

**EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY**

**POLICY NO. 9**

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| **Date of Review** | March 2020 |
| **Date of Next Review** | March 2025 |
| **Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management**  | **RS 1**: *The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.***Guidance: 1.6****RS 2***The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.***Guidance: 2.4****RS 5***The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity***Guidance: .5.3****RS 6***The governing body and senior officers have the skills and knowledge they need to be effective.***Guidance: 6.2, 6.4, 6.5** |

# 1. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

Glen Housing Association is aware that certain groups or individuals within the community may face either direct or indirect discrimination in obtaining housing services, access to housing and to employment; discrimination being defined as treating a person less favourably than others on the grounds of the following:

* age;
* gender reassignment;
* being married or in a civil partnership;
* being [pregnant](https://www.gov.uk/working-when-pregnant-your-rights) or on maternity leave;
* [disability](https://www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010);
* race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin;
* religion or belief;
* sex;
* sexual orientation,

defined as the protected characteristics within the Equalities Act 2010. (see 2. Legal Obligations)

Glen therefore aims to be an equal opportunity organisation in its role as service provider, employer and partner organisation and opposes any form of direct or indirect discrimination in terms of good practice, social justice and legal duty.

Direct Discrimination - when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have, or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination - when you have a condition, rule, policy or even a practice in your organisation that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic.

Glen recognises and values diversity in its broadest sense and strives to create a culture and adopt practices that recognise, respect, value and harness difference for the benefit of Service Users, Staff and Board Members.

The Association’s values are that of integrity and respect for all as stated in our Business Strategy; this Policy is intended to ensure that the Association complies with current legislative requirements as well as best practice.

## 2. LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

Glen Housing Association recognises and seeks to go beyond its legal obligations in relation to Equality and Diversity. We are committed to the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 which brings together over 116 separate pieces of legislation into one single Act. This provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals from discrimination, harassment and victimisation, as well as advancing equality of opportunity for all.

## 3. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

**3.1** Glen is committed to the development of policies and procedures that do not discriminate (directly or indirectly) against any groups or persons. In doing so, we will ensure compliance with all appropriate legislation [See Appendix 1].

**3.2** Glen’s policies are subject to regular review and any such review will take account of the Equality & Diversity Policy and Checklist (see Appendix 1) to ensure compliance and compatibility.

**3.3** A copy of this Policy will be provided to all Board Members, staff, students on work placement and contractors, who will confirm in writing that the Policy has been read, understood and accepted.

**3.4** The Equality & Diversity Policy and Checklist will be referred to, as appropriate, during in-house training courses provided to staff and Board Members to ensure that they fully understand their responsibilities under the relevant anti-discriminatory legislation, good practice guidelines and Glen’s policies.

**3.5** Equality & Diversity Training will be provided to all staff and Board Members with active participation encouraged.

**3.6** The ultimate responsibility for ensuring that Glen conforms to the principles of the Equality & Diversity Policy lies with the Director and Board of Management; however compliance with the Policy will be a condition of employment and also a condition of service for those participating with Glen in a voluntary capacity.

**4. ALLOCATIONS**

**4.1** Housing application forms will be made available to all households requesting same. The form is designed for ease of completion; however, staff should be sympathetic to the needs of an applicant who may experience difficulty in completing the form. If necessary, staff can access organisations that can help such as FRAE Fife, Disabled Persons Housing Service and Fife Community Interpretation Service or, if the applicant prefers, they can be directed to these organisations themselves.

**4.2** All tenants can request a joint tenancy and subject to meeting the requirements will not be refused one.

**4.3** Allocations will be made to match the applicant(s) needs to the property’s attributes. Specially adapted houses will be kept in a separate category, therefore giving priority to those who need them.

**4.4** Where evidence exists that a tenant is the victim of harassment or violence and wishes to move to another house, consideration will be given for a transfer. Glen will provide information on emergency accommodation available to tenants in need.

# 5. TENANTS

**5.1** Glen aims to ensure that tenants within the area are able to reside peacefully in their homes free from any form of harassment or violence.

The following policies and procedures are in place for dealing with tenants and staff who are found to be victims or perpetrators of harassment or violence:

* Anti-Social Behaviour and Neighbour Nuisance policy
* Hate Incidents and Hate Harassment Policy
* Statement of Terms & Conditions of Employment
* Dignity at Work Policy
* Code of Conduct

**5.2** When dealing with alleged incidents of harassment or violence, Glen will take a victim centred approach. The Association’s staff will handle all investigations sensitively. The victims will be advised of possible solutions and appropriate action. No course of action will be taken without their prior consent.

**5.3** We will ensure systems are in place to monitor incidents of harassment and violence and the action taken.

# 6. COMMUNICATION

**6.1** Glen will ensure that all our publications are presented in a clear, jargon free and easily understood format, available to all. In preparing written material, we will ensure that the content is open and inclusive and does not discriminate against any group or individual.

**6.2** Due to the relatively small size of the Association, it is not feasible to produce all our literature in the various translated forms however, we will make all reasonable efforts to facilitate verbal and written communications with all service users who have disabilities or whose first language is not English. This may include:

* large print
* audio
* braille
* translation into relevant language
* use of language or sign interpreters

**6.3** Glen will collect information on the specific needs of tenants to help assist in

 their tenancy. This information will be processed in line with our Fair Processing

Notice

# 7. STAFFING

**7.1** The Association will ensure that there is no discrimination in the recruitment, training and development of all staff.

**7.2** Job Descriptions, Person Specifications, Advertisements and Application Forms will use appropriate, unbiased, open and fair criteria. All job applicants will be asked to complete the standard job Application Form. Applicants will be asked to provide information on the Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form which will be held separately from the application form to be used solely for monitoring purposes.

**7.3** Training will be provided to ensure that staff have a clear understanding of equality and diversity and therefore adhere to this Policy. Any breaches of this Policy by staff members may be the subject of grievance and disciplinary procedures.

**7.4** Equal opportunities and respect for diversity principles will be integrated into the Association’s Business Strategy.

**7.5** Glen will strive to ensure the workplace is an environment where people are treated with dignity and respect.

# 8. TENANT/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

**8.1** Glen will endeavour to ensure that membership of any Tenants and Residents Groups reflect their wider community. Where minority groups are under-represented, attempts will be made to encourage membership from tenants and residents and by co-opting membership from interested groups.

**8.2** Glen will offer guidance to any Tenants and Residents Groups on equality and diversity and encourage them to include reference to equality and diversity in their Constitution and Membership policies.

**8.3** Where there is demand, Glen will endeavour to facilitate care arrangements for all public, committee and any other such meetings. In addition, Glen would encourage all Tenants and Residents Groups to facilitate care arrangements at all their meetings with a view to increasing wider representation and would aim to assist financially to allow this to happen.

# 9. CONTRACTORS/CONSULTANTS

**9.1** Glen will seek to ensure that the awarding of contracts is made to contractors/consultants who can demonstrate a commitment to equalities. They will be asked to provide a copy of their Equalities Policy or to confirm in writing that they are prepared to abide by Glen’s Equality & Diversity Policy and comply with the relevant health & safety, employment and anti-discriminatory legislation.

**9.2** All contractors will also be expected to adhere to Glen’s Code of Conduct and Openness & Confidentiality Policy which contain specific references to discriminating behaviour.

**9.3** Contractors who have been involved in litigation with reference to any discrimination complaint, e.g. Court or industrial tribunal, may be considered for removal from the Approved Contractors list if found to be discriminating.

**10. GOVERNANCE**

**10.1** Glen will seek to develop a broad membership within the Board of Management, reflecting the diversity of the communities we serve. Membership will be open to all who support the values and key principles of the Association.

 Within the Board of Management and Senior Management Team we will ensure that we have the range of skills and expertise to lead the Association.

**11. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING**

**11.1** Glen will ensure adequate resources are available for actions to promote equality and diversity.

**11.2** Suitable training will be provided on equalities issues and raising awareness, for Staff and Board Members.

**11.3** To assist in reviewing the effectiveness of this Policy, we will gather statistical information on various aspects of our activities and present to the Board of Management as appropriate. Information will be gathered in relation to:

* Housing Applications
* Allocations
* Membership of the Association
* Membership of the Board of Management
* Recruitment
* Selection and Appointment of Contractors

**12. POLICY REVIEW**

The Equality & Diversity Policy will be reviewed every 5 years and/or in line with any new legislative requirements.

COMPANY:/POLICIES &CONTRACTS – Equality & Diversity Policy (Reviewed March 2020)