

## Diversity Policy

### 1. Summary Policy Statement

- 1.1 As a building contractor, Ashleigh (Scotland) Ltd. is intent on ensuring equal opportunity so that no person is treated less favourably than any other person on the grounds of age, race, religion and belief, sexuality, gender, disability or other unwarranted grounds.
- 1.2 Ashleigh has consulted with a wide range of stakeholders and diversity groups in the formulation and implementation of this Policy.
- 1.3 This policy is designed to comply with current legislation and best practice, in particular all Ashleigh's activities will adhere to Equal Opportunities. We embrace diversity, promote equal Opportunities and fairness for all and eliminate unlawful discrimination in all areas of our work
- 1.4 Ashleigh will publicise this statement in appropriate communication and publications.

### 2. General

- 2.1 Ashleigh commits itself to eliminating discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and fairness. It recognises that discrimination can be direct or indirect and can take place at a personal or institutional level:
  - 2.1.1 Direct Discrimination: treating a person less favourably on grounds of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, etc
  - 2.1.2 Indirect Discrimination: Applying any requirement or condition which, though applied equally to everybody, is such that a considerably smaller proportion of people of one group can comply with it than the proportion of other people, unless the requirement or condition can be shown to be justifiable irrespective of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation.
- 2.2 Ashleigh will ensure that equality and fairness are integral parts of all its activities. All policies, procedures and decisions will seek to further equality where possible.
- 2.3 The pieces of legislation governing Ashleigh's equality actions are:
  - Sex Discrimination Act (1975) / Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (Amendment) Regulations 2003
  - Equal Pay Act (1970) / Equal Pay Act 1970 (Amendment) Regulations 2003
  - Race Relations Act (1976) / Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
  - Disability Discrimination Act (1995) / Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Amendment) Regulations 2003
  - Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- 2.4 The European Convention on Human Rights (1998), the European Employment Directive (2000/78/EC) and other European legislation have been instrumental in the extension of equalities within the UK, and these will be adhered to as necessary.

### 3. General

#### 3.1 Ashleigh:

- 3.1.1 is opposed to discrimination in any form and at all levels, and is committed to take all steps within its power to counteract it.
- 3.1.2 will seek to ensure that no one receives less favourable treatment or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.
- 3.1.3 will seek to ensure good communication with all diversity groups and will make information available in suitable formats for those who have difficulty in communicating.
- 3.1.4 will respect community diversity and will seek to ensure that its service will be relevant and accessible to all sectors of the community.
- 3.1.5 will seek to provide its users with full, clear and accurate information regarding the services it provides
- 3.1.6 will seek to ensure consultation with stakeholders, users and potential users with a view to providing appropriate housing and suitable environment.
- 3.1.7 will view harassment as a priority matter for serious investigation should such harassment involve any member(s) of staff.
- 3.1.8 will provide diversity training for all members of staff and will encourage active participation.
- 3.1.9 will monitor its policies and procedures regularly to ensure compliance with this Policy.
- 3.1.10 will abide by the terms and conditions of this Policy to ensure no discrimination occurs in the services it provides.
- 3.1.11 will take into account its duty of care as an employer in respect of all individuals and groups of people particularly those who may be vulnerable or disadvantaged.
- 3.1.12 will seek to engage with local diversity groups to ensure Ashleigh's services are fair and accessible to all.

#### 4. Core Values & Diversity Plan

- 4.1 Equal opportunities is one of Ashleigh's Core Values. As such it is a key issue for all level of activity, both strategic and operational. It is incorporated wholly into Ashleigh's overall business planning and processes and given consideration at Board level.
- 4.2 Ashleigh has adopted a Diversity Action Plan to continue to integrate equal opportunities and fairness into the IMS Management System. Due to the all encompassing nature of equalities, all work being planned for or evaluated against Performance Standards will be given some equalities consideration. Ashleigh's Diversity Action Plan is fully integrated into the Internal Management Plan and corporate and individual SMART objectives and targets.

#### 5. Equal Opportunities/Diversity Monitoring

- 5.1 Ashleigh recognises that monitoring is vital to the success of the Diversity Policy, without which it would be impossible to determine whether or not all groups are being treated fairly. The objectives of monitoring are:
- to establish if and where discrimination exists
  - to establish the effectiveness of Ashleigh's policies and procedures in eliminating discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and fairness.

#### 6. Accessibility: Communications & Translations

- 6.1 Ashleigh will make every reasonable effort to facilitate verbal and written communications with service users with disabilities or whose native language is not English.
- 6.2 Ashleigh will also endeavour to ensure that its practices, procedures and communications are conducted in spirit of openness and inclusiveness towards other marginalised or disadvantaged groups.
- 6.3 All written material provided by Ashleigh will be in simple, jargon-free language.

#### 7. Harassment & Victimisation

- 7.1 Ashleigh will deal quickly and firmly with all forms of harassment, including racial and sexual harassment of or by tenants, members of staff. We will be sensitive to the wishes of the person being harassed.
- 7.2 It is recognised that harassment includes not only physical attacks on a person or damage to property, but also verbal abuse. Ashleigh acknowledges the personal discomfort, stress and problems harassment can cause, and is committed to achieving an environment in which members of staff and feel secure, equal and able to report any cases of harassment in the knowledge that Ashleigh will act and support them.

## 8. Consultation

8.1 Ashleigh will regularly review its strategies to consult with its staff and the wider community. To encourage participation by all sections of the community Ashleigh will be sensitive to:

- Religious and cultural requirements
- The needs of people with disabilities eg. Provision of transport, access for disabled people
- Language differences eg. Appropriate formal communication, assistance with forms and questionnaires, use of interpreters and translators
- Needs of families with children
- The needs of groups of people who may be experienced other barriers to inclusion, including physical and social barriers

## 9. Conclusion

9.1 Equal outcomes and fairness are a natural and integral part of good practice and will develop services to the fullest extent possible for the good of Ashleigh employees

## 10. Review

10.1 The Diversity Policy will be reviewed every 5 years or sooner as required by best practice or legislation.

Signed:

A Steel  
Managing Director



Date 30<sup>th</sup> January 2009