

The Rent Service

Update Of The Rent Service Equality Action Plans 2006 – 2007

The Rent Service treats all aspects of diversity with equal importance. We have therefore decided to amalgamate our action plans for disability, gender and race into one encompassing summary. This is because we want to carry out the same actions across all the diversity strands where possible and, as a result, avoid repetition and printing similar actions more than once. This integrated approach does mean that the deadlines for all three diversity groups appear to be aligned; however, it remains our intention to achieve the objectives set out in our race equality scheme and action plans by the target dates indicated in our original plans.

The reference in the left hand column refers to the actions published in our equality scheme action plans in December 2006. The following key explains which action plan is being referred to.

Reference Key: D – Disability Equality Action Plan
 G – Gender Equality Action Plan
 R – Race Equality Action Plan

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Objective	Action	Deadline	Outcome	Progress
D1, G1, R1. Ensure implementation and governance of 2006 – 2009 equality schemes	Ensure structures already in place provide strategic steer Reporting arrangements in place via equality board	December 2006 – November 2009 Quarterly for equality board meetings	All objectives are taken forward and actioned Reports to our management board and staff	Equality schemes in place and published Equality board overseeing progress
	Revised equality schemes to be published	December 2009	Planned actions are achieved and continuance of good practice	Actions progressed and monitored to ensure completion
	All elements of action plan reviewed at equality board quarterly, monitor and report progress	December 2006 – November 2009 quarterly	Ensure actions are ongoing and completed to timescales	Reviewed at equality board quarterly and reported

Objective	Action	Deadline	Outcome	Progress
D2, G2, R2. Assessment of existing role, functions and policies	Embed equality strategy into all our functions and processes	December 2006 – November 2009	Our action plan reflects strategy of the Department and diversity equality schemes	Liaise with the Department through meetings and correspondence
	Regular review of procedures and guidance	December 2006 – November 2009	All procedures and functions adhere to the requirements of legislation	Impact assessment of our guidance embedded and updates on progress to equality board

Objective	Action	Deadline	Outcome	Progress
<p>D3, G3, R3. Assessment of new functions and existing procedures</p>	<p>Impact assessment of all new policies and procedures</p> <p>Where potential adverse impact found relevant policy making body is advised</p> <p>Training for senior managers in impact assessment techniques for use when new procedures are introduced</p>	<p>December 2006 – November 2009</p> <p>December 2006 – November 2009</p> <p>December 2006 – November 2009</p>	<p>Future assessments of polices and procedures carried out by trained senior managers</p> <p>Relevant body advised</p> <p>Processes transparent and auditable</p>	<p>External impact assessment report completed. All recommendations fed into action plan</p> <p>Advised as required</p> <p>Training complete and guidance issued. All new guidance undergoes impact assessment process</p>

Objective	Action	Deadline	Outcome	Progress
D4, G4, R4. Ensure arrangements to monitor functions and procedures for potential adverse impact on customers	Review of feedback from customer via customer satisfaction survey Review complaints handling procedure maintain log and publish results	December 2006 – November 2009 December 2006 – November 2009	All procedures in place and carried out correctly Complaints handled appropriately and learning points fed back into processes	Customer satisfaction survey results to be reviewed by our management board and published annually Complaints log in place and procedures reviewed regularly
	Implement recommendations from audit and impact assessment reports	December 2006 – November 2009	Ensure procedures do not impact adversely on our customers and stakeholders	Recommendations form part of action plan

Objective	Action	Deadline	Outcome	Progress
<p>D5, G5, R5. Ensure arrangements for publishing the results of assessments, consultations and monitoring</p>	<p>Progress and information including surveys to be reported via Annual Reports and scheme progress reports Publication of equality schemes and action plans</p>	<p>December 2006 – November 2009 December 2006 – November 2009</p>	<p>Improved reporting arrangements Processes and decisions are transparent and accessible to the communities we serve and to our own people</p>	<p>All details published in Annual Reports and updates Equality schemes and updates published internally and externally</p>
<p>D6, G6, R6. Ensure customers have access to information and services</p>	<p>Service leaflets available in other formats including Braille, audio cassette and different languages Development of internal and external websites</p>	<p>December 2006 – November 2009 December 2006 – November 2009</p>	<p>Ensure no customers are disadvantaged in gaining access to services All customers and staff with access to external website are fully informed of our services and our services are more easily accessible to all user groups</p>	<p>Information is available in a variety of formats and reviewed as feedback is received Both internal and external websites are compliant with world wide web consortium accessibility guidelines. Sites are under continual review to improve content and service provided</p>

Objective	Action	Deadline	Outcome	Progress
D6, G6, R6. Ensure customers have access to information and services (continued)	Consider using external website user surveys to increase customer feedback on site content and format Liaison with disabled people's representatives and customers Complete actions from Disability Discrimination Act audit action plan Review of annual customer satisfaction survey and staff surveys	December 2006 November 2009 December 2006 – November 2009 December 2006 – November 2009 December 2006 – November 2009	Increased knowledge of customer demographics and views All of customer base have information and access to our services Access arrangements for staff and customers including facilities in offices, are compliant Ensure feedback from customers and staff is fed into planning process and guidance reviews	Considered as part of regular website reviews Review of existing contacts to be completed December 2007 Disability Discrimination Act audit recommendations complete. New actions assessed as feedback received In place. Annual review following results of customer satisfaction survey and staff survey

Objective	Action	Deadline	Outcome	Progress
D7, G7, R7. Ensure all staff have access to diversity awareness raising opportunities	Diversity module as part of the induction course Diversity training for all staff to include legislation changes	December 2006 – November 2009 September 2006 – March 2007	New employees aware of good practice and responsibilities Raised staff awareness on all diversity issues	Diversity module in place and reviewed regularly Training for all managers and staff completed
	Raise awareness of all diversity issues via review of existing guidance and relevant publicity on internal website and publications	July 2005 – May 2008	Staff kept up to date on progress of all diversity issues	Update of guidance and publicity ongoing. 'Disability Confident' training plan complete. Rollout to staff October 2007 for completion by end of March 2008
	Encourage disabled staff to declare disabilities	December 2006 – November 2009	More accurately reflect actual level of staff disabilities	Staff encouraged to declare through range of measures, which has led to increased reporting
	Update and review of procedures including 'Different but Equal' policy	September 2006 – March 2007	All strands of diversity are included in guidance and staff fully informed	Completed. Revised 'Different but Equal' policy issued March 2007

Objective	Action	Deadline	Outcome	Progress
D7, G7, R7. Ensure all staff have access to diversity awareness raising opportunities (continued)	Consult staff on demand for and commitment to a staff diversity network	September 2006 – June 2007	Possible staff diversity network to act as additional two way communication channel with senior management	Consultation taken place as part of diversity training events
	Incorporate holy days of obligation into corporate calendar	December 2006 – December 2007	Increase staff cultural sensitivity	Action in progress and due for completion by end of December 2007
D8, G8, R8. Ensure arrangements for monitoring recruitment including applicants for employment, training and promotion	Regular analysis of data from recruitment, training and promotion processes Increase our understanding of the impact of equality issues on staff turnover	December 2006 – November 2009 December 2006 – November 2009	To ensure that processes are open and equal for all applicants Analysis of data from exit interviews and other sources may lead to actions for incorporation in action plan	Annual review in place Exit interview/questionnaire included as part of leaving process at end of October 2007

Objective	Action	Deadline	Outcome	Progress
D8, G8, R8. Ensure arrangements for monitoring recruitment including applicants for employment, training and promotion (<i>continued</i>)	Undertake diversity benchmarking surveys Continue with our Guaranteed Interview Scheme for disabled job applicants	December 2006 – November 2009 December 2006 – November 2009	Review outcomes against standard reviewed and action plan adapted accordingly Applicants are afforded maximum opportunity for progression	Contribute to future Departmental benchmark surveys Scheme in place look to positive statements in job advertising by end of December 2007 to encourage applications from disabled people
D9, G9, R9. Continue to monitor diversity statistics on employees involved in formal disciplinary, capability or grievance action	Regular analysis of disciplinary, capability and grievance records Publication of all relevant data in Annual Report and scheme progress reports	December 2006 – November 2009 December 2006 – November 2009	Ensure action taken is fair and consistent Ensure openness and transparency showing our commitment to diversity	Regular review in place Published via Annual Report

Objective	Action	Deadline	Outcome	Progress
D10, G10, R10. Seek to ensure our workforce reflects the diverse makeup of the communities we serve at all levels in the organisation	Consider adopting diversity targets for under represented groups by grade Consider positive action initiatives to increase representation at all grades	December 2006 – November 2009 April 2007 – November 2009	Incorporate relevant actions into planning processes Job applicants from under represented groups gain improved opportunity for recruitment and promotion	Given timescales, targets of limited value concentrate on positive action instead Review of mentoring policy underway to be reissued by end of December 2007
	Carry out reasonable adjustments to the work place as required	December 2006 – November 2009	Ensure that disabled staff have every opportunity to realise their potential	Programme in place and adjustments reported quarterly

Objective	Action	Deadline	Outcome	Progress
D11, G11, R11. Maintain and build visible leadership commitment to diversity	Consider individual and collective actions for senior managers arising from awareness and impact assessment training and review	December 2006 – June 2007	Improved leadership on diversity issues	Awareness training for senior managers complete
	Review core values to ensure equality and fairness to all	March 2007 – November 2009	Equality and fairness forms a key business priority for our business	Core values amended and reviewed annually
D12. The Rent Service to better meet the needs of diverse job applicants, staff and customers	Consider consulting specialist organisations for employer support	December 2006 – November 2009	Our organisation is a more comfortable environment for, and deals more effectively with, minority groups	Scheduled for consideration and action 2008 – 2009
	Increase staff awareness and skills in interacting with disabled customers	April 2007 – March 2008	Our organisation is a better environment for, and deals more effectively with, disabled people	'Disability Confident' training plan complete rollout to staff October 2007

Objective	Action	Deadline	Outcome	Progress
D13, G12, R12. Encourage suppliers to address all equality issues	Ensure procurement processes follow available guidelines concerning suppliers' equality policies	December 2006 – March 2009	More contracts let to organisations with best practice equality policies	Use of relevant guidance in place. Revise and review as new guidance received
D14, G13, R13. Ensure diversity and equality is featured in all human resource policies/guidance	Review human resource policies/guidance	December 2006 – September 2007	Human resource policies/guidance more inclusive and helpful to staff	Review of policies/guidance completed. Revised and updated policies October 2007
G14. Ensure pay systems are fair and equitable across gender groups	Conduct equal pay audit	December 2006 – March 2007	Incorporate relevant recommendations into gender action plan	Equal pay audit completed. Trade Unions consulted and agreed changes implemented