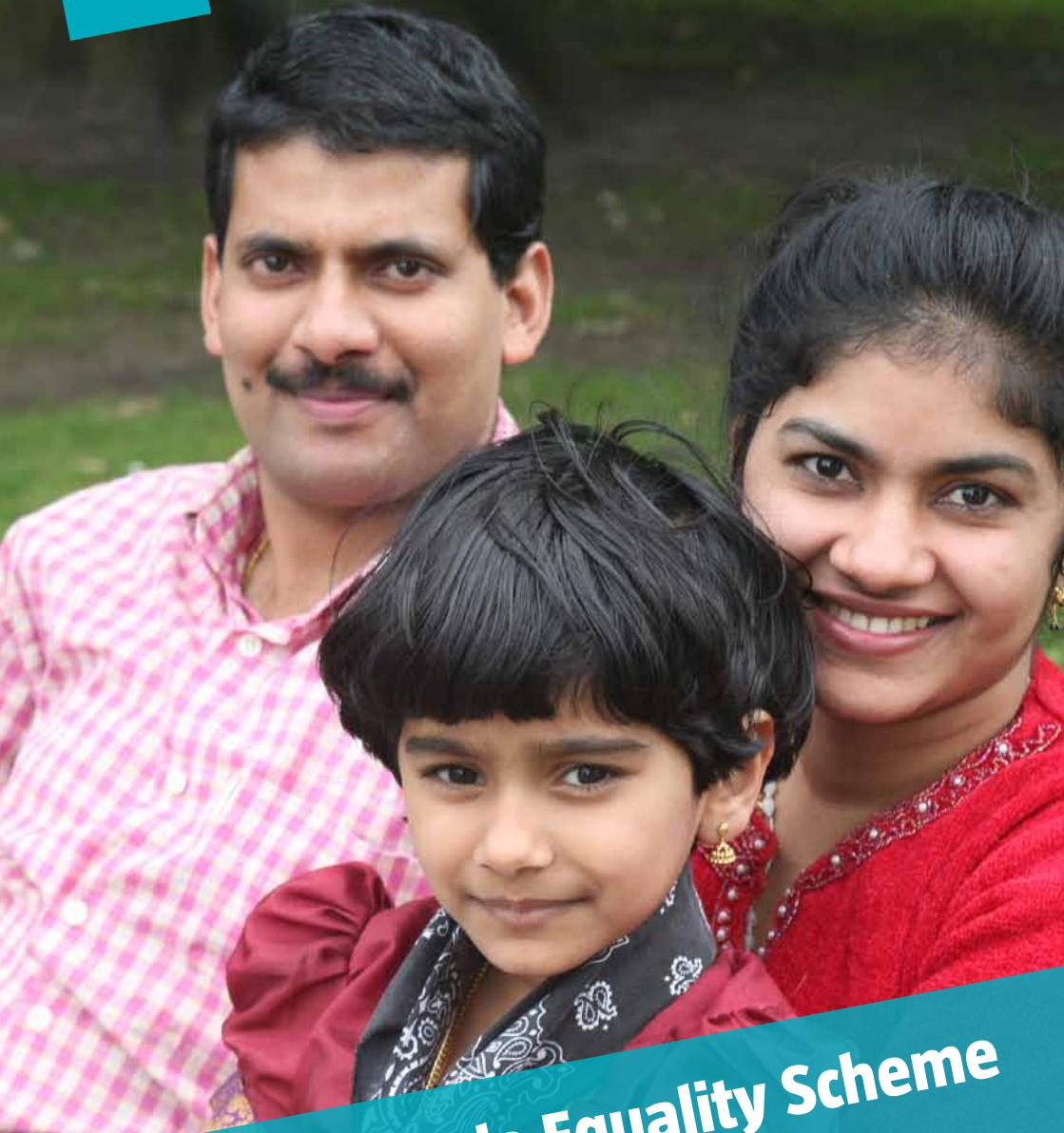


wulvern your home team



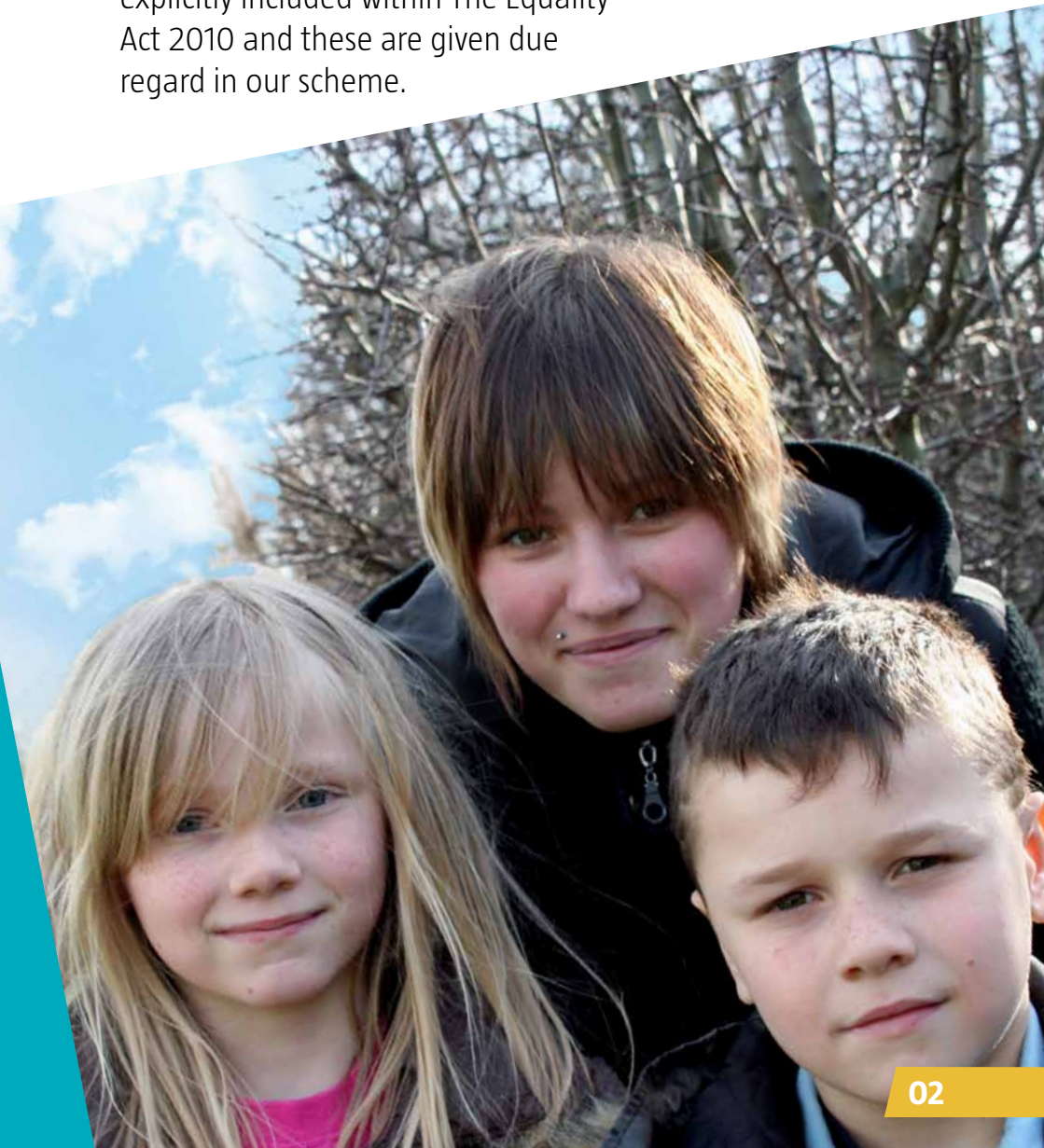
Wulvern's Single Equality Scheme

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Compliance Checklist

This SES covers:

Race, gender, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, religious belief and age. Socio-economic status pregnancy and maternity are also explicitly included within The Equality Act 2010 and these are given due regard in our scheme.



Introduction

Welcome to Wolvern's integrated Single Equality Scheme. This scheme builds on the firm foundations of the equality of access, service improvement and employment that Wolvern has successfully implemented.

The scheme aims to protect people from discrimination and recognises the following protected characteristics:

- Race
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Religious belief
- Age
- Socio-economic status
- pregnancy and maternity

Wolvern, like all Registered Providers, must respond to a constantly changing environment. Economic uncertainty, demographic, social, environmental and technological changes present both challenges and opportunities for us.

The move to developing our integrated equality scheme is representative of the step change we have brought about in our approach to equality management, moving away from minimal legal compliance towards a culture of responding positively to the needs of everyone.

We want our customers and stakeholders to have influence and choice over what happens to their homes and the delivery of services. We recognise that building equality principles into

service design and the way we conduct customer service and employment duties are key ways of effectively responding to individual customers needs.

This scheme is our guarantee that we will continue to improve and change the way in which we deliver our services for all our customers.

About Wulvern

Wulvern is the largest Housing Association in South Cheshire providing homes and services for over 11,000 customers across Crewe, the historic market town of Nantwich and a number of Cheshire villages.

We provide a choice of high quality, affordable homes including; properties for rent, shared ownership, sheltered accommodation and extra care, and homes for people with disabilities.

Housing Associations are non profit making organisations that provide affordable homes for people in housing need. They are also known as Registered Providers (RP). As an RP we are subject to external regulation and legislation.

Section one

We recognise that our staff and customers are fundamental to our business success and we are committed to:

- Ensuring that our customers are involved in the decisions which affect their lives
- Providing homes fit for the future with support that our customers want
- Provide a working environment that enables staff to excel

Our staff strive to achieve the highest standards of service, helping us to build a reputation that attracts new customers, partners and funding.

We believe in investing in our staff, customers and the communities we serve. In 2010 we were awarded the prestigious Investors in Excellence award.

What we mean by equality

Equality means treating everyone with equal dignity and worth. We recognise that people have different needs, circumstances and goals and achieving equality requires the removal of the discriminatory barriers that limit what people can do and can be.

We recognise that people can experience inequality in: outcomes; access to services; the degree of independence they have to make decisions affecting their lives; and inequality of treatment, including in relation to employment, through discrimination or disadvantage imposed by other individuals, groups, institutions or systems.

We also recognise that people can be treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic or they are linked or associated with someone who has a protected characteristic.



Our commitment to equality and diversity

As a service provider and employer, we strive to ensure that we treat all our staff, and our staff treat others, with dignity, fairness and respect. We aim to make sure that our staff have the knowledge and skills they need to deliver a service which recognises and meets the individual needs of our customers.

We empower our employees to take responsibility for embedding equality and diversity throughout the organisation.

This work is led by a member of the Executive Team and a member of our Board who take responsibility for Equality and Diversity to ensure standards are recognised at the highest level. **An Equality and Diversity Monitoring Group** that includes tenants will meet quarterly to monitor and report on progress of this Single Equality Scheme. The Monitoring Group will be assisted by associated **Local Equality and Diversity Champions** who will also **meet quarterly and feed into the Single Equality and Diversity monitoring process.**

Our approach

Through our Single Equality and Diversity Scheme we set out our approach to meeting our legal responsibilities under The Equality Act 2010.

We recognise that many people do not experience fair access to services, a fair quality of life or the opportunity to realise their full potential. Many of the actions we can take to tackle discrimination and harassment and promote equality and diversity apply to all groups covered by equalities legislation.

We believe that taking an integrated approach to equality and diversity helps us to tackle experiences of multiple discrimination more effectively as an organisation and in our work with others.

This Scheme includes our equality and diversity objectives, the actions we intend to take to deliver them, and the evidence we will use to track our progress.

We Will:

Be aware of the diverse needs of our customers and will take these into account in everything we do

Tackle discrimination and promote equality and diversity on the basis of a person's 'protected characteristics' and more so that we go beyond minimum legal compliance

Take into account our customer's socio-economic characteristics which can lead to discrimination or unfavourable treatment

Ensure we treat and pay our staff fairly

Publish annual progress reports on promoting equality and diversity

Developing the scheme

We have drawn on learning from the work we have done through our previous Equality and Diversity Strategy and have made a number of changes to the way we work.

These include:

- Using Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) to examine how a current or future policy, procedure or service may have an unequal impact on different groups of people
- Developing the role of Equality and Diversity Champions
- Carrying out an annual Status Survey based on a minimum 20% sample of Wulvern customers
- Using customer profiling findings based on the 'You and Yours' survey
- Producing Neighbourhood Plans and acting on their findings
- Assessing Wulvern Indicators of Neighbourhood Sustainability (WINS)
- Working with partners such as Cheshire East Council to ensure our Scheme compliments their Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme 2010-2013
- Engaging with customers



Learning points

We have reviewed the outcomes of the previous strategy with staff, customers and partners. We have made good progress but there is still more to do.

We have learnt that:



We will continue to use EIA's to understand the impact of our services on customers and enhance them to meet needs



We need to continue to work hard to comprehensively address the diverse and changing needs of customers



Our Short Notice Inspection findings were published in February 2010 and our approach to diversity was judged as strengths and weaknesses in balance. This has resulted in the following changes:

- Staff and contractors are informed of customer's diverse needs as a matter of routine
- Wulvern meeting the requirements of good practice guidance such as the CRE (EHRC) code of practice
- We monitor satisfaction levels amongst diverse groups
- We act on the findings of EIAs to ensure that outcomes for customers can be measured and assessed for effectiveness



We need to continue to develop the knowledge and skills of our staff so they can deliver fair outcomes for customers. Integrating equality and diversity into existing and new management and skill development and training programmes will ensure relevance to day-to-day work



We need to continue to ensure that our staff have easy access to information about the changing needs of our customers



We need to improve how we objectively measure our progress and understand the impact the delivery of the plan is having



We need to ensure that we provide a menu of opportunities for customers to influence how we do business ensuring that our services meet their needs

The action plan

Our action plan outlines the outcomes and evidence that will drive our Single Equality Scheme over the next three years. **Departmental Equality and Diversity Action Plans** have been developed to progress day to day activities in the following areas:

- Housing
- Active4Age
- Corporate Support
- Customer Services, Repairs and Voids
- Improvement and Cyclical Maintenance
- Regeneration, Development and Neighbourhood Investment

Our objectives:

- Ensure that all staff understand the importance of equality and diversity so that they remain firmly embedded within the culture and ethos of Wolvern
- Continue to develop the knowledge and skills of our staff
- Work harder to comprehensively address the diverse needs of our customers
- To improve customer insight by gathering and using customer information to help improve service delivery and develop new business opportunities



- Demonstrate that there is no difference in employment outcomes for our staff or potential recruits because of their race, gender, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, socio-economic status or pregnancy and maternity
- To develop the ways in which we involve customers to ensure customer involvement is representative, challenging, accessible and holds us to account

Monitoring the Action Plan

Implementation and monitoring of the Single Equality Scheme will be via Departmental action Plans and progress will be monitored quarterly by Heads of Service and reported to Board on an annual basis.

Equality action plan 2010 – 2013

Objective 1 - Ensure that all staff understand the importance of equality and diversity.

Outcomes	Evidence
<p>Staff at all levels are able to say why equality and diversity is important and give examples of how it influences the services they deliver.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Annual staff survey● Feedback from diversity champions● Feedback from RISE● Training programme and evaluation
<p>Customers tell us that the service they receive takes account of their individual needs and circumstances.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Annual status survey and feedback from customer involvement activities

Objective 2 - Continue to develop the knowledge and skills of our staff.

Outcomes	Evidence
<p>Our knowledge about equality, diversity, cohesion and human rights has improved and is reflected in the quality of the services we provide.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Annual staff and customer surveys ● Service Promises ● Training and Evaluation
<p>Equality and diversity is embedded into our work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improvements identified through independent review and external benchmarking activity ● Evaluation of the quality, outcomes and impact from equality impact assessments ● Equality Monitoring Group reporting
<p>Knowledge sharing improves the quality and efficiency of services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evidenced improvements where knowledge has delivered outcomes for customers
<p>Our staff have the knowledge and skills to make informed judgements about equality and diversity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Annual staff and tenants surveys ● Analysis of other forms of feedback such as complaints ● Complaints reporting

Section two

Objective 3 - Work harder to comprehensively address the diverse needs of our customers.

Outcomes	Measures
All customer facing staff will have easy access to information that helps them to deliver a quality service that meets the individual needs of customers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Annual staff survey● Development and use of research and intelligence● Feedback from diversity champions● Status satisfaction results
Staff and contractors are regularly accessing the 'you and yours' data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● IT Audit reports● Protocol Agreements
Customers tell us that Wulvern is good at meeting their needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Annual status survey and feedback from customer involvement activities
Contractors can show evidenced examples of where the data has helped them to improve service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Monitoring reports of intelligence submitted by contractors to customer services

Objective 4 - To improve customer insight by gathering and using customer information to help improve service delivery.

Outcomes	Measures
Information is both used and useful.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● IT Audit reports
Customers and Regulators say our approach is effective and delivers a quality service that demonstrates value for money.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Annual status survey and feedback from customer involvement activities ● Regulatory feedback
Customers receive a joined up service that is evidence based.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Annual status survey and feedback from customer involvement activities ● Regulatory feedback ● Delivery of Service Promises

Section two

Objective 5 - Demonstrate that there is no difference in employment outcomes for our staff or potential recruits because of their race, gender, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, socio-economic status or pregnancy and maternity.

Outcomes	Measures
Our workforce is diverse and its makeup reflects that of the local economically active population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Comparison with Cheshire East and Census data
Differences in pay between men and women have been eliminated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Results of our equal pay reviews● Occasional spot testing of key posts / salaries
People from diverse or minority groups are fairly represented in secondment, talent management, training and recruitment opportunities.	Level of consistency between percentage of applicants, percentage shortlisted, and percentage offered a job for diverse or minority groups. Proportion of staff from diverse or minority groups who: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Take up secondments● Are identified for talent development activities

Outcomes	Measures
<p>Staff feel that our performance management system is fair and that poor performance is managed consistently.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Annual staff survey ● Grievance, capability and disciplinary cases
<p>Managers are confident in managing people from diverse or minority groups, including staff with disabilities and those with mental health issues, making reasonable adjustments as appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Managers Training ● Staff Survey ● HR Feedback



Section two

Objective 6 - Meet our commitment to The Equality Act 2010. Promote equality and diversity throughout the work of the organization through good governance and the wider principles of fairness and accountability in order to meet the values of this Single Equality Scheme.

Outcomes	Measures
Work of the Board reflects the aspirations of the communities and people it serves	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Seek a reasonable gender and age balance● Encourage representation from those with disabilities and minority communities
Board retains the right balance of skills in order to understand and champion the needs of diverse communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Redress any imbalance or skills shortages● Recruit new board members in an open and systematic way when vacancies become available
Adopt a policy of diversity and inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Wulvern’s Single Equality Scheme includes how we will promote equality with regard to the protected characteristics

Outcomes	Measures
<p>Ensure as far as is possible that Wulvern meets the needs of the communities it serves and that it reflects these communities in staffing and governance structures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Services tailored to particular needs● Staff recruitment and conditions of service● Procurement● Customer involvement● Monitoring Single Equality Action Plan



Section two

Objective 7 - Communicate with customers and other stakeholders.

Outcomes	Measures
A comprehensive communications strategy that meets the needs of customers and Wulvern.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use all practical means to communicate with stakeholders, including newsletters, handbooks, leaflets, the Annual Report and website• Status findings re communication



Outcomes	Measures
<p>Information takes into account the barriers caused by sensory impairment, language difficulties, and literacy problems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mitigate barriers through the use of technology or innovative media solutions ● Provide other forms of assistance wherever possible ● We have a number of mechanisms in place to assist in achieving this These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crystal Clear Readers - Homewords Editorial Panel - Social Media – Wulvern page on Facebook
<p>Recognise the importance of other mechanisms for communication and engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use our Annual General Meeting, Customer Conference and other consultation forums to convey information on Wulvern’s business to stakeholders

Our checklist

This section explains how we make sure we are compliant with the Equality Act (2010) in delivering the scheme.



Leadership and Governance

We have staff throughout the organisation with explicit responsibilities for equality and diversity. Strategic leadership is provided by our Board Champion and a member of our Executive Team.

Other support functions, key to this work are Customer Services, Human Resources, Partnerships, Marketing and Communications and Customer Involvement.

We will develop an Equality and Diversity Monitoring Group to monitor progress on Equality and Diversity Plans and Activity.



Service Promises

Wulvern's Service Promises are designed to ensure we deliver excellent services that meet the diverse needs of customers and make best use of resources.

Each standard has a clear set of measures so that customers can check how we are performing. We report back throughout the year in our magazines Homewords and Your Call, and via regular performance updates on the Wulvern Website www.wulvern.org.uk.



Key performance Indicators

Wulvern has developed a series of key performance indicators for equality and diversity that have been designed to drive equality of access and service for all our customers and employees. The overriding principle of our approach is to ensure that the experience of services reflects the neighbourhood, customer and staff profile. Our equality performance indicators are included in our key performance indicators report which is updated on a quarterly basis and is reported to Board, the Tenant Scrutiny Panel, Senior Management Team and posted on the Wulvern Web-site and included in customer magazines.



Diversity Champions

Each area of the business has a diversity champion. Their role is to promote equality and diversity and challenge progress within their area of responsibility. They also have responsibility for ensuring that this Scheme's action plans are embedded into their areas and for monitoring and reporting on the progress being made.



Section three



Performance

Our arrangements for monitoring the delivery of the action plan set out in this Scheme are part of our existing performance management and business planning systems. The main elements of these arrangements are:

- Quarterly monitoring of EIA's led by a member of Wulvern's Executive Team
- Reporting by exception to Wulvern's Senior Management Team
- Quarterly Diversity champions group and Equality and Diversity Group meeting
- Quarterly reports to our Tenant Scrutiny Panel
- Annual report to Board



Lettings

Wulvern will ensure that its application and allocation procedures are fair and transparent. We will work with our choice based lettings partners to ensure we achieve and maintain balanced and sustainable communities.



Contractors and Agents

All our contractors and sub-contractors are required to comply with our approach to equality and diversity. Wulvern aims to ensure that our tendering processes are fair and transparent and encourage local and minority businesses to apply for contracts. We will:

- Support local initiatives and companies that promote employment of people from groups and communities that experience disadvantage
- Require all contractors to comply with our equality and diversity approach
- Encourage local companies, minority ethnic contractors and community initiative/social enterprise organisations to join our approved list of contractors



Provision of New Housing

Wulvern will provide new homes when possible, and take into account diverse needs, through consultation. To achieve our aims we will:

- Provide a wide range of housing options
- Consult with local agencies
- Work in partnership
- Adapt existing stock to meet religious beliefs or accessibility requirements

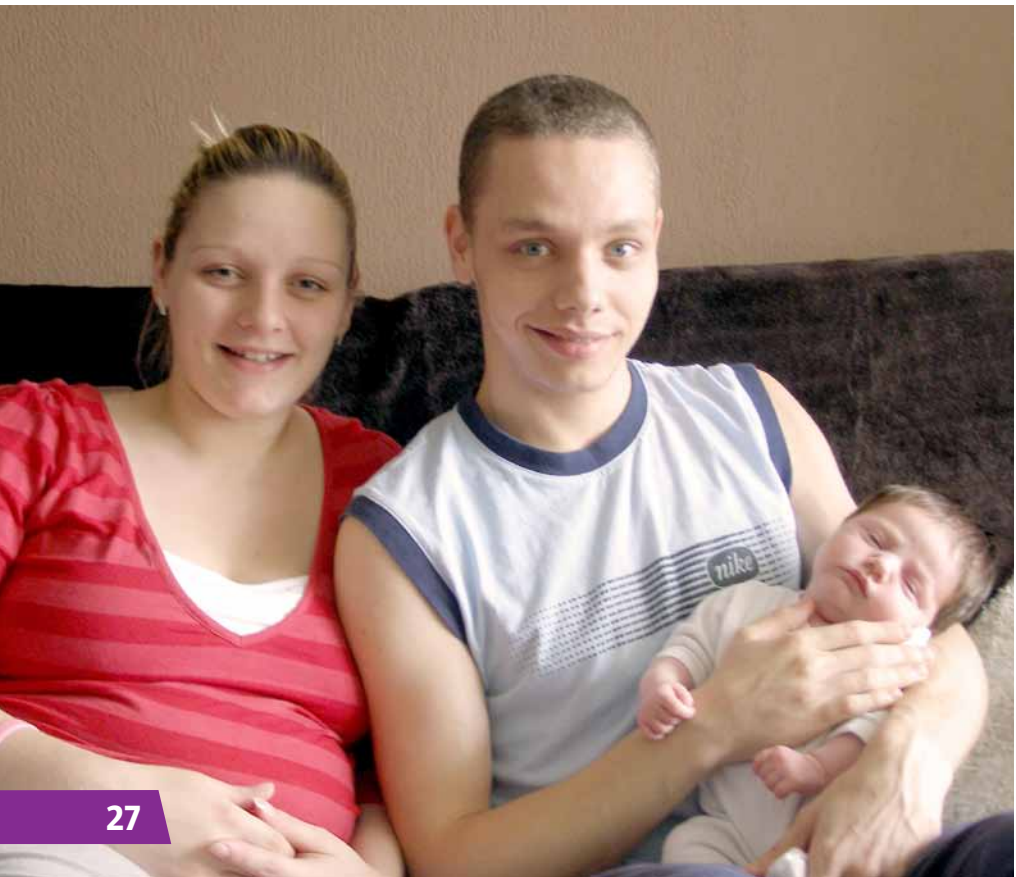
Section three



Customer Involvement

Wulvern will encourage and support all customers to take an active part in the work of the organisation.

We value the views of people from different communities and recognise that their involvement helps us improve how we promote equality and diversity, and tackle discrimination and harassment. Our involvement strategy sets out how we plan to develop the involvement of and consultation with tenants who may experience disadvantage or discrimination. You can find it on our website www.wulvern.org.uk.





Vulnerable Customers

Wulvern will treat vulnerable people on an individual basis. This means that where their need is more urgent because of their vulnerability, we will act quickly to maintain their health or comfort.



Employment practices

We have a range of mechanisms for monitoring and reviewing our employment practices:

Management information

This shows our performance and progress towards achieving equality in our workforce, recruitment and promotion, training and development and grievance and disciplinary activity.

Case Studies

Our HR Business Partners gather knowledge through case work about the day-to-day issues faced by staff from equalities groups. They are supported by the diversity champions so that issues requiring a change to policy, practice or behaviour are identified and the necessary action taken by the appropriate part of the organisation.

Section three

Employee satisfaction survey

We carry out an independent survey of our entire workforce. It includes questions about our equality and diversity performance as well as specific equality issues. We analyse survey results to identify differences between different equality groups.

Evidence from staff networks also provides first-hand knowledge of the issues facing our staff from equalities groups.



Reporting our progress

We will continue to report annually on our progress towards meeting the objectives and actions set out in this Scheme.





If you would like this document in your language, on tape, in large print or in Braille, please ring us on **01270 506200** or ask at one of our offices

Arabic

لتلقى معلومات في لغتك الرجاء أطلبها منا على الرقم
01270 506200

Chinese

如欲索取閣下語言的資料，請致電
01270 506200 向我們查詢

Gujarati

આપની ભાષામાં માહિતી મેળવવા માટે કૃપા કરી, 01270 506200
નંબર પર ફોન કરીને અમને પૂછો.

Italian

Per informazioni nella vostra lingua siete pregati
di contattare il seguente no.01270 506200

Kurdish

یۆزا نیاری به زمانه که ی خۆت تکایه په یوه ند یمان یی بکه به
01270 506200

Polish

Po informacje w języku polskim prosimy
dzwonić pod numer 01270 506200

Portuguese

Para informação na sua linguagem, por favor
fale com nos, 01270 506200

Turkish

Kendi dilinizde bilgi almak için lütfen bize sorunuz,
01270 506200

Urdu

اپنی زبان میں مزید معلومات کیلئے براہ مہربانی 01270 506200 پر رابطہ کریں۔



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