



EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

Date Policy Approved by Board	March 2017
Review Date	March 2020
SHR Guiding Standards	<p>GS1.2 Policies and procedures: We have high-quality written policies and procedures to guide our actions.</p> <p>GS2.1 Equal Opportunities: We embrace diversity, promote equal opportunities for all and eliminate unlawful discrimination in all areas of our work.</p> <p>GS3.3 Complaints and appeals: We deal fairly and effectively with anyone wanting to appeal against, or complain about, any of our decisions or activities. We make it clear that complaints can be made to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman</p>
National Care Standards	Standard 12: Your social, cultural and religious belief or faith are known and respected. You are able to live your life in keeping with these beliefs.

Policy Statement

In carrying out its functions as a charitable organisation, Viewpoint is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that no individual is discriminated against or unnecessarily excluded in the planning and delivery of any of our activities. We therefore aim to ensure that the values of equality, diversity and respect for all are embedded in everything we do.

This policy is intended to demonstrate our commitment to eliminating discrimination, encouraging and valuing diversity and promoting inclusion among staff, volunteers, partners, suppliers, residents, tenants and our Board of Trustees.

Legislation

We recognise our responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) and are committed to meeting them in full. We believe that a culture that embraces equality, values diversity and promotes inclusion will help to ensure that everyone feels involved and included in our plans, programmes and activities.

Aim

We are aware that Diversity is about understanding, recognising, respecting and valuing difference and Equality is about managing differences so that everyone is included and has equality of opportunity through a fair and consistent approach to the application of rules, policies and procedures.

Our aim is to create an environment which promotes these values, respects and welcomes everyone, applies rules policies and procedures fairly and in which, no form of bullying, harassment or disrespectful behaviour is tolerated.

This particularly applies, but is not limited to, the “9 Protected Characteristics” named in the Equality Act (2010): age, race, sex, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Scope

We understand that for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion to be achieved this policy needs to be made understandable to and embraced by all staff, volunteers, suppliers, partners, residents, tenants and the Board of Trustees.

All staff, volunteers, suppliers, partners and Trustees have a responsibility to ensure that their own language and actions are consistent with the spirit as well as the content of this policy.

Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the CEO, Executive team and the Board of Trustees.

Compliance and Support

We recognise that a policy alone is not enough to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are central to everything we do.

We will seek to create an environment in which the contributions of all staff, volunteers, suppliers, partners, residents, tenants and trustees is recognised and valued.

We recognise that many people are unfamiliar with the ways in which discrimination and disadvantage may affect people's health, wellbeing and quality of life.

We will support people to develop an awareness and understanding of the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion policies and procedures through learning and development programmes and will promote good practice and community cohesion in everything we do.

All staff will be considered solely on their merits for career development and promotion with equal opportunities for all

It is important to us that, suppliers, contractors and any individual or organisation working on our behalf is aware of and that they agree to comply with our policies while that work is underway.

In addition we are committed to

- ✓ Using accessible venues for events and meetings
- ✓ Using plain English and offering widely accessible communications - emails, letters, reports and publicity materials - as far as it is within our means to do so.

Monitoring and Evaluation

To make sure we are meeting the aims and spirit of this policy we will:

- ✓ Regularly discuss and review how well we are implementing the policy and adjust our practices/develop an action plan, where necessary
- ✓ Assess any significant new or revised policies and procedures for their impact on equality.
- ✓ Embed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in our development plans.
- ✓ Ensure our employment practices and procedures are consistent with the aims of this policy
- ✓ Ensure that all staff are considered solely on their merit for career development and promotion.

Review

We recognise that it is important to regularly review this policy to ensure it reflects up to date legislation and best practice.

A review of this policy will be carried out by the Executive Team and the Board of Trustees, every three years as a minimum and any necessary actions taken.