



Habinteg Housing Association (Ulster) Ltd

equality scheme

DRAWN UP IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 75 OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND ACT 1998

Habinteg
Housing Association
(Ulster) Ltd
Alex Moira House
22 Hibernia Street
Holywood
BT18 9JE

FOREWORD

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions, powers and duties, to promote equality of opportunity and good relations among a range of groups. Public Authorities, as defined by the legislation, are required to send an Equality Scheme to the Equality Commission, showing how they intend to carry out their new duties.

As Chairman and Chief Executive respectively of Habinteg we are pleased on behalf of Habinteg and staff to support this Equality Scheme which arises out of the implementation of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Commitments made in the Equality Scheme refer to how the Habinteg carries out all its functions, powers and duties relating to Northern Ireland. Habinteg is committed to ensuring that all necessary resources (in terms of people, time and money) are made available to support the effective promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations in all its policies and practices. This also includes making sure there are effective internal arrangements in place to ensure that the duties are effectively complied with, monitored and reviewed.

Habinteg will actively seek to develop a programme of communication and training with the aim of ensuring all staff are made aware and understand the new equality obligations. The purpose of this draft Equality Scheme is to set out how Habinteg will fulfil the new statutory duties.

This scheme will also available on disk, in larger print and can be made available in Braille, minority languages or on an audio cassette on request. The scheme is also available on Habinteg's website: www.habinteg-ulster.co.uk.



George Harkness
Chairman



David Duly
Chief Executive

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 ('the Act') requires Habinteg Housing Association (Ulster) Ltd ("Habinteg") in carrying out all its functions, powers and duties to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:
- between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
 - between men and women generally;
 - between persons with a disability and persons without; and
 - between persons with dependants and persons without.
- 1.2 Also, without prejudice to its obligation above, Habinteg will, in carrying out its functions, power and duties relating to Northern Ireland have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.
- 1.3.1 Schedule 9 of the Act requires Habinteg to set out in an Equality Scheme how Habinteg proposes to fulfil the duties imposed by Section 75. This scheme has been developed to satisfy that statutory requirement.

2.0 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 Habinteg is a registered housing association established in 1976 subject to the provisions of the housing Orders (NI) 1976, 1992 and 2003 and the Industrial and Provident Societies Act (NI) 1969 and 1976. In 1997 Habinteg was successfully assessed as an Investor in People organisation. In 2000 and 2003 we were successfully reassessed to the standard. In 2000 Habinteg was awarded a Charter Mark for excellence in customer services. We were successfully reassessed as a Charter Mark organisation in 2003.
- 2.2 Habinteg's principal role is the provision of specially designed integrated housing schemes for people with and without disabilities with, where appropriate, a residential support service and caring, responsive and efficient management and maintenance services. The Association also provides a wide range of supported housing schemes with partnership organisations.
- 2.3 The Board of Management of Habinteg reflects a range of interests representing the needs of service users. Membership comprises the Chairman, Vice chairman, Treasurer, Honorary Secretary and up to eleven other members. There is an Annual General Meeting when new members may seek election and when a third of existing members who wish to continue to serve as members are obliged to seek re-election. The current membership is eleven, as follows:

CHAIRMAN: George D B Harkness MA FCA

Retired Partner of Price Waterhouse. Treasurer of University of Ulster. Former Board member of Northern Bank. Chairman of Abbeyfield, Belfast Society. Director of Dale Farm Ltd.

VICE-CHAIRMAN: Stephen A Mathews BSc [Hons] MSc MIPD FCMI
Chief Executive of Cedar Foundation

TREASURER: (Position vacant - Previous incumbent resigned 17/09/04)

SECRETARY: Martin Turnbull, LL.B
Solicitor in private practice.

Lady [Trudy] Beveridge

Involved with a wide range of voluntary agencies.

Dr Lesley Calderwood MB BCH BAO Psychiatrist.

John S Cole BSc [Arch] DAAS MSc [Proj Man] RIBA PPRSUA

Past-Chairman of Habinteg Housing Association (Ulster) Ltd.
Chief Executive of Health Estates, Past President of Royal Society of
Ulster Architects and Council Member RIBA. Past-Chairman
Construction Industry Group.

Michael R Hendra MBE BSc [Hons] Dip.BS

Civil Servant and Past-Chairman of **Habinteg Housing Association (Ulster) Ltd** and of the Northern Ireland Paraplegic Association.

Michael C Holyer RIBA

Chairman of **Habinteg Housing Association** in England

Billy Jenkins MBE FRICS IRRV

Retired Deputy Commissioner – Valuation and Lands Agency. Former
Chairman of RICS Northern Ireland Branch. Trustee & Steward of
Lionheart [RICS Benevolent Fund].

Dr John McCann MD FRCP [Edin]

Consultant in Rehabilitation Medicine.

Ivor Spence BSc [Econ] MBA MRICS Retired Civil Servant

2.4 The functions of Habinteg for purposes of the Act include its powers and duties. In this Scheme the following are to be regarded as the functions:

- **Housing Management** – provision, allocation, management and maintenance of rented properties in the social housing sector
- **Development** – the procurement of land and buildings
- **Staffing** – recruitment and employment
- **Contracting** – procurement of goods and services
- **Finance** – borrowing and investing money
- **Sales** – sale of dwellings to sitting tenants in certain circumstances

Chief Executive - David Duly OBE

2.5 The Chief Executive is responsible to the Chairman and the Board of Management of Habinteg for the management of Habinteg which is a registered housing association, an Industrial and Provident Society and has charitable status.

Senior Management Team

Habinteg's Senior Management Team includes the following officers:

- **David Duly OBE BSc DMS FRICS FCIH FRSH**
Chief Executive
- **Mai Moore FCIH** – Deputy Chief Executive
- **Mary Hollywood** – Housing Manager [Job share 1]
- **Frances Magee BSc (Hons) MCIH**
Housing Manager [Job share 2]
- **Paul Kerr BSc (Hons)** – Area manager North West
- **John Ferris BSc (Hons) MRICS** – Development Manager
- **Barry Caruth AFA FIAB** – Finance Manager

3.0 ARRANGEMENTS FOR ASSESSING COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 75 DUTIES

Organisational Arrangements

- 3.1 Habinteg is committed to the fulfilment of its Section 75 obligations in all parts of its work. Statutory Responsibility for the effective implementation of the Scheme lies with the Board of Management of Habinteg and the Chief Executive.
- 3.2 The Chief Executive will be accountable to the Board of Management of Habinteg for the development, maintenance and review of the Scheme in accordance with the legislation, including any good practice or guidance that may be issued by the Equality Commission.
- 3.3 Responsibility for the implementation of the equality scheme and the point of contact within Habinteg will be:

Name *Siobhan Lowery [alternatively one of our managers will assist]*
Title *Housing Quality Officer*
Address *Alex Moira House
22 Hibernia Street
HOLYWOOD
BT18 9JE*
Tel No *028 9042 7211*
Fax No *028 9042 8069*
E Mail *equality@habinteg-ulster.co.uk*

- 3.4 This officer will report regularly to Habinteg's Senior Management Team (SMT) and respond to any queries for all those affected by the statutory duties.
- 3.5 Objectives and targets relating to the statutory duties will be integrated into Habinteg's strategic and operational plans. Staff who are directly engaged in this work will include implementation of the statutory duties in their personal performance plans, which are subject to appraisal in the annual performance review. In addition, a commitment to the statutory duties will be included in all job descriptions. Progress on meeting the range of objectives will be monitored and reported upon to the Housing association's SMT on a quarterly basis.

Progress Reporting

- 3.6 Habinteg will conduct an Annual Review of Progress in relation to the implementation of the Equality Scheme, in complying with the statutory duties. Habinteg will forward a report of this review to the Equality Commission by 31 July each year. This report, which will follow any guidance on annual reporting issued by the Equality Commission, will also be included in Habinteg's annual report.
- 3.7 Moreover, Habinteg will liase closely with the Equality Commission to build a close working relationship so that progress on the implementation of the Scheme is maintained.

Consultation

- 3.8 Habinteg acknowledges the emphasis on consultation in the development and implementation of the Scheme, and is committed to full and meaningful consultation on its Equality Scheme, equality impact assessments and monitoring arrangements. Details of this commitment are set out in the following section.

Complaints

- 3.9 When a complaint is made on the grounds that Habinteg has failed to comply with the Scheme, the point of contact will be

Name ***Siobhan Lowery [alternatively one of our managers will assist]***

Title ***Housing Quality Officer***

Address ***Alex Moira House
22 Hibernia Street
HOLYWOOD
BT18 9JE***

Tel No ***028 9042 7211***

Fax No ***028 9042 8069***

E MAIL ***equality@habinteg-ulster.co.uk***

- 3.10 This Officer will carry out an internal investigation of the complaint and respond to the complainant within one month. During this process, the complainant will be kept fully informed of the procedures for dealing with the complaint under Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act. Habinteg will also undertake to provide assistance to any complainant who requires information in a format that ensures equality of opportunity.
- 3.11 In any subsequent investigation by the Equality Commission, Habinteg will co-operate fully, providing access to any relevant documentation that the Equality Commission may require. Similarly, Habinteg will co-operate fully with any investigation by

the Equality Commission under sub-para 11 (1) (b) of Schedule 9 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Review of the Scheme

- 3.12 Habinteg will conduct a thorough review of the Scheme within five years of its submission to the Equality Commission. This review will evaluate the effectiveness of Habinteg in meeting its Section 75 obligations. In undertaking this review Habinteg will follow any guidance issued by the Equality Commission. A report of this review will be made public and sent to the Equality Commission.

4.0 CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Habinteg recognises the importance of consultation in all aspects of the implementation of its statutory equality duties. It affirms that all consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Equality Commission's Guiding Principles as detailed in its 'Guide to Statutory Duties' (Blue Section 2c). In particular, it will endeavour to conduct all consultations in a timely, open and inclusive way in accordance with the Equality Commission's Guiding Principles.
- 4.2 Habinteg will consult as widely as possible to ensure that any organisation or group which has a legitimate, particular interest in its work and /or the likely impact of its policies on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations will be included in the process of engagement.

Those Being Consulted

- 4.3 A list of those being consulted on matters relevant to Habinteg's equality duties, including screening and equality impact assessments and the Scheme itself, is detailed in Appendix 2. The list is not exhaustive and may be amended and reviewed throughout the lifetime of the equality scheme to promote inclusive consultation. Habinteg welcomes enquiries from any organisation wishing to be added to the list of consultees, and they should contact **Siobhan Lowery** at Habinteg to have their interest noted.
- 4.3 Habinteg will include the Equality Commission, the Community Relations Council, voluntary groups, community groups and Trade Union groups in all consultations whether or not they have a direct economic or social interest in the work of Habinteg. Organisations

representing the various categories included in Section 75 will also be included in any consultation carried out.

Timescale for Consultation

- 4.4 In order to facilitate meaningful consultation, Habinteg will ensure that consultation with groups and individuals will begin as early as possible.
- 4.5 Habinteg is conscious that some groups will need sufficient time to consult among themselves in order that their contributions to any consultation may be informed. All consultations will aim to allow a period of at least eight weeks except in emergencies. Such situations will include:
- policies which have to be implemented urgently to protect health and safety;
 - policies which have to be implemented urgently to comply with court judgements.
- 4.6 Habinteg wishes to minimise the number of exceptions to good practice guidelines on the timescale for consultation. When exceptions do occur, Habinteg will report such instances. Exceptions to the normal eight week consultation period will be monitored, kept under review, justified very clearly and reported by Habinteg in its annual report to the Equality Commission.

Procedures for Ensuring Inclusive Consultation

- 4.7 In consulting on any matter to which this scheme relates, Habinteg will work with representative groups and individuals of the Section 75 categories in order to identify how best to obtain their views. This may involve face-to-face meetings, advisory groups, surveys, consultative panels, Internet discussions and other innovative ways of consulting as there will be different means of consultation for different groups and it will be important to establish the basis for dialogue and engagement during the life of the scheme.
- 4.8 It is intended that barriers to proper consultation will be removed by ensuring that language is as clear as possible. Systems will be established to make presentations on this Scheme, if requested, available in an appropriate format to representatives of people with learning disabilities, minority community language speakers, people with disabilities, young people, and travellers.

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- 4.9 To ensure the highest level of inclusivity in any policy decision-making, information will be made available in consultation with groups affected by Section 75. Systems will be in place to ensure that information will be available on request in accessible formats in a timely fashion such as Braille, disc, and audiocassette and in minority languages to meet the needs of those who are not fluent in English.
- 4.10 Extra consideration will be given to ensuring that all consultations reflect the needs of young people and those with learning disabilities through the provision of accessible formats in a timely manner. Habinteg will liaise with representatives of young persons and learning disability organisations in the first place (by correspondence/direct communication) and take account of good practice elsewhere (e.g. Lead Report / MENCAP's guidance on accessible formats), in order to reflect the needs of these groups in consultation exercises.
- 4.11 Habinteg believes it especially important that sufficient timely and appropriate information is provided to enable all affected groups and individuals to consider the full implications of proposals, and it will take steps to ensure this. This will include quantitative and qualitative data that Habinteg holds or has collated, and other documents such as consultants' reports. This will apply to all consultations.
- 4.12 Specific training will be arranged for Habinteg staff undertaking consultation exercises to ensure they have the necessary skills to communicate effectively. Any training delivered will be developed in consultation with relevant Section 75 groups.
- 4.13** Steps will also be taken to ensure full participation in any consultation meetings that are held. Habinteg will consider the time of day, the suitability of the venue, whether it can be accessed by those with disabilities, how the meeting is to be run, the use of languages other than English, whether a signer is needed, childcare arrangements and will recognise and in good faith meet access related costs.

5.0 ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF POLICIES ON THE PROMOTION OF EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

Screening

- 5.1 Habinteg is committed to carrying out a systematic review of all its existing and new/proposed policies to determine whether there are any equality of opportunity implications.
- 5.2 The definition of a 'policy' under the Equality Commission's Guide to the Statutory Duties has a wide remit and includes policies relating to all functions and activities. Habinteg will monitor the implementation of a policy that it operates of behalf of another public authority, and will work in partnership with other bodies where such a policy is subject to an equality impact assessment.
- 5.3 Habinteg will consider the impact of each current and new/proposed policy on equality of opportunity in terms of the nine categories listed at Section 75 of the Act when considering which policies will be subject to equality impact assessment. A systematic review of each policy is required and Habinteg will take the following steps when screening:
- identify all policies, written and unwritten;
 - internally appraise the significance of equality of opportunity and good relations for each policy, taking account of the screening criteria and prioritisation factors detailed below;
 - produce a list detailing policies to be subject to equality impact assessment, together with a draft timetable for conducting the assessments. This should take account of the need to join up equality impact assessments of related policies;
 - consult with Section 75 groups to seek their views on whether all policies have been identified, whether all equality impacts have been identified, and whether they agree with the list of policies to be subject to equality impact assessment and the proposed timetable;
 - consider and take account of feedback from the consultation exercise;
 - provide information to consultees on the conclusions reached following the initial consultation on screening, on amendments made to the list of policies, and on the final equality impact assessment timetable, in a screening report.

5.4 For each policy the following criteria will be applied:

- is there any indication or evidence of higher or lower participation or uptake by different groups*?
- is there any indication or evidence that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular policy?
- have previous consultations with relevant groups, organisations or individuals indicated that particular policies create problems that are specific to them?
- is there an opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations by altering the policy or working with others in government or in the larger community?

* The main groups within each of the nine categories are identified at Appendix 4.

If the answer to any of these four questions is yes, consideration will be given to whether to subject the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

Evidence

5.5 Habinteg will make arrangements to obtain relevant information, whether quantitative or qualitative, so that it can clearly demonstrate why a policy is screened in for impact assessment or screened out as not requiring an equality impact assessment.

5.6 Evidence may include information from the Habinteg's own information management systems, including service monitoring and complaints handling systems, or from engagement in research, surveys or consultation exercises. Information may also be sourced from commissioned research or from research produced by other public authorities, representative groups, umbrella groups, and trades unions or universities. Information from consultation exercises on previous equality impact assessments, or those undertaken by other public authorities within the same sector will also be considered. Anecdotal evidence, feedback from service users and affected groups or ongoing experience within the authority will also be considered.

Prioritisation & Time-tabling

5.7 Having screened existing policies or new policies using the four criteria set out above, a view must then be reached on prioritising policies for equality impact assessment. Priorities may be established based on factors such as (over page):

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- Social need;
 - effect on people's daily lives;
 - effect on economic, social and human rights;
 - significance of the policy in terms of expenditure;
 - significance of the policy in terms of strategic importance.

5.8 An initial timetable will be developed setting out a programme and time-scale for equality impact assessments, see appendix 5.

Screening Report

- 5.9 A detailed report of the screening exercise will be provided to consultees and included in the Annual Report sent to the Equality Commission. The report will include details of: (1) those policies which will be subject to equality impact assessment, (2) those policies proposed by those consulted, as appropriate for impact assessment, but have not been subsequently included – giving a explanation for this course of action, (3) the factors for prioritising assessments, and (4) the timetable for equality impact assessments.
- 5.10 Consultation on screening will allow at least eight weeks, and will comply with the Equality Commission's 'Guiding Principles of Consultation'. Consultation exercises will involve seeking the views of the Equality Commission, representative groups of Section 75 categories, other public authorities, voluntary groups, community groups, Trade Unions and other groups with a legitimate interest in the matter including those directly affected by the policy, whether or not they have a direct economic or personal interest (see Appendix 2).

The Conduct of Equality Impact Assessments

- 5.11 All equality impact assessments carried out will be conducted in accordance with all the procedures outlined in Annex 1 of the Equality Commission's 'Guide to the Statutory Duties'.
- 5.12 In common with other aspects of the statutory equality duties, Habinteg will ensure that any equality impact assessment will be subject to consultation. All consultation exercises will involve seeking the views of the Equality Commission, representative groups of Section 75 categories, other public authorities, voluntary groups, community groups, Trade Unions and other groups with a legitimate interest in the matter whether or not they have a

direct economic or personal interest and those directly affected by the policy (see Appendix 2).

- 5.13 In making any decision on a current or proposed policy, Habinteg will take into account any relevant equality impact assessment and the outcome of associated consultation.

Monitoring Adverse Impact and Access to Services

- 5.14 A system will be established to monitor the impact of policies and access to services across all functions in order to identify their effects on the relevant groups and ensure equality of opportunity. This system will involve:
- an audit of existing information systems within one year of approval of the scheme, similar to that included in Appendix 4 of the Commission's Practical Guidance on EQIA, to identify the extent of current monitoring and a plan to address any gaps so that impacts can effectively be monitored through equality impact assessments.
 - the collection and collation of existing relevant primary quantitative and qualitative data across all nine equality categories on an ongoing basis;
 - the collection and collation of existing relevant secondary sources of quantitative and qualitative data across all nine equality categories on an ongoing basis;
 - identifying where more detailed data is needed in order to have the necessary information on which to base decisions;
 - undertaking or commissioning new data if necessary.
- 5.15 If over a three year period monitoring and evaluation show that a policy results in greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, Habinteg will ensure that the policy is revised.
- 5.16 This system will be reviewed on an annual basis and the results will be published as part of the Habinteg's annual report to the Equality Commission. In all cases relating to the holding of monitoring information or the collection of data, Habinteg will act sensitively in accordance with Equality Commission guidance and the wishes of representatives from S75 organisations.

Publication of Equality Impact Assessments and Monitoring

- 5.17 Habinteg will make publicly available the outcome of any equality impact assessment and of any monitoring undertaken to measure the adverse impact of policies. Systems will also be established to make available, on request, impact assessments in accessible formats and a timely fashion (i.e. Braille, disk, audio cassette and minority languages) from the responsible officer – **Siobhan Lowery, Alex Moira House, 22 Hibernia Street, HOLYWOOD, BT18 9JE**
- 5.18 Extra consideration will be given to ensure that young people and those with learning disabilities are able to access impact assessments in a timely fashion.
- 5.19 Habinteg will inform the general public about the availability of this material through public relations such as press releases and media coverage. It will also directly inform bodies listed in Appendix 2 when this material is available and it will place information in publications associated with Section 75 categories.
- 5.20 All published information will comply with guidance outlined by the Equality Commission in its 'Guide to Statutory Duty' (Section 1). Habinteg will publish information on equality impact assessments that:
- includes the aims of the policy to which the assessment relates;
 - details any consideration given to mitigating adverse impact of the policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity;
 - details any consideration given to the consideration of alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity.

6.0 PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND SERVICES

- 6.1 Habinteg is committed to ensuring that the information it disseminates and the services it provides are made accessible to ensure equality of opportunity. It is aware that some groups will not have the same access to information as others. These include:
- children and young people who may have difficulties in accessing or understanding information;
 - people with sensory and learning disabilities that may have difficulties with information in print;
 - members of minority ethnic groups, whose first language is not English, and who may have difficulties with information provided only in English.

Consideration will be given on how to provide accessible information in a timely manner to all these groups.

- 6.2 Habinteg will, within a year of approval of this scheme, review its arrangements for providing information in Braille, large print, audio cassette and minority ethnic language formats. The assessment will take account of:

- the statutory requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995; the likely demand for information of various formats across its main policy areas;
- the resource implications and recommendations from the Northern Ireland cross-departmental Promoting Social Inclusion (PSI) working groups on minority ethnic people and on access to information.

- 6.3 The review will make recommendations on how public access to information can be better ensured by improving arrangements for providing information in different formats and languages. Habinteg will ensure that it will publicise the current situation, the findings of its review, and any proposed changes to any aspect of information and services to such groups and individuals.

- 6.4 In disseminating information through the media, Habinteg will seek to advertise in the press. This arrangement will be kept under review, in terms of promoting wide access throughout the implementation of statutory equality duties. Habinteg intends that all of its services are fully accessible to all parts of the community in Northern Ireland.

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- 6.5 Habinteg will ensure that no section of the community is deterred from visiting Habinteg offices, for whatever reason. Habinteg offices will maintain a welcoming and harmonious environment. Habinteg will adhere to relevant provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

7.0 TRAINING AND COMMUNICATION

- 7.1 Habinteg will ensure that an effective communication and training programme will be developed for all staff. A series of targets for the implementation of the commitment to training and communication will be outlined in Equality Scheme Action Plan section of this document (Appendix 5).
- 7.2 In order to share resources and expertise, Habinteg will work closely with other bodies and agencies in the development and delivery of training.

Training

- 7.3 Habinteg will draw up a detailed training plan for all its staff over the 5 year period to which this Scheme refers, which will aim to achieve the following objectives:
- to raise awareness of current anti-discrimination legislation, including the provisions of Section 75 and Section 76 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. This will include an explanation of the duties and their implications for all employees;
 - to provide those employees involved in screening of policies with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively;
 - to provide those employees involved in the equality impact assessment of policies with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively;
 - to provide those employees who deal with complaints in relation to the implementation of the Housing association 's Scheme, with the necessary skills and knowledge to investigate and monitor complaints effectively;
 - to provide those employees involved in consultation processes with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively;
 - to provide those employees involved in the implementation and monitoring of the effective implementation of the Housing association 's Equality Scheme to do this work effectively; and

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- to evaluate the extent to which all participants in this training programme have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve each of the above objectives.
- 7.4 A report indicating the extent to which training objectives have been met will be reported on as part of the Annual Review of the implementation of the statutory duties, which will be sent to the Equality Commission.
- 7.5 All staff in Habinteg will receive training within one year of the approval of the Scheme (including those being inducted). Thereafter focused training will be provided for all specialist staff within the Housing association, and specific training will also be provided for those engaged in consultation.
- 7.6 All training will be developed in association with the appropriate Section 75 groups.
- 7.7 The Chief Executive wishes to positively communicate the commitment of Habinteg to its statutory duties (both internally and externally). Habinteg will:
- develop a summary of the Scheme and make it available to all staff ;
 - provide access to copies of the full Scheme for all staff;
 - ensure that the Housing association 's commitment to the statutory duties are made clear in Habinteg publications (such as the Annual Report); and
 - ensure that any queries or questions of clarification from staff are addressed effectively.

8.0 IMPLEMENTING THE SCHEME

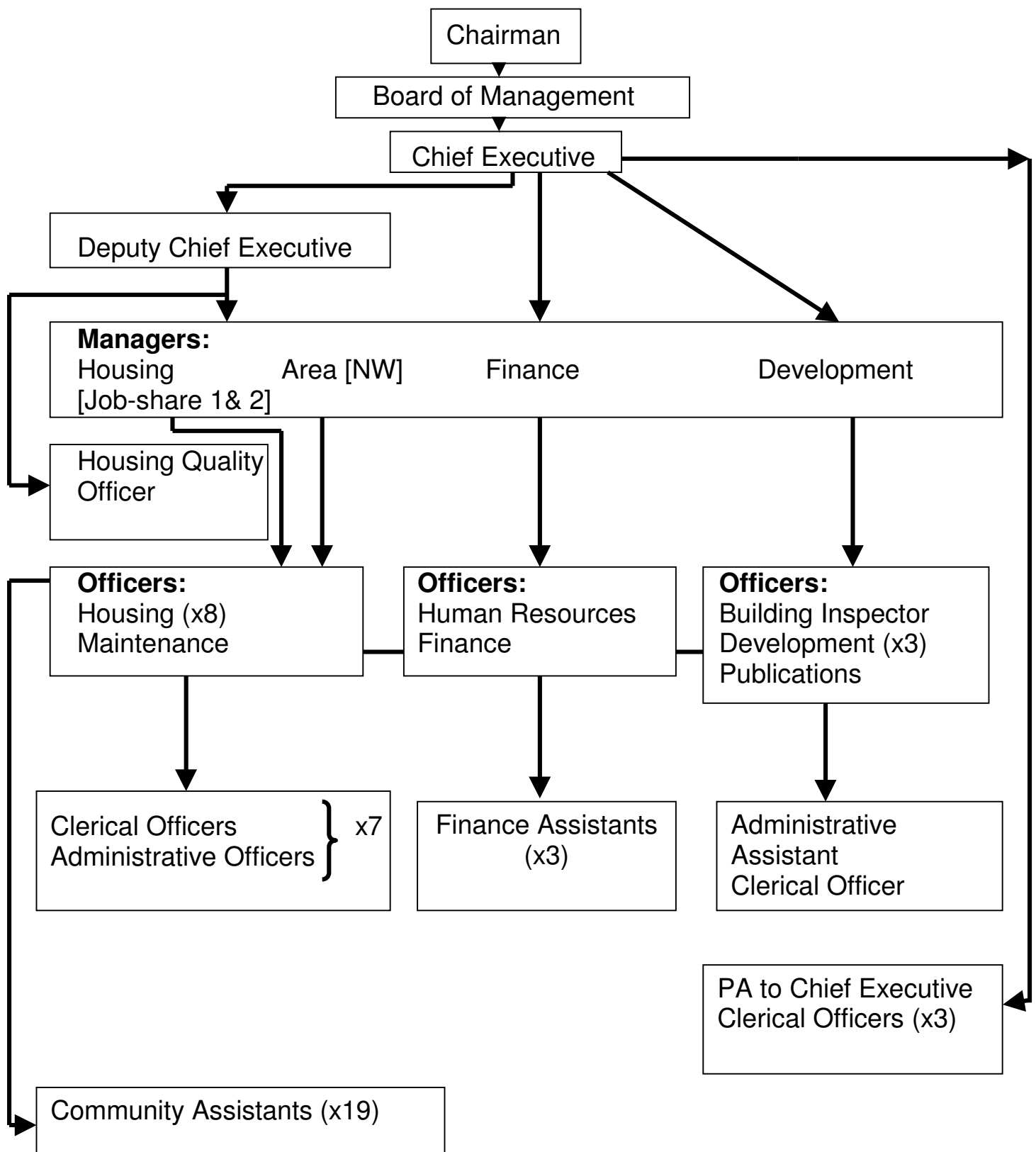
Publication of the Scheme

- 8.1 Following submission to the Equality Commission, this scheme will be available in print form and alternative formats free on request from Habinteg.
- 8.2 The following arrangements will be made for the publication of the Scheme and to ensure equality of access:
- the Scheme will be available on request in formats such as Braille, disc, and audiocassette and in minority languages to meet the needs of those not fluent in English;
 - systems will be in place to ensure that requests for the Scheme in accessible formats will be dealt within a timely manner;
 - specific consideration will also be given to how best to communicate the Scheme to young people and those with learning disabilities;
 - Habinteg will develop a plain English summary of the Scheme;
 - a press release and a prominent advertisement in the press will be placed by Habinteg whenever the Scheme is approved by the Equality Commission;
 - a copy of the Scheme will also be posted on Habinteg's website;
 - copies of the approved Scheme will also be sent to key stakeholders.

Timetable for Implementing the Scheme

- 8.3 Appendix 5 outlines an action plan for implementing the Scheme including date milestones and performance indicators for each task.

APPENDIX ONE – ORGANISATIONAL CHART



(One officer in each post, unless otherwise shown in brackets)

APPENDIX TWO – LIST OF ORGANISATIONS TO BE CONSULTED

Age Concern Northern Ireland
Alliance Party for Northern Ireland
Altnagelvin Area Hospitals HSST
Amalgamated Engineering & Electrical Union
Amalgamated Transport & General Workers Union
Antrim Borough Council
Armagh & Dungannon HSST
Armagh District Council
Association of Chief Officers (AVOVO)
Association of Independent Advice Centres
Bahai Council for Northern Ireland
Ballymena Borough Council
Ballymoney Borough Council
Banbridge District Council
Baptist Union of Ireland
Barnardos
Belfast City Council
Belfast City Hospital HSST
Belfast Hebrew Congregation
Belfast Islamic Centre
Belfast Trade Unions Council
Belfast Travellers Education & Development Group
Blind Centre for NI
Brainwaves Northern Ireland
British Deaf Association (NI)
Carafriend
Carers Northern Ireland
Carrickfergus Borough Council
Castlereagh Borough Council
Causeway HSST
Central Services Agency
Chartered Institute of Housing
Child Poverty Action Group (NI)
Children's Law Centre
Chinese Welfare Association
Coalition on Sexual Orientation (CoSO)
Coleraine Borough Council
Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ)
Community Development & Health Network (NI)
Community Relations Council (CRC)

Community Relations/Training Learning Consortium
Cookstown District Council
Council for the Homeless (NI)
Craigavon & Banbridge Community HSST
Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSST
Craigavon Borough Council
Democratic Unionist Party
Department for Social Development
Derry City Council
Derry Well Woman
Disability Action, Belfast
Disability Action, Derry
Down District Council
Down Lisburn HSST
Down's Syndrome Association
Dungannon District Council
East Belfast Community Development Agency
Eastern Health & Social Services Board
Employers' Forum on Disability
Equality Commission for NI
Equality Forum NI
Falls Community Council
Family Planning Association (NI)
Fermanagh District Council
Fermanagh Women's Network
First Key
Foyle Friend
Foyle HSST
Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster
Gay & Lesbian Youth Northern Ireland
General Consumer Council
Gingerbread Northern Ireland
Green Park Healthcare HSST
Help the Aged Northern Ireland
Homefirst Community HSST
Housing Rights Service
Indian Community Centre
Irish Council of Churches
Larne Borough Council
Lesbian Line
Limavady District Council

Lisburn Borough Council
Magherafelt District Council
Magheraflet Women's Group
Mater Infirmorum Hospital Trust
MENCAP
Methodist Church in Ireland
Moyle District Council
Multi-Cultural Resource Centre
Newry & Mourne District Council
Newry & Mourne HSST
Newtownabbey Borough Council
Newtownards Borough Council
NIGRA (Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association)
NIPSA
NITAP
North & West Belfast HSST
North Down Borough Council
North West Community Network
North West Forum of People with Disabilities
Northern Health & Social Services Board
Northern Ireland African Cultural Centre
Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Network
Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health
Northern Ireland Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux
Northern Ireland Committee, Irish Congress of Trade Unions (NIC-ICTU)
Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM)
Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA)
Northern Ireland Filipino Association
Northern Ireland Housing Council
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC)
Northern Ireland Mixed Marriage Association
Northern Ireland Office
Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA)
Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation
Northern Ireland Women's European Platform (NIWEP)
Northern Ireland Youth Forum
NUS USI
Office of the First Minister & Deputy First Minister
Omagh District Council
Omagh Women's Area Network
Parents & Professionals & Autism

PHAB Northern Ireland
PRAXIS
Press for Change
Probation Board for Northern Ireland
Progressive Unionist Party
Queer Space
Royal Group of Hospitals & Dental Hospital HSST
Royal Institute for Deaf People (NI)
Royal National Institute for the Blind (NI)
Rural Community Network
Sense NI
Sikh Cultural Centre
Simon Community
Sinn Fein
Social Democratic & Labour Party
South & East Belfast HSST
Southern Health & Social Services Trust
Sperrin Lakeland Health & Social Care Trust
Staff Commission for Education & Library Boards
Strabane District Council
The Cedar Foundation
The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
The Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland (LGSC)
The Rainbow Project
The Women's Centre
Traveller Movement Northern Ireland
UCATT
Ulster Community & Hospitals HSST
Ulster Democratic Party
Ulster Scots Heritage Council
Ulster Unionist Party
UNISON
United Hospitals Group HSST
United Kingdom Unionist Party
West Belfast Economic Forum
Western Health & Social Services Board
Women's Forum Northern Ireland
Women's Information Group
Women's Resource & Development Agency (WRDA)
Women's Support Network
Workers Party

Youth Action

Youth Council for NI

Also

First Homeless Action and Advice Service
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Presbyterian Board of Social Witness

Extern

Edward Street Hostel

Karuna

**APPENDIX 4: MAIN GROUPS RELEVANT TO THE SECTION 75
CATEGORIES FOR NORTHERN IRELAND PURPOSES**

Category	Main Groups
Religious belief	Protestants; Catholics; people of non-Christian faiths; people of no religious belief
Political opinion	Unionists generally; Nationalist generally; members/supporters of any political party
Racial group	White people; Chinese; Travellers; Indians; Pakistanis; Black people
Men and women generally	Men (including boys); women (including girls), Trans-gendered people, Transsexual people
Marital status	Married people; unmarried people; divorced or separated people; widowed people
Age	Children under 16; people of working age (16/65); people over 65
Persons with a disability	Persons with a physical, sensory, mental or learning disability as defined in sections 1 and 2 and Schedules 1 and 2 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Persons with dependants	Persons with personal responsibility for the care of a child; persons with personal responsibility for the care of a person with an incapacitating disability; persons with personal responsibility for the care of a dependant elderly person
Sexual orientation	Heterosexual people; homosexual people; bisexual people

APPENDIX 5 – ACTION PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTING EQUALITY SCHEME

Area of Implementation	Element	Performance Indicator	Milestone	Responsibility
Organisational Arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of equality objectives into departmental business plans • Integration of equality objectives into personal performance plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMT agrees equality objectives • Equality objectives included in business plans for 2004 / 2005 • Equality objectives reviewed annually in consultation with SMT and included in business plans in years 2003-2004 • SMT agrees draft guidance for staff • Objectives included in personal performance plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually • Annually • Annually • Ongoing • Annually 	Housing Quality Officer and SMT
Progress Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular reports to Habinteg • Annual reports to Equality Commission • Review of Scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minuted reports at least quarterly • Report sent after approval by <i>Habinteg's Board of Management</i> • Report incorporated in <i>Habinteg's Annual Report</i> • Review conducted, published and sent to Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Annually (July) • Annually (May) • 04/10 	Housing Quality Officer and Board of Management

Area of Implementation	Element	Performance Indicator	Milestone	Responsibility
Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="373 310 596 350">• Screening <li data-bbox="373 656 625 732">• Plan for EQIAs <li data-bbox="373 959 596 1036">• Carrying out EQIAs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="646 310 1367 431">• Finalise screening instrument and procedures, and pilot with sample of policies <li data-bbox="646 440 999 480">• Screen all policies <li data-bbox="646 488 1129 529">• Prioritise policies for EQIA <li data-bbox="646 537 1367 659">• Consult with relevant interest groups on outcome of screening exercise (including proposed priorities for EQIA) <li data-bbox="646 667 1367 789">• Develop plan for carrying out EQIAs, taking account of consultation responses <li data-bbox="646 797 1213 837">• Agree plan for EQIAs with SMT <li data-bbox="646 846 1297 886">• Agree plan with Housing association <li data-bbox="646 967 911 1008">• Begin EQIAs <li data-bbox="646 1016 1079 1057">• Review Plan for EQIAs <li data-bbox="646 1105 1367 1187">• Carry out EQIAs in accordance with guidance for EQIAs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1388 310 1528 350">• 01/05 <li data-bbox="1388 440 1528 480">• 02/05 <li data-bbox="1388 488 1528 529">• 03/05 <li data-bbox="1388 537 1541 610">• 04/05-09/05 <li data-bbox="1388 659 1528 699">• 09/05 <li data-bbox="1388 797 1528 837">• 09/05 <li data-bbox="1388 846 1528 886">• 09/05 <li data-bbox="1388 967 1528 1008">• 10/05 <li data-bbox="1388 1016 1577 1097">• annually (May) <li data-bbox="1388 1105 1570 1146">• ongoing 	<p data-bbox="1648 310 1892 391">Housing Quality Officer</p> <p data-bbox="1648 651 1902 773">Housing Quality Officer, SMT</p> <p data-bbox="1648 1032 1906 1203">Internally and in conjunction with other HA s in joint process</p>

Area of Implementation	Element	Performance Indicator	Milestone	Responsibility
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of Equality Scheme • Dissemination to key stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme to be published after approval from the Equality Commission • Summary of Scheme to be developed and made available • Scheme to be made available in accessible formats on request • Scheme to be published on website • Copy of Scheme to be made available to all Board members & staff • Copy of Scheme mailed to all those consulted on the Scheme, and to others on request • Press Release to the media informing them of the publication of the Equality Scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 04/05 • 05/05 • ongoing • 06/05 • 05/05 • 05/05 • 05/05 (or when all HA schemes are approved) 	Chief Executive
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Access to Information and Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To conduct a review within one year of the implementation of the scheme covering all aspects of access to information and services, and produce report making recommendations • To consult on review with key stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 04/06 • 09/06 	Housing Quality Officer

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce action plan for acting on review recommendations • Implementation of action plan begins • Carry out action plan to meet performance indicator targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12/06 • 01/07 • ongoing 	
<i>Complaints</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints procedure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To respond to any complaints of non-compliance within one month of complaint being made • To report on complaints made on an annual basis to the Equality Commission as part of annual report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ongoing • annually (July) 	Chief Executive