

Equality Commission

FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

**Public Authority 2022 - 2023 Annual Progress Report**

Section 75 of the NI Act 1998

Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended)



woven

## Woven Housing Association



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

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Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:

[www.woven.org.uk/housing/equality-matters](http://www.woven.org.uk/housing/equality-matters)

#### Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ann Gallagher". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large 'A' and 'G'.

**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 2022 and March 2023**

## **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 2022-23, 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.*

Woven Housing Association, previously Habinteg Housing Association (Ulster) Ltd, founded in 1976, is a registered housing association in Northern Ireland. Woven plans, develops and manages 'integrated' housing schemes in both urban and rural areas throughout the region and works with several partner organisations in providing supported housing projects. The Association currently has over 2500 properties at more than 100 locations and 18 partnership schemes.

Woven's Vision – **Homes, Lives and Communities; Woven as one** encapsulates the Association's central aim of providing housing which combines a range of dwelling types - family houses, apartments and bungalows - in order to appropriately meet the needs of the widest range of users, including older persons and persons with a disability. Quality, sustainable developments include large and medium sized suburban housing developments, inner city apartments, individual rural cottages and specialised housing schemes. Partnership projects include sensitively designed housing with care schemes, temporary accommodation for people who are homeless, and housing initiatives for people with additional support needs.

Throughout 2022-23, Woven maintained a commitment to implementing its statutory equality, good relation and disability duties in adherence to the Association's Equality Scheme and Disability Action Plan.

Woven's core work continues to embody our duties and much of what is undertaken on a daily basis fulfils our duties - from consultation on new developments, promotion of services aimed at reaching the widest range of audiences, unbiased allocation of housing and service delivery, choice, partnership work to support additional needs, community involvement, good relations, fair treatment, equality and diversity awareness training for staff and equality screening of all new or revised policies.

For the purpose of this report, in order to annually demonstrate 'progress', the information provided focusses predominantly on new initiatives and/or significant developments in this reporting period which demonstrate a renewed or enhanced endeavour to ensure equality and promote good relations.

## **1. KEY POLICY AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS IN THE PERIOD**

### **1.1 IN RELATION TO TENANT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND GOOD RELATIONS**

The Homes and Communities Team, have worked tirelessly to continue to promote, encourage, support, and sustain a culture of tenant engagement, community services and good relations opportunities. The Communities Involvement team consists of one Senior Officer who is responsible for overseeing the team which includes three Community Involvement Officers and one Admin Assistant who provides administration support to the team.

We are now in Year 2 of our five-year Tenant & Community Engagement Strategy which sets out a genuine commitment to deliver on our vision of improving Homes, Lives and Communities. Woven are committed to providing tenants with practical opportunities to influence the decisions that affect them and provide mechanisms to help support, develop and enable effective engagement. We continue to maintain a culture of building on existing and new relationships with our tenants, between our tenants and others and in doing so improve our tenants' experience of our services. This work is overseen by the Director of Homes and Communities.

#### **Woven Community News**

Since May 2021, a group of Woven tenants supported by Community Officers continue to provide a quarterly newsletter which is available online for all tenants. In December 2022, Community Involvement officers and Community Assistants distributed a hard copy of the newsletter to every household. The newsletter reports on a variety of topics which are relevant to tenants needs and include relevant Woven News that Showcases Woven Homes for one Council area in each edition whilst outlining services and amenities within that area. The tenant section includes dates of upcoming events, meet the tenant, help and advice on topics like winter tips, health eating and support/signposting on topics for example, domestic violence. Each tenant works on a section each with support from staff members and the team agree the newsletter for Woven to upload on their website.

#### **Environmental & Sustainability**

The Homes and Communities team recognise the positive impact of the great outdoors to our tenants, the wider community, and the environment that we live in. We are passionate about creating a friendly environment for our tenants and to ensure this we support tenants with funding to purchase plants for raised beds on schemes where tenants have identified the need either because of mental health problems, physical health problems or cost of living crisis to grow their own produce. Tenants are flourishing and growing incredible edible resources and are now in year three in growing and cultivating their own produce. Woven continues to provide tenants with the resources and training to grow their own baskets and window boxes creating pride and a welcoming ambience on schemes.

### **Tenant Reading Panel**

In June 2022 the panel, which included tenants and staff met to review arrears letters templates which are distributed to tenants when they fall into arrears for the first time and if they do not respond to this primary correspondence the next correspondence which follows up the initial letter. The panel was made up of six residents who were able to join the meeting

both in person and virtually. The panel was facilitated and supported by Woven Homes & Communities staff. The panel made recommendations to update both letters which are approved for Housing Officers to use. The report of this exercise is available on Woven website for all tenants to access.

### **Tenant Scrutiny Panel**

In September 2022, The Communities Team facilitated a scrutiny exercise which allowed tenants the opportunity to come along and find out more about how they can make recommendations on Woven services. Tenants agreed the terms of reference and code of conduct and those involved then agreed that the panel would review an aspect of Woven's Communication in relation to promoting Woven's Customer standards. Tenants met with Woven Communications Officer and made recommendations on promotion and communicating the Customer Standards.

### **Regional Panels**

During the monitoring period Woven have three Regional Panels that meet regularly. The aims of the Regional Panels are to ensure the voice of tenants in promoting residents' involvement process and make sure proper structures are in place to represent tenants effectively. Panel members meet four times per year and develop their own aims and objectives, which ensures they identify the needs within their area and feed into plans which address local interests.

### **Promotion of Tenant and Community Engagement, Good Relations opportunities/ activities, and events**

We actively promoted every community event and interaction using a variety of methods including social media, flyers, calls and text messages. We have continued to utilize our Community Assistants and their local knowledge to ensure that we are listening to the different voices that make up the fabric of Woven communities. No scheme is the same, and our attempts to ensure that tenants are communicated with effectively and in the way that is most appropriate to them have reflected this diversity.

Facebook has also given tenants the opportunity to get involved and comment on activities available across the region, offering them a greater sense of inclusion and involvement in all Woven activities. This has had a positive impact by contributing towards the reduction of social isolation amongst those participants. All tenant, community involvement and good relations activities are evaluated to monitor success and gather information for future events.

## **Tenant & Community Engagement Strategy 2021-2026**

Woven's Tenant & Community Engagement Strategy 2021-2026 sets out Woven's commitment to engage, listen and respond to the voice of tenants and those living in the communities within which we work.

We engage with several different communities, incorporating their knowledge, skills, and experiences, with a focus on improving our services. Woven does this by offering a range of opportunities to engage, from surveys and local tenants' groups through to reviewing policies, scrutinising services and tenants representing their schemes on the Regional Panels.

As an organisation, we ensure that tenants take a lead role in assessing and examining our housing services in a clear and open manner. Tenant scrutiny is tenant led giving them an opportunity to challenge our performance and to work with us. This ensures that we provide a quality service and create a culture of continuous improvement.

Woven want our tenants to know that their trust is important but also to foster a mutual respect and honesty between all parts of the Woven Community.

We ensure that all our actions are inclusive and meet the needs of all tenants by assessing our performance in line with the Tenant Participation Standards Accreditation Scheme (through Supporting Communities) with which we have committed to and completed the initial assessment outlining our commitment to the 10 principles underpinning Northern Ireland's strategy and how your Tenant Participation Strategy reflects these.

As part of our commitment to creating inclusive, diverse, and involved communities, Woven are increasing our engagement with the wider community across all age ranges. We include 'seldom heard groups' or those who find it harder to engage. We work in partnership with our tenants to embed our schemes into the local community making use of local community resources.

### **Together Building United Communities (TBUC) / Housing for All**

Woven have three 'Housing for All' schemes in Holywood, Portrush and Sion Mills. The Holywood and Portrush schemes are now in year three of delivering the five-year good relations plans and Sion Mills is in the pre-allocation stage with allocation, planned for April 2025.

Woven works in collaboration with Northern Ireland Housing Executive, other Housing Associations and local councils thereby reducing duplication of services within the target audience and area of output.

The schemes signed up to the 5-year Good Relations plans which aim to:

- To promote and support a community where residents feel welcome and where everyone has opportunities to make positive contributions to their community, developing a sense of belonging, community ownership and shared identity.

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- To enhance neighbourliness through building community spirit and encouraging involvement
- To develop partnership working that will support bridging and bonding among and between the shared scheme residents and residents from the surrounding communities (within a five-mile radius of the new shared scheme). This will be advanced through good relations and development programmes/projects/events and other opportunities.
- To encourage and provide investment/regeneration opportunities/activities, for the benefit of neighbouring communities, in order to support 'bridging' across and between neighbourhoods.
- To develop and encourage meaningful dialogue that accommodates and enables mutual understanding.
- To streamline good relations between communities and within our organisation, in order to contribute towards more shared sustainable communities.
- To work (in partnership) to support increased movement and interaction within and between shared housing schemes and neighbouring communities, some of which are single-identity communities.

In addition to the above a six monthly TBUC monitoring Report was completed in March 2023 and was submitted to the Department for Communities (DfC). This report outlined the delivery of the Housing for All programme to date.

Our five-year Good Relations plans were agreed by the DfC and NIHE. The plans will allow us to continue to look at developing programmes that will encourage support for communities and cultures within the schemes and their five-mile radius.

### **Bonding activities**

Tenants living in Church view in Holywood and Girona in Portrush (Housing for All Schemes) enjoyed several bonding activities during 2022/2023. These included the Christmas light switch on with supper and Santa, Christmas wreath making and a lunch event. These events provide an opportunity for tenants to meet their neighbours and build positive relationships between their neighbours and staff members attending.

### **Bridging Activities**

The funding from the Department for Communities through Housing for All helps promote the building of relationships with tenants on schemes and the wider community. To ensure this we have coordinated Advisory Groups in Housing for All areas engaging with local elected representatives, statutory and voluntary sector who have an interest in delivering Good Relations in the area.

Bridging events within the local areas have included -

#### ➤ **Ulster Scots evening**

Portrush Housing for All programme funded the opportunity for residents to come together and enjoy an evening of food, music and song celebrating the Ulster Scots heritage.

➤ **Sports Changes Lives**

Hollywood Housing for All programme provided funding to Sports Changes Lives to carry out The Honour Roll programme with Hollywood Primary School, Glencraig Primary School and Sullivan Prep.

The Honour Roll programme provided by sport changes life focuses on young people in P7 with the aim of preparing them for the transition from primary to secondary school. All sessions commence with an emphasis on sport and physical activity and are followed by an educational workshop, to help raise aspirations and build confidence. Each session focuses on creating a positive and fun environment, enhancing social connections within the class through sport. The educational workshops cover a range of issues relevant to support the well-being of young people as they transition to secondary school. Following the 8-week programme we had a festival day where all 3 schools came together to learn more about good relations from Woven staff and to enjoy further sports together.

➤ **Culture Calendar**

We aimed to increase Cultural awareness and celebrate the diversity of cultures in Northern Ireland. This programme was launched during Good Relations week 2022 with 4 primary schools in Portrush and Portstewart attending a multi-cultural celebration event. We also invited advisory groups, local residents and community groups to celebrate the cultures through music, dance, food and arts and crafts. 600 Cultural boxes were distributed to community groups, schools, advisory groups, and local residents. The cultural boxes included a multi-cultural calendar, country information, recipes, and arts and crafts from different cultures across the world.

➤ **Health & Wellbeing**

***Yoga and mindfulness 6-week course*** - This 6-week yoga and mindfulness course for our Hollywood tenants aimed to explore alternative ways to improve mental health. This course also provided the opportunity for tenants to reduce isolation and enhance connectivity.

***Men's Health Check*** – This event was open to all residents in the Portrush area and was provided by Action Cancer providing everyone with the opportunity for a full body “MOT”. All participants also received information on healthy eating and lifestyle options with useful contacts for support e.g., Smoking cessation.

***Kids Relax & Resilient Workshops*** – This programme provided children from Portrush Primary Schools the opportunity to increase emotional coping mechanisms by teaching the kids tools for self-understanding, self-calming and self-regulation. The workshops helped the children develop skills to bounce back from stress, adversity, challenges, and failures.

***Health Fair*** – This one-off event was hosted in collaboration with Radius Housing. This holistic event provided information stands from relevant statutory



and community organisations, breast screening, complimentary therapy, health checks and healthy eating demonstration.

**Small Worlds Café** - Small Worlds are cafe-style events facilitated by Together CIC providing a safe space for participants to encounter others whose lived experience originates from different parts of the world and, more recently, as that of asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants.

The workshop was attended by staff who have customer facing roles within Woven.

### **Police Property Fund**

Woven are delighted to be successful in applying to the Police Property fund for funding towards the costs of providing a range of diversionary activities for young people aged 8-18 years in the Strabane, Sion Mills and Dungannon area. The programme provided a range of arts & crafts workshops, recreational activities including fishing, away days, and farm visits. The second element of the programme involved young people completing “Make the right choice” workshops giving young people an opportunity to build confidence in policing in areas that young people would fear engaging with PSNI. The videos created for the workshops included family trauma, knife crime and substance abuse, all challenges young people may have in life.

### **Positive Older People**

Woven were also successful in providing workshops for those who are hard to reach because of disability or age. These workshops “positive older people” engaged participants in a range of healthy activities promoting the five steps to wellbeing. Workshops included healthy eating, health checks, mindfulness, old time dancing, gardening, arts, and crafts.

## **1.2 IN THE RELATION TO OUR HUMAN RESOURCES (HR)**

### **Communication & Engagement**

Maintaining communication with employees has remained a key priority throughout the past year.

In conjunction with NI Chest Heart and Stroke we undertook the Work Well, Live Well programme the findings of which were based on a survey with all Woven employees. This has given us direction for our Healthy Woven bulletins which continue to be focused on how to maintain both physical and mental health whilst working between home and the office environment. Topics on Health Digital Habits and Less Screen Time More Dream Time were of particular interest to address some of the key concerns highlighted by staff in the survey. We have tied this year’s bulletins in with awareness days including National Fitness Day, World Mental Health Day, Grief Awareness Week, and Sleep Week.

As an outcome of the Work Well, Live Well programme we have trained several Health and Wellbeing Champions across the Association as well as dedicated Mental Health First Aiders.

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Through our HR Managers Briefing we have provided awareness and advice to line managers on topics such as:

- How to ... Handle Employees Complaining About Workload;
- How to... Manage an Employee Who's Reluctant to Return to the Office;
- How To ... Handle Inappropriate Comments of Behaviour During a Video meeting;
- How to Handle Workplace Gossip
- Your Brain : Give Me A Break
- Let's talk About Autism; and
- The Right to Disconnect

We continue to run our monthly Habinteaer initiative which encourages employee engagement and has proved to boost morale and to be popular with staff, with engagement figures rising.

To allow peers to publicly acknowledge the support offered by colleagues during this year we had a Woven's Christmas Crackers initiative which allowed staff to nominate someone who has helped and supported them throughout the year. There were 33 employees nominated, and tokens of gratitude were issued together with the reasons why they were nominated. This initiative was well received by staff.

The Board and Management continued to convey their thanks and gratitude to staff through emails and personal letters of thanks and gift cards.

### **Employee Consultation**

We continue to consult with employees on the review and development of employment policies and procedures through the Staff Consultative Forum. . Policies were reviewed to take onboard equality related best practice. This year we have consulted on 18 employment related policies and procedures including the following new policies, procedures and initiatives.

- Employee volunteering policy
- Employee Cycle to Work Scheme
- Line Manager Guide to Reasonable Adjustments and the Tailored Reasonable Adjustment Plan

### **Recruitment and Selection**

Woven aims to ensure a transparent, unbiased and consistent approach to the recruitment and selection process, underpinned by a commitment to equality of opportunity, as outlined in the Association's Equal Opportunities Policy. We will do this by

- ensuring that all panel members have received appropriate training about fair, non-discriminatory recruitment methods
- ensuring, where possible, any requests for reasonable adjustments are made for disabled applicants
- monitoring our applicant pool and success rates on an annual basis and reviewing our advertising process to ensure the widest applicant pool is reached.

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Processes are designed to encourage the best in candidates and be creative and innovative to respond to the diversity of skills and experience within the community to whom we provide services.

This year we carried out a review of our recruitment advertising process which included benchmarking with best practice organisations and what they are doing to attract candidates, analysis of statistical information available to us through our own recruitment information, and a focus group made up of staff who had joined the Association over the past 2 years about their experience. As a result of this we have:

- Simplified and streamlined the application process.
- Reviewed where and how we advertise positions.
- Invested in recruiting technology in the form of an Applicant tracking systems (ATS).
- Increased our online presence to highlight our culture and values.

During the year 16 new employees' commenced employment with the Association, 14 of which were permanent positions and 2 were temporary positions.

As part of our aim to increase our workforce demographic for under 25-year-olds we supported and facilitated the NI Housing apprenticeship scheme along with several other Housing Associations.

### **Induction Programme for employees**

All new starts to the Association are required to complete a 3-month induction programme, including mandatory training on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, Unconscious Bias and JAM Card (Just A Minute) e-learning.

A key aspect of the induction process of all new employees involves a more in-depth awareness session to cover the Association's commitments to equality and good relations: Equality Scheme, Equality Screening, Charter and Customer Standards. This is delivered in arranged one to one induction meetings with the Quality and Performance Manager.

### **Annual Performance Reviews**

During the Annual Performance Review employees are assessed not only on how they have performed against objectives for the year, but also how they have performed against the Association's Employee Expected Behaviours.

One of the five expected behaviours staff are required to demonstrate is Embracing equality and diversity where we require all our staff to treat everyone with professional and personal respect, promoting fairness and recognising the value of diversity.

97% of staff rated good or above in relation to their performance against the expected behaviours.

Following the 2022 Annual Performance Review cycle a survey was carried out with all staff on their perception of the process and how this could be improved.

- 88% of respondents felt the assessment awarded fairly reflected their performance over the past year.
- 86% of respondents confirmed they were clear on the objectives they had been set for the incoming year.
- 94% of respondents confirmed their manager provided appropriate feedback to them on their performance over the past year.

We were able to report to our Board and Senior Management Team that, in comparison to 2021 annual performance reviews, the overall employee performance in 2021 increased by 6%.

### **Learning and Development**

As part of the Association's commitment to equality of opportunity and good relations, all staff are required to complete mandatory Equality and Diversity training, and compliance is monitored monthly and reported to the Senior and Operational Management Team. This is also reported through to the appropriate Committee and Board. As at the 31 March 2023 compliance for this training was 98% which is an increase of 3% on last year.

In addition to the above training, compliance for the mandatory online Unconscious Bias training was 97%.

During the year we ran several mini masterclasses for line managers one of which was focused on our Reasonable Adjustment duties.

This year several staff attended the Harkin Summit 2022, which is internationally recognised as a platform that brings together leaders to highlight and address disability employment issues, showcase best practice and success, build relationships and challenge for change. As a result of this we were able to link in with one of the speakers and discuss some of their ideas around inclusion in the workplace which inspired us to form an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum.

### **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Forum**

In February 2023 the Equality Diversity & Inclusion forum was formed. The purpose of this forum is to support, promote and encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace, being mindful of the commitments outlined in all our Equality Scheme, Disability Action Plan, Mental Health Charter and other relevant policy documents, and to assist in developing an action plan which goes beyond legal compliance and will be seen as a key component to the core business strategy, because it's the right thing to do.

The Association's values are central to this forum as we strive to make them visible in all we do and create an inclusive culture that nurtures talent and allows all present and potential employees, regardless of differences, the opportunity to flourish and reach their potential within the Association.

### **Absence Management and Reasonable Adjustments**

The Association actively promotes equality of opportunity for people with a disability, making reasonable adjustments to assist them whilst in work and for new employees who join the Association. The Association works in partnership with Disability Action to provide and sustain employment for those who have a disability

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and require support to continue to work. It also provides an Employee Assistance Programme and Occupational Health service to help employees who may be experiencing health issues.

HR continue to support managers where there are difficult and complex absence cases such as stress or disability related absence. This has included more proactive discussions with employees and where necessary the assistance of Occupational Health and external agencies to enable employees to continue within their role or to be supported through ill health retirement.

Reasonable adjustments have included phased return to work, changes to working hours, adjustment to absence management triggers and provision of specialist office equipment, etc.

All staff completed a display screen equipment assessment to ensure, whilst working both in the office and at home, they have a safe working environment and adopted good working practices.

Annual leave check-ins were carried out with staff to ensure they were managing a work life balance and utilising their leave entitlement.

As part of the Association's commitment to support the health and wellbeing of its staff the provision of Private Medical Insurance and Health Cash Back Plan is offered to all staff.

### **Equal Opportunities Monitoring**

During the period the Association carried out its annual Equality Commission equal opportunities monitoring to ensure fairness and equal opportunity requirements are being met. This was further extended to include monitoring of applicants and employees by all nine Section 75 protected categories.

To ensure information held on staff is accurate and up to date the Associations Employee Self Service Module allows staff to view the equality information held on them. The Annual Employee Equality Declaration is now carried out electronically.

## **1.3 IN RELATION TO CUSTOMER SERVICES AND OTHER EXTERNAL QUALITY STANDARDS**

### **Customer Service Excellence (CSE) Standard 2022**

During the reporting period the Association underwent its annual CSE reassessment in terms of its values and service delivery, with a bearing on performance in relation to equality and good relations. This is through an annual assessment against the National Customer Service Excellence Standard.

Assessment against the CSE Standard was conducted in November 2022 with the Association successfully retaining the Standard and improving on overall performance.

Out of 57 criteria, the Association achieved [last year's figures appear in brackets]:

- **21 [20] Compliance Plus/Best Practices**
- **35 [37] Full Compliances**

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- 1 [0] Partial Compliance
- 0 Non-Compliances

In his Report the CSE Assessor commented; *“The CSE team has worked hard to develop their service using the Standard as a business improvement tool. Lots of new evidence was presented this year. There are now 21 elements that have been awarded a compliance plus. The assessor's recommendation is that Woven Housing Association is well deserving of re-accreditation to the Standard”.*

The assessor's recommendation was that Woven Housing Association was well deserving of re-accreditation to the Standard.

### **Inclusive Housing Provision**

The core business of Woven, was to continue to fulfil its Vision of providing Homes, Lives and Communities throughout 2022-23.

115 new homes commenced during the period including 42 CAT1 (Active Elderly) units.

93 individual adaptations were completed (1 Major and 92 minor) to existing housing stock in the period to respond to specific needs, typically ranging from fitting of grab rails and 2<sup>nd</sup> stair rails, lever taps, level access showers and safe play areas. As well as this we have fitted stair lifts, food prep benches for wheelchair users, automatic door openers and automatic WC installations and provided additional lighting for partially sighted tenants. 1 major adaption was completed in the period.

## **1.4 IN RELATION TO OUR ONLINE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS AND ACCESSIBILITY**

### **Online Access and Promotion**

Woven continues to promote its work online through its website and social media platforms - Twitter feed, Facebook and LinkedIn - ensuring digital access and promotion and reporting of all community involvement in the period.

Online access to main services is provided mainly through the website with the ReachDeck accessibility toolbar helping to ensure digital inclusion. ReachDeck supports people with visual impairments and hidden disabilities, as well as those who lack basic digital skills and non-native speakers. The toolbar has a range of features for reducing barriers between content and audience - adding speech, reading, and translation, facilitating access and participation for people with Dyslexia, Low Literacy, English as a Second Language, and those with mild visual impairments. Online content can be translated onscreen into multiple languages or ‘listened to’ with the multiple language voice feature.

Woven's ReachDeck accessibility toolbar is used, on average, more than 35 times each week with more than 90% of customers accessing the website and using the accessibility tool via mobile phone. Approximately two thirds of those using the toolbar use the audio/visual accessibility features and one third for speech/translation. A range of languages are utilised via the translation tool, including Polish, Portuguese, Slovak, German, Spanish, Azerbaijani and Czech.

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Customers in Belfast and Dungannon are the two most active centres of translation usage with the remainder spread across the region.

### **1.5 EQUALITY SCREENING OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

During the period all 16 revised and new policies and procedures were screened for equality purposes using the Equality Commission's equality screening form. This is required of all public authorities to ensure adherence to our equality, good relation and disabilities duties under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and our own Equality Scheme and Disability Action Plan.

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2022-23 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

Potential Inequalities	Proposed Actions	Annual Progress 2022/23
<b>1. AGE</b>		
1.1 Few play spaces for young people / children	Liaise with the appropriate local authority to encourage the inclusion of play areas in new developments.	During the period our new residential mixed-use development in Strabane went onsite. The £20 million development will comprise 158 homes as well as community facilities, small business units, a children's Play Park and high-quality open space.
1.2 Electronic communications can cause problems for older people	Continue to undertake a review of preferred methods of communication for tenants/other customers.	<p>During the period we continued to undertake a review of preferred methods of communication for tenants and customers.</p> <p>Online access to main services continues to be provided mainly through the website with the ReachDeck accessibility toolbar helping to ensure digital inclusion. ReachDeck supports people with visual impairments and hidden disabilities, as well as those who lack basic digital skills and non-native speakers. The toolbar has several features for reducing barriers between content and audience - adding speech, reading, and translation, facilitating access and participation for people with Dyslexia, Low Literacy, English as a Second Language, and those with mild visual impairments. Online content can be translated onscreen into multiple languages or 'listened to' with the multiple language voice feature.</p> <p>Written and verbal communication is also maintained where the customer/tenant prefers this method.</p>



<p>1.3 Digital divide as older people may not be able to use / access services which are available electronically for example through internet</p>	<p>Explore the introduction of a text phone to enable persons with hearing or speech difficulties the same access as those without.</p> <p>Explore and support opportunities for older people to learn to access services and/or information online.</p> <p>Review digital forms of communication used by association to ensure maximum inclusivity.</p>	<p>A hearing loop system was installed in our new Laganwood Headquarter Offices.</p> <p>During the period our Community Involvement Team continued to support tenants to meet via Microsoft Teams following the success of meeting via Zoom during lockdown. Several new tenants are now engaging with us because we have continued to help set them up to meet with us digitally from the comfort of their homes</p> <p>We continued to maintain contact with some tenants since the lockdown via 'Courtesy calls. Community Assistants, Community Involvement Officers and Housing Officers maintain regular contact with tenants providing support as required and a listening ear for those who continued to isolated or lonely in their home.</p> <p>Understanding that peoples' needs would be diverse, our database of support and service-based organisations was maintained and added to as the weeks went on. Having the database distributed allowed our team to efficiently sign-post tenants. This effort complimented our 'Courtesy Call'</p>
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		project, where calls were made to every Woven home, checking in offering support & signposting
1.4 Growing older population but accommodation to meet need not increasing therefore there is potentially less choice for older people	<p>Monitor demand for housing for older people at association level – overall need determined by NIHE.</p> <p>Continue to highlight need to the Department for Communities, Northern Ireland Housing Executive and Planning departments.</p>	<p>115 new homes commenced during the period including house types No4v2 CAT1 (Active Elderly).</p> <p>113 individual adaptations were completed (5 Major and 108 minor) to existing housing stock in the period to respond to specific needs, typically ranging from fitting of grab rails and 2<sup>nd</sup> stair rails, lever taps, level access showers and safe play areas. As well as this we have fitted stair lifts, food prep benches for wheelchair users, automatic door openers and automatic WC installations and provided additional lighting for partially sighted tenants. We have received 3 major adaptations during the period. 6 Major adaptations from the previous financial year have reached advanced approval stage. 1 major adaption was completed in the period.</p> <p>During the period we continued to liaise with the Department for Communities and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to discuss meeting identifying and meeting the needs of an ageing population. Outcomes of this collaborative working is identified above.</p>
1.5 Social isolation of older people	Gather information to inform the	See 1.3 above

	<p>development of suitable activities.</p> <p>Liaise with relevant authorities as necessary.</p>	
1.6 Welfare Reform	<p>Continue to lobby government on the impact of Welfare Reform.</p> <p>Monitor situation as Welfare Reform changes are introduced to determine impacts on tenants, particularly those between 25 and 35 who may be affected by the Shared Room Rate.</p>	<p>During the period we continued to advocate that removing Welfare Supplementary Payments Schemes would significantly harm the most vulnerable populations, particularly women, disabled individuals, and social housing tenants. Therefore, there is a strong argument against withdrawing or tapering support. This will increase rent arrears and homelessness, especially since housing stock has not kept pace with demand and it will not 'save money' as the likely outcome is the spiralling of Discretionary Housing Payments and Temporary Housing budgets.</p> <p>During the period our Housing staff continued to be involved in Forum meeting to discuss pertinent housing items, including welfare reform and the general cost of living crisis, with colleagues from other Housing Associations and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.</p>

2. DEPENDENTS		
2.1 Welfare Reform – single room rate will have adverse impact on single parents under 35: especially males	<p>Continue to lobby government on the impact of Welfare Reform.</p> <p>Monitor situation as Welfare Reform changes are introduced to determine impacts on tenants, particularly those between 25 and 35 who may be affected by the Shared Room Rate.</p>	<p>During the period we continued to advocate that removing Welfare Supplementary Payments Schemes would significantly harm the most vulnerable populations, particularly women, disabled individuals, and social housing tenants. Therefore, there is a strong argument against withdrawing or tapering support. This will increase rent arrears and homelessness, especially since housing stock has not kept pace with demand and it will not 'save money' as the likely outcome is the spiralling of Discretionary Housing Payments and Temporary Housing budgets.</p> <p>During the period our Housing staff continued to be involved in Forum meeting to discuss pertinent housing items, including welfare reform and the general cost of living crisis, with colleagues from other Housing Associations and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.</p>
2.2 Lack of play space for children	Liaise with appropriate local authority to encourage the inclusion of play	See 1.1

	areas in new developments.	
2.3 Lack of 2 bed accommodation for Single parents  Elderly and/or disabled people needing carers	Monitor demand – highlight issue to Department for Communities and Housing Executive as appropriate.	See 1.4
<b>3. DISABILITY</b>		
3.1 Communications which do not meet differing needs of services users	Undertake review of forms of communication used by association to ensure maximum inclusivity.  Gather more comprehensive tenant profile to improve identification of preferred methods of communication.	See 1.2. A review is carried out annually or when changes in needs necessitate this
3.2 Lack of suitable (Lifetime homes) accommodation highlighted in ECNI statement of Key Inequalities	All new social housing is built to Lifetime Homes standard.  Continue work with NIHE in development of comprehensive property database to enable better	All new Woven new build is built to Lifetime Homes standard.  Ongoing

	<p>matching of stock to individual need.</p> <p>Agree implementation programme based on Stock Condition Survey findings and recommendations.</p>	Ongoing
3.3 Electronic communications / digital divide	Undertake review of digital forms of communication used by association to ensure maximum inclusivity.	See 1.2
3.4 People with mental ill-health may experience difficulty in accessing services and in relation to employment	<p>Continue to ensure compliance with legislation and keep abreast of best practice.</p> <p>Engage with representative groups identify / mitigate potential barriers.</p>	<p>During the period Woven demonstrated its continued commitment to the Mental Health Charter. This included the training of employee Mental First Aiders.</p> <p>our Community Involvement Team continued to engage with our various representative groups and individuals, particularly those tenants who were hard to reach and/or isolated</p>
3.5 Funding for adaptations is only available once, which may cause difficulties if needs change	<p>Gather baseline information to clarify the number of times where it is outside the Association control to assist.</p> <p>Lobby DfC on this issue.</p>	<p>As required</p> <p>Annually</p>

	<p>Explore options for alternative funding.</p> <p>Continue to liaise with relevant authorities as necessary.</p>	As required
3.6 People with a learning disability may have to remain in long stay hospitals due to lack of suitable services	<p>Continue to liaise with relevant authorities as necessary.</p> <p>Gather baseline information to clarify the number of instances where association is not in position to assist.</p>	We have a well-established joint management partnership with all-island charity and social enterprise INSPIRE. Their aim is wellbeing for all. They work together with people living with mental ill health, intellectual disability, autism and addictions to ensure they live with dignity and realise their full potential. We have the landlord function of providing independent living housing and partnership with INSPIRE who provide the specialist services to those who reside in our properties.
<b>4. GENDER</b>		
4.1 Activities at (sheltered) schemes can be geared towards one gender only	<p>Gather more comprehensive tenant profile information to improve development of customer services.</p> <p>Gather baseline information on uptake of</p>	<p>We continue to have a dedicated Scheme Co-ordinator Service at our one Sheltered Scheme. Our Community Involvement Team work closely with the Scheme Co-Ordinator and the tenants of who live there to gather more comprehensive tenants' profiles on services required and to provide inclusive activities for all.</p> <p>See above</p>

	<p>activities, if relevant.</p> <p>Use tenant feedback to inform the development of activities in sheltered housing schemes.</p> <p>Cross-sectoral sharing of case studies / good practice.</p>	<p>Prior to and after activities have taken place tenants are surveyed on what activities they would like to get involved in and then feedback on the activities that have taken place for evaluation purposes.</p> <p>Woven continues to work closely with the relevant voluntary and community sectors in delivering of services and/or activities. This well-established relationship allows us to share good practice and benefit from the good practice of others</p>
4.2 Gender imbalances in staff at all levels across the sector	<p>Gather more comprehensive cross-sectoral data to clarify actual situation.</p> <p>Consider options for mitigation of impacts identified.</p> <p>Consider developing a strategy where necessary based on research.</p>	<p>Completed annually</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>As required</p>
<b>5. MARITAL STATUS</b>		
5.1 Couples in residential homes not	Record all instances in our	Where applicable



always housed together	<p>sheltered scheme to inform action.</p> <p>Highlight problem to relevant authorities</p> <p>Identify options for mitigating impact which are available to housing associations</p>	<p>Where applicable</p> <p>Where applicable</p>
<b>6. POLITICAL OPINION</b>		
6.1 Possible inequalities due to perceptions of potential employees who have 'political convictions'.	Explore adoption of guidelines from OFM/DFM on employment of individuals with conflict related convictions.	The Association continues to have a Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy in place. Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders legislation and AccessNI Code of Practice it is a requirement that the organisation have this policy. The policy outlines the Association's commitment to equality of opportunity for all applicants including those with criminal convictions and outlines the process should an applicant with a conviction apply for a post. This policy is reviewed every 3 years or earlier of legislation and/or best practice necessitates this.

<b>7. RACE</b>		
7.1 Communications and accessibility may be difficult for those whose first language is not English or who are unfamiliar with system	Gather more comprehensive tenant profile information to help tailor services to customer needs.	See 1.2 above
7.2 Electronic communications / digital divide	Review digital forms of communication used by association to ensure maximum inclusivity.	Annually
7.3 Lack of adequate housing and accommodation for Travellers	Through the Social Housing Development Programme work with NIHE to deliver housing schemes which meet the needs of Travellers.	Annually
7.4 Literacy of Travellers	Explore alternative options for engaging with Travellers.	As required
7.5 People from Black and Minority Ethnic communities are vulnerable to exploitation and discrimination	Develop improved cross-sectoral liaison with representatives of relevant stakeholder groups.	As required



- 3** Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2022-23 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

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

Please provide any details and examples:

The work of the Community Involvement Team has continued to significantly contribute towards the further promotion of equal opportunity, good relations and resident engagement and involvement through the number of community-based activities and events during the period.

During the period the work of HR significantly contributed towards further promotion of equality, diversity and harmonious working environments through staff training, the review of existing policies and procedures and the introduction of new policies and procedures. Policies were reviewed to take onboard equality related best practice. This year we have consulted on 18 employment related policies and procedures including the following new policies, procedures and initiatives.

- Employee volunteering policy
- Employee Cycle to Work Scheme
- Line Manager Guide to Reasonable Adjustments and the Tailored Reasonable Adjustment Plan

The equality screening of all new and revised policies and procedures by the Quality and Performance Manager/Equality Manager continued to take place with 16 policies and procedures screened in the period.

- 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 scope and frequency of 'events' or 'activities' at housing schemes continued to increase, particularly activities and events delivered by the Association's Community Involvement Team. Additional funding streams were tapped into to invest in / prepare for projects, activities and events. The impact has been felt and fed back in numerous ways by both residents and Community Assistants in terms of targeting funding for events.

The Association continues to see the difference the Community Involvement Team have made to the lives of individuals and groups by engaging and consulting with them. Significant work continues to be done to target hard to reach tenants who have previously felt isolated and not really part of the community giving them more of a sense of belonging and involvement in their community.

**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)*:  
Only minor changes were made to wording contained in some policies and procedures to better promote equal opportunities and good relations.

☐ 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)*:

The work of the Community Involvement Team continued to be largely driven by the Association's Tenant and Community Engagement Strategy and subsequent Operation Targets for residents, to promote equal opportunity and good relations and the requirements outlined by the Department for Communities, the Regulator of Housing Associations.

**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 2022-23 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:

Yes, Section 75 statutory duties continued to be integrated in all job descriptions. During the year 16 new employees' commenced employment with the Association, 14 of which were permanent positions and 2 were temporary positions.

As part of our aim to increase our workforce demographic for under 25-year-olds we supported and facilitated the NI Housing apprenticeship scheme along with several other Housing Associations.

- 5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2022-23 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:

As detailed above during the period Annual Performance Reviews assessed not only on how employees have performed against objectives for the year, but also how they have performed against the Association's Employee Expected Behaviours.

One of the five expected behaviours staff are required to demonstrate is Embracing equality and diversity where we require all our staff to treat everyone with professional and personal respect, promoting fairness and recognising the value of diversity.

97% of staff rated good or above in relation to their performance against the expected behaviours.

- 6 In the 2022-23 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 2022-23 report
- ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Our Vision, Mission Statement and Values all continue to mainstream a commitment to Section 75 statutory duties as embodied in the Equality Scheme (including Easy Read) and our Disability Action Plan (including Easy Read).

Stemming from this Vision and Values base, our Corporate Strategy 2018 - 2023 continued to include ongoing commitments to community involvement and to accessible housing. As detailed earlier in February 2023 the Equality Diversity & Inclusion forum was formed. The purpose of this forum is to support, promote and encourage equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace, being mindful of the commitments outlined in all our Equality Scheme, Disability Action Plan, Mental Health Charter and other relevant policy documents, and to assist in developing an action plan which goes beyond legal compliance and will be seen as a key component to the core business strategy, because it's the right thing to do.

The Association's values are central to this forum as we strive to make them visible in all we do and create an inclusive culture that nurtures talent and allows all present and potential employees, regardless of differences, the opportunity to flourish and reach their potential within the Association.

### Equality action plans/measures

- 7** Within the 2022-23 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:

11

Actions ongoing:

2

Actions to commence:

0

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

Eleven rolling actions for the period were successfully met during the period and two are ongoing and with none yet to commence.

- 8** Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2022-23 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

As a full review of our Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan is due to be carried out in 2023/24 there were no significant changes or amendments made to our Equality Action Plan in 2022/23. A full review of our Disability Action Plan and Easy Read will also be carried out during the period though, which will complement our Equality Scheme.

- 9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2022-23 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 2022-23 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:

As outlined above during the period we continued to consult with employees on the review and development of employment policies and procedures through the Staff Consultative Forum. Policies were reviewed to take onboard equality related best practice. This year we have consulted on 18 employment related policies and procedures including the following new policies, procedures and initiatives.

- 12 In the 2022-23 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*): Text, virtual meetings, email and website feedback forms.

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 use several consultation methods, as outlined above on a variety of customers and employees who are representative of at least one or more of the Section 75 categories. Uptake depends on the consultation and can vary.

- 13** Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2022-23 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

New staff members continued to undertake the mandatory equality and diversity awareness e-learning as part of their induction, in addition to equality and diversity sessions with the Association's Quality and Performance Manager on the Association's equality obligations and their responsibilities as employees.

- 14** Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2022-23 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)

[Insert link to any web pages where screening templates and/or other reports associated with Equality Scheme commitments are published]

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

16
----

- 16** Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2022-23:

16
0

Policy consultations conducted with **screening** assessment presented.

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:

N/A

- 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 2022-23 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 2022-23 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:

- 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 2022-23 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:

The Association continues to gather, for NICORE monitoring purposes, details of the categories of tenants we are housing, through the Common Selection Scheme.

During the period the Association carried out equal opportunities monitoring to ensure fairness and equal opportunity requirements are being met.

#### **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 2022-23, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

As part of the Association's commitment to equality of opportunity and good relations, all staff are required to complete mandatory Equality and Diversity training, and compliance is monitored monthly and reported to the Senior and Operational Management Team. This is also reported through to the appropriate Committee and Board. As at the 31 March 2023 compliance for this training was 98% which is an increase of 3% on last year.

In addition to the above training, compliance for the mandatory online Unconscious Bias training was 97%.

During the year we ran several mini masterclasses for line managers one of which was focused on our Reasonable Adjustment duties.

This year several staff attended the Harkin Summit 2022, which is internationally recognised as a platform that brings together leaders to highlight and address disability employment issues, showcase best practice and success, build relationships and challenge for change. As a result of this we were able to link in with one of the speakers and discuss some of their ideas around inclusion in the workplace which inspired us to form an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum.

- 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:

See point 24 above.

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

- 26 Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2022-23, 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 2022-23?

Insert number here:

0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

### Section 3: Looking Forward

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

The next time the Equality Scheme is scheduled to be revised in in 2023/24 unless legislation or best practice requires this to take place earlier.

- 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*)

We wish to remain committed to our Action Plan and report on our progress against our proposed actions annually. We will, however, amend our Equality Scheme arrangements where legislation and/or best practice necessitates this.

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

☒ Employment

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

## 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:

11

Fully achieved

2

Partially achieved

0

Not achieved

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 <sup>i</sup>	Outcomes / Impact <sup>ii</sup>
National <sup>iii</sup>	NIFHA / Members	Participation in relevant consultation exercises.	Inform policies / strategies and promote equality.
Regional <sup>iv</sup>	None in the period		
Local <sup>v</sup>	NIFHA / Members	Participation in relevant consultation exercises.	Inform policies / strategies and promote equality.

PART B

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

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	<p>Equality and Diversity eLearning training module mandatory for all new staff to complete.</p> <p>Mandatory online Unconscious Bias training module for all new staff to complete.</p>	<p>All staff receive the training which includes an assessment at the end to ensure the training was understood.</p> <p>These eLearning modules continue to be part of induction of new staff to the organisation.</p>	<p>Awareness of equality and diversity best practice and legislation; understand the impact of exclusion; and help staff in relation to building an inclusive working environment.</p> <p>Employees are equipped to identify their own unconscious biases and are trained on how to reduce the likelihood of these biases negatively affecting their decision making in their professional and personal lives.</p>
2	<p>Liaising between the Association and the Equality Commission NI through the Association's Quality and Performance Manager particularly through equality updates and training facilitated by the Equality Commission</p>	<p>Updates filtered through to Board and all staff members</p>	<p>Awareness and equality agenda continuing to be embedded in the corporate strategy and actively promoted in the organisation.</p>
	<p>Quality and Performance Manager continuing to</p>	<p>Quality and Performance Manager to relay this information through continued training of staff members and liaising with the appropriate</p>	<p>Awareness and equality agenda continuing to be embedded in the corporate strategy and actively promoted in the organisation.</p>

PART B

	<p>spearhead the equality agenda and ensure the</p> <p>Association is up to date with the latest initiatives and obligations expected of it.</p>	<p>bodies to provide external support and awareness</p>	
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2(c) What Positive attitudes **action measures** in the area of **Communications** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	<p>The Association continues to have an arrangement with Language Line Services to provide translation and interpretation services in over 170 various languages. The Association also continues to utilise the services of local firm STEP for translating documents in different languages. The Association continues to provide information on its website that can be translated into various preferred languages there and then.</p>	<p>Interpretation and translation services remain an important facility to encourage equal accessibility of information to all who wish to use our services. An easy read version of the Association's Equality Scheme is available.</p>	<p>Customers who have used the facility have been able to access information in their preferred language/format.</p>
2	<p>The Association continues to promote a statement that</p>	<p>Equal accessibility of information to all who wish to use our services</p>	<p>Removal of barriers and enables users to access information and services. In the</p>



PART B

	information can be provided in Alternative Formats including Braille and other different languages as mentioned above. Continued use of accessibility software, Reachdeck. ReachDeck is an all-in-one digital inclusion solution. It helps organisations make their online content accessible and usable to everyone.	Reachdeck adds speech, reading, and translation to websites facilitating access and participation for people with Dyslexia, Low Literacy, English as a Second Language, and those with mild visual impairments.	reporting period there was an average of 99 toolbar launches and 86 speech requests per month.
3	Efforts to promote and communicate the commitment to section 75 and its importance to the Association	Section on our Website called 'Equality Matters' dedicated to equality and diversity related items with updates on activity and highlighting of equality duties.	Highlights importance and centrality of Equality and Diversity to Woven.  Promotes our commitment to Equality and Diversity across all its business

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

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
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PART B

1	Continue to embed the disability duties into our consultation with customers processes through our tenant and community survey structures	Creating an awareness of our obligations of the disability duties internally to our staff and Board and externally to our customers, whilst promoting positive attitudes towards people with disabilities and encouraging participation by people with disabilities in public life.	Ongoing commitment to promote the two duties and encourage others to see that this is good practice
2	Provide news updates on disability on our internal staff communication platform	Create a culture of awareness and embracing of equality and diversity	Ongoing commitment to promote duties and encourage others to see that this is good practice
	Positive images of people with disabilities in our literature, staff and Board structure, correspondence and other promotional materials	Our Corporate Strategy 2018 - 2023, published and promoted in the period, features positive imagery of people with disabilities, both staff and residents. Similar positive imagery continues to feature in our Community Involvement Strategy.	Promoted on our website, where these publications mentioned are available, we also featured throughout the period on social media which, additionally, regularly features images relevant to this theme from community events across NI.

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

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

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

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1	N/A			
2	N/A			

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

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1	N/A	
2	N/A	

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

(a) Qualitative

The Association continues to be committed to the effective implementation of all aspects of the Disability Action Plan throughout our organisation. Whenever a full review of our Equality Scheme, Disability Action Plan and Easy Read versions is required every 5 years, we will adhere to our Equality Scheme and carry out a 12-month consultation period for all our stakeholders/consultees to participate in. Overall responsibility for effective implementation of the Equality Scheme and the Disability Action Plan will be overseen by our Board, led by the Chairperson. The Chief Executive will continue to provide direction and guidance to both the Board and staff team with the assistance of the Quality and Performance Manager who will continue to have day-to-day operational responsibility for implementation of the equality and disabilities duties for the Association. The Quality and Performance Manager will report to Senior Managers on a regular basis.

(b) Quantitative

Integral to our business planning process is the three yearly reviews of our Vision, Mission Statement Objectives and Values by Senior Managers and the Board. Continuing to adopt the Operational Plan approach, the Association continues to set 'SMART' objectives and KPIs, including target setting and monitoring using the Business Operational Plan also forms a key element of our business planning process. This is reflected at all levels of the strategic planning process. How targets are met, and objectives are delivered is monitored and reported at the most senior level in the organisation.

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions has your organisation either:

- made any **revisions** to your plan during the reporting period or
- taken any **additional steps** to meet the disability duties which were **not outlined in your original** disability action plan / any other changes?

Please select

## PART B

If yes, please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1	N/A		
2	N/A		
3	N/A		
4	N/A		
5	N/A		

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?

As mentioned above when the Association is due to complete a full review of our Equality Scheme and Disability Action Plan (DAP), every 5 years, including incorporating any revisions in Disability legislation and best practice earlier where this required, we will go out to consultation for 12 weeks with our consultees.

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

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

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

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

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