



improving housing through partnership

Equality and Diversity Strategy 2005 – 2008



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Stonewall

Diversity Champions
PROMOTING DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

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Foreword by the Chair of Homes for Islington

Homes for Islington is the largest Arms Length Management Organisation in the country and began on 5th April 2004. We manage Islington Council's rented and leasehold housing stock, currently, 27,400 tenants and 9,934 leaseholders (May 2005).

This strategy covers both our employment and service delivery practices. It brings together all the key equalities initiatives we are undertaking or plan to undertake. Our strategy seeks to ensure that the Homes for Islington service is truly representative and inclusive of all our customers and staff, regardless of disability, race, colour, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, religion or other belief. Our new equality and diversity strategy will give clear information to our staff, residents and partners on our approach to equality and diversity, and through the action plan, our priorities for 2005-06.

Ann Lucas
Chair of Board
Homes for Islington

Equality and diversity policy statement

Homes for Islington's commitment to equality and diversity

Homes for Islington is committed to promoting equality and diversity among our customers and staff. Our equality and diversity policy links directly into our new equality and diversity strategy and Action Plan, which sets out our priorities for action to improve the living and working environment for all our residents and staff.

What equality means to Homes for Islington is ensuring that all our services meet the needs and aspirations of all our customers, that we provide our services in a fair and equitable way and that they are accessible to all. To do this, we will ensure that our policies and practices are not discriminatory and actively encourage people to access our services or take up and remain in employment with us.

By promoting diversity we appreciate and value the different life experiences, skills and perspectives different individuals can bring. Homes for Islington will celebrate the diversity of our community and staff and look at how we as an organisation can actively value those differences. This means that we will recognise people's different service needs and make our services relevant to their individual needs. As an employer, we will actively empower our staff to develop their potential and take pride in their abilities and resources.

We are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and valuing the diversity within our community and workforce. It is our policy that everyone should be treated fairly and without discrimination regardless of disability, sex, ethnicity, colour, age, sexuality, language, HIV status, national or social origin, religious or other belief, or other status. We believe that diversity benefits and adds value to our organisation and the work we do.

HFI welcomes and is committed to fulfilling its legal duties under the Equal Pay Act 1970, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act 1976, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, the Human Rights Act 1998, Employment Equality Regulations 2003 and all other current and impending equalities legislation. We also accept the definition of institutionalised racism as defined by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry and will extend it to apply beyond racism to discrimination against disabled people and all forms of discrimination.

Aims of our equality and diversity strategy

In December 2004 Homes for Islington set up an Equalities Working Group, chaired by Claudia Webbe, to oversee the setting up of its first equality and diversity strategy. The Equality and Diversity Working Group met four times to progress the work on the new strategy, which was approved by the HFI Board for consultation in April 2005 and received final approval by HFI Board, following feedback from the consultation, in August 2005.

This equality and diversity strategy sets out what Homes for Islington (HFI) wants to achieve in relation to equality and diversity and eliminating discrimination, and how we will deliver on our commitments. The strategy provides a clear framework for what we are trying to achieve, how we will achieve it, and the mechanisms we will use to measure our success. It will help us learn to identify any barriers that cause discrimination and through active and ongoing consultation with all our stakeholders enable us to introduce new and more effective ways of providing our service.

We want to improve the quality of life for all our customers and staff. We want to make sure that our services are accessible, that they meet the needs of all our residents and that people feel confident in using them. We aim to become an organisation that is inclusive and draws strength from its differences.

High-quality accessible services for all

Homes for Islington is committed to providing high-quality services that meet the needs of all our diverse community. We will act to:

- Remove any barriers preventing our customers from accessing our services or participating in our decision-making structures.
- Provide information which is accessible and available in appropriate formats on our Services and advertise the availability of our translation and interpreting services.
- Consult and involve all our customers in our work to promote equality and diversity.
- Work with our contractors and partners and those we buy services from to ensure they do not operate discriminatory practices in employment or service delivery and that they adhere to good equalities practice in the employment of their staff and in the delivery of their services, in respect to disability sex, ethnicity, colour, nationality, language, age, religion or belief, sexuality.
- Carry out equality impact assessments on all current and proposed policies and functions to identify any adverse impact and to take action to address this.
- Promote a community in which all our residents can live freely of prejudice and discrimination and in harmony with each other.

Combating discrimination and valuing diversity in our workforce

We will develop and promote policies and procedures which give equal access to employment and development opportunities to all our potential and existing staff members. We will seek to achieve a workforce reflective of our community at all levels. We will make sure that our employment practices are accessible to everyone and we will put into place in our equality and diversity action plan a range of initiatives to:

- Develop and promote policies giving all our staff equal access to employment and career development opportunities.
- Develop a workforce which is representative of our community at all levels and grades throughout our organisation.
- Make sure all our staff know of their right to be protected from discrimination, harassment and bullying.
- Train all our staff and Board members on our new policy.
- Set ambitious performance targets so that we can measure our progress.

Every member of our staff has the responsibility of complying with and actively promoting our Equality and Diversity Policy and we will ensure this is a key component of all staff appraisals. Our service providers and tenants and residents associations are also responsible for complying with and promoting this policy in their delivery of services to our residents. With the help of feedback from our residents and staff we will monitor, review and evaluate the effectiveness of our service delivery and employment practices, and if there are any areas of weakness we will take action to address this.

How we will deliver our commitment

HFI has formally adopted the Equality Standard for Local Government, which provides a systematic framework, which we will use to measure our progress in achieving equality and celebrating diversity within our community and workforce. The action plan attached to this strategy details the actions we will take and is based on the objectives and targets set in the Equality Standard.

The Audit Commission has published a guidance document *Key Lines of Inquiry*, which sets out the standards required of an excellent organisation. One of the key themes within this guidance is diversity and HFI will use this checklist to evaluate our progress towards becoming an excellent organisation in terms of equality and diversity.

The Equality Standard for Local Government

The Equality Standard for Local Government replaced the Commission for Racial Equality Standard in 2002 as the main best value performance indicator for local government. *(An explanation of what the Equality Standard is and what HFI needs to do to progress to the highest level of the Standard is at Appendix 1).*

Homes for Islington is committed to implementing the Equality Standard as a systematic way of ensuring that equality and diversity are mainstreamed into every aspect of our service delivery and employment.

Homes for Islington, alongside Islington Council, has met Level 2 of the Equality Standard in 2005. Our goal is to achieve Level 3 of the Equality Standard by March 31 2006 and progress on to the highest level (level 5) of the Standard by 2008. Work to achieve the higher levels of the Standard will also entail continuous improvement in our service delivery and employment practices.

Equality impact assessments

Under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 we have a duty to monitor and review all existing or proposed policies and functions relevant to the duty to promote race equality and identify any adverse effect on any of our black and ethnic minority communities. As a social landlord we are also monitored on how well we perform in regard to the CRE's Code of Practice in Rented Housing and the Code of Practice for Tackling Racial Harassment. One of the key ways in which to determine whether any of our functions or policies is having an adverse impact on our community or staff is to undertake an impact assessment. *(A programme of what we have planned for 2005-8 is attached at Appendix 2 and the new HFI Equality Impact Assessment Procedure is attached at Appendix 3).*

Complying with the requirements of the Equality Standard also requires the completion of equality impact assessments in order for the organisation to progress through the five levels of the Standard.

To address multiple discrimination, Homes for Islington will adopt an impact assessment process covering all six of the Equality Standard target groups and investigate any adverse effect of our policies or functions in regard to disability, race, sex, sexuality, age, religion or belief as well as economic status. We will review all our current and

proposed policies and procedures to ensure we comply with all equalities legislation (*A list of the regulatory framework governing HFI is attached at Appendix 4*).

We will build into our impact assessment process active consultation and engagement with our customers and staff. From the outset we will check to ensure we audit our processes. We will report back on our progress annually, making the report available on our website and to all sectors of our community and staff.

Homes for Islington will carry out a formal equality impact assessment during the development of all strategies, policies, procedures and projects which are relevant, to assess whether there is any impact on any particular equality group. This process will be an integral part of the planning and implementation of strategies, policies, procedures and projects. The assessment will be done before and during any consultation and will include a specific race equality impact assessment as required under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. Homes for Islington will also carry out an equality impact assessment to proposed revisions of existing strategies, procedures and policies.

Training

To implement our new equality and diversity strategy, we will train all our staff on their duty to promote equality and value diversity and combat discrimination and harassment. We will impact assess our Appraisals and Development policy in the first year of our equality and diversity strategy and ensure that our policy and procedures are accessible and inclusive. We will train our Management Team and managers who have to implement our policies and procedures.

We will monitor any information collected on our training function to identify and address any areas of concern. We will provide equality and diversity training for anyone involved in our recruitment or performance management procedures. We will train all our staff and make sure everyone is aware of their duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and all current and future equalities legislation. We will review our training and development processes to ensure that they are dynamic and flexible and equip our staff with the knowledge and skills they need to provide responsive and high-quality services to all our community.

Monitoring the strategy

We will monitor the success of our strategy through the cycle of impact assessments we will undertake of all our policies and functions over the next three years. As part of this, each of our service areas will monitor what they do and we will report back each year on our performance against each of the action plans.

Monitoring and evaluation of our equality and diversity strategy will take place on a number of levels:

- The Board of Homes for Islington will review the strategy within the wider equality and diversity agenda for Homes for Islington every year.
- The equality and diversity strategy will become part of our commitment to achieving Level 3 of the Equality Standard by 2006.
- The Management Team of Homes for Islington will receive quarterly reports on progress against the strategy's equality and diversity action plan.
- We will set up an equality and diversity action group with representatives from every division, as well as representatives from HFI's BME Positive Action Group, to work at an operational level to make sure that we maintain progress on the equality and diversity action plan.
- Homes for Islington will commit itself to an external challenge of its strategy
- Each division will report their progress against the equalities action plan on a three-monthly basis to the HFI Equalities Adviser. S/he will collate a three-monthly equalities report for the HFI Management Team, who will report six-monthly to the Board.
- We will discuss the findings of our monitoring with our trade unions and HFI staff forums and report on them to the HFI Board. We will publish the results and action to be taken annually on our Intranet and website.

Complaints

One of the key activities we will look at is our complaints process to ensure that we are able to respond effectively to our customers and to determine whether there are any areas of discrimination we will need to address. We will access audit our complaints process and use it to tackle inequalities and to improve our equalities awareness in delivering our services.

Reviewing the strategy

Tenants, leaseholders, residents and other key stakeholders such as community, advocacy and representative groups will be involved in reviewing and evaluating this strategy. We will use a range of mapping and evaluation techniques such as tenant and resident focus groups, surveys and questionnaires, performance data, complaints, sampling and spot checks, and mystery shopping.

Each year we will produce an end-of-year review to assess our performance on our equality and diversity strategy, publish it on our website and make it available to all sectors of our community and workforce. We will actively engage with our residents and partners in our annual monitoring and review of this strategy.

Collecting equalities data

To ensure that our services and employment practices are inclusive, we will systematically collect and monitor data on access to both. We will extend the collection and analysis of our equalities data to identify areas we need to improve in. In the first year of the strategy we will review the equalities and diversity information we hold on our residents and staff and how we can build up a comprehensive profile.

In 2005 we ran an extensive reconciliation exercise to make sure that the information we hold on our computer database matches that in our file records. This exercise greatly improved the information we hold on the ethnicity, gender, languages and impairment profile of our disabled tenants. But further work is needed to gather comprehensive equalities information, including age, sexuality and religion or belief as well as the equalities profile of our leaseholders.

With this profiling information we will be able to map our services against all the equality strands and see where services are unbalanced and where we need to take action.

A partnership with our community

Homes for Islington will develop and implement the equality and diversity strategy in partnership with our residents, tenants and residents associations, representative or advocacy groups within the community, staff and contractors. We will seek to meet our community cohesion duty under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. We will consult widely with our stakeholders, the community we serve and our staff on this strategy at the outset and annually with each review of the scheme. Homes for Islington welcomes your comments and we will encourage and facilitate your feedback.

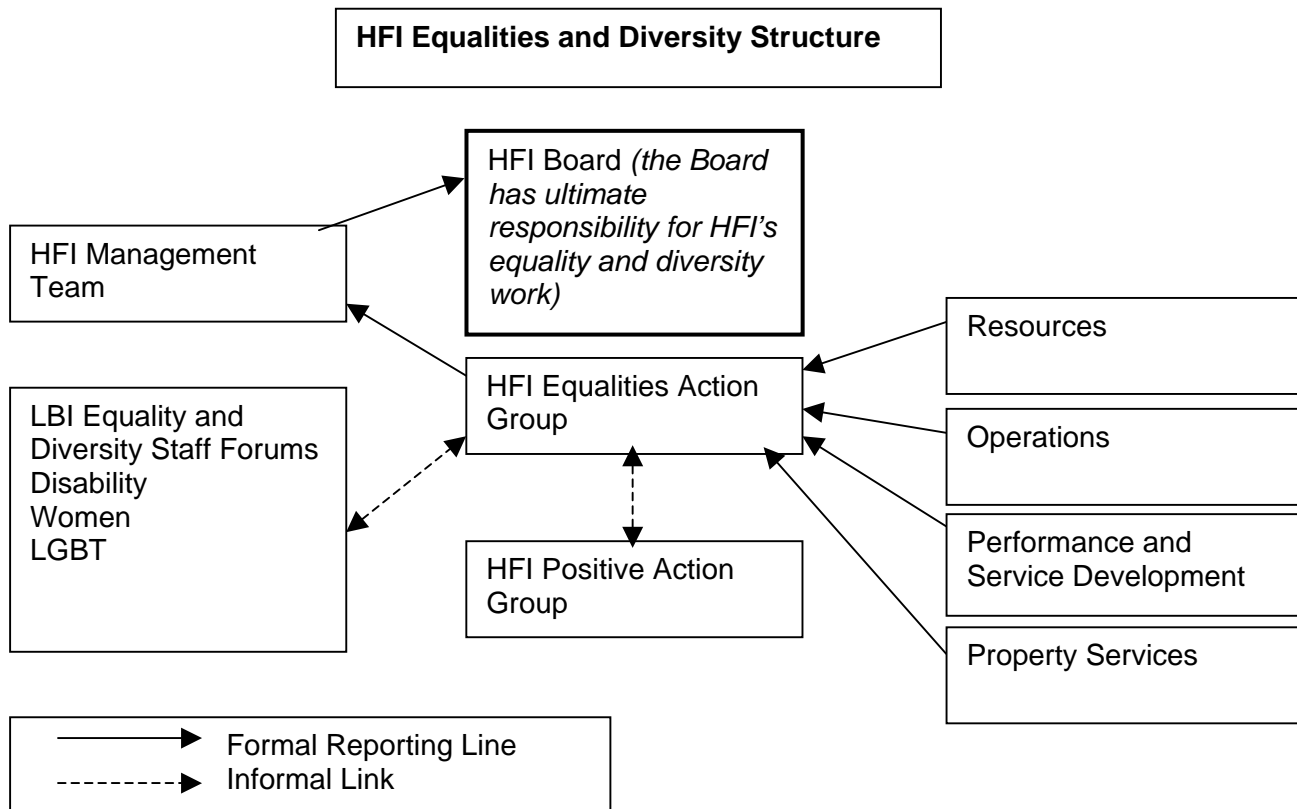
Communication

We will communicate this strategy widely to our community and workforce; we will:

- Ensure it is available on request in our main community languages and in accessible formats and that it is accessible to disabled people from a wide range of impairment groups.
- We will consult with our residents and their representatives, staff and contractors using a variety of inclusive consultation techniques including surveys, written documents, focus groups as well as face-to-face meetings.
- We will be pro-active in reaching out to all the groups in our community to seek your input and advice on the development and implementation of the strategy and action plan.
- HFI will seek to implement a variety of creative methods for reaching a variety of resident equality groups to ensure that information about HFI and issues relevant to residents is widely distributed and understood.
- We will ensure that our communication is accessible to all through our new Communications Strategy, that our new strategy is written to ensure that all staff are aware of what is expected of them, that there is consistency in HFI's communications and that there is the widest possible access for people who do not speak and/or read much English and for disabled and deaf residents and staff.

Who will be responsible for this strategy?

The diagram below shows the structure within HFI for managing our equality and diversity work:



Management and governance

Homes for Islington has a board of directors, consisting of seven tenant and leasehold representatives, five council representatives and five independent members (at present only four independent members are in place). The Board of HFI and the chief executive as head of staff/paid services are ultimately responsible for the delivery of HFI's objectives and HFI's statutory responsibilities. The Board's role is to guide and steer the rest of the organisation and ensure that it meets its goals in the most effective and efficient manner. As such the responsibility for the implementation and review of the equality and diversity strategy rests with the Board of HFI and were designated to the chief executive. The Board has ultimate responsibility for HFI's equality and diversity work.

The equality and diversity strategy is a public document and as such HFI will be answerable to the public and residents in particular for delivering the programme and agenda set out in the strategy.

Currently there are nine women and seven men on the Board, of whom six directors are black or minority ethnic and two are disabled people. We aim to make the Board truly representative of our local community and will encourage people from under-represented groups to seek Board membership. We are determined to make our resident consultation

panels reflect our community makeup.

Aiming to be an excellent organisation

Homes for Islington received a two-star rating from the Audit Commission following an inspection in November 04. The Audit Commission has issued guidance documents “Key Lines of Inquiry” (KLOE), which set out the standards they expect to see in organisations providing an excellent service. The Key Lines of Inquiry on diversity will provide an excellent checklist, as a complement to the Equality Standard, for assessing HFI’s progress towards becoming a three star organisation providing excellent services to its customers (*Appendix 5 sets out the KLOE diversity criteria for an excellent service*).

HFI as a provider of high quality, accessible services

HFI aims to provide high-quality, accessible services to everyone in our community. To do this, we will undertake an extensive profiling exercise of all our customers to make sure everyone’s needs are taken into account when we plan and deliver our services. We will work systematically towards eradicating harassment on our estates and will support people facing harassment by taking action against perpetrators. We will ensure that the information we provide to our customers is available in the main community languages and accessible to all.

We will actively seek to engage all our customers, including those who have been marginalised or previously considered “hard to reach” and involve them in our consultation forums. We will run an annual conference for residents to engage and involve people throughout our community in the way we deliver our services to them. We will actively encourage and welcome feedback from our customers on the way we provide services and build that feedback into improving our services.

Black and minority ethnic communities disproportionately experience racial discrimination. The effects can include poverty and bad housing conditions with more minority ethnic people likely to live in overcrowded accommodation. To address the debilitating effects of poor housing, the government has set a target to ensure that all social housing meets set standards of decency by 2010.

The Decent Homes Standard does not however cover a number of things such as security, lift repair and renewal, environmental or estate works and facilities for the disabled. Those will be covered by the Homes for Islington Standard. Our objective is to deliver improvement to residents’ homes that will not just meet the government’s Decent Homes Standard by 2010 but will deliver a much higher level of improvements that we know are needed to our stock from our Asset Management Information and what our residents have told us needs to be improved.

HFI believes that tackling poverty is an essential factor in promoting equality for all its residents. To ensure that everyone in our community has access to all life opportunities, we want to deliver improvements to our residents’ homes that will substantially improve the quality of their housing environment and help to make the area they live in safe and secure for many years to come (*Appendix 6*).

Homes for Islington as an employer of choice

An employer of choice

HFI wants to be an employer of choice and aims to attract and retain a talented and diverse workforce that reflects the community we serve.

We will ensure that everyone has equal access to training and promotion opportunities and that we operate work-life balance policies that maximise employment and career development opportunities for all. We will strive to make sure our workplace is free of discrimination and harassment and take robust action, where appropriate, to combat it.

We will provide a safe environment that is accessible to disabled people and seek to retain in employment any of our staff who are or become disabled. As part of this we will become a “Two Ticks – Positive about Disabled People Employer”. We aim to maintain our Investors in People accreditation and extend the existing positive action schemes in place for our staff (*Appendix 7 sets out details of our existing positive action schemes for staff*).

As part of our duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 we will monitor and collect information on our staff by ethnicity in regard to:

- Staff in post.
- Applications for employment, training and promotion.
- Staff receiving training.
- Staff appraisals.
- Staff facing complaints or disciplinary action.
- Staff leaving the organisation.

The new Equality Standard for Local Government expects organisations to promote equality across the six equality strands of disability, gender, race, age, sexuality and religion or belief. Homes for Islington will extend the monitoring of its staff to cover all six strands so we can take an active stand against multiple discrimination and promote equality for all.

To make our workforce truly representative of our community and to promote career development for all our staff, we will monitor and analyse the information we hold on our staff by:

- Percentage of the workforce compared with the equalities composition of our community.
- Equalities origin of our staff by grade.

We will undertake a comprehensive profiling exercise across all equality strands of our staff and will use the 2001 census figures to set initial baseline targets for the recruitment of our staff in terms of disability, gender and race.

To check we are making good progress on our employment practices, we are timetabling in the following priority areas for impact assessments for the first year of the strategy:

- Appraisals and Development.
- Induction.
- Leaving HFI, Redundancy and Redeployment.
- Employment, Disability and Access to Work

Making our workforce representative of the community we serve

In May 2005 Homes for Islington employed 674 staff of whom 267 were female and 407 male, 42.3% black and ethnic minority staff, other 1.6% and 56.1% were white (*Homes for Islington Workforce Profile can be seen at Appendix 8*).

To ensure there is accurate representation of our community throughout our organisation, Homes for Islington will set the following baseline targets of:

- Disabled staff –10%.
- Women – 50%.
- BEM- minimum of 25%.
- LGB staff – 5%.

Within these targets HFI will aim to ensure that disabled people, women, black and ethnic minority staff occupy 5% of the top posts.

Pending a more detailed and extensive profiling exercise of our community, these targets are indicative but enable Homes for Islington to start action to address under-representation we are already aware of.

Training

We will train our staff to ensure they have all the skills they need to deliver the aims of this strategy. There is a role for each member of our staff in tackling discrimination where it exists and being proactive in promoting equality and diversity where they work and in the services they deliver to our customers. We will introduce new diversity and equality training for our staff to ensure they can do this.

Equalities in procurement

Procurement is an important function, which we will use to actively promote our Equality and Diversity Policy and Strategy. Our new Procurement Strategy will seek to ensure that contracts are delivered in a way which is non-discriminatory and which promotes equality of opportunity for all our residents, staff and local businesses.

To this end we will:

- Make sure our contractors and external service providers meet the Commission for Racial Equality's Code of Practice on Procurement.
- Make them aware of HFI's Equality and Diversity Policy and their obligation to implement it in full.
- Expect that suppliers take all steps to ensure their employment practices are compliant with statutory equalities legislation and encourage them to promote equality of opportunity beyond the scope of the contract.
- Review our contracts to ensure they include a requirement that the contractor must comply with statutory equalities legislation.
- Encourage, through our contract requirements, as far as possible, participation from voluntary organisations, small businesses and local and black and minority ethnic businesses.
- Ensure a common procurement practice for all contracts and provider agreements, whereby all contractors and service providers wishing to deliver services do so in accordance with our equality and diversity strategy and action plan.
- Set up monitoring systems for contracts to secure equal employment and service delivery targets.
- Provide training for all staff involved in procurement work so that they understand the provisions of equality legislation and their relevance to their area of work.
- At pre-tender stage formally request copies of all contractors' equality and diversity policies; policies will be assessed to ensure they meet HFI's standards so that the contractor organisation can meet the specific needs of the diverse communities in Islington.
- Encourage our partner organisations to adopt recruitment and employment practices that make their workforce reflective of our local population.
- Take steps to encourage active participation in decision-making from customers and service users, including people from marginalised and disadvantaged communities.

All contracts will be tendered in strict accordance with HFI's procurement policy and will comply fully with all relevant legislation within UK and EC law.

The context of homes for Islington's work on equality and diversity

The borough of Islington is an area rich in diversity with a mix of ages, ethnicity, culture, language, religion and nationalities. Data from the last census (2001) shows Islington's official population at 175,797, with just over half being female (52.1%), around one fifth of school age and one fifth above 60 years of age. There are more than 10 ethnicities, 55 nationalities, and at least 7 religions represented in our community. (*Information on the Census 2001 results for the London Borough of Islington is available at Appendix 9*).

Many parts of Islington's community face disadvantage and / or exclusion for reasons such as unemployment, low income, low literacy or learning difficulties, disability, language and poor health. Often these issues combine together to create multiple disadvantage that prevents people from playing a full role in our community.

Census data showed an unemployment rate of 5.8% (2.4% higher than the average for England and Wales); 13% of those unemployed had never worked and 34% were long-term unemployed. A quarter of the resident population had no qualifications, 6.9% were permanently sick or disabled and 7.8% were retired.

Appendix 9 shows the equalities profile of Islington council residents against Islington and London residents of all tenures:

- The majority of council residents are Christian but 12.6% are Muslim, higher than for all Islington or London residents as a whole
- One third of council residents are from a black or minority ethnic origin, slightly more than for all Islington and London residents
- There are more children and older people amongst council residents.

BME mapping exercise

Islington Council's Housing Dept. undertook a BME mapping exercise in 2003 to get more information about the size and location of BME communities within the borough and establish a baseline of information on housing-related need.

Key findings from this exercise include:

- Projections that by 2011 31% of Islington's population would be from an ethnic minority background.
- The ward with the greatest concentration of BME communities is Finsbury Park.
- The ward with the highest concentration of white British people is St. Peters.
- Wards in the north of the borough tend to have roughly the same number of BME residents as White British, with possible reasons for this including.
- Council allocations, availability of affordable housing, house prices and a group initially settling in an area of Islington and establishing a community.

- Data on the tenure profile of residents, which functions also as an indicator of prosperity, showed that Black African, Bangladeshi and Black Caribbean people are likely to be less affluent than their White, Indian and Pakistani counterparts and more likely to be living in housing provided by the social rented sector.

Annual survey of Homes for Islington Tenants

The 2004 Survey of Tenants for Homes for Islington revealed the following key facts:

- 28% of households had one person aged 60 or over, with 10% housing two people aged 60 or over; only 1% of homes housed three or more people aged 60 or over.
- 14% housed one person aged 16 or under, 9% two and 5% three or more people aged 16 or under.
- 62% characterised themselves as white, 10% Irish, 22% black and ethnic minority, 4% mixed and 1% other.
- Half of tenants had a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity, with eight in ten saying their disability/illness limited their activities.
- 4% of households had someone who is a wheelchair user.
- A third of households had a net weekly income of under £100, while four in ten had a weekly income of £100-£199.
- Two-thirds of households receive Housing Benefit; a third did not. A quarter of all tenants said all their rent was paid for by Housing Benefit, with a third having part of their rent paid for by Housing Benefit.
- A fifth of households receive disability living allowance.

(Source: 2004 Survey of Tenants – Kwest Research)

Tenancy reconciliation exercise

The tenancy reconciliation exercise has been completed and there has been some improvement in the percentage coverage we now have on the different equality strands, but more work is planned to increase coverage, as detailed in the Equality and Diversity Action Plan.

Housing needs of lesbian, gay and bisexual tenants

There is comparatively little information available to housing providers on the needs of their lesbian, gay and bisexual tenants. Whatever research has been carried out so far has stressed the need for client mapping.

In 1999 the National Housing Federation published a report on equality in housing for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual people (Equality in Housing: Guidance for tackling discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and promoting equality), which recognised the need to “seek to develop and maintain monitoring systems that help identify discriminatory practices and outcomes”.

A 2002 National Centre for Social Research research project commissioned by Stonewall Housing (Hidden in Plain Sight: homelessness in lesbian and gay youth) identified two of the key causes of homelessness for young lesbians and gay men as:

- Homophobia from family or carers.
- An almost complete unawareness of the existence, let alone the needs of lesbians and gay men by most housing providers.

A groundbreaking national conference on Diversity and Sexuality – Housing and Homelessness by Shelter with Stonewall on March 17 2005 highlighted the dearth of in-depth research of lesbian, gay and bisexual people's needs and the urgent need for systematic monitoring by housing providers. *Sexual exclusion – issues and best practice in lesbian, gay and bisexual housing and homelessness*, (Shelter and Stonewall Housing, March 2005) points out that there are a number of key situations in which the client's sexuality may be a factor in his/her housing situation and where it therefore would be important for the client to be able to disclose their sexuality and for the housing adviser to take this into consideration when addressing their needs. Such situations could include:

- Family breakdown.
- Homophobic harassment from neighbours.
- Deciding whether to allocate temporary or permanent housing.
- Domestic violence.
- Deciding whether to grant a joint tenancy.
- Decisions regarding a same-sex couple applying as homeless.
- A client's worries in regard to living in a certain area.
- Where a client feels vulnerable in regard to his/her sexuality.
- Where an older client needs to move to sheltered or residential accommodation.
- Where one partner dies and the remaining partner wishes to succeed to the tenancy.

Homes for Islington welcomes the outcomes of this research. Through comprehensive diversity mapping and active engagement with all our tenants and leaseholders, we will endeavour to identify and address the needs of all our customers and to create an environment in which everyone of every sexuality feels safe and welcome.

Equality and diversity action plan

Our equality and diversity action plan will be revised each year to reflect the priorities of the three-year equality and diversity strategy. The plan will clearly identify the actions with expected outcomes we are taking to meet our responsibilities under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and under the Sex Discrimination Act and Disability Discrimination Act. HFI aims to become an excellent 3-star ALMO in order to provide the highest quality services to our customers. To assist us in doing this, our action plan will also clearly show where we are addressing the Audit Commission's Key Lines of Inquiry, which will enable us to achieve the excellent rating. Our work to progress to the highest level of the Equality Standard and to meet any national or locally agreed Best Value

Performance Indicators will also be clearly detailed in our equality and diversity action plan. We will also map out any resource implications required for implementing the equality and diversity strategy and action plan.

How will we know our equality and diversity strategy is successful?

We will know we are making a difference with our new equality and diversity strategy when:

- We get positive feedback in our Tenants' and Leaseholders' Surveys.
- We get positive feedback from our staff in our Staff Survey.
- There is increased representation from all sectors of our community on our resident consultation forums.
- Our workforce at all grades and levels of the organisation is representative in terms of equalities profile of the community we serve.
- Other ALMOs look to us as a leader on equality and diversity.
- We will score in the top 100 employers on Stonewall's Corporate Equality Index.

Appendix 1

The Equality Standard and what HFI needs to do to progress

The National Equality Standard for Local Government

In April 2002 the National Equality Standard superseded the Commission for Racial Equality Standard, whose aim was to bring racial equality into the mainstream of local government. The new standard covered initially three aspects of equality, race, gender and disability, in line with statutory requirements, and provided a toolkit to enable local authorities to address equality for gender, race and disability in service delivery and employment throughout all levels of local government.

The Equality Standard was developed by the Employers' Organisation for Local Government (Dialog) in conjunction with the Commission for Racial Equality, the Disability Rights Commission, the Equal Opportunities Commission, with the assistance of the Audit Commission. Performance against the Equality Standard is now a key Best Value Performance Indicator for Local Government. The standard provides a framework through which local authorities, including ALMOs, can begin to identify and address processes which might lead to discrimination and systematically work towards a culture which values diversity and has a comprehensive awareness of and commitment to equality and diversity.

The framework originally was devised to focus on race, gender and disability but its remit can easily be extended to cover the other aspects of diversity, including the other three key equality strands: age, religion or belief and sexual orientation. These three additional equality strands have been covered in Islington Council's approach. There is also scope to include any additional locally identified target groups within this framework approach.

Islington Council and Homes for Islington achieved Level 2 of the standard by March 31 2005. We have set ourselves the goal of achieving Level 3 by March 31 2006 and progressing systematically on to the highest level of the Standard.

The standard sets out five levels for an organisation to progress systematically through and provides guidance in achieving this. The five levels are:

- Level 1 – Commitment to a comprehensive equality policy.
- Level 2 – Assessment and Consultation.
- Level 3 – Setting equality objectives and targets.
- Level 4 – Information systems and monitoring against targets.
- Level 5 – Achieving and reviewing outcomes.

Achievement of each level of the standard is measured by progress against four specific themes:

- Leadership and Commitment.

- Service Delivery and Customer Care.
- Consultation, Community Development and Scrutiny.
- Employment and Training.

Progress from one level to the next is dependent on achieving the objectives set for each theme.

Level 3

In achieving Level 3 of the standard Homes for Islington will demonstrate that:

- A full and systematic consultation process with designated community and staff stakeholder groups has been carried out;
- Equality objectives on employment, pay and service delivery have been set, which are based on a needs assessment and consultation, enabling employment and pay targets to be set which compare favourably with the performance of other similar local authorities;
- Equality objectives have been translated into action plans with specific targets;
- Information and monitoring systems have been developed which allow HFI to assess progress in achieving targets;
- Action has been taken to achieve targets.

Key to ensuring that the organisation passes inspection is the collection of robust evidence to show work to achieve Level 3 across the four themes has been carried out.

Level 4

To progress to Level 4 Homes for Islington will need to show that:

- It has developed information and monitoring systems which allow it to assess progress in achieving targets;
- It is measuring progress against targets and effectively using its information and monitoring systems;
- Monitoring reports are being produced at specified intervals and circulated to designated consultation and scrutiny groups;
- Monitoring systems are providing useful information about progress towards specific targets.

Level 5

And to progress to the highest level, Level 5, HFI will need to demonstrate that:

- It has made considerable progress in achieving equal employment and service provision with regard to disability, race and gender;

- It has achieved significant progress towards the targets it set at level 3;
- It has reviewed and revised targets, monitoring and consultation systems with designated community, staff and stakeholder groups;
- It has initiated a new round of action planning and target setting;
- Through its achievements it can be seen as an example of good practice for other local authorities and agencies.

All stakeholders of Homes for Islington need to be involved in the implementation of the standard at all of the five levels. These stakeholders include the board and senior management, employees, customers, potential customers and partners. An integral part of our equality and diversity strategy is to improve through consultation and working in partnership will be an essential part of our work to achieve the Equality Standard. Work to achieve each level of the standard will be clearly designated within our yearly Equality and Diversity Strategy Action Plans.

Appendix 2
HFI Programme of Equality Impact Assessments 2005-8

Division	Section	Function	Policy/Procedure	Target date	
OPERATIONS	Tenancy Services		Rent Collection and Recovery	July 2005	
	Tenancy Services		Harassment	Aug 2005	
	Estate Services	Estate Parking Disabled		Aug 2005	
	Tenancy Services		Succession and assignment	Sept 2005	
	Tenancy Services		Tenant recharge policy	Nov 2005	
	Estate Services		Caretaking procedures	Nov 2005	
	Tenancy Services	Tenant Permissions (inc satellite dishes)		Dec 2005	
	Tenancy Services	Refund, Compensations and Remedies		Dec 2005	
	Tenancy Services		Decorations Voucher Scheme	Feb 2006	
PERFORMANCE and SERVICE DEVELOPMENT	Performance and Procurement	Procurement		Nov 2005	
			Complaints Procedure	Feb 2006	
			Equality and Diversity Strategy	Oct 2005	
			Translation Policy	Sept 2005	
	Governance Team	Business Planning		Oct 2005	
	Resident Involvement Team	Tenants and residents associations		Nov 2005	
	Housing Investigations	Housing Investigations		Dec 2005	
PROPERTY SERVICES	Capital Programme	Input into scoping/developing capital programme		Aug 2005	

Division	Section	Function	Policy/Procedure	Target date	
		Consultation		Oct 2005	
		Framework Arrangements		Nov 2005	
RESOURCES	HR and Communications	Residents' Newsletter		July 2005	
			Disciplinary and Competency Procedure Review	Dec 2005	
			Employment, Disability and Access to Work	Oct 2005	
			Appraisals and Development	Oct 2005	
			Leaving HFI, Redundancy and Redeployment	Nov 2005	
			Attendance Management procedure review	Feb 2006	
			Induction	Feb 2006	
	Facilities	Health and Safety of Highbury House (HandS, First Aid, Fire Alarms)		Feb 2006	
OPERATIONS	Tenancy Services		Anti-social behaviour	June 2006	
	Tenancy Services		Domestic violence	Aug 2006	
	Tenancy Services	Vulnerable tenants – Housing support function		Sept 2006	
	Tenancy Services		Management Transfer procedure	Dec 2006	
	Estate Services	Estate Services		Oct 2006	
	Home Ownership	Management of Service Charges		Aug 2006	
		Right to Buy		Nov 2006	

Division	Section	Function	Policy/Procedure	Target date	
PERFORMANCE and SERVICE DEVELOPMENT	Tenant Management Commissioning	tenant management organisations		July 2006	
	Resident Involvement Team	Community Centres		Aug 2006	
	Performance and Procurement	Performance Monitoring Framework		May 2006	
PROPERTY SERVICES	Capital Programme	Design/specification		Oct 2006	
		Feedback		May 2006	
	Repairs	Day to Day Repairs		July 2006	
		Reactive Repairs		Sept 2006	
RESOURCES	HR and Communications		Recruitment and Selection, including occupational testing, acting up/secondments	Sept 2006	
			Parenthood, adoption and paternity leave	June 2006	
	Income Control	Former Tenants		Feb 2007	
	I.C.T.	iWorld		May 2006	
		N.R.O.S.H./CORE – submitting of LBI/HFI information to the Government/National bodies		June 2006	
		Mutual Exchanges, development of a national MX scheme		July 2006	
		Updating tenancy/application details on iWorld		Aug 2006	
OPERATIONS	Transfers Team	Transfers		July 2007	
	Voids	Voids		Aug 2007	
	HFI Direct	Control Centre Function		Oct 2007	
	Reception Centre Management	Reception Centres		Nov 2007	

Division	Section	Function	Policy/Procedure	Target date	
	Tenancy Services		Major works procedure	Dec 2007	
PERFORMANCE and SERVICE DEVELOPMENT	Governance Team	Election/Selection of HFI Board Members		Nov 2007	
		Access to Public Meetings of Board and Sub-Board		Nov 2007	
	Service Development		Voids	Feb 2008	
PROPERTY SERVICES	Capital Programme	Works on site		Oct 2007	
	Repairs	Servicing		July 2007	
RESOURCES	HR and Communications		Staff Complaints Review	July 2007	
			Trainee Schemes	May 2007	
			Learning and Development Plan	June 2007	
			PASP	May 2007	
			Qualification	June 2007	
			Organisational Review, Employee Relations; Management of Employment Tribunals; Retirement	Feb 2008	
	Accountancy	Budget Monitoring		Oct 2007	
		Payments		July 2007	
		Cash Control		Feb 2008	
	ICT		Data Protection on the Housing Databases – I World and OHMS	May 2007	
			Data held on Databases Regarding Aids and Adaptations	June 2007	
	Facilities	Post room		Feb 2008	
		Reception of Highbury House		May 2007	

Appendix 3

New HFI Equality Impact Assessment Guidance and Template

Guidance for carrying out Equality Impact Assessments

(This guidance should be read in conjunction with the new HFI equality impact assessment template.)

Introduction – Why carry out an equality impact assessment?

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 places a duty on all public authorities to promote race equality throughout their business, in service delivery, policymaking, regulation and employment. This means that organizations have a duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- Promote equal opportunities
- Promote good relations between people from different racial groups

The Equality Standard for Local Government, which Homes for Islington has adopted, requires evidence of a systematic programme of equality impact assessments in order for the organization to progress through the levels of the Standard up to level 5.

In addition, many people suffer from multiple discrimination. The establishment of a Single Equalities Commission and moves towards harmonizing and extending equalities legislation to protect all the diverse groups within our society from discrimination make it essential that all equality target groups be included in considering the effect a service delivery or employment policy or function could have on service users or staff.

The Equality Impact Assessment process in Homes for Islington will therefore look at the potential for a policy or function to have an adverse effect on any group likely to face detriment. This will include groups defined by their race, age, gender, disability, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

To meet the requirements of the RR(A)A 2000 public authorities have had to develop and publish a Race Equality Scheme, which sets out how the organization will ensure its services and policies meet the needs of its community and staff in an equitable way.

Implementing the Race Equality Scheme requires that there be:

- An assessment of the organization's policies and functions in regard to their relevance to the duty to promote race equality
- Ongoing consultation with its stakeholders (in the community and workforce)
- Regular monitoring and review of its policies and functions
- Publication of the results of the impact assessments, consultations and monitoring undertaken, detailing any remedial action to be taken
- Training of the organization's staff to enable them to meet these duties

What is an Equality Impact Assessment?

An Equality Impact Assessment is a systematic way of discovering whether a policy or function affects all equality groups equally or has an adverse effect on one or more groups. This will include the impact of a policy or function on staff, either existing or potential service users, the wider community and where appropriate, staff who are employed in services which are contracted out.

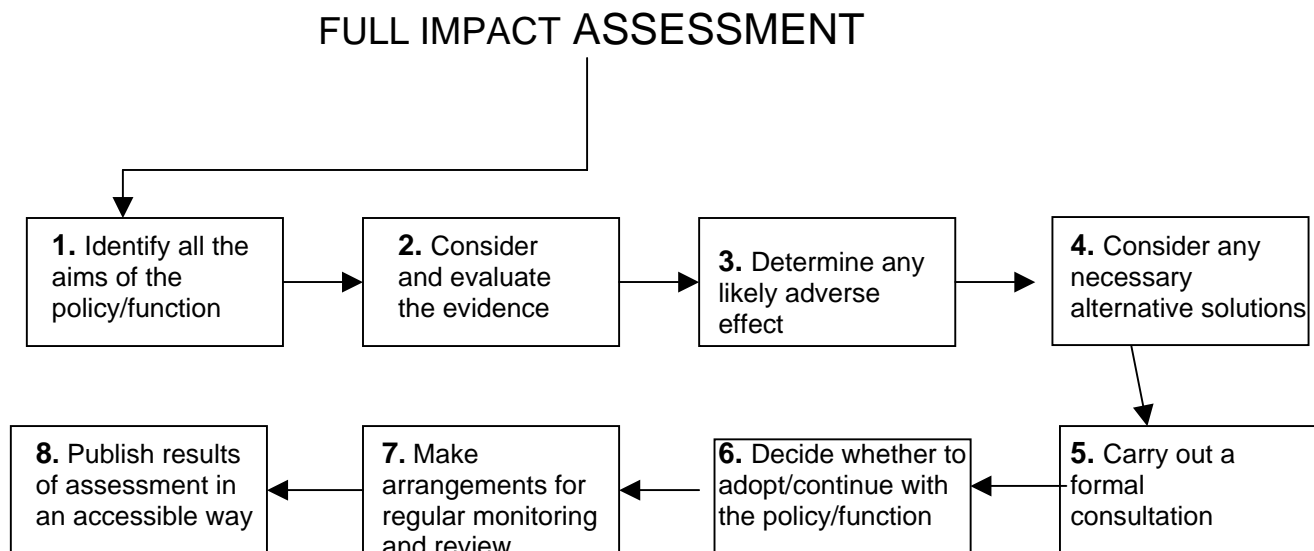
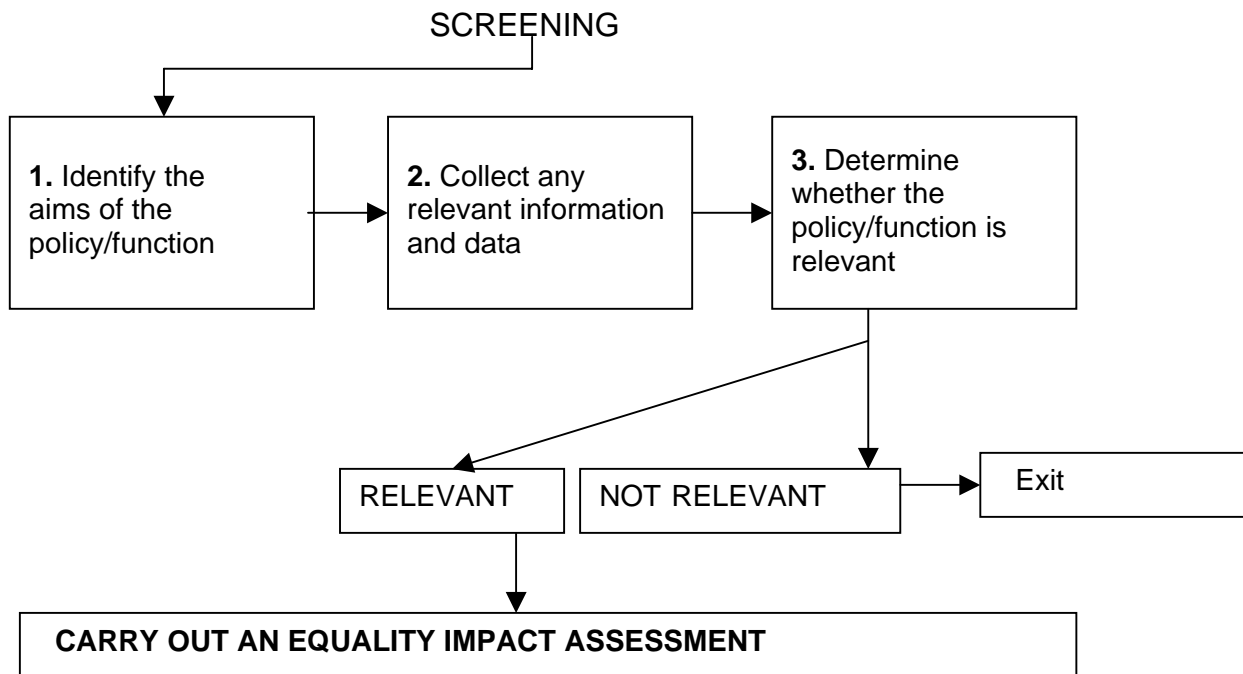
There are two key stages to conducting an Equality Impact Assessment:

1. Screening the existing/proposed policy or function to determine if they are relevant to promoting equality, including race equality
2. Carrying out a full equality impact assessment of those policies or functions identified as relevant to ensure they do not have an adverse effect on any disadvantaged groups, including racial groups

The flowchart below sets out the Equality Impact Assessment Process:

HOW TO CARRY OUT SCREENING and AN EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is the policy/function relevant to promoting equality (including race equality)?



Screening

You should start from the premise that all policies/functions may be relevant to promoting equality (including the duty to promote race equality) until you have screened them for their relevance. You also need to screen any changes you make to a policy/function to ensure they do not have an adverse impact on equality (including race equality).

The three key stages of screening a policy/function are:

1. Identifying the aims of the policy/function

2. Collecting any relevant information/data
3. Determining whether the policy/function is relevant to promoting equality (including the duty to promote race equality)

Identifying the aims of the policy or /function

In identifying the aims of the policy/function you need to determine what the purpose of the policy/function or the changes to the policy/function are, what you are trying to achieve through it and why and who is intended to benefit from the policy/function and how. If the policy/function is one shared with a partner organization, you need to involve them in the screening process and any subsequent equality impact assessment.

Collecting any relevant information or data

You need to draw on all available information on all the groups the policy/function affects. If there is insufficient information available, you may need to commission a one-off study or survey or conduct an informal consultation exercise to supplement any missing data. The types of information/data you should use include: recent research findings; demographic data (including the census results); diversity monitoring data; consultation or survey reports; evaluation of any complaints of discrimination against the organization in regard to service delivery or employment; any recommendations arising from any inspection or audit reports.

Determining whether the policy or function is relevant

Following the above steps should enable you to determine whether the policy or function is relevant to promoting equality (including the duty to promote race equality). You will want to consider: whether and what kind of effect the policy/function can have on the people Homes for Islington serves or employs; whether the policy/function will impact differently on people, depending which group they are from (including different racial groups); whether there is any evidence that the policy/function could result in unlawful discrimination; whether there is evidence that people from different groups may have different expectations of the policy/function; whether the policy/function could have an adverse impact on relations between different groups (including race relations) and whether the policy/function is likely to be detrimental to the relationship between any of the groups and HFI. If there is any indication that any of the above applies, then you must carry out a full equality impact assessment.

Carrying out a full Equality Impact Assessment

Carrying out a full Equality Impact Assessment means looking closely at all aspects of the policy or function from the perspective of equalities (including the duty to promote race equality) and considering what its impact is likely to be on the different equality groups.

There are 8 key stages to carrying out this assessment:

1. Identifying all the aims of the policy or function
2. Considering and evaluating the evidence
3. Determining any likely adverse effect
4. Considering any necessary alternative solutions
5. Carrying out a formal consultation

6. Deciding whether to adopt or continue with the policy or function
7. Making arrangements for regular monitoring and review
8. Publishing the results of the impact assessment in an accessible way

1 Identifying the aims of the policy/function

You need to determine why the policy or function is needed, what you hope to achieve through it and how you will ensure it works as intended.

To do this, you must keep in mind:

- what responsibility the organization has in regard to the policy/function
- where this responsibility lies
- how you intend to put the policy/function into effect and who the lead officer will be
- how the policy/function will promote equality (including the duty to promote race equality)
- what the outcomes are you want from the policy/function
- how you will monitor progress towards these outcomes
- any risks arising, including the duty to promote race equality
- whether the policy/function is in harmony with Homes for Islington's Equality and Diversity Policy and Strategy
- and you need to ensure that the stakeholders of this policy/function include representatives from the equality groups likely to be affected by it.

2 Considering and evaluating the evidence

During the screening exercise you will have identified the information and data available on the different equalities groups affected by the policy or function. Since the validity of the impact assessment will depend on the quality of information and data available, setting up a database of information across the six equality strands (race, gender, disability, age, religion or belief and sexuality) should be a key integral part of any consultation or research report.

Key points to consider here are:

- establishing what kind of information you need
- what quantitative and qualitative information is already available and how accurate and up-to-date it is
- does the information allow for an analysis of any differences between equalities groups
- what additional information needs to be provided through research, consultation or a survey.

3 Determining any likely adverse effect

This is a key stage of the Equality Impact Assessment, which any inequality identified during the screening process should provide the starting point for. You need to use the information and data you have assembled to determine the likely effect of the policy/function on different equalities groups and to consider whether any disparity in the effect amounts to adverse impact or unlawful discrimination. If it does, you need to consider changes to the policy to prevent this.

Key issues to consider here include:

- are there any statistically significant disparities in terms of equalities data
- are there other factors which would account for the adverse impact – if not, are there any changes to the policy or function which could mitigate the adverse effect
- if the policy/function leads to direct unlawful discrimination, you need to drop it and devise an alternative one
- if the policy/function could lead to unlawful indirect discrimination, you should devise a different way of achieving your policy/function aims
- you need to ensure the policy/function does not damage relations between your organization and any equalities group (including racial group)
- discuss the results of the assessment with key stakeholders

4 Consider alternative solutions

If you have established that the policy/function is likely to have an adverse effect on an equality group, you should consider alternative solutions, including the following:

- make changes to the policy/function
- consider ways of implementing the policy/function to mitigate any adverse effect
- find alternative means of achieving the aims of your policy/function

5 Carry out a formal consultation

Consultation with key stakeholders should be undertaken through the whole impact assessment process. You should aim to ensure that anyone likely to be affected by the policy/function both inside and outside of Homes for Islington is given the opportunity to express their concerns and suggestions. You will need to ensure that any groups perceived as hard to reach are enabled to provide their views.

Key points to consider here are

- check that you are aware of all the equalities groups likely to be affected by the policy/function
- check your consultation methods have taken into account the diversity of needs and preferences of the equalities groups you are consulting
- make sure your consultation partners are truly representative of their community
- provide any necessary resources to encourage full engagement by marginalized groups
- ensure that any consultation events do not clash with any religious festivals and are accessible to all (ensure full access to premises; possible provision of crèche, interpreting and translation services, including Sign Language Interpreters etc)
- ensure that you have made provision for publishing the results of your consultation.

6 Decide whether to adopt or continue with the policy/function

You should now be in a position to know whether to adopt, continue with or adapt the policy/function. This decision should be based on the previous stages of the impact assessment: Identifying the aims of the policy/function; an evaluation of the evidence collected; the results of consultations undertaken; and any possible alternative solutions.

Key considerations here are:

- check whether the assessment shows that the policy/function is likely to have an adverse effect on any equalities group (including a particular racial group or groups) or whether it is likely to make it difficult to promote equal opportunities or good relations between different equalities groups (including good race relations)
- if an adverse effect is identified, you need to look at how the policy/function could be adjusted or additional measures taken to avoid adverse effect
- what are the main conclusions of your consultations and how significant are they
- agree who should be involved in the decision-making process;

7 Make arrangements for regular monitoring and review

To ensure you can accurately gauge the impact of a policy or function, you need to ensure you have in place sound and regular arrangements for monitoring and review.

Key to effective monitoring is:

- agreeing a monitoring method and system across the six equality strands (race, gender, disability, age, religion or belief and sexuality)
- balancing quantitative monitoring with qualitative, to include surveys, mystery shopping exercises, follow-up consultation
- ensuring your monitoring system can identify whether the policy promotes equality and good relations between different equalities groups
- setting up a systematic monitoring and review schedule, with designated stakeholders.

8 Publishing the results of the Equality Impact Assessment in accessible formats

As part of the duty to produce and publish the Race Equality Scheme, arrangements need to be made and published for publishing the results of all Equality Impact Assessments and consultations carried out on any policy /function relevant to the duty to promote race equality.

At the end of each year the completed Equality Impact Assessments reports will be published on HFI's website and intranet and made available to anyone wishing a copy, including community languages, Braille, tape and CD, where requested.

The report should set out and contain the following information:

- The purpose of the assessment – this should set out what the assessment was designed to achieve

- Rationale – why this assessment is important to the organization
- The process – the methods and activities used to complete the assessment and who contributed. This should cover evidence gathering, commitment, analysis etc.
- Evaluation of the evidence and data – this should be a summary of the findings from research, consultation etc. including the views of different stakeholders
- Conclusions and recommendations – these are the overall findings from the process of assessment with an action plan of future work
- Appendix – a summary of all the evidence collected in the process



improving housing through partnership

HOMES FOR ISLINGTON EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

Policy/Function:	
Division:	
Lead Officer:	
Date completed:	
Is this a new policy/function?	
Names of team members carrying out Equality Impact Assessment:	

What knowledge and experience did these team members bring to the Impact Assessment process?

Head of Service –
Signature of Head of Service -
Date –

On completion of this impact assessment template, please send an electronic copy to the Equality and Diversity Adviser, Janice Markey. The Equality Impact Assessment will be published on the Homes for Islington Website and Intranet.

If you have any queries, please contact Janice Markey on ext. 4079.

PART 1
IDENTIFYING THE AIMS OF THE POLICY/FUNCTION

1 – What is the purpose of this policy/function?

2 – How does this policy/function link in to other policy/strategic objectives of Homes for Islington?

3 – Who is intended to benefit from this policy/function?

(Please list all beneficiaries. What outcomes would the stakeholders of this policy/function want?)

4 – How does this policy/function affect Homes for Islington's equality target groups?

(Does the policy or function discriminate on the grounds of race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, or religion or belief?)

5 – How does this policy/function contribute towards promoting good race relations between people of different communities?

6 – How is this policy/function implemented?

(Consider times of operation; if any external partners are involved, what systems are in place to ensure they comply with Homes for Islington's Equality and Diversity Policy?)

7 – How do you publicize this policy/function to staff and customers?

(Do you provide it in community languages/alternative formats?)

PART 2
EVALUATING ANY RELEVANT DATA OR RESEARCH FINDINGS

1 – What information do you have available which will help inform the equality impact assessment? (e.g. surveys and consultation exercises, especially those undertaken with equality target groups; Census 2001 statistics)

2 – Has there been any Best Value review, Inspection or accreditation for this policy/function?

3 – What is the equalities profile of the customers of this policy/function? (compare this against the equalities profile of Homes for Islington's customers to determine if there is any under-representation of any of the equality target groups)

4 – What is the equalities profile of staff providing this service?

5 – Is there any evidence of complaints about this policy/function from or regarding any of the equality target groups?

6 – Is there anything preventing anyone from an equality target group accessing this policy/function?

7 – Where are there any gaps in information?

What do you need to do to address this?

PART 3

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF THE POLICY/FUNCTION ON THE DIFFERENT EQUALITY TARGET GROUPS

GENDER

1 – Using all the information you have available, does this policy/function affect people differently in terms of gender?

2 – What percentage of women make use of this policy/function?

3 – From the information you have available, does this policy/function promote equality of opportunity in regard to gender?

4 - From the information you have available, does this policy/function have a current or potential adverse impact in terms of gender?

5 - If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified?

6– Does this policy/function have the ability to discriminate either directly or indirectly in terms of gender?

If so, is this justifiable under equalities legislation?

RACE

1 – Using all the information you have available, does this policy/function affect people of different racial groups differently?

2 – What percentage of black and minority ethnic people make use of this policy/function?

3 – From the information you have available, does this policy/function promote equality of opportunity in terms of race?

4 – From the information you have available, does this policy/function have a current or potential adverse impact on black and ethnic minority people more than anyone else?
(If so, consider also any differential impact on different racial groups.)

5– If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified?

6 - Does this policy/function have the ability to discriminate either directly or indirectly in terms of race?

If so, is this justifiable under equalities legislation?

DISABILITY

1 – Using all the information you have available, does this policy/function affect disabled people differently?

2 – What percentage of disabled people make use of this policy/function?

3 – From the information you have available, does this policy/function promote equality of opportunity for disabled people?

4 – From the information you have available, does this policy/function have a current or potential adverse impact on disabled people?

5– If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified?

6– Does this policy/function have the ability to discriminate either directly or indirectly against disabled people?

If so, is this justifiable under equalities legislation?

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

1 – Using all the information you have available, does this policy/function affect people of different sexual orientations differently?

2 – What percentage of lesbian, gay and bisexual people make use of this policy/function?

3 – From the information you have available, does this policy/function promote equality of opportunity in regard to sexual orientation?

4 – From the information you have available, does this policy/function have a current or potential adverse impact on lesbian, gay and bisexual people more than anyone else?

5– If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified?

6 – Does this policy/function have the ability to discriminate either directly or indirectly against lesbian, gay and bisexual people?

If so, is this justifiable under equalities legislation?

TRANSGENDER

1 – Using all the information you have available, what is the impact of this policy/function on transgender people?

2 – What percentage of transgender people make use of this policy/function?

3 – From the information you have available, does this policy/function promote equality of opportunity for transgender people?

4 – From the information you have available, does this policy/function have a current or potential adverse impact on transgender people more than anyone else?

5 – If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified?

6 – Does this policy/function have the ability to discriminate either directly or indirectly against transgender people?

If so, is this justifiable under equalities legislation?

PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT FAITH OR BELIEF GROUPS

1 – Using all the information you have available, does this policy/function affect people from different faith or belief groups differently?

2 – What percentage of people from different faith or belief groups make use of this policy/function?

3 – From the information you have available, does this policy/function promote equality of opportunity for people from different faith or belief groups?

4 – From the information you have available, does this policy/function have a current or potential adverse impact on people from different faith or belief groups more than anyone else?

5 – If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified?

6 – Does this policy/function have the ability to discriminate either directly or indirectly against people from different faith or belief groups?

If so, is this justifiable under equalities legislation?

AGE

1 – Using all the information you have available, does this policy/function affect people from different age groups differently?

2 – What percentage of older and younger people make use of this policy/function?

3 – From the information you have available, does this policy/function promote equality of opportunity for people of different ages, including older and younger people?

4 – From the information you have available, does this policy/function have a current differential impact on people who are older or younger more than anyone else?

5– If there is an adverse impact, can this be justified?

6– Does this policy/function have the ability to discriminate either directly or indirectly against people on the grounds of their age?

If so, is this justifiable under equalities legislation?

PART 4
ADDITIONAL FACTORS TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION -
ASSESSING THE IMPACT ON HEALTH and ECONOMIC WELLBEING

Two of the key additional factors which contrive to create multiple disadvantage are recognized to be low economic status and poor health. To ensure that HFI's services and employment practices are equally accessible and of high quality to all, these two factors need to be considered in any equality impact assessment.

1 – From the information you have available, does this policy/function currently or could it potentially have a differential health impact on people from different equality target groups?

If so, please explain how the differential impact takes place.

2 – Does this policy/function currently have or could it potentially have an adverse health impact (emotional, mental or physical) on any of the equality target groups?

3 - If there is or could be an adverse impact, what action can you take to address this?

4 – From the information you have available, does this policy/function currently or could it potentially have a differential economic impact on people of different equality target groups?

If so, please explain how the differential impact takes place.

5 - Is this policy/function likely to have an adverse effect on the economic wellbeing of any of the equality target groups?

6 - If there is or there could be an adverse impact, what action can you take to address this?

PART 5

HOW WILL YOU ADDRESS ADVERSE IMPACT?

1 -If you have identified that this policy/function is causing an adverse impact on any of the equality target groups, state how you will remove or minimise the adverse impact.

2 - If no adverse impact has been identified, how will you go about ensuring that none occurs in the future?

PART 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1 – Does this policy/function comply with equalities legislation including the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000?

2 – Are there any areas of the policy/function which require further attention?

If so, which ones and why?

3 – How will you ensure any action you take to redress adverse impact will be carried through into your business and service planning?

4 – Please list your main recommendations for improvement:

PART 7

MONITORING and REVIEW

1 – When and how will you monitor this policy/function?

2 – On what date will you review this impact assessment?

3 – How will you involve your stakeholders (internal/external) in the review of this policy/function?

PART 9

APPENDIX

Please list below evidence collected and used in the process of carrying out this impact assessment:

Appendix 4 Regulatory Framework

The following is a summary of the key areas of Legislation, in force or pending in the UK at present as they relate to the six equalities strands, and the duties they impose on HFI.

Single Status

Single status is the harmonisation of pay and conditions across a local authority for comparable posts. Following the national single status agreement on local government conditions of service and pay scales in 1997, local authorities have until 31 March 2007 to implement single status. The agreement requires existing pay and grading arrangements to be reviewed.

Single status is the harmonisation of pay and conditions across a local authority for comparable posts. Following the national single status agreement on local government conditions of service and pay scales in 1997, local authorities have until 31 March 2007 to implement single status. The agreement requires existing pay and grading arrangements to be reviewed.

The main features of the Single Status Agreement are:

- One pay spine.
- Harmonisation of conditions of service.
- A standard working week of 37 hours or less.
- Grading reviews based on equal pay.
- Equal status for part-time employees.
- A new deal on training and development.
- Partnership working between management and trade unions.

The single status agreement includes carrying out Equality Impact Assessments and equal pay reviews. Authorities may adopt different procedures for implementing this process.

Protection from Harassment Act 1977

The Protection from Harassment Act 1977 makes harassment and illegal eviction a criminal and civil offence. It covers residential occupation including: Owner-occupiers, most tenants or licensees while the contract is still in force and members of a household as long as they continue to live in the same home.

The Act creates three criminal offences: unlawful eviction and two offences of harassment. The main difference between the harassment offences is that one can only be committed by the landlord or the landlord's agent and the other can be committed by any person. Unlawful eviction or a

harassment offence can be tried in a Magistrates Court or the Crown Court. The maximum penalty in a Magistrates Court is six months in prison and/or a fine of not more than £5,000. In the Crown Court it is two years' imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine.

Human Rights Act 1998

Schedule 1 Part I Article 14 prohibits discrimination in respect of access to other parts of the European Convention Human Rights (ECHR). The ECHR rights and freedoms relate to sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status (e.g. sexuality, marital status or disability). Case law under this Act ruled that transsexuals have the right to have their reassigned gender recognised.

Race

Reporting and recording racial incidents

HFI needs to have specific procedures in place to record and report racial incidents and provide support to victims of racial harassment. This is in order to meet the obligations that are placed upon them by legislation in particular:

- The Race Relations Act (1976).
- The Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000).
- The Crime and Disorder Act (1998).

The Home Office launched a Code of Practice for dealing with incidents of racial harassment in response to recommendations 13 and 15 of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report which identified serious faults in the way a specific racist murder was dealt with. The aim is to support and measure how well public bodies are complying with their statutory duties and it strongly recommends consistency, a clear policy and procedure, and partnership working to deal with the reporting and recording of incidents of racial harassment.

Anyone can report a racial incident and should be able to do so by being dealt with in a sensitive and sympathetic way, with support offered where possible. Reporting could be done in a number of ways including:

- Reporting in person at an area housing office or through the tenant management association.
- An official complaint from the victim using HFI's complaints procedure, either verbal or written.
- An observation made by someone witnessing the incident.
- A report from a third party, by phone or in person.

- A referral from another agency.

All incidents must be recorded accurately as prescribed in the harassment policy. This will ensure that the Equalities Section can identify trends and develop action to respond effectively to racial incidents. Action includes mapping of racial incidents to identify particular hot spots in the borough.

Code of Practice for Social landlords: Tackling Racial Harassment

This is a good practice standard for social landlords in dealing with racial harassment, which sets out action which should be taken to prevent racial harassment, to ensure that racist incidents are reported, to support tenants and their families when such harassment occurs and to take action against perpetrators to enforce the landlord's civil powers and deter further harassment. The code was published in April 2001.

CRE Code of Practice in Rented Housing 1991

This Code is issued by the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and recommends that all landlords should adopt policies and procedures to deal with racial harassment. This part of the code was adopted by the Housing Committee in April 1991 to provide guidance on service provision and employment and include information on provision, allocations, harassment, monitoring, training, positive action, recruitment and selection, record keeping, and policy review.

Race Relations Act 1976 as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

In 2003 the Government introduced the Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003, which incorporates the European Union Race Directive into UK law by making changes to the Race Relations Act 1976. The new regulations introduced new legal definitions of harassment and discrimination; a new legal burden of proof in tribunal or court cases concerning racial discrimination or harassment, and a new exception from the prohibition to discriminate in employment where being of a particular race is a genuine and determining requirement for the job in question.

This Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against anyone on grounds of race, colour, nationality (including citizenship) or ethnic or national origin, and imposes a positive duty on public authorities to promote race equality: to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and good race relations. The Act requires that public authorities draw up and publish a Race Equality Scheme setting out how it will meet the specific duties of the 2000 Act.

Disability

Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Makes it unlawful to discriminate against members of the public on grounds of disability in the provision of goods, services and facilities by refusing to provide a service without justification or providing a service of a lesser standard without justification, or failing to make reasonable adjustments to the way services are provided for disabled people including the physical features of service premises which present physical barriers to access.

DDA 2005

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 received Royal Assent on 7 April 2005 and is the final step in meeting the Government's 2001 Manifesto commitment to extend rights and opportunities for disabled people. It means that the Government has put into place all of the remaining measures that it supports arising from the recommendations of the Disability Rights Task Force. The Act puts new duties on to public authorities and it will have a huge impact on how they approach their day-to-day functions:

Amongst other measures, the DDA 2005 amends the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 by: giving public bodies new duties; Setting an 'end date' of 1 January 2020, by which date all rail vehicles will have to be accessible to disabled people, including wheelchair users; extending duties on reasonable adjustments to landlords and others who manage rented premises; covering larger private clubs; covering local disabled councillors; bringing more people with HIV, cancer and Multiple Sclerosis into scope; ending the requirement that mental illness must be "clinically well-recognised"; and amending the Blue Badge Parking Scheme for disabled people to ensure reciprocity with arrangements in other European States.

In order to ensure that all their functions fall in line with the DDA 2005 public authorities will need to consult with disabled citizens, devise disability equality schemes and radically change the culture of their organisation.

Sex

Equal Pay Act

The Equal Pay Act 1970 makes it unlawful for employers to discriminate between men and women in terms of their pay and conditions where they are doing the same or similar work; work rated as equivalent; or work of equal value. The Equal Pay Act 1970 covers both pay and other terms and conditions such as piecework, output and bonus payments, holidays and sick leave.

The Women and Equality Unit have produced a "Workplace Guidance on the Equal Pay Act 1970 (Amendment) Regulations 2003 and the Sex

Discrimination Act 1975” document which details the provisions of both acts. In terms of the Equal Pay Act, the previous six-month time limit for bringing equal pay cases is extended in certain circumstances. Women who have long-standing cases of pay discrimination may receive back pay for up to six years.

Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (as amended – guidance in the report mentioned above)

This Act prohibits direct and indirect discrimination against individuals on grounds of sex in employment, education, advertising or when providing housing, goods, services and facilities. It prohibits discrimination against married people in employment, but it is not unlawful to discriminate against someone because they are not married. It is also unlawful to discriminate against someone in employment because they have undergone (or plan to undergo) gender re-assignment.

Housing Act 2004

This gives unmarried different sex partners the same rights in relation to tenancy succession.

Gender Recognition Act 2004

This provides transgendered people with the right to legal recognition in their acquired gender.

EU Directives

There are many specific EU Directives relating to equal pay and equal treatment for men and women in respect to employment, training, working conditions, promotion and dismissal.

Sexual orientation

Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) (Amendment) Regulations 2003

The EESOR prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in employment, vocational training and education. Like the Race Relations Act, it covers direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation and harassment.

Legal recognition of homophobic hate crime

Section 146 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003, which received Royal Assent on 20 November 2003 and came into effect on 4 April 2005, empowers courts to impose tougher sentences for offences motivated or aggravated by the victim’s sexual orientation. The new law mirrors that for race hate crimes.

Housing Act 2004

This gave same sex partners the same rights in relation to tenancy succession.

Civil Partnerships Act 2004

This gives same sex partners who choose to register as civil partners the right to be treated the same as married partners, including rights to housing, benefits, pensions etc.

Religion

Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) (Amendment) Regulations 2003

This EU directive outlaws discrimination on grounds of religion or belief in employment, vocational training and occupational pensions schemes. Like the Race Relations Act, it covers direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation and harassment.

Race Relations Act 1976

While UK primary legislation does not currently cover religion, case law rulings under the Race Relations Act have resulted in certain religious groups being recognised i.e. Sikhs and Jews.

Age

Age Discrimination Regulations 2003

Secondary legislation introduced in 2003 but effective from 1 October 2006, will prohibit discrimination on grounds of age in employment, vocational training and education. It will prohibit employers from forcing people to retire before the age of 65 and will also replace the mandatory retirement age of 65 with a right to request a later retirement age.

Legislation to be enacted in the UK

Age Discrimination in Employment

Arising from the EU Employment Directive, the new legislation will include setting a default retirement age of 65 but also creating a right for employees to request working beyond a compulsory retirement age, which employers will have a duty to consider. In summer 2005 the Government will be consulting on draft legislation, with the final legislation due to come into force on 1 October 2006. Implementing the age strand of the Employment Directive will outlaw age discrimination in employment and vocational training.

Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004

This act provides an opportunity for the whole community, via the local authority, to be involved in tackling domestic violence in respect of prevention, protection, justice and support for victims.

The definition of domestic violence includes violence between family members as well as partners, i.e. “any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (physical, emotional, psychological, sexual or financial) between adults who are or who have been family members, or partners, regardless of gender.” The legislation will apply to same sex relationships as well as to family members or partners who do not live together.

The legislation is being implemented in stages from April 2005.

Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR)

The Government has said that it will introduce legislation this year to establish the CEHR by 2007 with the 3 existing equality commissions phased in by 2009. The legislation will also ban discrimination in the provision of goods, facilities and services on the grounds of religion and belief and will include a duty on public authorities to promote gender equality.

Equalities Best Value Performance Indicators

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| BV 2a | The level of the Equality Standard for Local Government to which the organisation conforms. |
| BV 2b | The duty to promote race equality. |
| BVPI 11a | The percentage of top 5% earners that are women. |
| BV 11b | The percentage of top 5% of earners that are from the black and minority ethnic communities. |
| BVPI 16a | The number of staff declaring that they have a disability (under the Disability Discrimination Act) as a percentage of the total workforce. |
| BVPI 16b | The percentage of economically active disabled people in the authority area |
| BVPI 17a | The percentage of local authority staff from minority ethnic communities |
| BVPI 156 | The percentage of authority buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people. |
| BV 164 | The organisation follows the CRE’s Code of Practice in rented housing. |
| BV 174 | The number of racial incidents recorded by the authority per 100,000 population. |
| BV 175 | The percentage of racial incidents that resulted in further action. |

Useful websites:

Commission for Racial Equality www.cre.gov.uk
Equal Opportunities Commission www.eoc.gov.uk

Disability Rights Commission www.drc.gov.uk
Department of Work and Pensions www.agepositive.gov.uk
Diversity Action in Local Government www.lg-employers.gov.uk/diversity
Employers' Forum on Age www.efa.org.uk
Stonewall www.stonewall.org.uk
Women and Equality Unit www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk

Appendix 5
Diversity Key Lines of Inquiry for an excellent service
(Source: Audit Commission)

Corporate Culture and Governance

The organisation:

- Has a corporate policy on diversity that is appropriate and understood throughout the organisation. There is a regular, consistent message and ethos.
- Promotes its commitment to diversity and equality to its customers and other stakeholders.
- Uses categories recommended by the CRE to monitor ethnic breakdown of staff and contractors, has a staff composition that at all levels reflects the community it serves; or which is working positively towards this target.
- Has responded to external factors. Actions are taking place accordingly and there is a suite of training programmes to share knowledge.
- Has representative involvement in determining priorities. Training programmes for users and providers (including) contractors exist and information is shared in a variety of media and on a regular basis.
- Has comprehensive reports supplying information and statistics on a wide variety of issues affecting customers. Measures have targets or benchmarks. Senior officers and board members or councillors are aware of the relevant key issues.
- Does not discriminate against any person or organisation on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, disability, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, class, appearance, religion, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.

Access and Customer Care

- Has a clear understanding of its customer base and local demographics, using appropriate sources of information, including the input of local partners. It knows the exact breakdown of residents by age, ethnicity, disability and other factors that are relevant locally. Resources are prioritised accordingly.
- Uses categories recommended by the CRE to monitor ethnic breakdown of service users.
- Has a comprehensive database which sets out the preferred method of communication for each resident. This addresses issues of language, literacy, hearing and visual impairment and support. This information is

highlighted on computer systems for the benefit of all staff and provided to contractors where appropriate.

- Has a communication strategy that ensures that translation and interpretation facilities are readily available with guidelines on when and how to use them. Where there is a need, relevant documents are translated and readily available. All such communication issues are appropriately advertised.
- Complies with statutory requirements on, for example, the CRE code of practice on lettings
- Meets targets for lettings and allocations to the diverse range of applicants which reflect priority housing need and the communities in which it is working.
- Has customer service points all of which are fully wheelchair accessible, with hearing loops, and comply with the Disability Discrimination Act.
- Has comprehensive arrangements for disabled access to communal areas of estates and homes.
- Has front line staff that all know how to use Type Talk or text phones and how to deal with different levels of vulnerability and disability with evidence of training or induction.
- Has a computer alert system to say which residents are potentially dangerous. Relevant staff and contractors have easy access to information about issues around vulnerability or challenging behaviour that are relevant to the service they are delivering.
- Has systems that ensure that experience about successful ways of dealing with vulnerable residents is shared, recorded and made easily available.
- Has a system for monitoring and reviewing the circumstances of vulnerable tenants to ensure that they are getting the support that they need.
- Can access extra or floating support for residents who have particular needs such as teenage parents or residents with low level mental health problems.
- Has a clear process for assessing the needs for aids and adaptations and provides them to residents' properties in a timely manner. This is communicated to all residents and requests are appropriately dealt with.

Service User Involvement

- Sets diversity targets for service users and monitors and reports on the breakdown of service user involvement bodies, surveys, forums and focus groups by ethnicity, gender, age, disability, location and others as relevant.
- Takes action to achieve a better balance where there is under-representation of any particular group.

- Has members of service user involvement bodies who understand the clear message from the organisation on the importance of equality and promoting diversity.
- Consistently breaks down information from surveys and service users by relevant categories and has made changes and improvements in response to the views expressed by specific groups and minorities.
- Uses various methods to ensure the views of under-represented groups are adequately heard.
- Has different types of minority groups of service users that all feel that the organisation is taking serious steps to ensure that their opinions are heard.

Partnerships

- Works with a wide base of other community organisations to ensure that services are tailored to local need. It can demonstrate that it has an understanding of different issues of relevance to diverse need and different local communities.
- Is able to inform service users about other service providers as appropriate.
- Has an understanding of the cultural issues of all significant minority groups where this is relevant to the service they receive.
- Ensures that the needs of more hidden groups or sub groups are understood. For example the needs of travellers and gypsies and the way they engage with the settled community, the needs of Turkish women as distinct from the needs of the Turkish community taken as a whole.
- Has a well-developed procurement policy, that does not exclude smaller groups and that requires consultants and contractors to demonstrate good practice and sign up to the organisation's policies. The performance of contractors and consultants is monitored and the results used to improve services.
- Uses its position to develop and influence partnerships to promote community cohesion and address social exclusion.
- Actively promotes its role within the locality to develop partnerships and influence the debate around cohesion and exclusion.
- Has strategies in place to address its role locally, review the contribution that it makes and divert resources to enable the aims of promoting cohesion and addressing exclusion to be met.

Harassment and domestic violence

- Identifies different types of harassment and offers fast and effective action including support to those suffering harassment.

- Has staff that understand the policies and procedures and the actions taken are appropriate and timely.
- Where appropriate evicts perpetrators of domestic violence leaving the person suffering the violence with the same or equivalent tenancy.
- Can and does give support in a number of different ways to those experiencing harassment and violence including through a variety of agencies.
- Promptly deals with offensive graffiti and vandalism committed with intent to harass.
- Has residents that are aware of the stance that the organisation takes against harassment and domestic violence. They know that perpetrators can lose their tenancies and that support is available for those who face harassment or domestic violence.
- Works where relevant with resident organisations and other community groups to help tackle harassment and promote positive attitudes and respect.

Appendix 6
Comparison of Decent Homes Standard and HFI Standard

Work	Decent Homes Standard (£Millions)	The Homes for Islington Standard (£Millions)
Windows, roofs and structure	£117m	£262m
Kitchens and bathrooms	£22m	£152m
Heating and electrics	£53m	£58m
Lifts	£0m	£9m
Security and the neighbourhood	£0m	£28m
Totals	£192m	£509m

Appendix 7

HFI Positive Action Initiatives

HFI PASP Scheme (Positive Action Scheme)

The PASP scheme is a learning and development programme which has been set up for black and minority ethnic staff, women and disabled staff from Homes for Islington and the council's Housing and Performance department. We recognise that these groups of staff are under-represented at a senior level within HFI and Housing and Performance. The PASP scheme aims to give these staff the skills and experience to compete for senior posts when they fall vacant and has been running for the past four years.

Disabled staff, black and minority ethnic staff and women on all grades can apply to be considered for the PASP scheme. Successful applicants are given the opportunity of a placement in a similar or different sphere of work.

32 candidates have been on the scheme to date, of whom 25 have completed it and 7 are currently enrolled. 29 were from black and ethnic minority staff, 2 were disabled people and 27 were women. The majority were on an SO1 or SO2 grade at the start of their programme. As of March 2005 the ceiling on who can apply for this scheme was removed.

To date 14 SO1/2 graded staff progressed to a PO grade since participating in the scheme; 3 candidates from past programmes have achieved positions over PO5, with two obtaining permanent posts with another local authority. Availability of posts at PO band might affect this outcome.

The aims of the PASP scheme are:

- To ensure that the talents and abilities of the target groups are properly harnessed and valued within the department.
- To ultimately contribute to the process of achieving a senior management team that better reflects its workforce and the community it serves.
- To help improve management effectiveness in the department.
- To enable staff to identify their learning and development needs in relation to the skills, knowledge and ability required for general and senior management posts.
- To provide staff with relevant learning and development.
- To enable staff to gain experience and develop confidence.

The scheme does not give preferential status for jobs. At the end of a placement staff will return to their substantive post, although staff may have the opportunity to apply for the post that they have been working in if it has not been subsequently recruited to. Each year 8 places are available to managerial and non-managerial staff working for the organisation.

The scheme hopes to attract:

- Staff who believe they have the potential to move into a more senior position.
- Existing managers, who believe that they have the potential to undertake a more senior role in the future. (This includes existing senior managers who wish to progress further within the organisation).

In 2005-6 up to 8 places are available: 3 in Housing and Performance and 5 in HFI. Staff applying for the scheme must have been in their current post for at least a year. Staff who apply to the scheme are selected from their application forms and a development centre which includes a 1-1 interview.

The scheme is tailored to meet the needs of the individual participants. During the scheme individuals will undertake a variety of development opportunities initially identified during the development centre and follow-up personal development planning session.

The development opportunities could include a combination of the following:

- Undertaking a placement in another work area. This will enable the participant to develop confidence in an area of work which s/he would not be eligible for under the normal recruitment process.
- Undertaking the lead, or participation in a project.
- Temporarily acting up or extending their role and duties in their current workplace.

All of the above would enable the candidate to apply for similar posts on a permanent basis in the future.

All staff on the programme are supported by a mentor and have an individual development plan. The scheme aims to treat each participant as an individual and to enable him/her to develop in a manner appropriate to his/her current level of skills, knowledge and ability.

HFI Trainee Scheme

The Trainee Scheme offers development and career opportunities within the Housing profession and was introduced in 2000.

There are two schemes:

- Modern Apprenticeship Scheme – part of the Government's national scheme and for school leavers.
- Graduate Trainee Scheme – a scheme for graduates with a 2.2 or higher.

Both schemes involve a series of placements in the three divisions of Homes for Islington and Housing and Performance. Trainees undertake formal study at the same time. At the end of two years, on successful completion of the placements and study, trainees are eligible to apply for a post in the service. There is an annual rolling programme of on-going recruitment, resulting in trainees appointed and being in place by 1st November each year.

Graduate Trainee Scheme

Graduates are recruited and selected in their final year of study. Trainees can choose their area of placement for year two after identifying what aspect of Housing they want to enter. Trainees study for a postgraduate qualification at the University of Westminster in Housing Management. Three trainees, including one woman and one black and ethnic minority staff member, have successfully completed the course and two trainees are currently enrolled, both black and ethnic minority staff.

Modern Apprenticeship Scheme

Trainees are school leavers. They undertake both work-based and out-of-work training, as well as experience a full range of placements throughout Housing. Their placement runs for two years. The scheme is run in partnership with Training for Change. The trainee follows a course at NVQ level 2 or 3 in customer services run by Training for change and funded by the Government. Subject to satisfactory progress in the first year, the trainees can progress to a second year when they will eventually be eligible to apply for a permanent post within Housing. A trainee has an overall manager in the Training and development section as well as a placement supervisor. The learning and development programme in each workplace is developed between the supervisors and the trainee. Two trainees have successfully completed the scheme, one of whom was female, and two are currently enrolled.

**Appendix 8
Homes for Islington Workforce Profile**

		Female	Male	Total	% breakdown of Totals
P05+	Asian Indian	0	1	1	1.92%
	Black Caribbean	0	2	2	3.85%
	Mixed	1	1	2	3.85%
	Other	1	0	1	1.92%
	White	2	12	14	26.92%
	White British	8	20	28	53.85%
	White Irish	0	4	4	7.69%
	Total	12	40	52	100.00%
P01/4	Any other Asian background	2	2	4	2.40%
	Asian Bangladeshi	0	1	1	0.60%
	Asian Indian	1	3	4	2.40%
	Asian Pakistani	1	0	1	0.60%
	Black African	9	6	15	8.98%
	Black Caribbean	10	8	18	10.78%
	Black/Black British	3	0	3	1.80%
	Mixed	4	1	5	2.99%
	Other	0	3	3	1.80%
	White	6	17	23	13.77%
	White British	24	50	74	44.31%
	White Greek Cypriot	1	0	1	0.60%
	White Irish	5	9	14	8.38%
	White Turkish Cypriot	1	0	1	0.60%
	Total	67	100	167	100.00%
	S01/2	Any other Asian background	1	0	1
Asian Indian		0	2	2	1.50%
Black African		9	4	13	9.77%
Black Caribbean		22	10	32	24.06%
Black/Black British		2	1	3	2.26%
Mixed		2	2	4	3.01%
White		8	7	15	11.28%
White British		18	28	46	34.59%
White Greek Cypriot		0	3	3	2.26%
White Irish		6	8	14	10.53%
Total		68	65	133	100.00%
SC1/6	Any other Asian background	4	4	8	2.52%
	Asian Bangladeshi	5	1	6	1.89%
	Asian Indian	2	1	3	0.95%
	Asian Pakistani	0	1	1	0.32%
	Black African	11	16	27	8.52%
	Black Caribbean	26	21	47	14.83%

	Black/Black British	6	4	10	3.15%
	Mixed	3	1	4	1.26%
	Other	3	4	7	2.21%
	White	17	39	56	17.67%
	White British	34	86	120	37.85%
	White Greek Cypriot	1	2	3	0.95%
	White Irish	5	19	24	7.57%
	White Turkish Cypriot	0	1	1	0.32%
	Total	117	200	317	100.00%
Others	Asian Indian	0	1	1	20.00%
	Black Caribbean	1	0	1	20.00%
	Black/Black British	1	0	1	20.00%
	White	1	0	1	20.00%
	White British	0	1	1	20.00%
	Total	3	2	5	100.00%
Total		267	407	674	

(Data collected 19 May 2005)

**Appendix 9
Census data**

Data extracted from the 2001 census.

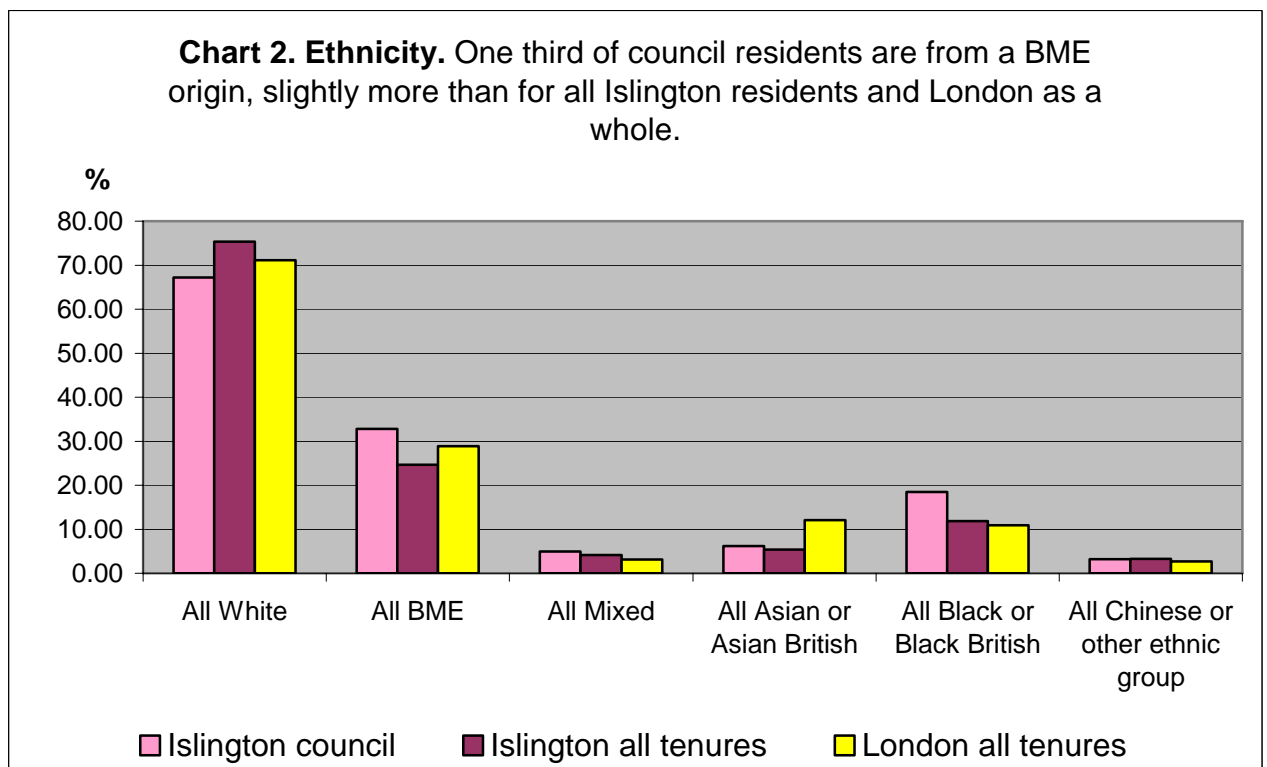
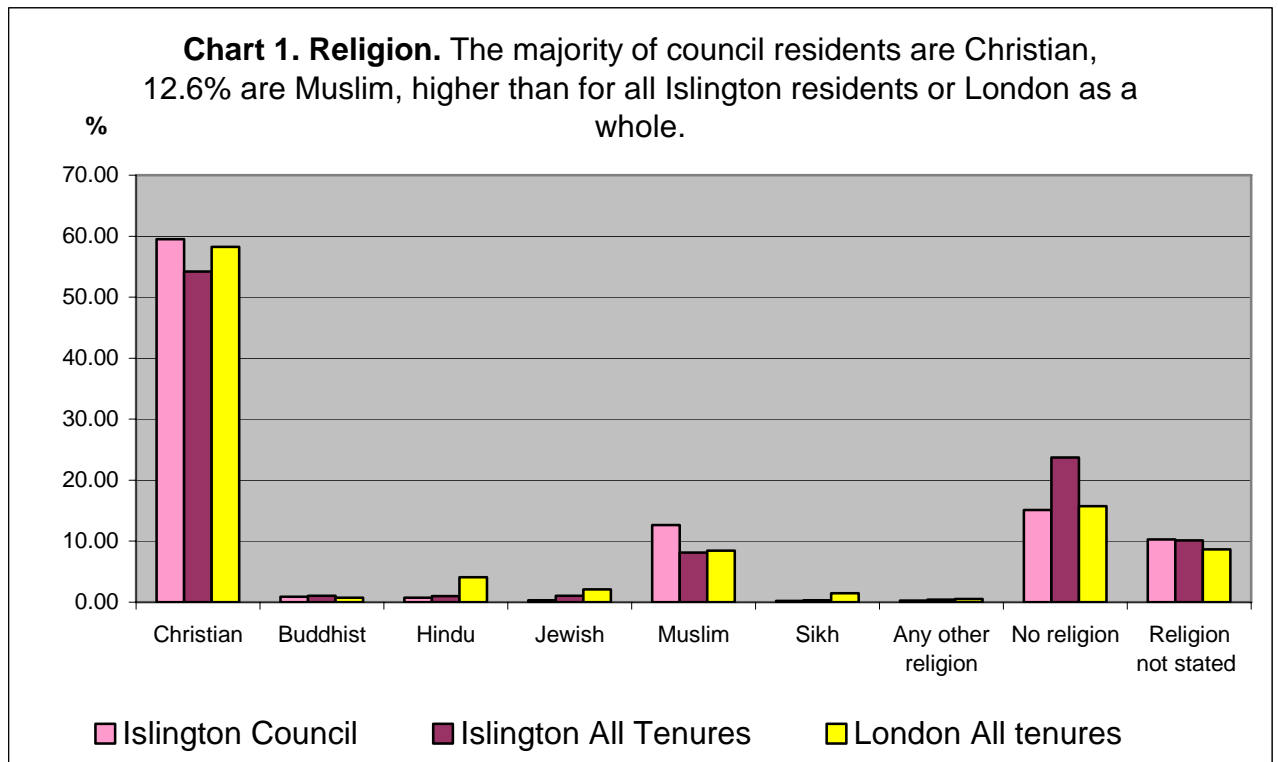
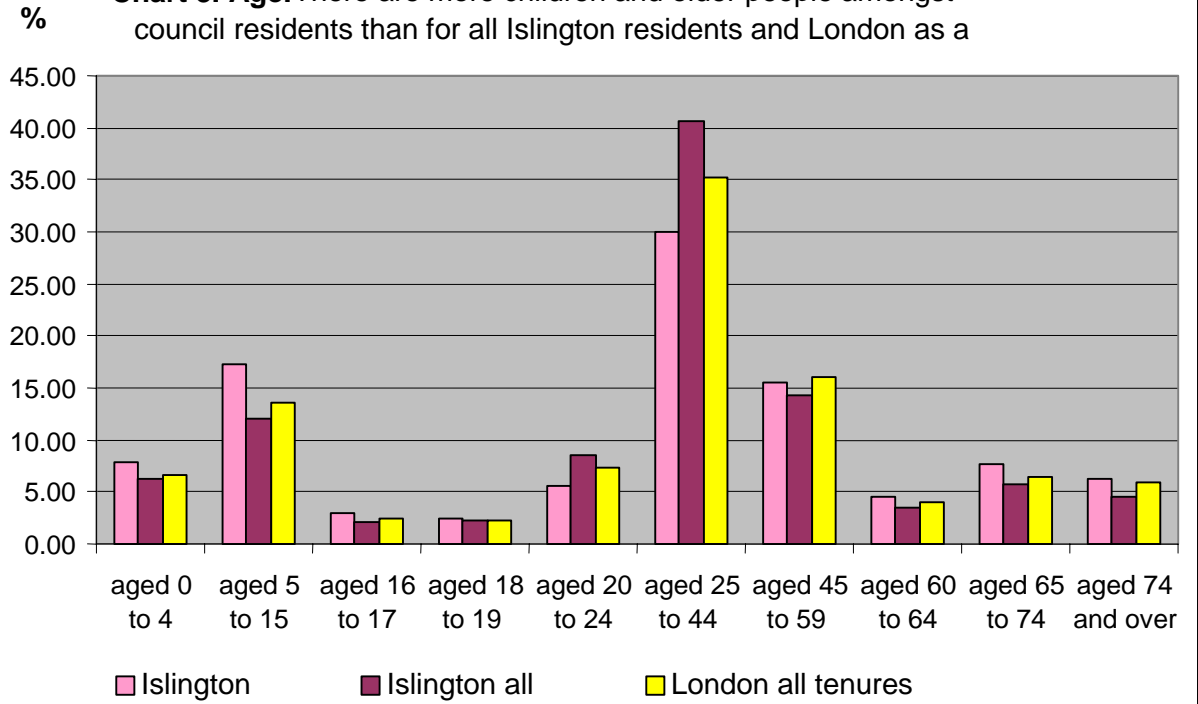


Chart 3. Age. There are more children and older people amongst council residents than for all Islington residents and London as a



Appendix 10

Glossary of equalities terms

Access audit – This is a process used to determine the barriers people may face in using an organisation’s services or working as an employee.

Adverse impact – This is a significant difference in patterns of representation or outcomes between different equality strand groups, with the difference amounting to a detriment for one or more groups.

Best Value – This refers to the process outlined in the Local Government Act 1999, which requires local authorities to secure continuous improvement in the delivery of services.

Community or Social Cohesion – a government initiative, developed in response to the disturbances in 2001 in the north of England, which gives local authorities a leading role in helping to realise a “common vision, a sense of belonging, and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds among the elements that help create cohesive communities.”

Consultation – asking for views on services or policies from service-users, staff, decision-making groups or the general public. Consultation can include a range of different ways of consulting, e.g. focus groups, surveys and questionnaires or public meetings.

Equalities - This is a short hand term for all work carried out by an organisation to promote equal opportunities and challenge discrimination, both in employment and in carrying out functions and delivering services.

Direct Discrimination – This occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation because of their racial or ethnic origin, sex, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

Diversity – Appreciating diversity goes beyond the mere recognition that everyone is different; it is about valuing and celebrating difference and recognising that everyone through their unique mixture of skills, experience and talent has their own valuable contribution to make.

Diversity mapping – This establishes the equalities profile of HFI’s service users and staff in terms of equality categories. By mapping out the diversity background of its staff and customers, HFI can then assess whether its workforce reflects the borough’s diverse community and whether its personnel practice and procedures are fair to all groups, as well as ensuring that it provides a fair and equal service to all its service users.

Equality Impact assessment – This is a systematic way of determining whether a policy or function in service delivery or employment can impact positively or negatively on one group within the community.

Flexible working – This describes a wide range of work styles and employment practices, which differ from the traditional working day and week. Employees may choose a different work schedule to meet personal or family needs.

Focus Groups – Focus group research involves organised discussion with a selected group of individuals, to obtain information on their views and experiences regarding a particular topic. Focus group interviews are especially helpful in obtaining a range of perspectives on a topic.

Functions – The full range of activities carried out by a public authority to meet its duties.

Harassment – This is unwanted behaviour which has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person on grounds of racial or ethnic origin, sex, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation and creating a degrading, humiliating, hostile, intimidating or offensive working environment.

Indirect discrimination – This occurs when an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice would disadvantage people on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin, sex, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation unless the practice can be objectively justified by a legitimate aim.

Institutional racism – This is a concept introduced by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report and defined as: “The collective failure of an organisation to provide appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racial stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people.”

Local Labour Market – The local geographical area from which candidates for particular jobs may be drawn.

Mainstreaming – The integration of equalities into policy development, implementation, evaluation and review.

Minority ethnic – A minority ethnic community is an ethnic group, which is numerically smaller than the predominant white group in Britain. This includes groups distinguished by their “skin colour” as well as Irish, Turkish, Cypriot, Jewish, Gypsies and Travellers. When reporting generally on minority ethnic make-up, it is important to state and identify the non-white minority ethnic population and related statistics.

Monitoring – This is the process of collecting, analysing and evaluating information, to measure performance or progress.

Multiple discrimination – This is discrimination which affects a person or group on more than one level, for example a woman who is black and gay experiencing homophobia from some parts of the black community, racism from some parts of the gay community and racism and homophobia from others.

Mystery shopping – This is a method of testing the effectiveness of an organisation’s customer service, by having spot checks carried out by mystery shoppers, who then report back to the organisation on their findings.

(Best Value) Performance Indicator – Performance Indicators provide a snapshot of a council’s overall performance and progress on achieving continuous improvement in service delivery performance.

Policies – The formal and informal decisions about how a public body carries out its duties and uses its powers.

Positive action – This is the provision of special opportunities in employment and training etc. for a disadvantaged group, e.g. women or people from the black and ethnic minorities.

Procurement – This is the set of contractual or other arrangements which a public body makes in order to obtain goods, works or services from an outside organisation.

Racial group – Racial groups are defined by racial grounds, that is race, colour, nationality (including citizenship), or ethnic or national origins. All racial groups are protected from unlawful racial discrimination under the RRA. Romany Gypsies, Irish Travellers, Jews and Sikhs have been explicitly recognised by the courts as constituting racial groups for the purposes of the RRA. A person may fall into more than one racial group: for example a “Nigerian” may be defined by race, colour, ethnic or national origin and nationality.

Reasonable adjustments – Employers have a duty of making reasonable adjustments in respect of disabled candidates or staff and are required to take appropriate measures to enable a disabled person to have access to employment and training unless doing so would impose a disproportionate burden on the employer. Reasonable adjustments may include, for example, providing wheelchair access, adjusting working hours, adapting office equipment or simply redistributing tasks between members of a team.

Stakeholders – These are the persons or groups affected by, having an interest in or benefiting from the operations of an organisation.

Victimisation - Punishing or treating someone unfairly because they have made a complaint of discrimination (e.g. racial discrimination) or are thought to have done so, or because they have supported someone else who has made a complaint.

Work-life balance – This is about people having a measure of control over when, where and how they work. It is achieved when an individual's right to a fulfilled life inside and outside paid work is accepted and respected as the norm, to the mutual benefit of the individual, business and society.

Homes for Islington, October 2005