

Newington Housing Association Ltd



**Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties
Annual Progress Report**

Contact:

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Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at: <http://newingtonha.co.uk/equality/>

Signature:

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This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the Equality Commission.

It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties and implementing Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plans.

This report reflects progress made between April 2023 and March 2024.

PART A – Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme
Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice

- 1 In 2023-24, please provide examples of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.**

Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.

Newington Housing Association (NHA) is a community-based housing association with **720** units of accommodation under management on the 31st of March 2024, operating exclusively within North Belfast.

The Association provides mainly general needs housing for families; but also provides accommodation for older people, singles, and supported accommodation for homeless people via our joint management partnership with The De Paul Trust.

Newington Housing Association is a part of the Apex Housing Group and is a subsidiary of Apex Housing.

Newington Housing continues to be registered as a Housing Association with the Department for Communities and operates as an independent Housing Association with its own staff and Board of Management.

During the reporting period Newington HA: -

We purchased no additional new homes from the open market.

We processed **four** new lets and **28** relets of existing properties. All allocations were carried out under the Common Selection Scheme, which is administered by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE).

The Association spent approximately **£296k** on planned and cyclical maintenance improvements to our existing homes during 2023/2024.

The Association also spent approximately **£480k** on response/general maintenance repairs to our existing homes during 2023/2024.

At the end of March 2024, Newington Housing Association employed **21** full time and **1** part-time members of staff.

In addition, the Association employed a Housing Apprentice on a two-year fixed term contract from January 2023 and a student placement on a temporary ten-month fixed term contract from the end of October 2023.

We have continued to sustain all our existing partnerships, whilst continuing to forge new ones with various community, voluntary and statutory organisations. This is to ensure our tenants receive the support to help them to fully integrate well within their new or existing surroundings.

Our Association is committed to ensuring new and existing tenants are aware of the support available to assist them to sustain their tenancies. Mechanisms and procedures are in place to ensure that tenants are signposted or directly referred for financial, tenancy or personal support and these procedures are at the core of our day-to-day services. This is to maximise the usage of the various essential services that are provided locally.

In October 2023, via our Student Bursary Scheme, we provided financial support to **12** students who are undertaking educational courses up to Degree level. These bursaries are designed to support and assist the successful applicants throughout the duration of their course.

Further funding will be awarded to each student on an annual basis, whilst they remain within further education, up to a maximum of 3 or 4 years, dependent on the duration of the course being undertaken.

Information to all tenants is distributed annually each summer to promote and encourage take up of the Scheme.

In partnership with Newington Credit Union (NCU), we also continue to promote our Match Savings Scheme, which provides new and existing tenants with the opportunity to access a registered banking/lending institution and to avail of affordable credit. Newington provides an incentive to new applicants who meet the terms of the Scheme after a period of 6 months. This is to encourage tenants, who may in some cases have no access to other banking institutions, to commence regular saving and implement personal financial planning measures.

We continue to promote initiatives that encourage tenant participation. Our Tenant Forum has now been in place since April 2017.

During 2023/24, Forum members took part in various initiatives including organising and delivering community events, seasonal projects, training and the development and delivery of our new Tenant Participation & Community Involvement Strategy 2023 - 2026 and Community Investment Strategy 2023 – 2026.

In November 2023, via our Brian Mullan Community Fund (BMCF) we distributed nearly **£15k** in community grants ranging from £250 to £1,000 to **16** local groups/organisations operating and delivering services throughout North Belfast.

Newington continued to attend various multi-agency partnership initiatives (i.e., Multi Agency/Community Safety Forums) to address any instances of Anti-Social Behaviour and/or hate crime in all areas where Newington provides homes. They are as follows:

- Upper North Belfast Multi-Agency Group
- Girdwood Community Forum Meeting
- Girdwood Site Management Forum
- New Lodge Community Empowerment Partnership (CEP) Working Group
- New Lodge Safer Streets Resident's Initiative
- Upper North Belfast Family Support Hub
- Lower North Belfast Family Support Hub
- Duncairn Community Partnership Programme Reference Group

The Association is also a member of the North Belfast Smile Sure-Start's Management Committee.

As per above, the Association is a member of the Girdwood Hub Community Safety Forum and the Girdwood Hub Site Management subgroup. These are made up of representatives from nationalist and unionist areas, local residents, statutory agencies and community and voluntary sector organisations. These partnership working groups were established to promote the use of the Girdwood Hub development, reduce the potential of sectarian tensions arising, to encourage usage of the building and facilities by all communities and to develop good relations, community confidence and trust.

Newington continues to fund our partner Grow NI (£7k per annum.) to ensure delivery of a community gardening project at our Sheltered Scheme, Camberwell Court. This project encourages social interaction and improves residents' mental health and wellbeing, through involvement in gardening.

This project has been developed to ensure that disabled tenants have full access to the range of activities provided and to reduce social exclusion.

Inter-generational and race relations initiatives are also promoted and delivered via this project.

Via our membership with both the Upper & Lower North Belfast Family Support Hubs, we are well placed to provide referrals for tenants and families with children and/or tenants with disabilities, which require additional support and access to various specialised groups and activities. These may be in areas like accessing Autism support groups, parental and child support whilst awaiting diagnosis for an autism spectrum disorder (ASD), etc. Via membership of these Hubs, Newington staff have also been able to access various types of training provided.

The Association had an occupancy level of **97.3%** at the end of March 2024.

Social Value, Tenant Participation, Community Engagement & Investment

Newington continues to strive to invest locally and make a real contribution to people's lives. Our Community Investment Fund budget, which is set by our Board each year is used to support a range of strategic and community activities.

The Association Board raised this level of expenditure from 2% of our total rent receivable to 3% (approximately £124k).

One of our main Strategic priorities is delivering on the commitments we made within our new Tenant Participation & Community Involvement Strategy 2023 -2026 and Community Investment Strategy 2023 - 2026.

Our Community Engagement Officer's role, which is part funded from our Community Investment Fund is extremely important to the local community and voluntary groups within North Belfast.

Our Tenant Forum continued to meet during 2023/2024 and assisted with the development of our new 3-year Strategic Plan, Tenant & Community Involvement Strategy 2023/2026, and Community Investment Strategy 2023 – 2026.

Training and support were also provided to all Forum members during 2023/24.

Newington continued to invest and support local communities through direct requests for funding, as well as funding to support a range of community activities for young people, families, and our older tenants.

During 2022/2023, our Board of Management approved the retention of the independent Welfare Advice post beyond the initially planned two years and have committed to a further two years of funding (i.e. until Dec. 2024). The part-time post (22.5 hours per week) is now fully funded by the Association and the Welfare Advice worker is based within Tar Isteach two days per week and at Newington's main office one day per week.

During the year, the Association provided £5k in financial support to a local community housing advice service (New Lodge Housing Office) and a further £5k to a Community Restorative Justice Ireland (CRJI) project based within lower North Belfast.

The Association also provided funding totalling £8k to two local youth organisations to assist in the delivery of youth diversion/summer intervention projects.

It was evident that the current cost of living crisis is having a major impact on our tenants, therefore in early 2022, the Association established a Hardship Fund to provide financial support to tenants struggling to purchase food, gas, electricity or essential items. In total the Association distributed over £7k via this fund during 2023/24. These awards were made to support the essential and critical work both projects do to support the most vulnerable within our society.

Also, by working in partnership with representatives from Newington Residents Group and other local stakeholders, the 'Camberwell Hub – Heat, Eat & Meet initiative'

continued to be rolled out and its focus was on creating a welcoming environment for locals to call for some warmth, food and advice/support.

Projects and activities were designed for different ages groups and abilities, including intergenerational participation by elderly residents from Camberwell Court, local residents, children and young people from local community groups.

This initiative was warmly welcomed by the residents of Camberwell Court were fully supportive of the initiative.

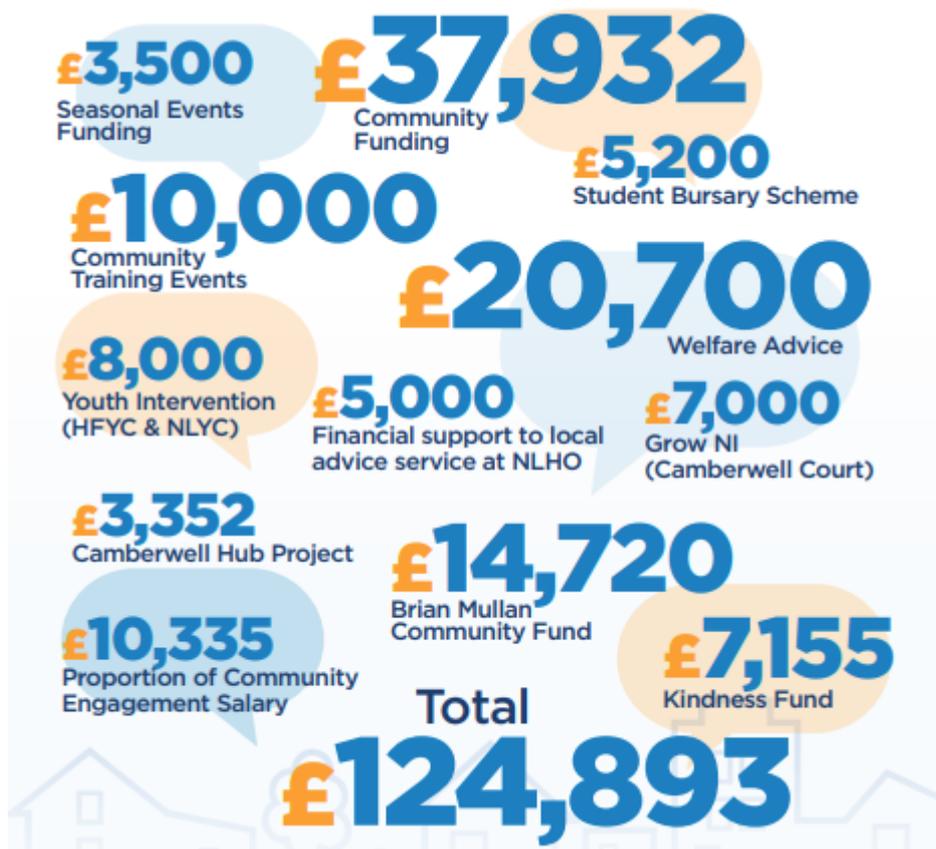
Our Community Investment during 2023/24

Newington’s Board continued to invest in our tenants and residents within the wider community.

For several years NHA’s Board of Management has annually committed 2% of our rent receivable to deliver targeted strategic investment initiatives. From April 2023, this budget was increased to 3% of rent receivable (approx. £124k), to allow us to provide greater financial support and to make more positive differences, locally.

The Association continued to work in partnership with our key stakeholders and partners to enhance the lives of those currently residing within existing well-established communities.

The following is a breakdown of our Community Investment expenditure during 2023/2024:



Newington continued to invest and support local communities through direct requests for funding, as well as funding to support a range of community activities for young people, families, and our older tenants.

The Association continues to provide secretarial support to New Lodge Safer Street (i.e. a local resident association) who work across interfaces to reduce community tensions.

2 Please provide examples of outcomes and/or the impact of equality action plans/ measures in 2023-24 (or append the plan with progress/examples identified).

During the reporting period Newington continued to promote equality of opportunity and good relations through the following activities:

- Newington staff were present at various forums, public meetings and information days, multi-agency meetings and community safety meetings throughout the reporting period.
- Newington staff carried out post tenancy interviews with new tenants to assist them to settle into their new homes and to identify any problems or potential barriers, which if addressed, would assist them in sustaining their tenancy.

We are continually seeking to develop new ways to consult and engage with our tenants. This is to acquire valuable feedback on our service delivery, performance standards, tenant satisfaction level, etc.

Our new Tenant participation & Community Involvement Strategy 2023 – 2026 provides our tenants with various ways to engage and participate in the activities of Newington and provides our tenants to become actively and meaningfully involved in shaping the services we provide.

The Association carried out **twelve** disability adaptations to help ensure tenancies could be sustained.

Newington Housing Association staff are providing support to tenants who are required to apply online for assistance towards the payment of their rates costs (i.e., new Universal Credit cases).

The Association continues to fund the Welfare Advisor Post to support those impacted by the introduction of Universal Credit, Personal Independence Payments, potential loss of mitigated payment (i.e., Social Sector Size Criteria and the Benefit Cap), etc.

Our recently constructed new office at 300 Limestone Road, Belfast, BT15 3AR, is fully Disability Discrimination Act compliant and is fitted with a lift, level access bathrooms, and shower, kitchen, induction loops systems, etc.

The Association regularly consulted with and continues to liaise with Unison (via a Trade Union Recognition Agreement), during the reporting period.

Newington last carried out an Equality Monitoring Survey during 2022/2023 of all our Board members and holds all relevant records for all employees.

Newington completed our Fair Employment Monitoring Return to the period 06/02/2024 and this was submitted to the Equality Commission in Feb. 2024.

3 Has the application of the Equality Scheme commitments resulted in any changes to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2023-24 reporting period? (Tick one box only)

Yes No (go to Q.4) Not applicable (go to Q.4)

Please provide any details and examples:

As a result of a reduction in Education Authority funding for local youth provision, the Association has been working in conjunction with other registered social landlords (RSL's) providers to financial support to local youth providers for the delivery of summer intervention, diversionary projects.

The Association initiated the establishment of a joint working groups made up of political representatives, youth workers, local RSL's, local community and voluntary sector and young people.

Newington has established a stronger working relationship with Community Restorative Justice Ireland (CRJI) with the aim of jointly tackling, with others, increased levels of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), the delivery of community safety initiative and to reduce local community tensions.

3a With regard to the change(s) made to policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas, what difference was made, or will be made, for individuals, i.e. the impact on those according to Section 75 category?

Please provide any details and examples:

The initiatives highlighted above will result in a reduction of young people engaging interface violence, reduce community tensions, establish relationship between young people and thus the creation of safer and more vibrant communities.

By funding youth diversionary initiatives, young people are more likely engage and by-in to society.

Less internal and external community tensions and reduced levels of crime and ASB will increase levels of satisfaction of residents within the local communities.

3b What aspect of the Equality Scheme prompted or led to the change(s)? (tick all that apply)

- As a result of the organisation's screening of a policy (*please give details*):

- As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise (*please give details*):

- As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact (*please give details*):

- As a result of changes to access to information and services (*please specify and give details*):

- Other (*please specify and give details*):
Due to the reduction/absence of statutory funding by EA.

Section 2: Progress on Equality Scheme commitments and action plans/measures

Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)

4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2023 – 24 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes, organisation wide
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Statutory Duties already incorporated into all job descriptions.

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2023-24 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- Yes, organisation wide
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Note: Our C.E.O, Heads of Departments and Line Managers who undertake staff performance reviews are required to ensure staff development needs are met.

In June 2023, all NHA staff undertook Disability Awareness training delivered by the Cedar Foundation and we are planning to deliver Equality & Diversity training to all staff during 2024.

6 In the 2023-24 reporting period were objectives/targets/ performance measures relating to the Section 75 statutory duties integrated into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? (Tick all that apply)

- Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan
- Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning
- Yes, in some departments/jobs
- No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation’s ongoing corporate plan
- No, the organisation’s planning cycle does not coincide with this 2021-22 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The Association held consultation events with key community partners, tenants, staff, and Board members during 2022/2023 to develop our new Strategic Plan for 2023 – 2026.

The Association developed a new 3-year Strategic Plan for 2023 – 2026 and a Business Plan for 2024 – 2025, with set objectives/targets/ performance measures relating to the Section 75 statutory duties integrated into them.

Equality action plans/measures

7 Within the 2023-24 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions completed: Actions ongoing: Actions to commence:

The Association has set **22** measures/outcomes within our Equality Action Plan 2022 – 2027. For further information on progress, please refer to Appendix 1 below (See Pages 39 - 49)

Please provide any details and examples (*in addition to question 2*):

The Association achieved 18 of the 20 measures/outcomes we set in relation to our Equality Action Plan 2017 – 2022.

There were two actions ongoing from our previous DAP Progress Report for 2022 – 2023. These were:

1. **Undertake tenant census and use results of survey to produce and implement actions** - The Association deferred the carrying out of this census and now plans to complete this exercise at the end of 2024.

2. **Facilitated testing of website by people with different abilities, including online forms and transactions** – The Association is yet to establish a new website and our present website does not have any online forms or payment transaction methods incorporated within it.

Both measures have been incorporated into our new 5-year Equality Action Plan for 2022 – 2027.

- 8 **Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2023-24 reporting period (points not identified in an appended plan):**

N/A

Note: The Association has recently undertaken a 5-year review of our Equality Scheme and Action Plan measure have been incorporated into it for the period 2022 – 2027, which was submitted to the Equality Commission in Dec. 2023.

- 9 **In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2023 -24 reporting period, the following have been identified: (tick all that apply)**

- Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality
- Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way
- Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities
- Measures to address a prioritised inequality have been completed

Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)

- 10 **Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance: (tick one box only)**

- All the time Sometimes Never

- 11 **Please provide any details and examples of good practice in consultation during the 2023-24 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g., the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:**

No new policies developed during 2023 – 2024 that were consulted upon.

Via our community investment initiatives, we have developed, supported and delivered initiatives which aim to reduce community tensions, such as community fun-days, alternative programmes to bonfires, provided support for summer community festival projects, youth diversionary initiatives, etc.

12 In the 2023-24 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were most frequently used by consultees: (Tick all that apply)

- Face to face meetings
- Focus groups
- Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing
- Questionnaires
- Information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation
- Internet discussions
- Telephone consultations
- Other (please specify):

The Association last carried out a full 'Tenant Experience Survey in 2022, with a response rate of 25%. This survey provided us with valuable feedback relating to all aspects of our day-to-day operations relating to the services we deliver.

A new survey will be carried out during 2024/25 and is included as a set objective within our annual Business Plan for 2024/25.

The Association also held dedicated resident meetings for scheme specific issues, new projects and improvement works.

Please provide any details or examples of the uptake of these methods of consultation in relation to the consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories:

We regularly attended and updated partners on our activities at Community, Housing and Environmental Forums.

We hold Face to Face meetings relating to the delivery of our planned maintenance schemes, housing support services, etc.

We hold Focus Groups to support the assessment and distribution of Community Investment Awards.

We issue written documents relating to the delivery of our planned maintenance schemes, support services, etc.

PART A

13 Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2023-24 reporting period? (tick one box only)

Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Via our Tenant Newsletters and Annual Report, we published articles highlighting good practice examples of works completed and to promote our various range of services, which are aimed at encouraging and maximising take up by our residents.

We published a Newsletter, with articles incorporated to promote take up of disability home adaptations service, match savings scheme, student bursary scheme, home and personal safety advice, encourage the uptake of local support services, welfare advice centres/signposting, etc.

14 Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2023-24 reporting period? (tick one box only)

Yes No Not applicable – no commitment to review

Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

15 Please provide the number of policies screened during the year (as recorded in screening reports):

57

16 Please provide the number of assessments that were consulted upon during 2023-24:

57	Policy consultations conducted with screening assessment presented.
0	Policy consultations conducted with an equality impact assessment (EQIA) presented.
0	Consultations for an EQIA alone.

17 Please provide details of the main consultations conducted on an assessment (as described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

The Association reviewed and screened 57 policies within the following areas of our business:

Area of Business	Policies Reviewed/Screened during 2023/24
Property Services/Repairs & Maintenance	36
Development	3
Housing Management	4
Governance	3
Finance, Corporate Services, IT and Human Resources	11
Total	57

All policies were screened by Newington HA employees.

18 Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? (Tick one box only)

Yes
 No concerns were raised
 No
 Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

19 Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2023-24 reporting period? (tick one box only)

Yes
 No
 Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Arrangements for monitoring and publishing the results of monitoring (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

20 From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2023-24 reporting period? (tick one box only)

Yes
 No, already taken place
 No, scheduled to take place at a later date
 Not applicable

Please provide any details: N/A

PART A

21 In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies? (tick one box only)

Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

22 Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2023-24 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

N/A

23 Please provide any details or examples of monitoring that has contributed to the availability of equality and good relations information/data for service delivery planning or policy development:

N/A

Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)

24 Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2023-24, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

The Association facilitated Disability Awareness training in June 2023 to staff which was delivered by the Cedar Foundation.

25 Please provide any examples of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

As above

Public Access to Information and Services (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 6)

26 Please list any examples of where monitoring during 2023-24 across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation to access to information and services:

N/A

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

27 How many complaints in relation to the Equality Scheme have been received during 2023-24?

Insert number here:

0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

N/A

Section 3: Looking Forward

28 Please indicate when the Equality Scheme is due for review:

Newington has completed a second 5-year review of our Equality Scheme covering the period 2017 – 2022 and it was presented to our Board in November 2023 for approval.

This was subsequently submitted to the Equality Commission in Dec. 2023.

Our current 3-Year Disability Action Plan runs from Sept. 2021 – Aug. 2024. This document highlights our performance for Year 3 of 3 (Sept. 2023 - Aug. 2024).

Our new 3-Year Plan (Sept. 2024 – Aug. 2027) has been developed and submitted to the Equality Commission for their consideration and feedback.

29 Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? (please provide details)

Further staff training on roles and responsibilities and the screening of Newington policies is being sourced. All members of Newington’s Executive Team who oversee the screening of policies have received various types of training, including EC training video, etc.

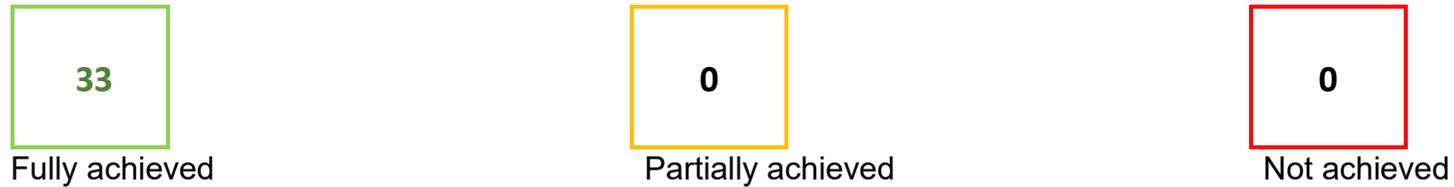
30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what equality and good relations priorities are anticipated over the next (2023-24) reporting period? (please tick any that apply)

- Employment
- Goods, facilities and services
- Legislative changes
- Organisational changes/ new functions
- Nothing specific, more of the same
- Other (please state):

PART B

PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans

1. Number of action measures for this reporting period that have been:



2. Please outline below details 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 ⁱ	Outcomes / Impact ⁱⁱ
National ⁱⁱⁱ			
Regional ^{iv}			

Local ^v	<u>COMMUNICATION</u>		
1.1	Regularly review and update our website and social media platforms to promote disability awareness, positive attitudes towards people with a disability and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote disability awareness, positive attitudes, and participation by all. 	<i>Achieved between 2021 - 2024 as Newington published articles on our social media platforms, website and within our publications.</i>

PART B

1.2	Use effective signage and positive imagery to promote inclusion for all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote disability awareness, positive attitudes, and participation by all. 	<i>Achieved– Newington continues to publish articles on social media platforms, website and within all our publications.</i>
1.3	Continue to carryout out positive engagement with specialist disability representatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to formalise links with disability groups that offer guidance and advice. 	<i>Newington liaised with various groups/organisations, some of whom provide bespoke services and support.</i>
1.4	Review our Complaints Policy and procedures and other feedback mechanisms to ensure a quality service to tenants and other service users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review feedback/findings and use info. acquired as a tool to improve work practices and service delivery. 	<i>Achieved– Newington have recently conducted a review of our Complaints Policy and Procedures (Feb. 2024).</i>
1.5	Ensure that surveys are completed to ensure our service standards are being maintained and are easily accessible to all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor, review, collate and action findings from all surveys to identify any barriers to accessing Newington’s services. 	<i>Achieved– Newington conducted a full Tenant Experience Survey in 2022 and findings have been presented to NHA Board and tenants informed of results/key findings.</i>
1.6	Improve opportunities for a person with a disability to effectively communicate with us, other statutory agencies, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate facilities within our newly constructed office which will remove any remaining barriers to tenants seeking to engage or communicate with us or others. 	<i>Achieved– New main office constructed and fully DDA compliant (Dec. 2021).</i>

PART B

1.7	We will ensure that all relevant staff are competent in using the new facilities incorporated within our newly constructed office accommodation (i.e., text phone, induction loops systems, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of training for frontline staff will ensure effective use of new technology and systems, which will improve customer experience and complement/enhance service delivery standards. 	<i>Achieved– Front-line staff have been trained in the use of newly installed office equipment.</i>
1.8	Seek the views of staff on the content and implementation of this Disability Action Plan and disability equality generally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a staff consultation event relating to this DAP and implement any conclusions/recommendations as a result of this). 	<i>Achieved– Focus Groups held with all NHA staff in July 2024 to review NHA DAP 2021 – 2024 (performance outcomes, etc.) and our new DAP for the period 2024 – 2027, with conclusions and recommendations from staff incorporated.</i>
1.9	Provide updates and advise to disabled tenants on changes to welfare reform and other key and relevant legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure tenants effected by changes in legislation are fully aware of how any such changes may directly or indirectly affect them. • By providing adequate training to staff on changes that effect residents and/or and the wider community, better support mechanisms and appropriate referrals can be made. 	<p><i>Achieved – Regular referrals being made for Welfare and benefits advice, appeals, etc.</i></p> <p><i>In Jan. 2022, most of our staff undertook:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Customer Service - Tel. Techniques and Personal Safety training</i>

PART B

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure disabled tenants have easy access to partner organisations that provide advice and support (i.e., Independent Welfare Advisor, Family Support Hubs, North Belfast Advice Partnership and other community and voluntary sector organisations, etc.). 	<p><i>Some of our front-line staff also attended:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Domestic Violence & Coercive Control and Autistic Children/Young People in Emotional Distress: supporting them and their carers training.</i> <p><i>Our staff team continue to make regular referrals to our dedicated Independent Welfare Advisor, local Family Support Hubs, the North Belfast Advice Partnership and other community and voluntary sector organisations.</i></p>
1.10	Continue to promote take up the use of Newington’s disabled adaptation service, ensuring it is easily accessible to all and monitor take up of the service at least annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of service via digital platforms and within Newington’s publications will ensure tenants are fully aware of the service and that it is fully utilised. 	<p><i>Achieved – This service is highlighted to tenants by front-line staff and an article is regularly published within our Newsletters. The Association undertakes and absorbs associated costs with regards to minor improvements works.</i></p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All adaptations installed will be carried out in an unintrusive and timely manner and as per policy and Dept. for Communities guidelines. • Continue to complete and review findings of all Post Tenancy Visits to ensure tenant's new accommodation fully meets their needs. • Newington will monitor take up and performance delivery relating to this service and compile a report on at least an annual basis. 	<p><i>Newington staff make referrals for OT assessments for more major works required and liaise with OT's relating to all proposed works.</i></p> <p><i>Achieved – Newington regular monitors and reports on the take up and performance of carrying disabled adaptations, etc.</i></p> <p><i>Achieved – Newington's front-line staff liaise to ensure any new measures/adaptations identified are undertaken to ensure their accommodation is suitable and meets tenants needs.</i></p> <p><i>Achieved – Newington regular monitors and reports on the take up and performance of carrying disabled adaptations, etc.</i></p>
1.11	Ensure all internal and external communications, information, publications, policies, etc. can be provided in alternative formats, when require or requested.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all service users are aware of availability of all publications, policies, correspondence, etc. can be 	<p><i>Achieved – All information can be provided in alternative formats, when require or requested.</i></p>

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		made available, on request, in alternative formats.	
	<u>TRAINING</u>		
2.1	Ensure all staff have full access to training and development opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure all staff develop their knowledge and themselves personally. To ensure best practice. To enhance Newington's service delivery standards to tenants and the wider community. 	<p><i>Achieved – Newington staff have a full access to training, and this is monitored regularly by the Association. Each staff member has an individual training plan, and this is review/monitored during staff reviews/appraisal process.</i></p> <p><i>Achieved – The Association continually strives to ensure we deliver Value for Money and Best Practice and publish an annual VFM Statement which is distributed to all our tenants and key stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>Achieved – Newington continually strives to enhance our service standards to our tenants and pride ourselves in how we engage, consult and support others within the wider community.</i></p>

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2.2	Provide new/refresher training on Equality & Diversity legislation and Disability Awareness to Board members and staff every 2 - 3 years and invite key disability speakers where appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure all Board members are up to date with relevant legislative requirements. • To ensure staff are appropriately trained and equipped in identifying people with disabilities and be able to provide the necessary advice, guidance and support required). 	<p>Disability Awareness training delivered in June 2023.</p> <p>Equality & Diversity training still to be delivered during 2024.</p>
2.3	Ensure all new staff have received information about disability awareness during initial staff inductions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMT will carry out all new staff inductions and emphasis the necessity to ensure Newington meet all requirements under Section 75 duties. • All staff will be trained in the use of Newington's facilities/services and the availability of internal and external support mechanisms in place. 	<p>Achieved - Staff Inductions are carried out with all new employees who join Newington.</p> <p>Achieved - Newington intend to deliver refresher training during 2024.</p>
2.4	Continue partnership working arrangements with other local RSL's (i.e., NIHE and other Housing Association's), NIFHA and CIH to deliver shared training, good practice from within the sector, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure service standards are maintained or improved upon. 	<p>There was limited training available during 2021/22 due to Covid-19.</p> <p>Achieved - Newington is again partnering with other RSL, etc. to deliver shared training and identify good practice within the sector,</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To acquire VFM, best use of shared resources, assist to identify good practice, etc. 	<p>via NIFHA Comms. Forum, Housing Managers working groups, etc.</p> <p>As above</p>
	<u>PARTICIPATION & ENGAGEMENT</u>		
3.1	Carry out annual exercises to encourage staff to declare disabilities/long term health conditions and ensure consideration is given to the implementation of all identified reasonable adjustments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure staff receive the appropriate advice and support. To assist staff to avail of additional resources to allow them to undertake their general duties safely and unhindered. 	<p>Achieved - Completed.</p> <p>Achieved - All staff are aware that resources and support measures that can be made available on request to their Senior Manager.</p>
3.2	Provide support to those within the community and voluntary sector who promote initiatives for disabled people, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of direct support from Newington staff or via our Community Investment Fund (i.e., financial support) to deliver local events or initiatives for people with disabilities. 	<p><i>Achieved – Newington provided funding and direct support to a broad range of groups/organisations who promote disability awareness, good relations, etc.</i></p>
3.3	<p>When hosting internal or external events ensure that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation and promotion materials are easily readable Signage is clear Handouts are in accessible formats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure all literature is offered in different formats. 	<p><i>Achieved – All publications can be made available in alternative formats (on request).</i></p> <p><i>Achieved – All venues access to ensure they</i></p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Venues are easy to reach, fully accessible and are chosen to ensure that they are welcoming environments Delegates are made aware of fire evacuation policies, location of toilets, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When hosting events, ensure that facilities accommodate the needs of all attendees. Encourage tenants with disabilities, who wish to attend events, to inform the Association of their specific needs and requirements, to promote positive engagement and customer experience. 	<p><i>meet the new of everyone attending.</i></p> <p><i>Achieved – All tenants are encouraged to attend events and to inform the Association of their specific needs and requirements, to ensure positive engagement and customer experience.</i></p>
3.4	We will encourage people with disabilities to become involved at all levels within our organisation (i.e., BOM, etc.).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure all appointments to the Board are reviewed and monitored to identify gaps from under-represented groups and persons with disabilities. 	<i>Achieved – Six new BOM members appointed during 2022/23 from various backgrounds and abilities.</i>
3.5	Encourage all tenants and staff to submit articles for Tenant Newsletters and other relevant publications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To encourage all tenants and staff member to be actively involved in the design and delivery of our publications and to promote inclusion and active participation by all interested parties. 	<i>Achieved – All staff are encouraged to provide articles/literature, etc. for all our publications and front-line staff regularly liaise with tenants regarding producing articles, promotional articles about good relations, positive news stories, employment and training opportunities, etc.</i>
3.6	Promote participation from people with a disability on our Tenant Forum, focus group sessions, residents’ committees, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure participation is open and accessible to all. 	<i>Achieved – Newington has a broad range of tenants on our Tenant Forum who</i>

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			<i>also are members of local residents' groups, etc.</i>
3.7	Improve online access for tenants who have a disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure tenants have access to our digital platforms (i.e., social media platforms, website, etc.). To build tenants capacity to access information online. 	<p><i>Achieved – Newington provided bespoke digital inclusion training to residents within our Camberwell Court Sheltered Scheme.</i></p> <p>NHA provides free internet connection in the communal area within our Cat. 1 Sheltered Scheme.</p>
3.8	Appoint a Disability Champion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newington will actively seek to appoint a Disability Champion. 	<i>Achieved – Newington has appointed a new Disability Champion (staff member).</i>
	<u>RECRUITMENT & RETENTION</u>		
4.1	Support employees with disabilities and long-term health conditions and ensure there are no barriers to career development opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Newington staff have access to advice, support and the relevant equipment to fulfil their day-to-day duties. This will be completed during individual annual staff appraisals and surveys. Ensure career development is not hindered due to a disability or long-term health issue. 	<p><i>Achieved – Hybrid working introduced, training plans developed, procured Staff Skills online training portal, etc.</i></p> <p><i>Achieved - New Staff skills portal acquired to allow staff to undertake mandatory and bespoke training to assist with career development.</i></p>

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4.2	Establish best practice in the recruitment and employment of disabled people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the use disability networks to circulate adverts for employment vacancies, to ensure recruitment advertising reaches a wide audience. 	<p><i>Achieved – Newington publicly specified in latest recruitment drives for people with disabilities as they are currently underrepresented within the organisation.</i></p>
4.3	Support employees to manage their physical, mental and financial wellbeing (i.e., effectively manage stress, etc.).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide regular training and adhere to/ensure implementation of all relevant policies within the Association’s current Employee Handbook. • To ensure access to external support mechanisms, if required. 	<p><i>Achieved – Our Staff Skills training portal provides bespoke training to assist employees to manage their physical and mental health and financial wellbeing.</i></p> <p><i>NHA provides access to external support mechanisms, if required.</i></p>
4.4	Where possible, provide work placements, shadowing and mentor programmes and encourage applications and take up to these from people with a disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a mentoring programme and work in partnership with disability groups/organisations to attract those with a disability. 	<p>No work placements or monitoring programmes available during 2021/22, as most employees were working from home due to the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Achieved -The Association employed a Housing Apprentice during 2022/23, on a two-year fixed term contract, with applicants from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities.</p>

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			Achieved -The Association also employed a Student Placement during 2023/24, on a six month fixed term contract.
	<u>OTHER LEGAL, STATUTORY & BEST PRACTICE MEASURES</u>		
5.1	Deliver requirements of UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure all legislative requirements and legal obligations are met by Newington. To adhere to the eight General Principles and all other associate Articles (1 – 50). 	<p><i>Achieved, regularly reviewed and monitored.</i></p> <p><i>Achieved, regularly reviewed and monitored.</i></p>
5.2	Continue to review policies to identify and assess any significant issues relating to the two disability duties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SMT to ensure all Section 75 requirements are met/adhered to when reviewing all policies. 	<i>Achieved during 2021/22 & 2022/23 and continued throughout the lifetime of our DAP 2021/24.</i>
5.3	Engage with organisations and disabled people to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage participation by disabled people in public life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To strengthen current partnership working. To establish new links and partnerships to build positive relationships and networks. 	<p><i>Achieved during 2021/22 & 2022/23 and continued throughout the lifetime of our DAP 2021/24.</i></p> <p><i>Achieved during 2021/22 & 2022/23 and continued throughout the lifetime of our DAP 2021/24.</i></p>
5.4	Ensure representation at joint consultation events hosted by the Equality Commission, NIHE and other statutory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To participate proactively at partnerships working events. 	<i>Achieved during 2021/22 & 2022/23 & continued</i>

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	agencies, Northern Ireland Housing Association, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify best practice and assist in any implementation within the organisation. To stay up to date with current policy, legislation, etc and to ensure all relevant measures are in place within the Association. 	<p><i>throughout the lifetime of our DAP 2021/24.</i></p> <p><i>Achieved during 2021/22 & 2022/23 and continued throughout the lifetime of our DAP 2021/24.</i></p> <p><i>Achieved during 2021/22 & 2022/23 and continued throughout the lifetime of our DAP 2021/24.</i></p>
5.5	Collaborate on outreach activities with disability groups to raise awareness of public appointments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form partnership and strengthen links with local groups. 	<p><i>Achieved during 2021/22 & 2022/23 and continued throughout the lifetime of our DAP 2021/24.</i></p>
5.6	Ensure the delivery of our new build developments are designed and constructed to meet current and future long-term needs of disabled people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to complete and review all findings from surveys carried out on new build schemes. This is to ensure standard are met and that the homes we provide meet all requirements of new tenants (i.e., allow them to live comfortably and unrestricted within their new homes). Complete Post Tenancy checks to ensure all existing facilities meet the new tenants' requirements and to identify suitable adaptations, 	<p><i>Achieved: There were 3 new build properties completed during 2021/22 and surveyed.</i></p> <p><i>Note: No new build homes were built by NHA in 2022/23 or 2023/24.</i></p> <p><i>Post Tenancy checks completed during 2021/22 & 2022/23 and continued throughout the lifetime of our DAP 2021/2024.</i></p>

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		support mechanisms, etc. to assist with the sustainment of their tenancies.	
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2(b) What training action measures were achieved in this reporting period?

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
	Our staff training plans were impacted due to the lack of training available, venue availability and lockdown/ restrictions as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, but face-to-face staff training has now been resumed.	Ensure staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge to deliver a high-quality service to tenants/other service users.	To ensure all our tenants/other service users receive the appropriate and correct advice, guidance, support regarding the various services we provide.

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

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
	We continue to encourage staff and tenants to submit articles for newsletters.	Promotion of disability issues	<i>Increase awareness among Newington tenant base. Articles published in Newington’s Annual Report and Newsletters to encourage uptake of our adaptation services and to positively promote people with disability as valued members of our community.</i>

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			Findings from our Tenant Experience Survey 2022 show that 94% of our tenants were satisfied how Newington keeps them informed about things that might affect them as a resident and 91% of our tenants were satisfied with the overall services we provide.
	Promote positive attitudes toward people with disabilities.	Use of positive imagery and articles in publications	<i>Increase in positive attitude towards people with disability amongst Newington's tenant base.</i>
	Advise tenants on impacts of Welfare Reform on people with disabilities.	Staff adequately trained to provide general advice, mechanism in place to refer cases for independent advice.	<p><i>Newington staff are regularly updated on U/C, Welfare Reform (mitigation and temporary protections measures, etc.).</i></p> <p><i>Newington has regularly promoted on independent advice service in partnership with NBAP.</i></p> <p><i>Staff regularly monitor tenant arrears cases and provide/signpost or make referrals for the acquisition of the appropriate support.</i></p> <p><i>We have worked with residents to increase the awareness of welfare reform changes and all mitigation measure to ensure these are taken up.</i></p>

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

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
	<p>All housing management staff have attended various training and briefing sessions relating to the above to acquire a clearer understanding of some of the challenges facing our tenants, particularly those who are most vulnerable.</p>	<p>This is to ensure that our members of staff are adequately equipped to sympathetically support, provide advice and signpost or make any relevant referrals required.</p>	<p><i>Tenants are less likely to fall into debt or financial difficulty and potentially look to seek alternative lending. This will ensure that there is no detrimental effect on their mental health and personal well-being.</i></p>

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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
	BOM & Staff Survey	Determine the disability and needs of BOM and all employees.	BOM and staff needs are regularly monitored, identified and met.
	Tenant Experience Survey 2022	Identify respondents with disabilities	Identify issues or trends that may be adversely impacting on disabled tenants
	All Gaps in Data Reviewed.	Reviewed Data Collection Systems	Improved identification of disabled tenants to enable appropriate services to be delivered.
	Seek views of staff on contents and implementation of Disability Action Plan.	Carried out staff consultation during staff away day in 2019. This was not done in 2020 and 2021 as no away day held due to outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.	Engaged staff in formation of DAP and achieved positive buy-in to its aims and objectives. Staff consultation to be arranged during 2023/24.

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	Review of Performance	Review of KPIs to identify areas of weakness non-performance.	Ensure continuous improvement and quickly identify systemic problems that may occur.
	Partnership working with other HA's	Encourage best practice and sharing of knowledge.	Improvements in standards and economies of scale achieved. Improved outcomes for all tenants.
	Positive engagement with specialist disability organisations.	Working in conjunction with groups working to support vulnerable people with disabilities, via Family Support Hubs partnership working group, etc.	Continually seek to formalise links with disability groups that offer guidance and advice.

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3. Please outline what action measures have been partly achieved as follows:				
	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestonesvi / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
	N/A			

4. Please outline what action measures have not been achieved and the reasons why.				
	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestonesvi / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
	N/A			

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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

- Tenant surveys are carried out on all response maintenance works, planned works and disabled adaptations.
- Post Tenancy visits are carried out with new tenants within 8 weeks of the tenancy commencing. This is to identify any problems and to help support tenants within their new home (i.e., sustain tenancies).
- Tenant and public feedback is obtained at forums, multi-agency and public meetings.
- All staff provide feedback during operational staff meetings and during their annual individual staff appraisal process.

(b) Quantitative

- The Association records all our allocations information onto a NICORE database, which captures the tenant/family profiles, household makeup, disabilities, age, gender, sexual orientation, economic status, etc. This information allows use to review, amend or incorporate measures and procedures to fully meet the requirements of our tenant base.
- We complete tenant censuses to identify any potential impact of Welfare Reform and we monitor and have access to NISRA Census Data.
- We review all Information about new allocations acquired via NIHE Housing Waiting Lists. This is to ensure potential tenant's homes are fully equipped to meet the tenant/family profile and specific requirements (i.e., complex needs/house type, adaptations, floating support etc.).

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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?

No

If yes, please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1			
2			

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

No

ⁱ **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. ⁱⁱ **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. ⁱⁱⁱ **National:** Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments ^{iv} **Regional:** Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level ^v **Local:** Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora. ^{vi} **Milestones** – Please outline what part progress has been made towards the particular measures; even if full output or outcomes/ impact have not been achieved.

Appendix 1: Newington’s Equality Scheme Action Plan measures and outcomes for the next 5 years (2022 – 2027)

The Association has set 22 no. action plan measures which we aim to achieve over the next five years and will regularly monitor progress and identify all outcomes.

There are:

- Monitoring - (5 action measures set)
- Consultation - (2 action measures set)
- Tenant & Community Engagement - (5 action measures set)
- Training & Development - (4 action measures set)
- Governance - (6 action measures set)

MONITORING

Action	How will we know when we have achieved this?	Timescale	Lead/ Responsibility	Equality-related outcome	Strategic owner	Outcome
1. Undertake a tenant profiling survey and use results of survey to produce and implement actions.	On completion of exercise and after review of findings.	At least every 3 - 5 years Next survey by the end of 2024.	SMT	Informs a more targeted and responsive service and to assist with screening of new and existing policies.	SMT	Pending

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<p>2. Develop a new Communications Plan to promote equality and diversity internally within the organisation and externally.</p>	<p>Use local media and joint working partnerships to promote the organisation and the HA Sector overall.</p> <p>Continue to attend NIFHA's Comms. Forum to identify and incorporate examples of best practice within the sector.</p>	<p>Throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan</p> <p>Throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan</p>	<p>SMT</p> <p>SCSO</p>	<p>Raised awareness and increased understanding of equality and diversity issues.</p> <p>Develop effective partnership working within the HA sector and collectively enhance its reputation locally and nationally.</p> <p>Publicise initiatives which effectively promotes and delivers equality and diversity.</p>	<p>SMT</p> <p>SMT</p>	<p>All Ongoing</p>
<p>3. Further develop an appropriate system to collect information about communities' needs and aspirations.</p>	<p>New Housing Management software package to be sourced.</p>	<p>By end of 2023</p>	<p>SMT</p>	<p>Relevant, proportionate and appropriate information to be collected to inform decision making.</p>	<p>SMT</p>	<p>All Ongoing</p>

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	All staff to record feedback from attendance at local community meetings, Tenant Forum meetings, focus groups, etc. and must communicate effectively with colleagues to ensure effective management.	Throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan	All relevant Staff	As above	All relevant Staff	
4. Use relevant data when reviewing or developing policies and services.	Usage of all available data and figures	Throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan	SMT	Available data will be analysed and used to shape policies and services.	SMT	Ongoing
5. Continue to improve mechanisms to monitor the diversity of our workforce and appointees.	Complete staff profiling exercise annually.	Throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan	SMT	Ensure the profile of workforce is broadly representative of the community it serves.	SMT	Ongoing

CONSULTATION

Action	How will we know when we have achieved this?	Timescale	Lead/ Responsibility	Equality-related outcome	Strategic owner	Outcome
6. NHA Board/SMT to attend meetings with S75 representatives to inform them of the Associations work.	By holding or attending regular meetings	Throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan	SMT	Raised awareness and increased understanding of equality and diversity issues.	BOM & SMT	Pending
7. Provide guidance and support (i.e., financial or otherwise) to local services who promote participation and inclusion for underrepresented groups.	Via our ongoing work and monitoring/recording of this.	Throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan	SMT	Evaluate and ensure local services are supported and fully accessible to all.	SMT	Ongoing

TENANT & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Action	How will we know when we have achieved this?	Timescale	Lead/ Responsibility	Equality-related outcome	Strategic owner	Outcome
8. Facilitated testing of website by people with different abilities, including online forms, etc.	Testing and implementation of issues identified.	By end of 2023	SMT	Increased access to information and services.	BOM & SMT	Pending
9. Further develop and deliver new Age Friendly initiatives.	Deliver initiatives locally and encourage take-up of all initiatives.	Throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan	SMT/All Staff	Promote Association as an age friendly organisation.	SMT	Ongoing
10. Support local Youth provision and services.	NHA staff to regularly attend multi-agency community safety working groups and encourage/develop partnership initiatives with Youth	Throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan	SMT/All Staff	Promote participation and inclusion of children and young people.	SMT	Achieved during 2023/24 and to continue throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan.

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	Clubs/Forums, etc.					
11. Assist with linking tenants to key bespoke services and local support networks.	Regularly evaluate all activities carried out by NHA (i.e., publications, service evaluation, post tenancy feedback, etc.).	Throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan	SMT/All Staff	To ensure tenants have access to key services that they require.	SMT & BOM	Ongoing
12. Continue to remove barriers to training and employment and improve access to long term unemployed and other marginalised groups.	Refer and support tenants, family members or members of the local community to relevant local training and employment services.	Throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan	SMT/All Staff	To help improve opportunity for identified groups	BOM & SMT	Ongoing

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Action	How will we know when we have achieved this?	Timescale	Lead/ Responsibility	Equality-related outcome	Strategic owner	Outcome
13. Utilise Staff Skills training portal for staff and encourage staff to undertake bespoke training relating to mental health, disability awareness, equality and diversity, stress management, GDPR, etc.)	Record number of training events held. Review and set mandatory training for all staff.	Throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan	SMT/All Staff	Increased staff awareness of self-care, career progression, equality and diversity, confidentiality, etc.	SMT	Ongoing
14. Further develop and deliver programmes of work to tackle health inequalities.	Develop and incorporate programmes which promote inclusion, good relations and active participation. Implement initiatives which reduce	Throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan	SMT/All Staff	To ensure health inequalities are being addressed.	SMT	Ongoing

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	the likelihood of social isolation.					
15. Increase gender awareness amongst staff and tenants/customers.	All staff to receive guidance during induction process. All staff to undertake all relevant training.	Throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan	SMT/All Staff	Raised awareness and increased understanding amongst staff and tenants/customers.	SMT	Ongoing
16. Ensure all SMT and BOM members undertake the relevant training to ensure they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to meet all legal and legislative requirements. For further information, please visit: https://www.equalityni.org/training	When all BOM and SMT members have undertaken the relevant training.	Throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan	BOM & SMT	BOM and Staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to meet all legal and legislative requirements (i.e., as Board members, recruitment, workplace management, equality of opportunity, etc.	BOM & SMT	Ongoing

GOVERNANCE

Action	How will we know when we have achieved this?	Timescale	Lead/ Responsibility	Equality-related outcome	Strategic owner	Outcome
17. Embed Equality and Good Relations in new Corporate Plan 2023 - 2026	All staff and BOM to continue to promote and encourage cross community partnership working initiatives and strengthen relationships with all those working and residing within areas of North Belfast where we deliver our services.	During the review of our Corporate Plan in 2023 and throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan	All Staff & BOM	<p>Demonstration of effective leadership.</p> <p>Consideration of equality is 'designed in' to service delivery and the planning of policies, projects and programmes.</p> <p>Organisation developed to deliver responsive services to a wide ranging and diverse communities.</p>	BOM & SMT	Achieved during 2023/24 and to continue throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan.
18. Develop and deliver strategic programmes, initiatives and events.	By developing and incorporating strategic initiatives and	Throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan	SMT/All Staff	Promotion of equality and diversity outcomes in strategic programmes.	BOM & SMT	Ongoing

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	facilities, which will help attract and support those currently socially inactive or may have barriers which restrict them from fully engaging in all opportunities and programmes that are delivered locally.					
19. Review and develop any new Equality Scheme Action Plan measures required.	By reviewing annually and incorporating any new measures into this document.	Throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan	BOM/SMT/All Staff	Compliance with Section 75 of Northern Ireland Act.	BOM & SMT	Ongoing
20. Implement all new Action Plan measures detailed within our Equality Scheme 2023 – 2028 and report regularly on	Via submission of all returns to ECNI. Via SMT and BOM reviews.	Throughout the lifetime of the 5-year Action Plan	SCSO/SMT/BOM	Compliance with the Equality Commission requirements.	BOM & SMT	Ongoing

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<p>progress to the ECNI.</p>						
<p>21. Deliver a revised Disability Action Plan and measures for Sept. 2024 to Aug. 2027</p>	<p>SMT to review existing DAP which expires in Aug. 2024 and discuss/ implement new DAP outcome targets from Sept. 2024.</p>	<p>New DAP effective from Sept. 2024</p>	<p>SMT</p>	<p>Address any inequalities faced by disabled people in employment, service provision, our day-to-day operations and policies.</p>	<p>SMT</p>	<p>Achieved.</p>
<p>22. NHA to develop and implement all actions from our new: 1) Tenant Participation & Community Involvement Strategy 2023/26. 2) Community Investment Strategy 2023/26.</p>	<p>Once presented to BOM and staff</p>	<p>By end of 2023</p>	<p>SMT</p>	<p>Strategies developed to deliver responsive services to diverse communities.</p>	<p>BOM & SMT</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>