

Disability Action Plan 2007

DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

Oaklee Housing Association

1.1	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), Oaklee Housing Association is required when carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and• encourage participation by disabled people in public life ('the disability duties'). <p>Under Section 49B of the DDA 1995, Oaklee Housing Association is also required to submit to the Equality Commission a disability action plan showing how it proposes to fulfill these duties in relation to its functions.</p>
1.2	<p>As Chair and Chief Executive of Oaklee Housing Association, we are committed to implementing effectively the disability duties and this disability action plan. We will allocate all necessary resources (in terms of people, time and money) in order to implement this plan and where appropriate, build objectives and targets relating to the disability duties into corporate and annual business plans.</p> <p>We will also put appropriate internal arrangements in place to ensure that we comply with the disability duties and implement the disability action plan. We will also ensure that the plan is communicated to staff and provide all necessary training and guidance for staff on the disability duties and the implementation of the plan.</p> <p>Responsibility for implementing, reviewing and evaluating this disability action plan and the point of contact within Oaklee Housing will be:-</p>

	<p>Name: Maurice Mackey Title: Personnel and Training Manager Address: Leslie Morrell House 37-41 May Street Belfast, BT1 4DN Telephone number: 02890 441304 Fax number: 02890 441346 Email: mauricem@oaklee.org.uk</p> <p>If you require this plan in an alternative format (such as in large print, in Braille, on audio cassette, easy read or on computer disc) and/or language, please contact the above person to discuss your requirements.</p>
1.3	<p>Commitment</p> <p>The Association will submit an annual progress report on the implementation of this plan to the Equality Commission and carry out a five year review of this plan.</p> <p>A copy of this plan, our annual progress to the Equality Commission and our five year review of this plan will be made available on our website oaklee.org.uk. The public will be made aware of the plan through our joint working with the Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations, who will advertise in relevant media. Oaklee will also communicate with key stakeholders on the content of the plan.</p> <p>As part of the operational planning process, Oaklee will build objectives and targets relating to the disability duties into the annual business planning process. Progress on meeting objectives will be reported to the Association’s Board of Management.</p>
1.3a	<p>Consultation</p> <p>Oaklee is committed to carrying out consultation in the development of its disability duties. We will seek the views of a range of stakeholders in relation to this plan. To do this, Oaklee will be engaged on a number of levels :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will seek to consult with our tenants on the services we provide

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will communicate the development of this plan with our staff and tenant forum. • We will contact representative organizations of disability groups for their feedback on the plan. <p>Through consultation, Oaklee will seek to :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify barriers faced by disabled people in public life, with particular emphasis on the issue of housing / service provision. • Identify opportunities for Oaklee Housing Association to promote positive attitudes • Incorporate suggestions into the Disability Action plan.
1.4	<p>Functions</p> <p>Outlined below is the range of functions of Oaklee Housing Association.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oaklee Housing is a charitable housing association registered with the Department of Social Development. It is a voluntary non-profit making organization. • Responsibility for strategic management of Oaklee lies with the Voluntary Board of management. Day to day management of the Association is delegated to the Chief Executive and the senior management team. The disability action plan has been prepared by the Personnel and Training Manager. • Oaklee's main role is to provide social housing and support services to meet a wide range of needs. • We have over 4000 units in Northern Ireland. Our housing stock is made up of sheltered accommodation, residential care homes, general family housing and supported housing schemes which include housing for people with a range of complex needs. • The Association also provides a development and maintenance service. • Provision of the Oaklee Services Centre for housing management and maintenance issues <p>Main Policy areas include :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent collection, arrears and voids

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Consultation and development • Purchase and disposal of land and property • House Sales • Employment • Finance • Supporting People • Maintenance • Procurement • Complaints • Estate Management
1.5	<p>Public Life Positions</p> <p>The range of public life positions over which Oaklee Housing Association has responsibility for, are as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Board Members and Members of Committees</i> • <i>Tenant Forum and Regional Forum</i>
2.	<p>Previous Measures</p> <p>Outlined below are the key measures which Oaklee Housing Association has already taken to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life.</p> <p>Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people and encouraging the participation of disabled people in public life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of housing and services for disabled people • Specialised housing provision which includes schemes with assistive technology so tenants can remain in their homes longer • Adaptations carried out to homes to facilitate tenants with a disability • Disability Awareness training for staff • Specialist training as relevant to post e.g. recruitment panels or for those carrying out specific jobs within Oaklee dealing with more specialized areas of disability • Joint working with partner organizations from the voluntary and

statutory sectors

- Reasonable adjustments made as necessary
- DDA audits carried out and plan of action agreed by management team
- Association buildings readily facilitate use by disabled people
- Homes built to Lifetime Homes standard where appropriate
- Promoting interaction between those with a disability and those without
- Positive images of disabled people used in Association's display or promotional materials
- Positive attitudes towards disabled people reflected in association's literature, correspondence and written materials etc.
- Braille controls and voice identification in Head Office lift in the main office building and all new and refurbished installations
- Disabled people supported to participate in internal groups such as Tenants Forum, Best Value Reviews, Working parties and Committees
- User involvement policies/activities/groups (with disability focus) i.e. armchair aerobics, reminiscence etc.
- Provision of Training for Joint Management Partners on disability issues
- Remodelled accommodation for the specific needs of tenants with disabilities
- Currently implementing publicity campaign to promote availability of adaptations
- Provision of Tenancy Agreement in plain English for complex needs tenants
- Implementation of the 1st Northern Ireland housing services centre providing a single contact point for Housing Management and maintenance service
- Provision of plain English and pictorial repairs and housing management handbooks
- Carrying out complex needs assessments to allocate housing to meet the needs of people with disabilities
- Specialised provision of furniture and equipment in housing schemes i.e. assisted showers and furniture for communal areas
- Amended contractor assessment criteria to recognize contractors with disability and high care needs experience

3	<p>Action Measures</p> <p>Outlined below are the measures which we propose to take over the period of this disability action plan, together with performance indicators or targets.</p>
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Measures to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life

Measures	Timescale	Performance Indicators/target
Ensure positive and proportionate imagery in all Corporate documentation	<i>June 2007 and ongoing</i>	Positive and proportionate imagery in main corporate documents including Annual Report, promotional material and tenant newsletters.
Develop screening Procedure to assess Disability issues in relation To S75 duties	March 2008	New policies screened for disability implication. Included in annual progress report
Include requests for statistical information in relation to stakeholders with disabilities in internal surveys	Ongoing	Disability information collated and included in the annual return
Complete NICORE information on annual basis for all new tenants	Annually	Report statistics to Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations

Maintain and annually update staff monitoring system	Annually	Report findings to the Board of Management Personnel reports on disability issues produced and reported to the Board
Review external and internal communication policies, practices and procedures	March 2008	All communication policies take account of disability equality duties
Integrate statutory disability duties into the annual business planning process	March 2008	Report progress on operational plan to the Board of Management And the Equality Commission

Training and Awareness

Provide briefings on the disability duties to all staff, tenants and Board members	December 2007	Briefing process completed
Provide specialist training for senior managers and recruitment panels	December 2007	Training Delivered
Research the availability of online training on the disability duties for staff	March 2008	Identify suitable training solutions
Equality issues included in staff inductions with formal training carried out within one year of joining	Ongoing	All new staff aware of equality issues and formally trained within one year of joining

Promoting Positive Attitude

Use the District Housing plans produced by the NIHE to identify specific geographic areas where housing need has been identified for people with disabilities	Annually	Include in the Association's annual development new build programme.
All new homes are developed to promote barrier free living which includes homes designed and built to lifeline homes standard	Annually	Target development of homes to lifetime home standard
Consulting with local communities and political representatives to promote positive attitudes regarding housing	Ongoing	Schedule of consultation meetings for complex needs housing schemes

Encouraging participation in public life

Build on partnerships already established with voluntary and statutory organizations providing services for our tenants with complex needs	Ongoing	Provision of supported housing units and support services
Carry out adaptation requests as requested by Occupational Therapists	Ongoing	Adaptation work completed within 16 weeks of receipt of request
Inclusive participation for people with complex	Ongoing	Complex needs representatives


needs		within Tenants Forum
Develop a strategy for the employment of people with a disability	March 2008	Transport provided to facilitate tenant involvement Implement strategy
Develop an Action Plan from the Complex Needs Tenants Survey	March 2008	Develop and implement Action Plan

Signed by:



Chairman – Mr W Deane

26th April 2007
Date



Chief Executive – Mr I Elliott

26th April 2007
Date