



POLICY: EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

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Copies of this Policy are available in alternative formats.

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POLICY: EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All reference to 'we', 'our' or 'us' in this Policy should be read as meaning Sandbourne Housing Association.

1. Purpose and aim of the Policy

- 1.1 It is our policy to eliminate discrimination in all areas of its work, including recruitment. We are committed to ensuring, within the framework of the law, that no-one is treated less favourably for any reason relating of age, being or becoming a transsexual person, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, disability, race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion, belief or lack of religion/belief, sex or sexual orientation, part-time or fixed-term working status, where any of these cannot be seen to be a genuine occupational requirement of the job or office concerned.
- 1.2 We aim to ensure that our staff achieve their full potential and that all employment decisions are taken without reference to irrelevant or discriminatory criteria. We have adopted the following Equal Opportunity Policy as a means of helping to achieve these aims.

2. What Is discrimination?

- 2.1 **Direct** discrimination occurs where someone is put at a disadvantage on discriminatory grounds in relation to his or her employment. Direct discrimination may occur even when unintentional.
- 2.2 **Indirect** discrimination occurs where the individual's employment is subject to an unjustified condition which one sex or race, nationality etc, finds more difficult to meet although on the face of it the condition or requirement is 'neutral'.
- 2.3 **Harassment** – see the separate Bullying/Harassment Policy.
- 2.4 **Victimisation** is less favourable treatment of an employee by reason that the employee has taken action under anti-discrimination legislation or has been involved in such action.

3. Implementing equality of opportunity

- 3.1 Recruitment and employment decisions will be made on the basis of fair and objective criteria. Our selection procedures are reviewed from time to time to

ensure that they are appropriate for achieving its objectives and for avoiding unlawful discrimination.

- 3.2 The requirements of job applicants and existing members of staff who have or have had a disability will be reviewed to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to enable them to enter into or remain in employment with us. Promotion opportunities, benefits and facilities of employment will not be unreasonably limited and every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that disabled staff participate fully in the workplace.
- 3.3 Person and job specifications shall be limited to those requirements which are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Interviews will be conducted on an objective basis and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.
- 3.4 All staff have a right to equality of opportunity and a duty to implement this Policy. Breach of the Equal Opportunity Policy is potentially a serious disciplinary matter. Anyone who believes that he or she may have been disadvantaged on discriminatory grounds is entitled to raise the matter through the grievance procedure.
- 3.5 Appropriate training will be given to enable staff to implement and uphold our commitment to equality of opportunity.

4. Equal pay

- 4.1 We are committed to the principle of equal pay for men and women. In this context 'pay' includes not only remuneration but also other benefits of the employment such as promotion and training opportunities and access to facilities provided within the employment package from time to time.
- 4.2 We are committed to introducing and maintaining pay systems which are transparent, based on objective criteria and free from sex bias.
- 4.3 Women and men employed by us are entitled to equal pay if they are undertaking work which is substantially similar or is of equal value to the organisation unless there are specific and clear reasons unconnected with their sex which explain and justify any differential in pay. In some cases, individuals carrying out similar work may receive different salaries because of seniority, incremental points, qualifications and other such factors.
- 4.4 Staff are able to raise any query or grievance concerning their pay and its evaluation with their line manager.
- 4.5 Our pay policies and practices will be reviewed on a regular basis and particular attention will be paid to employees who may be in non-standard employment, in jobs where one or other gender predominates, or who are absent on pregnancy and maternity leave.

5. Our commitment

- 5.1 In addition we are committed to:
 - 5.1.1 Ensuring as far as possible all external contractors and suppliers adhere to these values.
 - 5.1.2 Training staff and Board members with regard to their responsibilities in these areas.
 - 5.1.3 Not discriminating against anyone because of their age, other than age restrictions on eligibility for our services set by its charitable founding objectives.
 - 5.1.4 Monitoring contractors’ compliance and applications for our jobs and services.
 - 5.1.5 Striving to promote positive images of older citizens.
 - 5.1.6 Reporting performance to the Board.
 - 5.1.7 Updating this statement regularly.

6. Equality impact assessment

Age	Neutral
Being or becoming a transsexual person	Neutral
Being married or in a civil partnership	Neutral
Being pregnant or on maternity leave	Neutral
Disability	Neutral
Race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin	Neutral
Religion, belief or lack of religion/belief	Neutral
Sex	Neutral
Sexual orientation	Neutral

7. Consultation arrangements

- 7.1 Our staff will be consulted on this Policy and any reasonable suggestions will be taken into account before the Policy is approved by the Board.