

ST MUNGO'S EQUALITIES & DIVERSITY POLICY

1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

St Mungo's aims to make sure that homeless and vulnerable people can look forward with optimism, and can contribute to the quality of life.

We acknowledge that the client groups with whom we work – homeless and vulnerable people – face discrimination and disadvantage, and that these prevent them from achieving their full potential. We aim to tackle this unfair discrimination and disadvantage.

We also acknowledge that, as an employer, some of our staff may have personal experience of discrimination and disadvantage. We will ensure that all members of staff are entitled to, and receive, fair and equal treatment.

We believe that we are richer, as a charity and as a society, if we recognise and celebrate diversity, and if we strive for equality of opportunity in order that everyone can contribute. We are therefore committed to actively challenging inequality of opportunity, and will look beyond existing legislation to address all forms of prejudice and unfair discrimination.

2. SCOPE

This policy covers all aspects of equalities and includes race / ethnicity, gender / transgender, disability, sexual orientation, religion / belief, age and marital status.

The policy applies to all areas of St Mungo's service-delivery and employment:

- ✓ The provision of housing, care and support (which includes access to housing; the quality of accommodation; the provision of care or support; and the protection of residents' rights)
- ✓ Recruitment of staff, their employment conditions, and opportunities for training and development as well as progression.
- ✓ The design, development and maintenance of accommodation, including the oversight of the practices of our consultants and contractors
- ✓ The actions of our members, and of members of our Board of Management.

3. POLICY

3.1 St Mungo's will ensure that services are delivered to homeless and vulnerable people in a way that is fair and equitable, with positive steps being taken to address the needs of minority and disadvantaged groups.

3.2 St Mungo's will also ensure that everyone working for us will be entitled to fair and equal treatment, with positive action being taken to ensure that members of minority and disadvantaged groups are able to play a full part in all aspects of service development and delivery.

3.3 St Mungo's will ensure effective implementation of this policy in its recruitment practices which includes written instructions to managers and supervisors on equal opportunities in recruitment, selection, training, progression and dismissal of staff,

and open recruitments methods such as the use of job centres or press advertisements.

- 3.4 St Mungo's will set targets for and monitor a range of performance issues to reflect our internal and external priorities. Those current are outlined in the Equality Scheme and Plan 2008-2011, updates of the plan are kept on public folders. Where there is a significant variance between our target and our performance, we shall investigate the reasons and take corrective and improvement action to meet the target.
- 3.5 We will support the development of staff and client equality groups addressing specific elements of our equalities and diversity plan (such as the Black and Minority Ethnic Group; the Irish Focus Group; the Disability Focus Group; the Women Focus Group, and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Group), and will develop a St Mungo's-wide Equalities and Diversity Working Party (called the Equality and Diversity Forum) to advise management on emerging issues, best practice, and difficult areas.
- 3.6 The Operations Executive Director is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this policy in our projects (including Technical Services), and the HR Executive Director is responsible for its implementation and monitoring as regards our staffing. The HR Executive Director is also our lead officer on these matters, and is advised and assisted by our Equalities and Diversity Consultant. The Chief Executive retains overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with our objectives, and for guiding and advising the Board of Management.
- 3.7 St Mungo's Board of Management will receive regular reports (on a quarterly or annual basis, depending on the topic) and approve any improvement actions.
- 3.8 Each member of staff has a responsibility for the positive application of this policy. Breaches may result in disciplinary action.
- 3.9 St Mungo's will provide training and development opportunities to clients, staff and Board members to aid the implementation of this policy.

4. LEGISLATION & GUIDANCE

In drawing up this policy, full reference has been made to the relevant statutory requirements of:

- the Sex Discrimination Act (1975)
- the Race Relations Act (1976)
- the Disability Discrimination Act (1995)
- the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000)
- Employment Equality Sexual Orientation regulations (2003)
- Employment Equality Religion or Belief regulations (2003)
- The Equality Act 2006

We have also drawn from the recommendations contained in:

- the Commission for Racial Equality's *Codes of Practice on Rented Housing and on Employment*
- the Race & Housing Inquiry's *Race Equality Code of Practice for Housing Associations*
- the requirements placed on housing associations which are outlined in the Housing Corporation's *Regulatory Code*
- and in the EU Directives on *Religion or Belief* and *Age*.

5. REVIEW

The Board of Management will review this policy every 3 years.