portuguese

Este documento é o Esquema Único de Igualdade de CityWest Homes (CityWest Homes Single Equality Scheme). Explica como promovemos igualdade, como valorizamos a diversidade e como nos asseguramos que as nossas políticas e procedimentos são justos e sem discriminação.

Se gostaria de obter uma cópia deste documento na sua língua, por favor envie um e-mail para aravenscroft@cwh.org.uk ou telefone para 020 7245 2236.

Spanish

Este documento es el Plan Unico de Igualdad de CityWest Homes. Su propósito es poner de manifiesto cómo nosotros promovemos la igualdad, valoramos la diversidad y nos aseguramos de que nuestros criterios y procedimientos son justos y sin ningún tipo de discriminación.

Si Usted quisiera tener una copia de este documento en su propio idioma, por favor escriba un correo electrónico a aravenscroft@cwh.org.uk o llame al teléfono 020 7245 2236.

Arabic

عنوان هذه الوثيقة هو "خطة المساواة الفردية لمنازل سيتي ويست CityWest Homes' Single Equality Scheme وتوضح كيفية ترويجنا للمساواة ومدى تقديرنا للتنوع وكيفية تأكدنا من عدالة سياساتنا واجراءاتنا وخلوها من التمييز.

وإذا رغبت الحصول على نسخة من هذه الوثيقة مترجمة الى لغتك فيرجى ارسال رسالة الكترونية الى العنوان التالي:
aravenscroft@cwh.org.uk او الاتصال على رقم الهاتف: ٠٢٠ ٧٢٤٥ ٢٢٣٦.

Bengali

এই ডকুমেন্টটি হলো ছিটি ওয়েস্ট হোমছ ইকোয়েলিটি স্কিম। এই স্কিম এর উদ্দেশ্য হলো সমাজের সকল ভেদাভেদ উপেক্ষা করে পারসপারিক ভিন্নতা কে মেনে নিয়ে সকলের প্রতি শ্রদ্ধা এবং সমতা প্রতিষ্ঠা করা এবং আমাদের নিয়ম নীতি গুলিকে নিরপেক্ষ ও বিভেদমুক্ত রাখার নিশ্চয়তা প্রদান।

আপনি যদি আপনার নিজ ভাষায় এই ডকুমেন্টের একটি কপি পেতে চান তবে নিম্ন ঠিকানায় ফোন অথবা ইমেইল করুন।

email aravenscroft@cwh.org.uk or phone 020 7245 2236.

Cantonese

這文件是有關 CityWest Homes 的單一平等方案。它列出我們怎樣提升平等，如何珍惜多元化的社會。同時我們怎樣保證我們的政制和步驟是平等和不含歧視成份。

如你需要一份中文譯本的文件，請聯絡 aravenscroft@cwh.org.uk 或 致電 02072452236

If you require a large print or audio version of this document please contact Angela Ravenscroft on aravenscroft@cwh.org.uk or 020 7245 2236.

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Introduction

Westminster is one of the most diverse cities in the world. This diversity is reflected in the needs, expectations and aspirations of our residents.

Over a third of our tenants are aged over 60, and a growing number (over 40%) are black or minority ethnic.



CityWest Homes leaseholders are equally diverse. They range from original tenants who exercised their right to buy to landlords with multiple properties who purchased on the open market and regard CityWest Homes as any other business from which they buy services.

Our vision is to be the leading provider of housing services. As well as managing 22,000 homes, we act as a gateway to a wide range of services, enabling our residents to achieve their potential and build themselves better lives.

To achieve this vision we must have an understanding of our diverse communities and ensure that the needs of our residents are identified and taken into account in planning and delivering our services.

The CityWest Homes single equality scheme sets out our five equality objectives and commitment to promoting equality, valuing diversity and ensuring our processes and procedures are fair and free from discrimination. Our action plan shows the practical steps we will take to achieve our aims and ensure all residents are able to access our service.

Jonathan Cowie
Chief executive
CityWest Homes

Our commitment to equality and diversity

About CityWest Homes

CityWest Homes is an arm's length management organisation (ALMO) which delivers high quality services to residents, across 22,000 Westminster homes. We aim to offer the right homes to meet local needs, improve neighbourhoods and give residents access to services which can help improve their lives.

Since launching in 2002, the organisation has delivered the first new council housing in Westminster for 30 years, become the first ALMO to set up a private lettings and sales agency and helped several hundred residents to find employment. By keeping residents at the heart of everything we do, CityWest Homes continues to provide homes which are sustainable, affordable and comfortable for our residents. CityWest Homes has built a strong foundation and aims to become the leading provider of housing services.

CityWest Homes and equality

CityWest Homes believes in promoting equality and valuing diversity in everything we do. This commitment is central to our single equality scheme, and cuts across all our services including:

- delivering housing management services
- dealing with harassment and domestic abuse
- membership and constitutions of resident associations, area management committees, strategic committee and tenant management organisations
- membership of our board and subcommittees
- procuring goods and services
- recruitment, employment and retention of staff.

Equality is about ensuring that all people are treated equally. This does not mean treating everyone the same, but recognising the differences in life situation, in experience and ensuring that there is equality of opportunity for all people, taking their needs into account.

Diversity means valuing the uniqueness of individuals, celebrating difference and recognising that everyone through their own mixture of skills and experience has a valuable contribution to make.

Our equality objectives

We have identified the following five equality objectives which are our priorities for 2015. Our action plan shows how we will meet them.

Objective 1 – Knowing our customers

We will increase the profiling information we hold on our residents and use it to better understand their needs, plan services for the future and in our communications.

Objective 2 - Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment

We will work towards level two (the achieving level) of the social housing equality framework by ensuring the actions in the single equality scheme action plan are completed to target.

Objective 3 – Involving our customers

We will undertake a review of our resident engagement structure to test the effectiveness of resident scrutiny of the service. The review will also look at how the engagement structure reflects the diversity of our customer base and is tackling resident priorities.

Objective 4 – Responsive services, access and customer care

We will ensure all residents have access to our services both in terms of physical access to our offices/estates and through the information we provide. This will include the production of a digital inclusion strategy and action plan.

Objective 5 – A skilled and committed workforce

We will take positive action to increase the number of women in senior positions in CityWest Homes and meet the aims of the Creating Balance Network.

The legal requirements - Equality Act 2010

CityWest Homes has responsibilities under the Equality Act in three areas as:

- a service provider to our residents
- a procurer of goods and services
- an employer to 380 people.

The Equality Act 2010 replaced previous equality legislation with a single act and introduced the term 'protected characteristic' and two new duties - a public sector general duty and a public sector specific duty.

The nine protected characteristics

The term 'protected characteristic' describes the nine groups that are protected by law. These are:

- age
- race, ethnic or national origin
- disability
- religion or belief
- gender
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnerships
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy and maternity.



Above: children at a Victorian Christmas celebration

Full definitions of each protected characteristic are shown at appendix 1.

The public sector general duty

The general duty includes three aims and requires CityWest Homes to have due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.

Unlawful discrimination includes:

- direct discrimination
- discrimination by perception
- discrimination by association
- indirect discrimination
- harassment
- third party harassment
- victimisation
- discrimination arising from disability.

Full descriptions of these terms with practical examples are shown at appendix 2.

- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This involves the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people
- encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

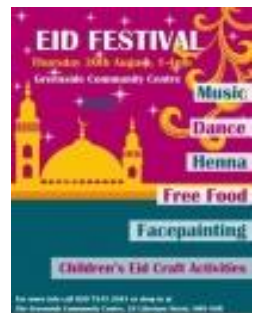
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups.

Equality analyses

We will complete an equality analysis at an early stage for all changes to policy, procedures or service provision. Equality analyses measure any effect the proposed change could have on residents or staff with protected characteristics. This will identify steps we can take to reduce or remove negative impacts.

Below: poster for Lisson Green Eid festival



The public sector specific duty

There is a specific duty to:

- publish information to demonstrate compliance with the general duty
- prepare and publish one or more equality objectives in an accessible format.

CityWest Homes as an arms length management organisation is subject to the general duty, but not to the specific duty. However, it is good practice to comply with the specific duty and we will meet it by publishing this single equality scheme and action plan, plus our five equality objectives on our website. Copies will also be available at the area and estate offices.

For more information on the Equality Act you can visit
Equality Act 2010 at www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents

The standards for social landlords

Standards are set for social landlords by the Homes and Communities Agency in four areas:

- tenant involvement and empowerment
- home
- tenancy
- neighbourhood and community.

Diversity is specifically covered in the tenant involvement and empowerment standard but diversity cuts across all four standards. The standard states social landlords must:

- treat all tenants with fairness and respect
- demonstrate that they understand the different needs of their tenants, including in relation to the equality strands and tenants with additional support needs
- demonstrate how they respond to tenants' needs in the way they provide services and communicate with tenants.

The following pages illustrate how we will meet this requirement, in particular the sections on 'knowing our customers', 'customer engagement' and 'responsive services and customer care'.

Social housing equality framework (SHEF)

A social housing equality framework has been produced for arms length management organisations as a performance and improvement tool. The framework lists good practice in five key areas and we have designed this scheme, the action plan and our equality objectives around these areas as a test of our service.



The five areas are:

- knowing our customers
- leadership, partnership and organisational commitment
- customer engagement
- responsive services, access and customer care
- a skilled and committed workforce.

We are testing ourselves against the 'achieving' level and our response to each of the areas follows.

Knowing our customers

CityWest Homes is required to meet the needs of a diverse range of communities and individuals. We need to have a strong understanding of our local area in order to design services that both meet current needs and are sufficiently flexible to respond to changing circumstances.

We collect profiling information (such as age and race) from our residents on the protected characteristics. We need it to check we are not unlawfully discriminating against any residents in the protected groups and that residents in all groups are able to access and receive the same level of service.



Above: Biryani bake-off at Church Street

The provision of personal information is entirely voluntary. Residents are not obliged to provide personal information to us but the law requires us to gather this information if we can.

Details of our tenant profiling information are shown below. We hold good quality information on the age, gender and race of our tenants but we need to collect more information on the other protected characteristics in particular on disability. We also need to find out more information such as email addresses and mobile phone numbers to allow us to better communicate especially in emergencies. We need to know which tenants have access to the internet which will be an essential requirement once universal credit is introduced.

The profiling information we hold on tenants tells us:

- Age - 59% of tenants are aged over 50
- Race - We know the race of almost 90% of our tenants. A growing number (over 40%) are black or minority ethnic (BME)
- Language - The top six languages in order are English, Arabic, Bengali, Portuguese, Spanish and Cantonese.

We will:

- Increase the profiling information we hold on our tenants and leaseholders and use it to better understand their needs and plan services for the future
- Check the profiling information we hold to ensure we are not discriminating against any residents in protected groups

- Make profiling information available for equality analyses to check the effect any new policy or change to service provision might have on our residents or staff
- Use the profiling information to analyse if all residents have access to our services and to check that all our residents are satisfied with our services.

Tenant profile at October 2014

Age				
16-30	31-50	51-70	71-80	81+
7%	34%	37%	13%	9%

Race						
White	Black	Asian	Arabic	Mixed	Other	Don't wish to answer/unknown
44%	16%	12%	9%	3%	3%	13%

Gender	
Female	Male
53%	47%

Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment

Clear leadership is key to establishing a strong vision for equality and improving equality outcomes. Board members and our executive team play important roles in ensuring a strong vision and commitment to equality. This role has become even more important as external regulation of the service has been significantly reduced.

The CityWest Homes board has overall responsibility for this equality scheme and for agreeing our equality objectives.

There are also subcommittees with responsibility for specific equality issues:

- **The customer services committee (CSC)** is responsible for ensuring equality in service delivery including monitoring access to our services and measuring satisfaction with services we deliver
- **The remuneration, employment and diversity committee (REDC)** is responsible for ensuring equality in employment including workforce monitoring.

CityWest Homes executive team is responsible for delivering the actions set out in the action plan and are accountable for its implementation.

Every CityWest Homes individual has responsibility to read, understand and implement the principles set out in this scheme.

Our contractors and tenant management organisations are responsible for complying with our equality scheme in their delivery of services to our residents.

We will

- Undertake equality monitoring of our board and aim to improve the profile by increasing the number of women and those from BME backgrounds so it is more representative of our tenants
- Provide training for new board members so they are fully aware of their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010
- Ensure our updated procurement strategy reflects our commitment to equality so contractors bidding for work are clear what is expected of them
- Use our purchasing power to work with small and medium enterprises whenever possible.

Equality analyses

We will carry out equality analyses before changes to policy, procedures or service provision. This will allow us to understand the potential impact of our decisions on residents with different protected characteristics and to identify steps we can take to reduce or remove negative impacts.

Board profile as at October 14 compared to tenant profile

Age	16-30	31-50	51-70	71+
Board	8%	33%	42%	17%
Tenants	7%	34%	37%	22%

Race	White	BME	Other	Don't wish to answer/unknown
Board	83%	17%	0%	0%
Tenants	44%	40%	3%	13%

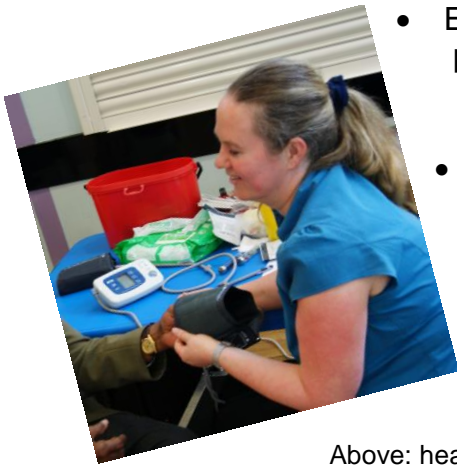
Gender	Female	Male
Board	42%	58%
Tenants	53%	47%

Customer engagement

CityWest Homes has long understood the value of involving our residents in decision making and providing a variety of options for involvement so all residents have the opportunity to engage at a level they are comfortable with.

We will:

- Undertake a review of our customer engagement structure to ensure it reflects the diversity of our customer base and is tackling resident priorities
- Continue to build inclusive community engagement structures by providing training and capacity building and actively reach out to and encourage residents from underrepresented groups to become involved
- Ensure we undertake meaningful consultation on service planning, development and delivery through our consultation structure
- Work with a wide variety of partners who can improve the life of our residents, such as schools and the health service
- Assist our residents in finding volunteering placements, work opportunities and access to education
 - Take every opportunity to increase engagement with young people through social media, community events and additional youth club provision
- Look at innovative ways to build community cohesion on our estates through initiatives such as community cafes and allotment schemes.



Above: health checks at local events

Area management committee (AMC) profile as at October 14 compared to tenant profile

Age	16-24	25-34	35-54	55-64	65+	Unknown/Don't wish to answer
AMCs	0%	10%	30%	19%	17%	24%
Tenants	1%	9%	39%	18%	33%	0%

Race	White	BME	Other	Don't wish to answer/unknown
AMCs	43%	36%	0%	21%
Tenants	44%	40%	3%	13%

Gender	Female	Male
AMCs	56%	44%
Tenants	53%	47%

Responsive services and customer care

CityWest Homes realises the effect that harassment, hate crime and domestic abuse can have on our residents' lives and we will continue to tackle this as a priority.

It is important to us that all our residents can access our services both in terms of physical access and access to the information that we provide.

We will:

- Work towards the elimination of harassment, hate crime and domestic abuse on our estates, supporting victims and taking action against perpetrators
- Produce a digital inclusion strategy and action plan to increase internet access for our residents
- Provide an accessible service by removing or altering physical barriers to access
- Provide training for frontline staff on recognising mental health issues
- Use our profiling information to analyse if all residents have access to our services and to check that all our residents are satisfied with our services.



Above: Easter party at Grosvenor

A skilled and committed workforce

CityWest Homes has duties under the Equality Act 2010 as an employer to our 380 staff. We are committed to developing a workforce that reflects the community we serve, and valuing and developing the skills and abilities of all our people to enable them to reach their full potential.

We collect profiling information for our staff. We have good quality information on age and gender but we need to increase the information we hold in other areas such as disability. We will use the information we hold to ensure our staff are treated fairly irrespective of their protected characteristics.

We will:

- Continue to monitor the profile of our workforce and work to increase the profiling information we hold, particularly for disability
- Take positive action to increase the number of women in senior positions through the Creating Balance network
- Make sure that all employees and job applicants receive fair and equal treatment in recruitment and selection
- Ensure that all our people have fair and equal access to promotion and training opportunities
- Provide a workplace that is accessible and, where possible, retain in suitable employment employees who become disabled or ill
- Ensure our staff consultation structure is inclusive and consult with our people before priorities are set
- Take forward our new health and wellbeing plan to further improve the health and work life balance for our people
- Have policies in place to ensure the workplace is free from discrimination, harassment and bullying and act promptly on all complaints of such
- Provide training and guidance to our people to enable them to deliver equality outcomes
- Carry out a yearly staff survey and act on the results to improve ourselves as an employer.



Above: NVQs in customer service awarded to CityWest Homes staff

Our employment policies

CityWest Homes has specific employment policies that set out in detail our commitment to equality and non discrimination in employment. The policies are:

- recruitment
- learning and development
- grievance
- disciplinary
- whistle blowing at work
- bullying and harassment.

Staff profile at October 14 compared to tenant profile

Age	16-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61+
CWH staff	24%	28%	24%	19%	5%
CWH tenants	7%	12%	22%	20%	39%

Race	White	Black	Asian	Mixed	Other	Don't wish to answer	Did not reply
CWH staff	58%	13%	10%	3%	4%	N/A	12%
CWH tenants	44%	16%	12%	3%	12%	3%	10%

Gender	Female	Male
CWH staff	46%	54%
CWH tenants	53%	47%

Definitions of protected characteristics

Age

A person having a particular age (for example, 32 years old) or being within an age group (for example, 18-30 year olds). This covers all ages, including children.

Disability

A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender reassignment

A person who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process to change their gender.

Marriage

A union between a man and a woman or a same-sex couple.

Civil partnership

Legal recognition of a same-sex couple's relationship. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a range of legal matters.

Pregnancy

The condition of being pregnant.

Maternity

The period after giving birth. It is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, including as a result of breastfeeding.

Race

A group of people defined by their colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins.

Religion

Any religion, including a lack of religion.

Belief

Includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (for example, atheism). Generally a belief should affect life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

Gender (sex)

A man or a woman.

Sexual orientation

Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

Definitions of discrimination

Direct discrimination

Treating a person less favourably because they have a protected characteristic.

Example - Refusing a job to an applicant who is perfectly capable of doing the job because they are judged too old as they are over 60.

Protected characteristics

Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation.

Indirect discrimination

When a rule, policy or practice applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic.

Example - Arranging a community event at a venue with a number of steps and no lift. This means residents who have mobility problems are unable to attend.

Discrimination by association

Direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

Example - An employer disciplines a woman because she has to take time off work to care for her disabled child. He has not disciplined any other workers who have had similar amounts of time off work.

Discrimination by perception

Direct discrimination against someone because they are thought to possess a particular protected characteristic.

Example - A group of youths congregate near a bus stop and shout homophobic abuse at two men they believe to be gay as they share a flat.

Harassment

Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Example - A resident with learning difficulties is frequently called offensive names by a neighbour. The victim is frightened and upset by this.

Harassment by a third party

Employers are liable for harassment of employees based on any of the protected characteristics (other than marriage/civil partnership and pregnancy/maternity) by individuals who are not employees of the company.

Example - A contractor who calls into the office regularly makes racist remarks in the hearing of a member of staff who is black. The office manager is aware of this but does nothing to stop the contractor.

Victimisation

Someone is treated badly because they have made/supported a complaint or grievance under the equality act or are suspected of doing so.

Example - A member of staff gives evidence to support a claim brought by a colleague that a manager is sexually harassing her. All the other managers then refuse to talk to her for supporting the complainant.

Discrimination arising from disability

Someone is treated unfairly because of something connected to their mental or physical disability.

Example - A member of staff develops a sight problem which means they can no longer read instructions and they are sacked for this.



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