
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy



February 2026 | This policy relates to Elmbridge Borough Council Residential Properties



Elmbridge
Borough Council

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1. Policy Statement

We aspire to ensure that we are a welcoming borough of opportunity for all, to deliver better services, designed for those who need them, where every voice is listened to and valued.

This policy sets out our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in the landlord services we provide, ensuring all tenants living in our homes are treated fairly, with respect, and feel valued. It supports our wider EDI strategy 2024-30 and reflects the kind of inclusive organisation we strive to be. Full details of this including our vision, definitions, borough profile and objectives for the next five years can be found here ([Elmbridge EDI Strategy 2024](#)).

Our vision is that we will always commit to and strive for fairness, equality, diversity and inclusivity for all.

We believe that everyone—regardless of background, identity or circumstance—deserves to be treated with fairness, dignity and respect. This statement outlines our approach to ensuring inclusive, accessible, and responsive services that reflect the diverse needs of our tenants and communities.

We have overall responsibility as the landlord to ensure that our Housing Management, Repair and Maintenance services are delivered in line with our commitment to equality, respect, and safety. While our Managing Agent carries out most of these services on our behalf, we will work closely with them to ensure these standards are reflected by them and our principles are maintained in their dealings with tenants and colleagues.

2. Scope:

This policy sets out our commitment to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) across all landlord services, workforce practices, and community engagement. It combines statutory requirements under the **Equality Act 2010**, **Human Rights Act 1998**, and **Public Sector Equality Duty** with best practice principles to foster an inclusive environment for tenants, staff, and partners.

This policy applies to tenants, staff, contractors and our Managing Agent providing landlord services on our behalf.

3. Definitions:

- **Equality:** Treating everyone fairly and removing barriers to opportunity.
- **Diversity:** Valuing and respecting differences in people's backgrounds, identities, and experiences.
- **Inclusion:** Creating an environment where everyone feels welcomed, respected, and able to participate fully.
- **Protected Characteristics:** Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation

4. Legal and Regulation:

We comply with the Equality Act 2010, Human Rights Act 1998 and the Public Sector Equality Duty, and we align with the Regulator of Social Housing's Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard.

Under the Equality Act 2010, we are responsible as a Council and registered provider for promoting equality of opportunity. The Act makes discrimination unlawful in relation to nine protected characteristics including race, religion or belief, sex, age, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity. Furthermore we recognise further wider equality, diversity and inclusion impacts and these can be found in our EDI Strategy 2024-30, page 6.

We are also required as a public body, in the exercise of these functions, to have due regard to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

5. Consumer standards

The regulator of Social Housing sets out the Regulatory Standards which require registered housing providers to respond to the needs of diverse tenants and treat all tenants with fairness and respect.

In particular, the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard sets clear expectations around diversity, accessibility and engagement with tenants:

- Registered providers are expected to understand the diverse needs of tenants, including:
 - Those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010
 - Different household types
 - Those with varying levels of additional support needs

This includes ensuring:

- Services are accessible and responsive to diverse needs.
- Tenants are able to influence decisions that affect them.

6. Our Commitments

Alongside our Strategy commitments specifically for tenants living in our homes we commit to:

- **Fairness and Respect:** We treat all tenants, and service users with respect and fairness, ensuring that no one is disadvantaged due to protected characteristics or other vulnerabilities.
- **Inclusive Services:** We deliver services that are accessible, inclusive, and responsive to the diverse needs of our communities.
- **Equity of Access:** We remove barriers to participation and ensure equitable access to services, information, and opportunities.
- **Tenant Voice:** We involve tenants in shaping decisions that affect them, ensuring their voices are heard and valued. Our Tenant Engagement Strategy provides more information on how we do this.
- **Zero Tolerance:** We take a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, harassment, and victimisation in any form.
- **Data-Informed Practice:** We collect and use equalities data to understand needs, monitor outcomes, and improve service delivery for our tenants.

7. Implementation

This is part of the wider Council's equality objectives action plan (Appendix 2 in Elmbridge's EDI Strategy). It is a working document continuously updated.

- **Training and Awareness:** We provide regular EDI training to all staff to build understanding, prevent discrimination, and promote inclusive behaviours. This training also encourages open conversations and ongoing awareness of equality, diversity, and inclusion in everyday practice.
- **Monitoring and Accountability:** We assess the impact of our EDI work against agreed objectives and report progress to our Council's Leadership Team. This is to ensure that equality analysis, impact assessment, objective setting and monitoring are effective in improving outcomes.
- **Partnership Working:** We collaborate with stakeholders, voluntary and faith communities groups, and partners to promote inclusion and tackle inequality.

But in addition, we will implement the following:

- **Harassment, Anti-Social Behaviour and Domestic Abuse:** We have zero tolerance to any forms of bullying, harassment or discrimination. We're committed to dealing promptly and effectively with harassment (racial or other), anti-social behaviour and domestic abuse affecting tenants. While our Managing Agent carries out most of these services on our behalf, we will work closely with them to ensure they are meeting these standards.
- **Communication:** We are committed to making all our communication accessible to tenants, offering information in alternative formats and languages wherever possible to meet different needs.
- **Services Delivery:** We aim to deliver services that are sensitive to individual circumstances, considering the diverse needs of our tenants and making reasonable adjustments to ensure fair and inclusive access for all.

8. Use of Data and Monitoring

We will:

- Collect and publish equality data.
- Conduct Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- Benchmark performance and review annually.
- Report progress to the Leadership Team.

9. Review and Governance

This policy is reviewed every 3 years to reflect current legislation, good practice and alignment with our EDI Strategy. Oversight is provided by our Council's Leadership Team.