

# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 A2Dominion is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion by providing services that are accessible and inclusive for all our customers and staff. We are an organisation which values an environment where individuals can be their authentic selves and are committed to creating an inclusive environment in which everyone has an opportunity to achieve their full potential and feel like they belong.
- 1.2 This policy meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and includes consideration of the protected characteristics, related codes of practice and other legislation and regulatory requirements, but not limited to:
- the Equality Act 2010 (incorporating the Public Sector Equality Duty);
  - the Human Rights Act 1998;
  - [the National Housing Federation Code of Governance 2020]; and
  - Regulator of Social Housing, the Regulatory Framework, and
  - any relevant amendments to such legislation or further codes/frameworks of practice.
- 1.3 **Duties under the Equality Act 2010**  
The Equality Act 2010 protects people with 'protected characteristics' from unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation (as defined in the Equality Act 2010). The nine Protected Characteristics are: race, sex, sexual orientation, gender assignment, disability, religion or belief, age, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or in a civil partnership.
- 1.4 **Obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty**  
A2Dominion is mindful of its duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) so far as it should apply to our organisation as a Registered Provider of Social Housing. Therefore, we continue to have regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 to:



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- a. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- b. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- c. Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

#### 1.5 **Other Duties**

A2Dominion also understands that diversity and risks of discrimination go beyond the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 and that it has a moral duty to address discrimination as an employer, a landlord and as a provider of services. We are committed to tackling inequality in its widest sense and challenging discrimination based on a variety of social and cultural characteristics such as the protected characteristics above, but also including: socio-economic background; class; appearance; language; accents; education; learning styles; political affiliation and any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.

## 2. **Policy aims and statement**

- 2.1 To demonstrate A2Dominion's commitment to providing equal treatment and opportunity in access to housing, provision of services, as well as access to employment and treatment of/opportunities for colleagues.
- 2.2 We recognise and respect diversity and aim to embrace principles and practices across the range of our activities that promote equality and that are relevant to the diverse needs of the communities where we work. We monitor and measure our performance and participate fully in eliminating unfair discrimination on grounds of any of the Protected Characteristics. We will build and raise awareness and embed best practice across the Group.

## 3. **Scope**

- 3.1 The scope of this policy is Group-wide and applies to all parts of the organisation and its services.

## 4. **Framework and commitments**

- 4.1 In order to fulfil its policy commitments the Group has a supporting framework in place. This includes an overarching ED&I Plan, an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) framework and guidance, where we undertake EIAs on new areas of work, in particular new strategies, plans and/or major initiatives.
- 4.2 We have undertaken the following formal commitments:

- G15 pledges for people from diverse ethnic groups (described by G15 as BAME)
- G15 Accelerate programmed for managers from diverse ethnic groups
- Chartered institute of Housing equality and diversity charter
- Investors in People accreditation (retained Gold)
- Disability confident employer

## 5. Implementation – our ED&I plan and ambition

5.1 Our ED&I plan (2020-25) is for our colleagues, our customers and all those we work with. Achieving our plan will give us more breadth of experience and thinking and will foster creativity, openness and respect – leading to a better service to our customers and a positive culture for our colleagues.

5.2 Our ambition is:

- **To monitor and narrow key gaps** to achieve and maintain equal pay - so that people who do the same jobs are rewarded fairly and that we strive to understand, address and reduce gaps in pay at all levels.
- **To fully represent the diversity of the communities** we serve, across all levels of the organisation – this means getting the best understanding we can of the customers and communities we work with and to work towards improved diversity among our colleagues and senior teams.
- **That our people feel they can be their professional selves** at work and that uniqueness is celebrated – this means creating and nurturing an atmosphere where people feel they can be themselves because we believe that people perform and collaborate better when they can be genuine and authentic.
- **That respect and fairness are at the heart of all we do** – so that all our people are treated equally at work, so that access to opportunities are fair and so that people can speak out about issues we care about in a safe and open environment.
- **To lead our dialogue on ED&I issues** to foster confidence, inspire customers, colleagues and the sector, so that we all understand why ED&I is important to us and what we are aiming to change and achieve. This will help us all be clear about the part we can play and empower us to talk about the issues that matter to us.
- **To use high quality data** to inform action/share progress – so that we have the insights we need to identify challenges to address and so that we can understand, measure and share our progress towards our ambition.

## 6. Specific policy wording for A2D colleagues

- 6.1 Our aim is for our people to be representative of the residents and the communities we serve, and for each colleague to feel respected and able to give their best.
- 6.2 Our approach is to build a culture in A2D where everyone is committed to creating an inclusive environment in which everyone has an opportunity to achieve their potential and feel like they belong.
- provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment, whether temporary, part-time or full-time
  - not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics.
  - We oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination in how we treat our people at every stage of the employment with us.
- 6.3 Through delivery of our six ambitions and our ED&I strategy we will create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of everyone are recognised, valued and celebrated. Our approach is set out by the ED&I Steering Board and endorsed and sponsored by our Executive Management team. It is delivered in collaboration with our A2Dominion consultative forum, our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Network and our Wellbeing Matters Forum.
- 6.4 We will take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow colleagues, customers, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisation's work activities.
- 6.5 We will take opportunities for training, development and progress available to everyone, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- Our decisions concerning our people will be based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).
  - Review employment practices to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law and we will listen to our colleagues via focus groups or colleague surveys to ensure that we target our responses appropriately.

## 7. Performance Measures & Targets

- 7.1 We monitor the composition of our staff, board, committees, panels and our resident profile in line with the requirements of the Equality duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010. The targets associated with each ambition statement will continue to be developed and monitored as our data and insights improve.
- 7.2 Measurement is undertaken through:
- Customer data
  - People data
  - Surveys such as Your View and Investors in People
  - Evaluation of projects and initiatives
  - Candidate surveys to assess the importance/recognition of our ED&I position and EVP in their decision to apply/accept a job with us (future potential)

## 8. Responsibility & Reporting Arrangements

- 8.1 All staff have a responsibility to ensure that this policy is put into practice and to comply with the formal procedures designed to ensure its successful implementation. Any breach of the policy will be treated as a disciplinary matter.
- 8.2 We provide reports to our Executive Team and Group Board biannually and publish an external report every year. Throughout the year, our data is used by HR and operational teams to monitor progress, identify issues for further work and to inform action to ensure we deliver with equality and fairness at our heart and work towards our ambition.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

- Delivery and oversight roles are set out below:
- The Diversity & Inclusion Steering Board ensures that the Group meets its legal and regulatory obligations
- The Board, Committees and Senior Management have ultimate responsibility to ensure that the Group is fully compliant with the ED&I Policy
- The Customer Services Committee has oversight of the customer aspects of the ED&I plan and policy, with particular emphasis on the vulnerable persons action plan
- We will publish equality data on an annual basis
- The steering board and Group Board will review performance against our ED&I plan
- Managers will ensure staff are trained effectively to deliver the ED&I Policy.

## **9. Consultation**

9.1 In developing this policy, we have consulted with:

- Group Board
- Executive Management Team
- The ED&I Steering Board

## **10. Review**

10.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years, unless legislation or sector developments instigate an earlier review, ensuring that it continues to meet its objectives and take account of good practice developments.

## **11. Associated documents**

- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Plan 2020-25
- Equality Impact Assessment Framework
- Chartered Institute of Housing Equality and Diversity Charter