



Regulator of
Social Housing

Equalities information report

1 October 2018 – 31 March 2019

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OFFICIAL

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Regulator of Social Housing became a standalone organisation on 1 October 2018 having previously been a part of the Homes and Communities Agency (now trading as Homes England). As we are now a public body with at least 150 employees, we are required to publish relevant, proportionate equality information to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Duty and to promote transparency and accountability for our equality performance. This is the first equality information report we have published.
- 1.2 The information contained within this report has been compiled to comply with the specific duty to publish and demonstrates due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relationships between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 1.3 It covers:
- our staff, including equality and diversity data about our staff; and
 - those affected by our policies and procedures.
- 1.4 The information within this report covers the period from 1 October 2018 until 31 March 2019.
- 1.5 In preparing this report we have been mindful of the published guidance from the Equalities and Human Rights Commission¹. Whilst we wish to be as transparent as we can on these matters as a relatively small organisation with just over 150 employees there are several areas where we cannot publish our diversity information to ensure we preserve the anonymity of staff.

¹ <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/equality-information-and-equality-duty-guide-public-authorities>

2. Our staff

- 2.1 One of the regulator’s core values is that “We embrace diversity and seek to be an inclusive and supportive organisation”.
- 2.2 The regulator has a Positive Working Group (PWG) made up of staff from all levels and areas of the organisation, which has a purpose to inspire and support a culture at the regulator that respects diversity, inclusivity and staff wellbeing and promotes supportive behaviours.

Diversity profile

- 2.3 The data below summarises our workforce diversity profile as at 31 March 2019, using data extracted from our HR management system. It is based on the total headcount at 31 March 2019 of 152.

Characteristic		Percentage of staff
Ethnicity	BAME	18%
	Non-BAME	80%
	Declined to respond / un-declared	2%
Gender	Male	38%
	Female	62%
Sexual orientation	Lesbian, gay, bisexual (LGB)	7%
	Heterosexual	76%
	Declined to respond / un-declared	18%
Working pattern	Full time	93%
	Part time	7%
Age	55-64	27%
	45-54	35%
	35-44	26%
	25-34	11%
	Under 25	1%
Disability	Declared disabled	8%
	Declared non-disabled	34%
	Declined to respond / un-declared	58%

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- 2.4 In some cases, staff have either not completed the relevant sections or have declined to provide the data, referenced below as 'Declined to respond/ un-declared'. We believe this is primarily due to the information not being collected automatically at recruitment but relying on self-reporting. We take diversity monitoring seriously and continue to encourage people to update their information to ensure that our analysis remains relevant.
- 2.5 We are looking at introducing an online application system which will make collection and analysis of equality data at application stage more effective.
- 2.6 This year's figures will serve as a baseline against which we will compare future years.

Recruitment

- 2.7 We encourage applications from a diverse range of candidates and carry out blind shortlisting, as well as carrying out unconscious bias training for interviewers. We also encourage applicants to request reasonable adjustments where necessary.

People Strategy

- 2.8 After becoming standalone we launched our People Strategy which aims to ensure the Regulator of Social Housing is an organisation that can attract, develop and retain the best staff who will continue to do our valuable work in effectively regulating the social housing sector.
- 2.9 The strategy will help to:
- ensure that we have the capacity, capability and flexibility to deliver our business strategy in a changing environment;
 - embrace our core values as an effective regulator and reinforce the culture we want to work in;
 - ensure that we have a fair, transparent and appropriate recognition and reward framework;
 - engage with staff in a collaborative and iterative way to improve the way we work together; and
 - demonstrate excellence in leadership and management in the ways which we work.
- 2.10 These aims are supported by two cross-cutting themes, equalities and wellbeing. This means that we are actively considering equalities and wellbeing as part of all the projects, not just in the workstreams dedicated to them.

Employee engagement

2.11 We monitor employee engagement through our regular staff survey. However, due to our transition to becoming a standalone organisation on 1 October 2018, we did not run a survey during the reporting period of this report (1 October 2018 to 31 March 2019). We will report on employee engagement from our 2019 staff survey in our 2019/20 report.

3. Equality for those affected by our policies and practices

- 3.1 This section details how we meet our duty to those who are affected by our policies and practices, or who engage with us in relation to the exercise of our regulatory function.
- 3.2 The following sections provide a narrative summary of our approach to ensuring we have due regard to the aims of the duty in decision-making with regard to registration decisions; equality impact assessments on statutory consultations; the consumer regulation panel; and decisions made by the Regulation Executive Group and Board.

Registration decisions

- 3.3 There are two stages to the regulator's application process for registering an organisation as a registered provider; during the second (detailed) application stage, applicants are asked to provide assurance on their compliance with the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.4 In particular, the regulator asks whether applicants have any, or intend to have any, restrictions of services in place regarding persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic. Where the regulator establishes that such restrictions are in place, or will be put in place, it asks the applicant for specific assurance on how it has satisfied itself that it is acting lawfully under the current equality legislation.

Consultations

- 3.5 As a public body, we are required to consult on any proposed changes to our regulatory approach. As part of the consultation process, we ensure that we consider our duties under the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.6 Equalities requirements are considered at relevant stages of the drafting process when we are developing new regulatory standards and approaches. Where issues are identified, these are specifically set out in reports to both the Executive group and the Board, to enable appropriate consideration at relevant stages of the decision-making process.
- 3.7 As part of the consultation we normally include a specific question to respondents on their agreement with and understanding of the equalities analysis we have undertaken. We also invite comments and recommendations for further consideration should respondents feel we have missed anything relevant of note.

3.8 Following the end of the formal consultation period we analyse the feedback on our equality analysis and where appropriate to do so, propose revisions in light of the feedback. We then report the results of the consultation to our Executive group and Board and specifically highlight any feedback we receive with equalities implications. Following approval, we formally report the results of the consultation publicly via a Decision Statement which both explores the feedback we received on the equality analysis and also includes the updated analysis. Where appropriate, and based on feedback, we may make reasonable adjustments in relation to the issue under consultation.

Consumer regulation

3.9 The regulator has due regard to its equality duties in carrying out its consumer regulation work and will consider making reasonable adjustments where appropriate for individuals contacting the regulator. For example: providing correspondence in large print, taking details of complaints over the telephone (where an individual has difficulty with written forms of communication) and arranging translations of key documents and our correspondence (e.g. into Braille).

3.10 The regulator's Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard requires registered providers to demonstrate that they understand the different needs of their tenants (including in relation to the equality strands, and tenants with additional support needs). Where we receive individual referrals that suggest a registered provider may not have taken tenants' needs into account (in respect of a protected characteristic), we have due regard to our equality duties through our consumer regulation processes.

3.11 Where appropriate, we signpost the individual to services who may be able to assist, including the Equalities and Human Rights Commission² and the Housing Ombudsman Service³.

Regulation Executive Group / Board decisions

3.12 The Regulation Executive Group and Board consider operational and strategic matters brought before them through the submission of formal papers. Both Executive and Board papers include a section on Equality and Diversity Implications, within which the author should demonstrate how the regulator has given due regard to the Equality Duty in the consideration of proposals. This enables appropriate consideration at the relevant stages of the decision-making process.

² <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en>

³ <https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/>



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RSH regulates private registered providers of social housing to promote a viable, efficient and well-governed social housing sector able to deliver homes that meet a range of needs.