



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

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1. Aim of the policy

The aims of this policy are:

- To set out our commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and providing fair, inclusive and equitable services, free from unlawful discrimination and harassment,
- To outline our commitment and expectations to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion amongst all our stakeholders, and
- To demonstrate our compliance with all relevant legislation and obligations.

2. Scope of policy

This policy sets out how we will address our commitments to equality, diversity and inclusion in service delivery, outlining the organisation's legal and regulatory obligations.

The policy applies to all staff, Board members, customers and stakeholders, including those who provide us and our customers with goods and services.

Our stakeholders will be made aware of and required to comply with this policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other related policies outlined in section 6.

This policy applies to the services we deliver, rather than VIVID as an employer, which is covered in our People Policy.

3. Policy statement

This policy sets out how we will foster an environment where equality, respect and inclusion are actively championed for our staff, customers and all stakeholders.

This policy provides clear guidance on how everyone can contribute to upholding inclusive practices, with the assurance that any concerns raised will be handled promptly and fairly, further strengthening trust and collaboration.

4. Policy delivery

This policy will be delivered in compliance with all relevant legislation and obligations as outlined in section 5. We have a robust Equality Impact Assessment procedure in place to support our delivery.

Communication and Engagement

We are committed to developing an in-depth understanding and insight into who our customers are, what challenges and opportunities they face within their communities and how we can best engage with.

We will:

- Maintain accurate customer records to enable tailoring of communication to their needs,
- Provide a website that is accessible to the widest possible audience,
- Provide a wide range of customer consultation methods, and
- Continually monitor and develop methods of communication to ensure the support we offer remains relevant.

Where possible and reasonable, we will engage with customers through their preferred method of communication and take into account specific instructions and requirements regarding communications, in line with our Reasonable Adjustments Policy.

Repairs/Adaptions

We are committed to recognising and responding to the diverse needs of our customers and to providing services that deliver equitable outcomes.

We will:

- Prioritise heat and hot water repair requests from customers with relevant support needs in line with our Reasonable Adjustments Policy,
- Engage with occupational therapists and the appropriate authorities to assess and action required adaptations or reasonable adjustments, and
- Maintain accurate records of adapted properties.

Tenancy/Lettings

We are committed to delivering inclusive and fair housing and to ensure that all individuals have equal access to our services.

We will:

- Use tenancy agreements that recognise the rights of same-sex partner relationships,
- Implement and champion lettings practices that actively promote fairness and equal opportunities for all, and
- Promote and provide support to customers to enable them to maintain their tenancies.

Harassment/Victimisation/Discrimination

We condemn all forms of harassment, victimisation, discrimination and hate crime. We are committed to ensuring that all customers enjoy the privacy and comfort of their homes.

We will:

- Ensure that all reports of harassment, victimisation and discrimination are investigated,
- Contact the victim (by the end of the next working day) from when the report is made and explain how we will investigate,

- Take appropriate and proportionate action, sharing what we can in line with GDPR regulation, and
- Signpost victims to relevant support available (for example, Victim Support).

VIVID as a customer

We'll monitor compliance of all contractors and sub-contractors with our Code of Conduct when working in customers' homes and communities, taking prompt contract enforcement action where needed.

VIVID in the community

We will:

- Promote awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion in the community in order to build and maintain relationships with diverse groups and partners to promote community cohesion and integration.

5. Responsibilities

Board

The Board are responsible for ensuring:

- The scrutiny and approval of this policy,
- All services, facilities, activities and opportunities for employment are equally accessible to all members of the community,
- Diversity and inclusion are promoted positively,
- All reports and policies are appropriately assessed to reflect the implications for equality, diversity and inclusion and action is taken to remedy any causes for concern, and
- Equality issues and the annual equality, diversity and inclusion performance report are reviewed, published and proportionate mitigating actions undertaken.

The Chief Executive

The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring:

- Adequate systems are in place to comply with legislation and obligations,
- The delivery of reasonable adjustments that meet the needs of individual customer and communities, and
- Prompt investigation and effective handling of any complaint alleging discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

The Senior leadership team

The Senior Leadership team are responsible for ensuring:

- They use their positions of leadership to role model best practice and to identify and act on unacceptable behaviour,
- The policy is publicised, and awareness raised with communities, customers and employees,
- Employees are appropriately trained, and
- Services are monitored, and that appropriate action is taken against anyone whose actions are inconsistent with the policy.

Managers/ Team Leaders

All managers/supervisors are responsible for ensuring:

- They use their positions of leadership to role model, embed best practice and to identify and act on unacceptable behaviour,
- The policy is applied within their service area,
- An awareness of our customer base and the communities they serve is demonstrated
- Services are reasonably personalised to meet the needs and aspirations of individual customers and communities,
- Insight gathered from satisfaction surveys to assess the suitability of services against the needs of diverse customers is monitored,
- Accurate records are kept, and performance is regularly and consistently monitored and reported,
- The prevention of unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment,
- Breaches are dealt with quickly and appropriately through the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure,
- They employ the use of equality impact assessments to regularly review the equalities impact of policies, procedures and practices,
- Policies, procedures, and practices are regularly reviewed (with customer and partner involvement) to make sure they do not discriminate,
- Contractors and partners uphold the policy, and
- Promotion of the policy with customers, staff and communities

All Staff

All staff are responsible for ensuring:

- Equality of opportunity and the diverse needs of customers are considered within their role and deliver reasonable adjustments as appropriate,
- They actively foster an inclusive environment and uphold the values of this policy in all their actions,
- They deliver personalised services whenever possible,
- They include colleagues to make all staff feel comfortable during their work,
- They take an active role in constructively and respectfully challenging behaviours which go against the values of this policy, and
- They behave in an inclusive way to foster an environment where all colleagues feel comfortable and a sense of belonging.

Customers, resident groups and other supported groups

Customers, resident groups and other supported groups are responsible for ensuring:

- The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion principles within this policy are upheld, and
- They demonstrate a strong commitment to complying with legislation and actively promote equality by avoiding any unlawful discrimination or practices

Contractors, Consultants, Suppliers and Partners

Contractors, Consultants, Suppliers and Partners are responsible for ensuring:

- The principles of the Equality, Diversity and inclusion policy are upheld,
- They demonstrate a strong commitment to complying with legislation, and that
- They actively promote equality by avoiding any unlawful discrimination or practices.

6. Related policies/ associated documents

Many VIVID Policies and documents are connected to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy, these include but are not limited to:

- Reasonable Adjustments Policy
- Adaptions Policy
- Allocations, Lettings and Voids Policy/ Starter Tenancy Policy
- Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Corporate plan
- Customer Influence Strategy
- Procurement Policy

7. Monitor and review process

We will:

- Monitor, analyse and publish potential unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation events and the way they have been handled,
- Monitor and analyse the issues raised and ensure that the VIVID policy is fit for purpose, the process is managed in a fair and consistent manner and staff training is appropriate, using feedback from customers.

Furthermore, Equality Impact Assessments will form an integral part of the policy review process and will be required with regards to all policies and service areas having an impact on staff and customers.

This policy will be approved by the Directors Group and reviewed annually.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken in respect of this policy.

The EIA identified no negative impacts on any person or groups with a protected characteristic as a result of this policy.

8. References/appendices

- The Equality Act 2010 - <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
- HCA Regulatory Standards - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-standards>
- The Human Rights Act 1998 - <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents>

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