



# EAST MIDLANDS COMMUNITY LED HOUSING

## EMCLH Equality and Diversity Policy

<b>Date policy approved:</b>	<b>24<sup>th</sup> November 2020</b>
<b>Policy reviewed by:</b>	<b>EMCLH Board</b>
<b>Policy last reviewed:</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Date of next review:</b>	<b>24<sup>th</sup> November 2021</b>
<b>Delegated responsibilities:</b>	<b>none</b>

<b>Signed by:</b>	
-------------------	--

EMCLH  
November 2020

## **East Midlands Community Led Housing: Equality and Diversity Policy**

### **Introduction / statement of intent**

1. EMCLH is committed to providing equality of opportunity and promoting diversity and inclusion in all aspects of its practice, and to avoiding unlawful discrimination. This policy is the first step in putting this commitment into practice.
2. This policy covers all aspects of EMCLH practice: governance; recruitment and employment; and service provision.
3. EMCLH recognises its obligations to act within the law (Equality Act 2010 and related regulations)
4. Beyond that, EMCLH recognises the systemic disadvantage and discrimination experienced by communities with protected characteristics as defined in the Act and affirms its commitment to positive action to combat this in its work.
5. This policy sets the framework for EMCLH's practice; it requires EMCLH to identify, focus and prioritise specific tasks to be set out in an Action Plan to inform its work and how that work will be monitored and managed.

### **Purpose**

6. The policy's purpose is to:
  - promote equality, fairness and respect for everyone associated with EMCLH, whether as a Board or staff member or as a recipient of our services;
  - promote EMCLH's commitment to act within the law;
  - affirm EMCLH's commitment to taking positive action to counter discrimination.

### **The Law**

7. It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of a 'protected characteristic'. The Equality Act defines the protected characteristics as being age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality, caste and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership.
8. It is also unlawful to discriminate against or harass a member of the public or service user in the provision of services or goods or to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability.

9. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, service providers have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

## **Governance**

10. EMCLH seeks to build a Board whose membership is diverse. It commits to including collection of information from existing and prospective Board members as part of its regular skills audit. Results will be used to inform recruitment.

11. Board meeting arrangements will be flexible to take account of the circumstances of current and prospective members.

12. Expenses can be paid to Board members to facilitate their participation in EMCLH business – e.g. to cover travel; care of children and other dependents; documents in different formats.

## **Recruitment and Employment**

13. EMCLH aims to create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.

14. EMCLH will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, disciplinary and grievance matters, and selection for redundancy. Job descriptions will avoid any unnecessary requirements (those unrelated to effective performance) that may otherwise have deterred applicants. EMCLH will base decisions on objective criteria. EMCLH will consider making reasonable adjustments in recruitment as well as in day-to-day employment matters such as requests for flexible working, dependency leave, provision of specialist equipment and similar matters.

15. EMCLH will review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness and update them to take account of changes in the law.

## **Service provision**

16. In its work with partners and groups to develop new housing or bring existing properties back into use EMCLH will always advocate for best practice in equality, diversity and inclusion.

17. EMCLH is committed to making the information it provides (online; at training events; on paper) accessible to as wide a range of people as possible. EMCLH will take account of specific needs wherever practicable and recognise that this may involve additional expenditure.

18. EMCLH recognise the need for ongoing training for EMCLH Board and staff so that they are informed of current thinking and best practice; confident to promote it; and confident to recognise and challenge aspects of discrimination in themselves and in others where necessary.

### **Implementation**

19. To make the ambitions of this policy a reality EMCLH will produce an annual action plan which will set out the steps to be taken by the Board and the staff and against which EMCLH will monitor our performance. The action plan will reflect our commitment to good practice. It will review the current situation (baseline); identify key issues for EMCLH; and set out actions to be taken, with KPIs and timescales. It will cover governance, employment and service provision.
20. The action plan will be an agenda item at every Board meeting, to ensure that the organisation gives appropriate priority and focus to this work.

EMCLH Nov 2020