



## EQUALITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

### Public Authority 2011 – 2012 Annual Progress Report on:

- Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and
- Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Order (DDO) 2006

Name of public authority:

Habinteg Housing Association [Ulster] Ltd

Quality and Performance Manager [including Equality Manager]

#### **S75:**

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#### **DDO:**

As Above

## **S75 Executive Summary**

- **What were the key policy/service developments made by the authority during this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations and what outcomes were achieved?**

### **Habinteg's response**

For the period 1 April 2011 – 31 March 2012, the Association has been involved in some of key policy and service developments to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations. This mainly included collaborative working with other participating housing associations, co-ordinated by the Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations [NIFHA] on revising our Equality Scheme and particularly focussed on producing an Audit of Inequalities and Potential Inequalities in housing and action plan.

No EQIA's were carried out for this reporting period but Habinteg has continued to screen all new and revised internal policies for equality impact purposes and has continued to provide annual Section 75 staff training for all staff.

In addition to the above, the Association continues to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations by maintaining support to the principles of a 'Shared Future' neighbourhood, where diversity is welcomed and respect and tolerance are shown to all. We continue to encourage tenants, as part of the sign up process, to buy into our Good Neighbour Agreements for all new housing association tenancies and re-lets. This involves tenants signing up to a voluntary charter which is a stand-alone document additional to the legal tenancy agreement. It outlines the conduct that is expected from each tenant as well as incorporating community safety and shared neighbourhood principles. Examples of commitments with specific relevance to the promotion of Good Relations include:

- Respect for all neighbours and their property and fairness in dealing with everyone, irrespective of their religion, race, ability, culture or political belief.
- Recognition that a good community spirit benefits all through healthy interaction and mutual support in dealing with local problems.

The agreement is talked through in detail with every new tenant and tenants are asked if they would like to enter into this agreement. A copy of this agreement can be found in **Appendix 1**.

In relation to staff training, the Association continues to invite external agencies that promote equality of opportunity and good relations, into the organisation to provide up to date training and information to all staff. For this reporting period the Association sourced training for all staff mental health related issues and in particular living with and working with people with depression. The Association invited Aware Defeat Depression to provide training to all staff at its Annual Staff Away Day on 5 October 2011. Aware Defeat Depression has been working since 1996 to support all those in Northern Ireland affected by depression or bipolar disorder (manic depression).

Aware Defeat Depression recognises that positive mental health is more than just the absence of mental illness and promotes positive coping skills, self awareness, good self esteem, warm relationships and good physical health. The training for Habinteg staff on the 5 October was designed as awareness training for all staff members, with the promotion of people with depression in a non-judgmental manner, encouraging dignity and respect, and equal opportunities for those affected to develop to their full potential.

The Association also worked closely with Business in the Community Northern Ireland during this reporting period and arranged 'Respect and Dignity' training for all staff that was facilitated with small groups of staff at any one time and ran from October 2011 to February 2012.

This training involved:

- underpinning values, beliefs and opinions and the effects this has on how we relate to others
- understanding of the effect that communication & assertiveness can have on potential conflict situations
- the benefits of eliminating bullying
- conflict
- causes of conflict
- behaviour & communication
- bullies & targets
- challenging conflict & bullying

The Association's Quality and Performance Manager, who drives the equality agenda in the organisation with support the Board, Senior Management Team and the Human Resources Officer, continues to ensure that the Association complies with the latest equality legislation in carrying out their functions, powers and duties and promotes equality of opportunity and good relations among a range of groups.

The Quality and Performance Manager attended training provided by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations [NIFHA] and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive [NIHE] on a number of occasions over the reporting period, including training on carrying out the 5 year review of the Equality Scheme and the implementation of a new/revised Equality Scheme as well as how to carry out an audit of inequalities.

- **What are the main initiatives planned in the coming year to ensure the authority improves outcomes in terms of equality of opportunity and good relations for individuals from the nine categories covered by Section 75?**

### **Habinteg's response**

Equality continues to remain at the heart of Habinteg's ethos and practice and is very much embedded into everything we do.

As mentioned previously, equality training and updates continue to be coordinated by the Quality and Performance Manager who actively spearheads and promotes all aspects of equality as a core element of their role. In general, all aspects of the Association's business adhere to and are inclusive towards all nine categories covered by Section 75.

The Association will continue to provide annual up to date equality training on the nine category groups in turn with all staff members. All new members of staff meet with the Quality and Performance Manager, as part of their induction and our Equality Duty is explained as well as the Association's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and good relations.

On 10 October 2012 the Association has arranged for the Equality Commission Northern Ireland to attend its Annual Staff Away Day and provide awareness training to all staff on the Travelling Community. This

training was decided on by the Quality and Performance Manager, following the results of the Equality Commission's Equality Awareness Survey 2011, whereby it was reported that the highest incidence of negative attitudes that exist in Northern Ireland were towards Travellers.

The Quality and Performance Manager will continue to represent the Association and attend seminars and training organised by the Equality Commission for NI, as standalone training or in conjunction with events and seminars organised with NIFHA, so as to keep up-to-date and aware of any changes in legislation and requirements that the Association must be adhere to.

The Quality and Performance Manager will also continue to relay relevant and up to date information both verbally and on the staff Intranet where necessary. Equality work update papers will continue to be prepared for Board, Housing Management Committee and Senior Management Team information at regular intervals and listed as an agenda item where required. Discussions will continue to be had at the Action Team meetings and any recommendations actioned, upon approval, through staff training and updates.

The Association endeavours to continue to take guidance from government and the Equality Commission through NIFHA's Equality Coordination Group and ensure that it plays its part in helping to improve outcomes in terms of equality of opportunity and good relations.

In order to improve outcomes the equality duty remains a standard agenda for the Board, Senior Management Team, and Action Team and is included in staff briefings. The equality duty also continues to be highlighted at the Residents Forum and published in the residents' newsletters and at relevant staff training.

The Association proudly continues to be committed to promoting and delivering its Vision of 'Homes for All' and its mission statement to 'provide accessible, sustainable, high quality housing'.

Habinteg in general continues to invest time and resources for internal and external processes and an endorsement of the Equality Duty under Section 75, through publications and staff training opportunities.

We will continue to ensure that all members of our Board, which now comprises of two Resident representatives, sub-committees, staff team and Residents' Forum, are made aware of any new duties. We also plan to consult fully with all of our internal groups and external consultees [**See Appendix 2**] when undertaking our five yearly review of this Equality Scheme and drafting our Audit of Inequalities.

We continue to publicise that we offer any of our publications in alternative formats upon request and have continued to retain our membership with Language Line Services in London and avail of STEP in Dungannon Northern Ireland who offer interpreting and translation services in various languages as well as internally having a member of staff that can translate in Polish for our Polish tenants.

Habinteg also continue to produce documents in large print and on audio tape at the request of some of its customers. The Association, where needed, will continue to utilise the services of RNIB for the purpose of translating documents into Braille for customers who may request the information using this format and we have also been in contact with Action on Hearing Loss with respect to researching possible future communication devices for customers with hearing impairments.

The Association continues to be committed to using the following statement in all of Habinteg's recruitment campaigns:

*'Applications are welcomed from persons irrespective of religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, ability/disability or dependant statuses'*

The Association was assessed against the Customer Service Excellence Standard on 8 and 9 March 2012 and are proud to have not only met the Standard first time round but because we achieved 7 best practices.

One of the areas where the Association achieved best practice was in our Tenant Satisfaction Survey. This was awarded because the Assessor was impressed that we have a specific question in our survey whereby we ask our tenants if they felt they were treated unfairly because they belonged to one or more of the nine categories under Section 75, and we list all nine groups.

In total the best practices included:

1. The Association's general planning for the housing needs of vulnerable people and people with disabilities
2. The introduction of the Tenant Profile Form in response to Welfare Reform and using the opportunity to obtain more up to date information on tenants and their household members.
3. The significant improvements to the Mystery Shopping Exercise Report in 2011 in comparison to the feedback report in 2010.
4. The Equality Question in the Annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey, whereby tenants were asked to feedback if they were treated fairly by the Association across all of the nine Section 75 Equality category groups
5. The introduction of Team Appraisals in the Association and how these were carried out.
6. The strong partnership working in the Association, which was reinforced by partners and other agencies that attended the CSE lunch at Ardnacloyne
7. The Corporate Responsibility Report that details the numerous ways in which Habinteg and its staff contribute to People, Planet and Places in the wider community.

As highlighted at point 2 above and because it was awarded best practice during this reporting period, we feel it is important to elaborate that the Association undertook an exercise to gather up to date information on our tenants [Tenant Profiling]. The reason for this exercise was primarily to investigate our tenant's up to date household composition and benefit entitlement for the purposes of the likely impact on them in relation to Welfare Reform.

The tenant profiling exercise also allowed us to ascertain whether anyone in the household has a physical or sensory impairment, long term medical condition, learning difficulty. The Association provided the incentive of £25 shopping vouchers for completed and returned surveys, which helped with the return. This is an ongoing exercise for housing officers to gather information from existing tenants that did not return the survey and **all** new tenants will be asked for this information automatically at the sign up stage.

This information will help us gain a better idea of our tenants' needs and preferences.

## New / Revised Equality Schemes

- Please indicate whether this reporting period applies to a new or revised scheme and (if appropriate) when the scheme was approved?

For this reporting period the Association still refers to its existing Equality Scheme with some reference made to the work commencing on revising the scheme and producing an Audit of Inequalities. The reason for this is because the final revisions were not made to the scheme by the end of this reporting period. It is intended, as per the Equality Commission's timetable that submitted draft Equality Schemes will have received Board approval and are submitted to the Commission for approval by 1 August 2012.

- Please give examples of changes to policies or practices which have resulted in outcomes. If the change was a result of an EQIA please tick the appropriate box in column 3 and reference the title of the relevant EQIA in the space provided below:

	Outline change in policy or practice which have resulted in outcomes	Tick if result of EQIA
Persons of different religious belief	Training for all staff [OCT 2011] on Respect and Dignity	
Persons of different political opinion	Training for all staff [OCT 2011] on Respect and Dignity	
Persons of different racial groups	Training for all staff [OCT 2011] on Respect and Dignity	
Persons of different age	Training for all staff [OCT 2011] on Respect and Dignity	
Persons with different marital status	Training for all staff [OCT 2011] on Respect and Dignity	
Persons of different sexual orientation	Training for all staff [OCT 2011] on Respect and Dignity	
Men and women generally	Training for all staff [OCT 2011] on Respect and Dignity	
Persons with and without a disability	Training for all staff [OCT 2011] on Respect and Dignity & Awareness training provided to all staff by Aware Defeat Depression [OCT 11]	
Persons with and without dependants	Training for all staff [OCT 2011] on Respect and Dignity	

## **Section 1: Strategic Implementation of the Section 75 Duties**

- **Please outline evidence of progress made in developing and meeting equality and good relations objectives, performance indicators and targets in corporate and annual operating plans during 2010-11**

### **Habinteg's Response:**

As previously highlighted, Habinteg continues to have the equality agenda firmly embedded within the organisation. We continue to recognise and adhere to our equality duty and timetable and ensure that staff members receive up to date training and information through the role of the Quality and Performance Manager and Human Resources Officer.

Progress on our equality work continues to be reported on a regular basis by the Quality and Performance Manager to the Board, Housing Management Committee, and Senior Management Team both verbally and in written report form. It remains the Quality and Performance Manager's role to ensure that all staff members receive adequate training and up to date information.

To date Habinteg has completed the screening of Year 1, Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4 policy areas and did not carry out Year 5's EQIA on Procurement as explained in last year's report. The five year EQIA timetable therefore came to an end with Housing Association's conducting their own screening and carrying out EQIAs if and when this became necessary. For this reporting period Habinteg Housing Association did not need to carry out an EQIA on any policies that were screened.

Even without conducting an EQIA for this reporting period, the Association remains committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all and excellence in customer service, and will continue to seek, where possible, to continue to put measures in place to ensure that all sections of society have an equal opportunity to access appropriate redress when problems occur.

Responsibility for overseeing Habinteg's compliance with the Section 75 equality duty will continue to lie with the Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive and the day to day responsibility for developing initiatives in

relation to the equality duty continues to be designated to the Quality and Performance Manager, who reports directly to the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Operations and Senior Management Team on this matter.

The Quality and Performance Manager continues to ensure that training and information provided through NIFHA and the ECNI is adopted in order to progress on complying with the equality duty. As mentioned earlier in this report all staff members and other relevant persons are updated on a regular basis through various communication methods, including training events throughout the year.

Habinteg continues to be represented on a multi-agency partnership in the North West region which is co-ordinated by PSNI. This multi-agency group oversees the development of protocols for race and homophobia. This highlights our continued commitment to the promotion of good relations throughout Northern Ireland.

As mentioned at the beginning of this report, Habinteg has also already embraced the 'Shared Future Agenda' and demonstrated its commitment to this by completing the first in the North West, Shared Future Housing Development at Ballyfatton Close in Sion Mills in November 2008. Again, as mentioned earlier in this report, the Association continues to promote the principles of the Shared Future Agenda and encourages all residents to sign up to the 'Good Neighbour Agreement' **[See Appendix 1 for a copy of the Good Neighbour Agreement].**

## Section 2: Examples of Section 75 Outcomes / Impacts

- Given the renewed focus of Section 75 aiming to achieve more tangible impacts and outcomes and addressing key inequalities; please report in this section how the authority's work has impacted on individuals across the Section 75 categories. Consider narrative in the following structure:
  - *Describe* the action measure /section 75 process undertaken.
  - *Who* was affected across the Section 75 categories?
  - *What impact* it achieved?
- Please give examples of changes to policies or practices using **screening or EQIA**, which have resulted in **outcomes or impacts for individuals**. If the change was a result of an EQIA please indicate this and also reference the title of the relevant EQIA.

	<b>Outline change in policy or practice which have resulted in outcomes</b>	<b>Tick if result of EQIA</b>	<b>Title of EQIA</b>
<b>Persons of different racial groups</b>	Continued upgrade of website to include more alternative formats of communication	✓	Access and Communication
<b>Persons with and without a disability</b>	Continued upgrade of website to include more alternative formats of communication	✓	Access and Communication

- Please give examples of **outcomes or impacts on individuals** as a result of any **action measures** undertaken as part of your Section 75 action plan:

During the year 2011-12 the Association's main focus was on carrying out an audit of inequalities and developing a new Equality Scheme and Action Plan.

- Please give examples of **outcomes or impacts on individuals** as a result of any **other Section 75 processes** e.g. consultation or monitoring:

During the year 2011-12 the Association’s main focus was on carrying out an audit of inequalities and developing a new Equality Scheme and Action Plan.

**Section 3: Screening**

- **Please provide an update of new/proposed/revised policies screened during the year.**

For those authorities that have started issuing of screening reports in year; this section may be completed in part by appending, to this annual report, a copy of all screening reports issued within the reporting period.

Where screening reports have not been issued, for part or all of the reporting period, please complete the table below:

Title of policy subject to screening	What was the screening decision? E.g. screened in, screened out, mitigation, EQIA...	Were any concerns raised about screening by consultees; including the Commission?	Is policy being subject to EQIA? Yes/No If yes indicate timeline for assessment.
TOIL Policy	Screened Out	Some clarification was required in certain areas of the policy following consultation. These have now being addressed and the final policy was drafted and approved in June 2011	No

**Section 4: Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)**

- **Please provide an update of policies subject to EQIA during 2011-12, stage 7 EQIA monitoring activities and an indicative EQIA timetable for 2011-12**

EQIA Timetable – April 2011 - March 2012

Title of Policy EQIA	EQIA Stage at end March 10 (Steps 1-6)	Outline adjustments to policy intended to benefit individuals and the relevant Section 75 categories due to be affected.
NO POLICIES WERE SUBJECT TO AN EQIA FOR THIS REPORTING PERIOD.		

- **Where the EQIA timetable for 2011-12 (as detailed in the previous annual S75 progress report to the Commission) has not been met, please provide details of the factors responsible for delay and details of the timetable for re-scheduling the EQIA/s in question.**

**NB** The 5 year EQIA timetable, jointly set and agreed by the Equality Task Group came to a conclusion at the end of 2011. Since then all Housing Associations have been responsible for carrying out EQIAs as and when these are required with any new or revised policy. For this reporting period, and as detailed above, only one policy was screened out. This policy was not subject to an EQIA.

Ongoing EQIA Monitoring Activities April 2011- March 2012

Title of EQIA subject to Stage 7 monitoring	Indicate if differential impacts previously identified have reduced or increased	Indicate if adverse impacts previously identified have reduced or increased
NO POLICIES WERE SUBJECT TO AN EQIA FOR THIS REPORTING PERIOD		

- Please outline any proposals, arising from the authority’s monitoring for adverse impacts, for revision of the policy to achieve better outcomes the relevant equality groups:

2012-13 EQIA Time-table

Title of EQIAs due to be commenced during April 2012 – March 2013	Existing or New policy?	Please indicate expected timescale of Decision Making stage i.e. Stage 6
ALL OF HABINTEG’S POLICIES HAVE BEEN SCREENED OUT TO DATE WITH MINIMAL CHANGES BASED ON CONSULTATION BUT NO EQIA’S REQUIRED. THE ASSOCIATION IS COMMITTED TO SCREENING ALL NEW OR REVISED POLICIES AS AND WHEN THEY ARE PRODUCED.	N/A	N/A

**Section 5: Training**

- **Please outline training provision during the year associated with the Section 75 Duties/Equality Scheme requirements including types of training provision and conclusions from any training evaluations.**

**Habinteg’s Response:**

The Association’s Quality and Performance Manager, continues to actively embrace the equality agenda on behalf of the organisation by availing of the relevant external training and information seminars provided by NIFHA through the Equality Task Group, the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and other relevant voluntary and statutory bodies throughout the year.

This included training by the Equality Commission on conducting a 5 year review of Equality schemes, preparing to create or revise your Equality Scheme for 2012, including carrying out an ‘audit of inequalities’, as well as best practice sharing by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

In 2011-12 NIFHA arranged a variety of open courses and workshops for members, a number of which were aimed at helping them to meet their equality obligations. Examples from their training programme, where Habinteg was represented, included:

- Deaf Awareness – Breaking down the Barriers
- Creating Customer Focus

Sessions specific to the development of new Equality Schemes that Habinteg attended were:

- Workshops to identify potential inequalities by functional area, September 2011 – facilitated by Dorothy McKee
- Developing S75 Actions and revised Equality Schemes: What Social Housing Providers Need to Know, October 2011 – facilitated by ECNI representatives, Tony Steed, NIHE and Lucinda McMurrin, NIFHA
- Challenge Workshop to assess potential impacts by equality category, January 2012 – facilitated by John Kremer

As mentioned earlier in this report all relevant equality training and updates on Section 75 equality duties were reported by the Quality and Performance Manager to the Board, the Housing Management Committee, the Senior Management Team, the Action Team and to staff members at weekly team meetings and at various stages throughout the year, including through the Intranet and at the annual Habinteg Away Day when all staff and some Board members are present.

For this reporting period the Association continued to place a strong emphasis on the Equality Duty to its employees from day one of their employment with the Association. This involved the Quality and Performance Manager providing each new employee with a one to one session on the Association's commitment to the equality agenda as part of their induction to the organisation.

The Association, as an 'Investors in People' organisation, continued to welcome the opportunity to train staff to enhance their ability to do their job better. Training to enable staff to fulfil the Section 75 duty is considered essential.

Individual training was identified at the appraisal stage between the Line Manager and the appraisee. At weekly team meetings training was reviewed with the rest of the team and an evaluation form on the training completed by the member of staff who attended the training.

### **Section 6: Communication**

- **Please outline how the authority communicated progress on delivery of the Section 75 Duties during the year and evidence of the impact/success of such activities.**

#### **Habinteg's Response:**

As in this report, the Association completes an annual progress report to the Equality Commission and copies the same to NIFHA on its equality work since the last reporting period.

Internally the Association evaluates what staff members thought of and learned from various equality training provided. This feedback helps decide on future training needs also.

The Association continues to survey tenants to assess satisfaction and in one particular survey question, as mentioned earlier, asks them how they were treated by the member/s of staff they were in contact with and whether they felt they were treated unfairly. Current figures show very high satisfaction with staff treating tenants fairly.

Habinteg also continues to communicate progress on its delivery of the Section 75 duties during the year in a number of other ways. These include in the Residents' Newsletter, directly to the Residents Forum, in its Annual 'How Did We Do' document, on the staff Intranet and at staff training events.

## **Section 7: Data Collection & Analysis**

- **Please outline any systems that were established during the year to supplement available statistical and qualitative research or any research undertaken/commissioned to obtain information on the needs and experiences of individuals from the nine categories covered by Section 75, including the needs and experiences of people with multiple identities.**

### **Habinteg's Response:**

The joint data collection process during 2011-12 was handled by NIFHA and its member associations through the Equality Task Group, of which Habinteg's Quality and Performance Manager is a member of. The main focus for the Task Group during this reporting period was gathering information for the Audit of Inequalities.

NIFHA also worked with members of the Equality Task and Finish Group to develop appropriate forms for gathering comprehensive tenant profile information. These forms were shared with all member associations. In addition, forms were also developed to assist member associations to capture monitoring information in an agreed format. This approach should facilitate better cross-association comparison.

As part of our joint work for the Audit of Inequalities the Equality Task Group also assisted in collecting relevant statistics and qualitative information about the nine equality categories. This material was made available to all designated associations

Other regular data collection audits continue to be undertaken internally. Some of these include;

The collection of tenant data, on behalf of NIFHA, for their annual socio-economic data analysis of new lettings. These statistics are referred to as 'NICORE' and at 31 March 2012 still cover seven of the nine Section 75 categories. The Association also continues to collect and report similar information to NIFHA on behalf of its jointly managed schemes.

Habinteg continues to produce annual returns on its activities in relation to Housing Management to our funding body the Department for Social Development [DSD].

The Association also continues to conduct annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey across 20% of all our housing schemes and continues to adopt the Tenant Satisfaction Survey template used by a number of other housing associations for benchmarking purposes. For this reporting period a summary of the results were published in Habinteg's 'How Did We Do?' document 2011, which is distributed to all residents and is available on our website.

The results of the surveys are analysed by the Quality and Performance Manager and are then discussed in detail at the Housing Management Committee meetings and are reported on at Senior Management Team and Board meetings. The next 20% round of surveys for 2012 will commence in October 2012, using the same benchmarking Tenant Satisfactory Survey.

The results of the surveys are also communicated to all other staff members at weekly team meetings and on the staff Intranet and actions are put in place to address where possible any improvements in service delivery.

The Association continues to have in place a staff suggestion scheme in which staff members are encouraged to put forward thoughts and suggestions on how to improve on the Association's service delivery especially to those who fall under any one of the nine categories outlined under Section 75 of the Statutory Equality Duty.

More recently the Association introduced a new Stakeholder survey in order to determine satisfaction with other stakeholders other than our tenants.

The Association commenced an exercise in September 2011 to gather more information on its tenants', including their household compositions, needs and preferences. This was done by designing and distributing what was called a 'Tenant Profile Update Form' and asking tenants to provide the most up to date information about them and their household. The Association had a prize draw of £25 shopping vouchers, which helped with the return of completed forms.

The main purpose of this exercise was to identify tenants that are likely to be impacted by Welfare Reform. This allows the Association to target advice and support and be prepared for the impact in terms of time and

resources when the reforms come to fruition. This is an ongoing exercise the Association is working through.

- **Please outline any use of the Commission’s Section 75 Monitoring Guide.**

The Association generally continues to refer to the guide in the process of developing or implementing policy to ensure that we are promoting equality of opportunity and good relations and are adhering to the responsibilities imposed by Section 75.

### **Section 8: Information Provision, Access to Information and Services**

- **Please provide details of any initiatives/steps taken during the year, including take up, to improve access to services including provision of information in accessible formats.**

#### **Habinteg’s Response:**

Since the last reporting period the Association’s Communication Officer has continued, in consultation with staff and the Residents Forum, to update and improve the Association’s new website. This has included the provision of more relevant, accessible and up to date information and publications for customers in a variety of accessible formats.

We also continue to state on all of our publications that all our information can be made available in alternative formats upon request. We continue to use the facilities of Language Line Services, who provide interpretation and translation services in up to 170 various languages and the language translation services of local company STEP.

Our reception areas continue to display welcome posters in a variety of languages for people from a wide range of cultures visiting our offices.

As mentioned earlier the Association continues to be committed to gathering feedback from our tenants through Tenant Satisfaction Surveys. We ask in the survey where we could improve our information provision and where weaknesses are identified we address these. The benchmarking Tenant Satisfaction Survey allows us to benchmark our tenant satisfaction levels against of tenants in similar sized housing associations.

## **Section 9: Complaints**

- **Please identify the number of Section 75 related complaints:**
  - **received and resolved by the authority (including how this was achieved);**
  - **which were not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant;**
  - **which were referred to the Equality Commission.**

### **Habinteg's Response:**

- No Section 75 complaints were received during the period 2011/2012.
- A comprehensive complaints procedure remains in place which offers recourse to the Ombudsman Service.

## **Section 10: Consultation and Engagement**

- **Please provide details of the measures taken to enhance the level of engagement with individuals and representative groups during the year.**
- **Please outline any use of the Commission's guidance on consulting with and involving children and young people.**

### **Habinteg's Response:**

The Association continues to be committed to working jointly with our Joint Management Partners, other housing associations, NIFHA, the Equality Commission, our Residents Forum and community and voluntary groups to undertake consultation and involvement exercises in relation to the Section 75 duty.

As mentioned earlier in this report, during 2011-12 the Equality Task Group, co-ordinated by NIFHA, sought information from representative bodies of various Section 75 categories. This exercise was for the purposes of pulling together an Audit of Inequalities.

Generally the Association continues to be strongly committed to consultation generally and views consultation and involvement of customers as a key business priority.

Habinteg continues to involve customers in many of the decision making processes employed. This is particularly evident in the work that is carried out by a representative Residents Forum which continues to consist of democratically elected representatives from Habinteg housing schemes

and which meets at least three times per year. The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Residents' Forum are co-opted members of the Housing Management Committee and Board.

The Association continues to work very closely with many groups and consortia throughout the community and voluntary sectors. Such mechanisms continue to prove excellent vehicles for the Association to gain an insight into the requirements of different groups in the community.

The Association has significantly enhanced our consultation and engagement with children and young people on our housing schemes through the Community Assistant Service.

A number of events are ongoing and have taken place. Some of these have included

**Health Drop-In Sessions** – a 12 week series, facilitated by one of Habinteg's Community Assistants Margaret Cunningham. The drop in sessions ran from Feb to end of April 2011 at five of Habinteg's housing schemes. Each session included taking and monitoring residents' blood pressure and weight. Health information is provided along with sign posting to local agencies offering specific support and services in the area.

**Fruity Fridays** – Again, facilitated by Community Assistant Margaret Cunningham, a 3 week programme to encourage children from Habinteg and housing schemes to eat fruit and vegetables.

**Garden Angels Project** – an organized programme to encourage young people from the area to look after residents and keep them safe.

### **Section 11: The Good Relations Duty**

- **Please provide details of additional steps taken to implement or progress the good relations duty during the year. Please indicate any findings or expected outcomes from this work.**

### **Habinteg's Response:**

In addition to what has already been mentioned in the Executive Summary of this report, the Association remains committed to Corporate Responsibility [CR] and recognise the benefits for customers, employees

and key stakeholders in developing and implementing a Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy.

The Association continues to have a clear ambitious vision to consider the economic, social and environmental impact of its operations. To date the Association has become involved in numerous activities to provoke an overall positive impact on society which has been highlighted in more detail in our third CR. Some of the activities the Association continues to be involved in to progress the good relations duty include;

### **Shantallow North Community Forum**

The aim of this group is to find ways to improve community safety and enhance the quality of life of residents in the Shantallow North area. The Forum was formed by local people, who were interested in creating a safe environment that meets social needs and generates a sense of belonging and pride within the local community.

### **Foyle Community Forums Partnership Group**

The aim of this umbrella group are to advance community safety and to improve the conditions of life of residents in the Derry City Council area by providing information and practical assistance for the benefit of residents with a view to creating a safe environment , which meets social needs and generates a sense of belonging and pride within local communities.

### **Outer North Community Safety Team**

The aim of this group is to resolve community safety issues at ground level in the Outer North area of the city.

### **The Habinteg Estates Forum**

Aim of this group is to combat anti social behaviour within our estates in the Hazelbank area. This Forum comprises Habinteg Housing officers in the Northwest and the PSNI.

As mentioned earlier in this report the Association continues to promote 'Shared Future Neighbourhoods' like that of its development at Ballyfatton Close, Sion Mills, Co. Tyrone.

The Association supports these activities by continuing to promote the principles of 'A Shared Future' and 'Neighbourhood Charter'. Residents are encouraged to affirm their choice to live in a 'Shared Future Neighbourhood' by signing up to a 'Neighbourhood Charter' in which diversity is welcomed and respect and tolerance are shown to all, irrespective of religious, political or cultural beliefs.

As highlighted in the Executive Summary of this report, the Association has continued to promote its 'Good Neighbour Agreement' whereby Habinteg residents are encouraged to sign up to a voluntary charter which is a stand-alone document additional to the legal tenancy agreement. It outlines the conduct that is expected from each tenant as well as incorporating community safety and shared neighbourhood principles. Examples of commitments with specific relevance to the promotion of Good Relations include:

- Respect for all neighbours and their property and fairness in dealing with everyone, irrespective of their religion, race, ability, culture or political belief.
- Recognition that a good community spirit benefits all through healthy inter-action and mutual support in dealing with local problems.

Generally the Association fully supports the Good Relations Duty in any way it can.

- **Please outline any use of the Commission's Good Relations Guide.**

While no specific parts of the guide that can reference our work against, the Association continues to generally refer to the guide in the process of developing or implementing policy, again to ensure that we are promoting equality of opportunity and good relations and are adhering to the responsibilities imposed by Section 75.

## **Section 12: Additional Comments**

- **Please provide any additional information/comments**

Although highlighted in previous Annual Reports to the Commission, it is important to re-emphasise that 'Habinteg' is derived from an amalgamation of the words 'habitat' and 'integrate'. The association prides itself on continuing to be the leading provider of accommodation for people with disabilities on schemes where wheelchair dwellings are integrated with those of able-bodied persons in Northern Ireland;

Likewise, we continue to provide accommodation for older people and families throughout Northern Ireland;

All of our offices are wheelchair accessible and therefore pushchair accessible and our two main offices in Holywood and Londonderry are equipped with a lift;

Also mentioned earlier in this report, is Habinteg's collaborative working with other housing associations and NIFHA. This work will continue to help mainstream equality and promote good relations in the social housing sector and beyond in Northern Ireland.

Externally, Quality and Equality performance is also measured against national standards, such as Customer Service Excellence and Investors in People. In March 2012, Habinteg achieved the Customer Service Excellence Standard, with 7 Compliance Pluses/Best Practices, which the Assessor remarked on was an achievement in itself when being assessed first time to the Standard.

The Association is also proud to remain an Investor in People organisation with Bronze Status and is due to be reassessed in April 2012.

Annual Report 1 April 2010 / 31 March 2011  
'Disability Duties' Questions

**1. How many action measures for this reporting period have been?**

19

Fully  
Achieved

2

Partially  
Achieved

Not  
Achieved

2. Please outline the following detail on **all actions that have been fully achieved** in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what **public life measures** have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs <sup>1</sup>	Outcomes / Impact <sup>2</sup>
National <sup>3</sup>			
Regional <sup>4</sup>	NIFHA / Members	Participation in relevant consultation exercises.	Inform policies / strategies and promote equality.
Local <sup>5</sup>	One of Habinteg's residents, who is also Chair of Habinteg's Residents Forum, continues to be an advocate of Disability Awareness. This person also continues to be a Housing Management Committee member and has previously sat on one of the Association's Service Review Panels. The Association also has a Board Member, who is a wheelchair user, who has sat on the Board and Housing Management Committee for a number of years	Both members have an extremely important role in the organisation and their input and role in the organisation demonstrate how the association encourages and welcomes people with disabilities to help make a positive impact on public life at a local level.	Ensures that Disability awareness and positive promotion remains imperative to the Association's vision and ethos

<sup>1</sup> **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.

<sup>2</sup> **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.

<sup>3</sup> **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments

<sup>4</sup> **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level

<sup>5</sup> **Local**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.

2(b) What **training action measures** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Regular in-house Equality Training over the year provided by internal and external trainers as well as all new staff, as part of their induction, meet with the Quality and Performance Manager one to one to highlight and embed the Association's equality duties.	Training provided internally for all staff on Section 75 equality duties and promotion of the Habinteg's integrated approach and externally training on Respect and Dignity. For this reporting period 13 new staff members joined the Association and received equality training as part of their induction	Awareness of current legislation and statutory duties on organisation and individual staff members as well as an awareness and understanding of appropriate language and behaviour from induction stage in the Association.
2	Regular liaising between the Association and NIFHA through the Association's Quality and Performance Manager and NIFHA's Corporate Services Manager particularly through equality updates and through joint working with NIFHA and other Housing Associations	Updates and joint working activities filtered through from Board to staff members	Awareness and equality agenda continuing to be embedded in the corporate strategy and actively promoted in the organisation as a whole.
3	Quality and Performance Manager continuing to spearhead the equality agenda and ensure the Association is up to date with the latest initiatives and obligations expected of it.	Quality and Performance Manager to relay this information through continued training of staff members and liaising with the appropriate bodies to provide external support and awareness	Awareness and equality agenda continuing to be embedded in the corporate strategy and actively promoted in the organisation as a whole.

2(c) What Positive attitudes **action measures** in the area of **Communications** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	The Association continues to subscribe to Language Line Services to provide translation and interpretation services in over 170 various languages. The Association also continues to utilise the services of local firm STEP for translating documents in different languages. The Association continues to provide information on its website that can be translated into various preferred languages there and then.	Interpretation and translation services remain an important facility to encourage equal accessibility of information to all who wish to use our services	Customers who have used the facility have been able to access information in their preferred language/format.
2	The Association continues to promote a statement that information can be provided in Alternative Formats including Braille, audio tape as well as other different languages as mentioned above	Equal accessibility of information to all who wish to use our services	Customers who have used the facility have been able to access information in their preferred format

3	As mentioned earlier the website, the Tenants Handbook, the Residents Newsletter and Staff Intranet continue to be updated and improved on involving Resident Forum consultation	More relevant and accessible information is provided that is of interest to residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established a staff Intranet to improve on internal communication</li> <li>• Continuing to carry out further work on our website through continued consultation with Residents Forum, including providing more information and increasing accessibility of information.</li> </ul>
4	The continued representation of Disability advocates on the Housing Management Committee and Board of Management	Has a stronger voice and position to promote equality to Senior Management and Board of Management and subsequently at decision making level	The Association benefits from the experience of champions of Disability Rights being members of the Housing Management Committee and Board. With this insight and voice this will help positively impact on any decision making processes.

2 (d) What action measures were achieved to ‘**encourage others**’ to promote the two duties:

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Continue to embed the disability duties into our consultation with customers processes through our Residents Forum and tenant survey structures	Creating an awareness of our obligations of the disability duties internally to our staff and Board and externally to our customers, whilst promoting positive attitudes towards people with disabilities and encouraging participation by people with disabilities in public life.	Ongoing commitment to promote the two duties and encourage others to see that this is good practice
2	Include regular features about disability in Residents Newsletters	“	Ongoing commitment to promote the two duties and encourage others to see that this is good practice
3	Positive images of people with disabilities in our Habinteg literature, staff and Board structure, correspondence and other promotional materials	“	Ongoing commitment to promote the two duties and encourage others to see that this is good practice
4	Promote the awareness of our duties under the Disability Discrimination Order as part of induction and training programme for Board members and staff	“	Ongoing commitment to promote the two duties and encourage others to see that this is good practice

2 (e) Please outline **any additional action measures** that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
1	N/A		

3. Please outline what action measures have been **partly achieved** as follows:

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones <sup>6</sup> / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1	N/A			

4. Please outline what **action measures have not been achieved** and the reasons why?

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1	N/A	

<sup>6</sup> **Milestones** – Please outline what part progress has been made towards the particular measures; even if full output or outcomes/ impact have not been achieved.

5. What **monitoring tools** have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

**(a) Qualitative**

The Association continues to be committed to the effective implementation of all aspects of the Disability Action Plan throughout our organisation. Overall responsibility for the determining the policy on how effective implementation is achieved will be determined by our Board, led by the Chairman. The Chief Executive will continue to provide direction and guidance to both the Board and staff team with the assistance of the Quality and Performance Manager who will continue to have day-to-day responsibility for implementation of the policy relating to this area. The Quality and Performance Manager will report to Senior Managers on a regular basis. Senior Managers will have ultimate responsibility for overseeing and implementing administrative arrangements to ensure that the Association complies with its Disability Duties. Evaluation forms are distributed to all staff to complete following all internal training. Feedback from the evaluation forms help to determine future training needs and requirements in these areas.

**(b) Quantitative**

Integral to Habinteg's business planning process is the annual review of our Vision, Mission Statement Objectives and Values by Senior Managers. This year, adopting the development of an Operational Plan, the Association continues to set 'SMART' objectives, including target setting and monitoring using the Balanced Scorecard business improvement tool also forms a key element of our business planning process. This is reflected at all levels of the strategic planning process. How targets are met and objectives are delivered is monitored and reported at the most senior level in the organisation. The progress on the Disability Action Plan will be monitored and reported on through the Senior Management Team, Sub-Committees and ultimately to the Board.

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions has your organisation either:
- made any **revisions** to your plan during the reporting period or
  - taken any **additional steps** to meet the disability duties which were **not outlined in your original** disability action plan / any other changes.

Please delete: **No**

7. Do you intend to make any further **revisions to your plan** in light of your organisations annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes?

While no further changes are planned the Association will continue to look at how we could further improve on the outcomes of our Disability Plan.



# Housing Associations' Joint Equality Exercise

## Annual Progress Report 2011-12

### Introduction

The Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations (NIFHA) is the umbrella body for 30 registered and five non-registered housing associations in N Ireland. NIFHA itself is *not* a designated body, but since 2004 we have supported member associations in implementing the Statutory Equality Duties. Our aim is to help members maximise available resources and to reduce the impact on consultee and/or stakeholder bodies. In 2011-12 the 28 designated associations<sup>7</sup> again participated in this joint approach.

This project is facilitated by NIFHA's Corporate Services Manager and steered by the Federation's Business Committee; a task group also assisted in 2011-12. However, responsibility for discharging the Statutory Duties in the individual organisation *remains* with each designated housing association. NIFHA's role is purely supportive. The following sections outline the collective work carried out with or on behalf of members.

### General

Between April 2011 and March 2012 NIFHA provided support for members participating in our joint equality project by:

- Reporting on equality matters and progress of the joint project at three Federation Business Committee and five Resources and Standards Committee meetings
- Co-ordinating meetings and relevant working / task groups
- Issuing regular prompts for action and providing updates on Equality & Diversity matters in NIFHA's e-News (22 during 2011-12)
- Producing equality-specific briefings for members
- Organising or signposting to training relevant to the associations' equality work
- Centrally collating and distributing statistical information and consultee feedback
- Managing, maintaining and sharing a Joint Consultee List
- Capturing and reflecting the views of members when responding to equality-related consultations undertaken by other organisations
- Liaising with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI)
- Representing the housing association movement through participation in the NI Housing Executive's (NIHE) Consultative Forum on Equality

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<sup>7</sup> Craigowen Housing Association gained exemption at initial designation. Covenanter Residential Association Ltd requested exemption following the request for a new Equality Scheme – pending ECNI decision at 31 March 2012.

- Acting as a liaison point for organisations representing Section 75 groups
- Acting as a contact point for all designated associations
- Routinely providing information, advice and support to assist designated associations in fulfilling their statutory duties

### **EQIA Process**

The designated housing associations original Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) programme came to an end in 2011. No additional impact assessments had been identified for joint action in 2011-12. During this period our members' focus was on development of new equality schemes, although individual associations may have progressed EQIAs specific to their organisation none were undertaken as part of our collective work. We took the view that the process of developing new schemes could in itself generate information which would prompt future equality impact assessments.

### **Training**

In 2011-12 NIFHA arranged a variety of open courses and workshops for members a number of which were aimed at helping them to meet their equality obligations. Examples from our training programme include:

- Deaf Awareness – Breaking down the Barriers
- Creating Customer Focus

Sessions specific to the development of new Equality Schemes were:

- Workshops to identify potential inequalities by functional area, September 2011 – facilitated by Dorothy McKee
- Developing S75 Actions and revised Equality Schemes: What Social Housing Providers Need to Know, October 2011 – facilitated by ECNI representatives, Tony Steed, NIHE and Lucinda McMurrin, NIFHA
- Challenge Workshop to assess potential impacts by equality category, January 2012 – facilitated by John Kremer

The table shown at Annex A demonstrates the high levels of member participation at all of the practical workshops. For each of the events related to developing new equality schemes most associations were represented by several members of staff. This helped ensure knowledgeable input across the full range of functional areas.

In October 2011 NIFHA's Annual Conference addressed the topic of 'Time for Change'. Under this heading we included an equality-specific session entitled:

- Equality Schemes: A challenge and an asset

In addition to our own events, NIFHA continued to sign-post members to relevant training on equality matters during 2011-12. As part of our member support role the Corporate Services Manager also facilitated occasional sessions for individual associations which focused on their equality obligations. Presentations and training material which Federation personnel have produced for equality purposes remained freely available for any member association to adapt for use in their own training.

## **Communications**

Throughout 2011-12 NIFHA's Corporate Services Manager continued to act as a liaison point between the Equality Commission and the designated housing associations. The Federation also acted as the main link between members and those with an interest in promoting equality of opportunity, such as consultee organisations, voluntary groups or statutory bodies.

The NIFHA team answered queries, provided general information about associations and co-ordinated the public engagement aspects of the joint project. NIFHA also used its regular publications such as POSH magazine or Annual Reports and our website ([www.nifha.org](http://www.nifha.org)) to showcase the work members have undertaken to implement equality of opportunity and promote good relations. POSH, which has a print run of 2000 copies, was issued three times during 2011-12. These publications are circulated to a wide range of individuals and organisations including all our elected representatives. In the last quarter of the reporting period we committed to a new website; accessibility and equality were among the areas prioritised when developing our specification for the site.

Federation staff actively participate in the events of other organisations, using such occasions to promote the positive contribution housing associations make for our community beyond the 'bricks and mortar' provision of homes, including on equality and diversity matters. The following are a few examples from 2011-12:

- Corporate Services Manager - participation in NIHE Equality Consultative Forum meetings
- Chief Executive / Housing Policy & Research Manager - regular participation in NIHE Research Committee
- Housing Policy & Research Manager - regular contribution to work of Voluntary Sector Housing Policy Forum
- Housing Policy & Research Manager - regular participation in Joint Housing Adaptations Group
- Communications Officer - Assisted with photography and press statements for Ark HA's Annual Neighbourhood Day

**Please note:** Reported NIFHA communications output only relates to the joint aspects of our members' work and is intended to complement each individual association's messages about their respective equality and good relations activities.

## **Data Collection & Analysis**

The joint data collection process during 2011-12 was handled by NIFHA and its member associations since our focus was gathering information for the Audit of Inequalities. The main activities co-ordinated or undertaken by NIFHA under the joint exercise were:

- Production of reports from the Federation's NICORE Database
- Use of NIFHA's database to provide equality data for member associations
- Use of NIFHA's database to provide baseline equality data for the Audit of Inequalities

NIFHA also worked with members of an equality task and finish group to develop appropriate forms for gathering comprehensive tenant profile information. These forms were shared with all member associations. In addition, forms were also developed to assist member associations to capture monitoring information in an agreed format. This approach should facilitate better cross-association comparison.

As part of our joint work for the Audit of Inequalities this Equality Task Group also assisted in collecting relevant statistics and qualitative information about the nine equality categories. This material was made available to all designated associations.

## **Information Provision; Access to Information and Services**

NIFHA itself is not designated under Section 75 but the Federation has maintained its commitment to producing information and publications like our magazine, POSH, in formats that use accessible fonts and type styles. NIFHA also strives to ensure that information provided on [www.nifha.org](http://www.nifha.org) is accessible and takes a positive approach to requests for production of materials in alternative formats.

The Federation regularly provides information and advice for members in relation to translation, interpretation services and producing material in alternative formats. NIFHA routinely shares any information received about suppliers of these services. This information sharing is aimed at equipping the housing associations to respond promptly to any requests where accessibility may be a factor. How these services are implemented remains the responsibility of the individual association.

## **Consultation and Engagement**

During 2011-12 NIFHA did not undertake significant individual engagement with consultee organisations but through the Equality Task Group, mentioned above, we sought information from representative bodies of various Section 75 categories.

NIFHA also continued to conduct our general consultation and engagement activities as part of our member support work for the associations' Joint Equality Project, such as:

- Conducting routine exercises to ensure that the joint consultee list remained accurate, up-to-date and valid
- Amending the consultee list following individual notification of changes and / or on discovery of invalid details relating to consultee data

- Throughout the year NIFHA staff participated in a range of inter-agency groups which enable engagement with ‘equalities’ organisations – this is in addition to electronic networking and consultation with relevant groups

Where appropriate NIFHA also consulted with members and provided detailed written responses on relevant consultation exercises by other organisations. Those of particular importance in 2011-12 related to the following consultations<sup>8</sup>:

- Children & Young Peoples Plan
- DSD Equality Scheme
- NI Executive’s Economic and Investment Strategies
- NI Executive’s Programme for Government,
- NILGOSC Equality Scheme
- Physical and Sensory Disability Strategy
- Quality 2020 Health Strategy

### **Good Relations Duty**

NIFHA continued to advocate for mainstream funding and consistent support for a ‘Shared Future’ housing programme. We undertake the commitment to good relations in our role as an umbrella organisation while each association is responsible for implementing the housing programme within the community. Our members provide details of individual Shared Future schemes which they developed during 2011-12 in their respective Annual Progress Reports.

Throughout the reporting period NIFHA maintained its involvement with a variety of inter-agency groups working to foster good relations, such as:

- Community Relations Council
- Supporting Communities Northern Ireland
- NICVA

Initiating and sustaining such strategic alliances is integral to our work on behalf of our membership. This active participation enables NIFHA to offer members useful assistance and share best practice thus enhancing the associations approach to the good relations duty. It also creates opportunities to highlight the many excellent contributions of housing associations in this important area of work.

### **Disability Duties**

As with the Equality duties responsibility for implementation of the Disability Duties lies with the individual association. Their respective Actions Plans record how they intend to deliver on this requirement. NIFHA routinely advises members of pertinent priorities

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<sup>8</sup> Documents available at [www.nifha.org](http://www.nifha.org)

and developments in this area through our normal communications channels. More generally, NIFHA undertakes a range of activities which influence other bodies and/or help shape cross-sector priorities to develop action measures which reflect the needs of disabled people.

In 2011-12 the Federation's Housing Policy and Research Manager continued to be a significant contributor to a Joint Housing Adaptations Group undertaking a full review of all aspects of the adaptations process. As a result an adaptations toolkit was developed and this is currently being tested by member associations and others involved in the process. This major piece of work was ongoing at the end of the reporting period.

### **Additional Comments**

NIFHA and its members welcome the opportunity to actively contribute to mainstreaming equality and good relations.

### **Lucinda McMurrin**

Corporate Services Manager

NIFHA

6 August 2012

## Annex A Production of new Equality Schemes

### Member participation in practical workshops

Association	Sept 2011	Nov 2011	Jan 2012
Abbeyfield (UK) NI	✓		✓
Alpha			✓
Apex	✓	✓	✓
Ark		✓	✓
Broadway	✓		✓
Clanmil	✓	✓	✓
Connswater	✓	✓	✓
Co-Ownership	✓	✓	✓
Covenanter		✓	
Filor	✓	✓	✓
Flax	✓	✓	✓
FOLD	✓	✓	✓
Gosford			
Grove	✓		✓
Habinteg	✓	✓	✓
Harmony	✓		
Hearth			✓
Helm	✓		✓
Newington	✓	✓	✓
Oaklee	✓	✓	✓
Open Door	✓	✓	✓
Rural			✓
SHAC	✓	✓	✓
South Ulster	✓	✓	✓
St Matthew's	✓	✓	✓
Triangle	✓	✓	✓
Trinity	✓	✓	✓
Ulidia	✓	✓	✓
Wesley	✓	✓	

## **GOOD NEIGHBOUR AGREEMENT**

**Habinteg Housing Association (Ulster) Ltd is committed to tackling anti-social behaviour, as and when it arises, but to do so we need your support. We will not tolerate such behaviour taking hold in your neighbourhood and ask for your commitment to positively engage with us so that we can put such behaviour in the past.**

### **Being a Good Neighbour**

Habinteg is asking all its tenants to treat their neighbours with respect and look out for them in times of need. We should be especially vigilant in the care of the vulnerable and elderly in our community. We believe that by being a good neighbour you will not only be helping us to stop nuisance and anti-social behaviour but you will be contributing to a more positive, confident and outward looking community.

### **About this agreement**

As a Habinteg tenant, we would encourage you to sign this agreement as a commitment that neither you, nor members of your household or visitors to your home will behave in a manner that affects the peace and enjoyment of your neighbours.

### **What is Anti-Social Behaviour?**

Anti-social behaviour is defined as acting in a manner that causes, or is likely to cause alarm, harassment or distress to one or more people in another household.

### **Habinteg's Responsibilities**

Habinteg will respond to complaints of anti-social behaviour and carry out investigations which will include interviewing the complainant and the alleged perpetrator. In carrying out our investigations to resolve anti-social behaviour we will liaise and exchange information with other agencies. These agencies may include the Police Service for Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, the local District Council, Youth Justice Agency and Social Services.

**When necessary, Habinteg will use legal powers to deal with anti-social behaviour. This will require working with an agency such as the Northern Ireland Housing Executive or local Council to obtain an Order for Possession and/or an Injunction or an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO)**

### **What can you do to be a good neighbour?**

- There are many things you can do to help prevent nuisance and anti-social behaviour. Some examples are listed below:
- Respect for all neighbours and their property and fairness in dealing with everyone, irrespective of their religion, race, ability, culture or political belief.
- Care for the elderly, the lonely and the vulnerable in the community.
- Accept that everyone is different and be tolerant of the lifestyles of others, particularly with regard to noise levels.
- Be responsible for the behaviour of your children and anyone visiting your home.
- Respect the rights of children and young people to play and meet in a safe and happy environment.
- Residents are respectful of the environment in which they live through upkeep of a clean and tidy neighbourhood, free from antisocial behaviour.
- Recognition that a good community spirit benefits all through healthy inter-action and mutual support in dealing with local problems.
- If any problem arises, every resident has the right to approach any constituted group set up by the residents, the Habinteg or other statutory body, in order that the problem may be sorted out amicably and to the satisfaction of all concerned.
- Residents in flats or other shared buildings have additional responsibilities given that they live in close proximity to each other and this may have implications for noise levels and shared access areas
- Within the above charter, people have a right to choose the extent to which they engage in the community
- I / We have read and agree to all the principles of this Agreement.

**Your agreement with Habinteg:**

**It is acknowledged that each signatory pledges to respect the rights of his/her neighbours in the community and to fully exercise his/her responsibilities within the context of the agreement.**

I agree that whilst I am a tenant of Habinteg, I will do everything I can to be 'a good neighbour' and will not behave in any way which may be considered `anti-social'.

I understand that if any member of my household or visitors to my home act in a way which can be considered as being anti-social, Habinteg will take action for breach of my tenancy agreement which may lead to legal action being taken against me.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Tenant) Date\_\_\_\_\_

Witnessed \_\_\_\_\_ (Habinteg) Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2



# EQUALITY CONSULTATION LIST

(Revised – July 2012)

Action for Hearing Loss
Age NI
Age Sector Platform
Alliance Party for Northern Ireland
Amalgamated Engineering & Electrical Union
An Munia Tober
Antrim Borough Council
Ards Borough Council
Armagh City & District Council
Association of Independent Advice Centres
Autism NI
Bahai Council for Northern Ireland
Ballymena Borough Council
Ballymoney Borough Council
Banbridge District Council
Barnardos
Belfast & District Trade Unions Council
Belfast City Council
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust
Belfast Hebrew Congregation
Belfast Islamic Centre
Brainwaves Northern Ireland
British Deaf Association (NI)
Carafriend
Carers Northern Ireland
Carrickfergus Borough Council
Castlereagh Borough Council
Central Services Agency
Chartered Institute of Housing
Child Poverty Action Group (NI)
Children's Law Centre
Chinese Welfare Association
Citizens Advice Regional Office
CO3 Chief Officers Third Sector
Coalition on Sexual Orientation (CoSO)
Coleraine Borough Council
Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ)
Community Development & Health Network (NI)
Community Relations Council (CRC)

Cookstown District Council
Council for the Homeless (NI)
Craigavon Borough Council
Democratic Unionist Party
Department for Social Development
Derry City Council
Derry Well Woman
Disability Action - Belfast
Disability Action - Londonderry
Down District Council
Down's Syndrome Association
Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council
East Belfast Community Development Agency
Eastern Health & Social Services Board
Equality Coalition
Equality Commission for NI
Equality Forum NI
Falls Community Council
Family Planning Association (NI)
Fermanagh District Council
Gay & Lesbian Youth NI
General Consumer Council
Gingerbread Northern Ireland
Housing Rights Service
Indian Community Centre
Irish Council of Churches
Larne Borough Council
Lesbian Line
Limavady Borough Council
Lisburn City Council
Magherafelt District Council
Magherafelt Women's Group
MENCAP
Methodist Church in Ireland
Mind Yourself
Moyle District Council
Multi-Cultural Resource Centre
Newtownabbey Borough Council
NI Committee for Refugees & Asylum Seekers
NIGRA (Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association)
NIPSA
North Down Borough Council
North West Community Network
North West Forum of People with Disabilities
Northern Health & Social Services Board
Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Network
Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health

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 Housing Council
Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC)
Northern Ireland Mixed Marriage Association
Northern Ireland Office
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
POBAL
Polish Welfare Association
PRAXIS
Press for Change
Probation Board for Northern Ireland
Progressive Unionist Party
Royal National Institute for the Blind (NI)
Rural Community Network
SEEDS
Sense NI
Simon Community
Sinn Fein
Social Democratic & Labour Party
Southern Health & Social Care Trust
Staff Commission for Education & Library Boards
Strabane District Council
Supporting Communities NI
The Cedar Foundation
The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
The Rainbow Project
The Women's Centre
Traveller Movement Northern Ireland
UCATT
Ulster Unionist Party
Western Health & Social Care Trust
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