

Meeting the needs of our customers and diverse workforce

Our people

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY **STRATEGY**



**Sadeh Lok
Housing Group**

Committed to equality & diversity

The organisation began life in 1988 as a Black and Minority Ethnic (B&ME) Housing Association. Today we manage housing stock located across the entire Yorkshire area and our size and reach gives us a unique regional role on the housing platform.

Sadeh Lok began life in

1988

Our Vision

Our vision of a more integrated and inclusive service to the many communities we serve required us to diversify and so the Sadeh Lok Housing Group was developed.

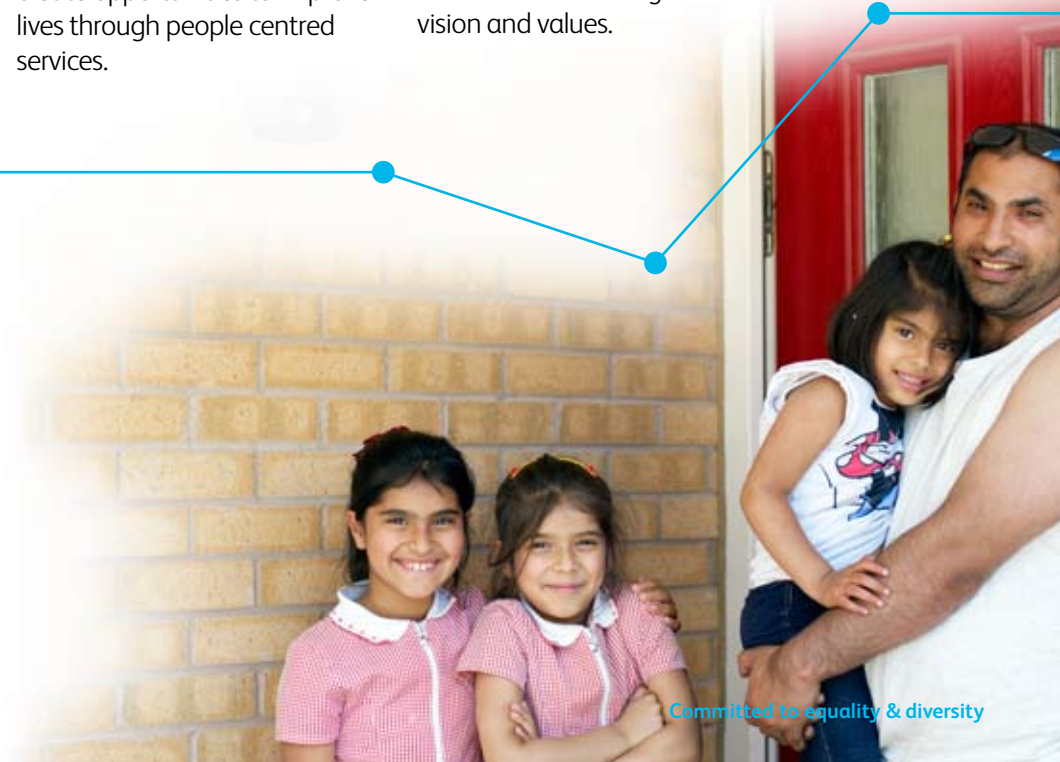
Today the Sadeh Lok Housing Group has a national footprint and provides services which compliment housing in a number of key areas including Employment, Consultancy and Children's Services and our aspirations don't stop there!

The organisation's vision is to create opportunities to improve lives through people centred services.

The Sadeh Lok Housing Group's operations are managed and maintained by approximately one hundred and seventy five employees and managers, three Divisional Directors and five Executive Directors.

The organisation has a total of twenty five Board Members and of those, ten serve on the Group Board which is the 'Governing Body'.

Sadeh Lok Housing Group was formed to positively promote diversity and inclusion is therefore at the heart of the organisation's vision and values.



This Equality Strategy, which incorporates the previously published Race Equality Scheme, Disability Equality Scheme and the Gender Equality Scheme has been developed to ensure that our work across the Sadeh Lok Housing Group promotes equality around seven key diversity strands - race, age, disability, gender, transgender, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

In formulating this strategy key stakeholders including the Governing Body, employees and our service users have been consulted and contributed to its development.

Why do we need a strategy?

In an ever changing multi racial and diverse society, meeting the needs of the communities we serve and the workforce we employ must be a priority.

It is our intention to fulfil our obligations to the fullest and to share best practice with partner organisations to create service delivery that truly meets the needs of our customers and workforce.

The Organisation's Equality & Diversity Aims

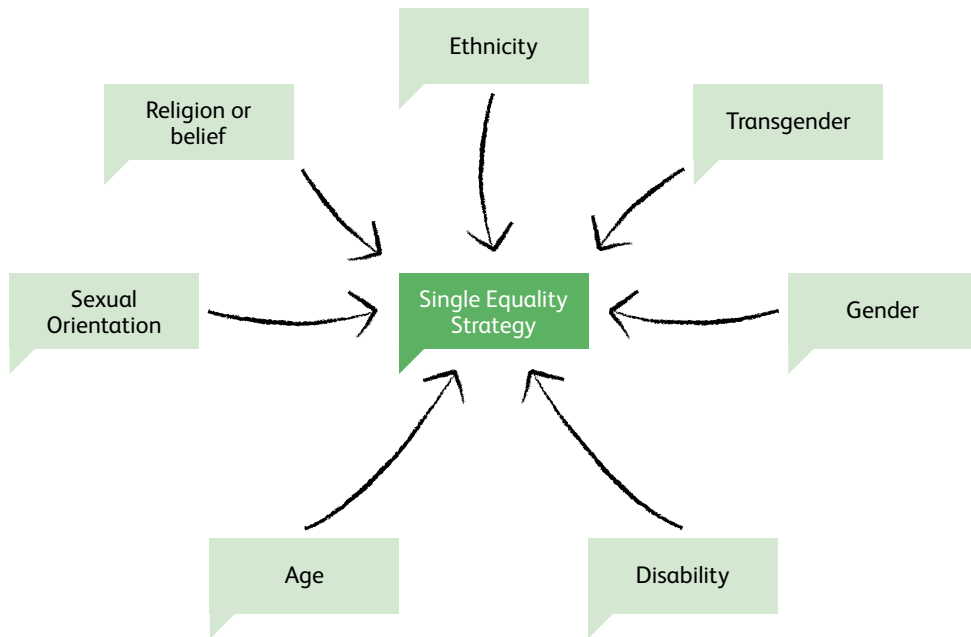
- **Leadership**
Commitment to equality and diversity from the Board, Executive, and Senior Management team.
- **Service Delivery**
Ensuring that services we deliver meet the needs of the communities we serve.
- **Mainstreaming**
Equality and diversity is integral to all our work, ensuring that strategies, policies, plans and behaviours match our vision.
- **Inclusive**
Inclusive for all.

The Equality Strategy and associated Action Plan will provide a platform to work from in order to achieve these objectives.

The organisation recognises that the aims of the Business Plan will only be achieved by taking into account the diverse nature of our communities. The organisation will aim to ensure that no individual or group is treated less favourably on the grounds of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, transgender, disability, age and religion or belief.

Scope

The strategy is a single equality scheme and incorporates seven key strands of equality and diversity:



* Please see glossary of terms on page 15

Our commitment to equality and diversity will be implemented via an action plan. The action plan will look at Sadeh Lok Housing Group’s role as an:

- Employer
- Provider of Homes
- Provider of Services
- Procurer of Services
- Relationships with Other Organisations

Targets

Challenging targets will be set and monitored across all seven diversity strands in the following areas:

- a Employment**
 - All Service Areas
 - Workforce Profile
 - Board Profile
- b Provider of Services**
 - All Service Areas
 - Customer Profile (across different service areas within the Group)
 - Customer Satisfaction
 - Complaints
- c Provider of Services**
 - Housing Specific
 - Customer Profile and Lettings
 - Resident/Customer Satisfaction
 - Resident Involvement
 - Dealing with Harassment Cases
 - Complaints
- d Procurement of Services**
 - All Service Areas
 - Contractor Profile



Internal Working Group

A dedicated Diversity Working Group has been established, which consists of Diversity Champions from across the organisation. This includes employees, Board Members, and a resident representative.

External Involvement

As part of the development of the strategy, service users have been consulted via the Residents Steering Group and Easy Reader Group.

Future strategies will also engage with service users in new business areas, for example Children's Services.

Implementation - Making it real

Legislation and Regulation

The organisation will comply with the legislation and regulatory requirements established for equality and diversity.

As of October 2010, the Equality Act 2010 harmonises existing legislation into one single legislative framework.

The Equality Act 2010 will cover the same groups that were protected by existing equality legislation but introduces nine "protected characteristics", which are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Race
- Religion and Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy

Codes of Practice

The organisation will also adopt guidance and good practice notes as issued from time to time.

Communication

All employees will receive training on policies, procedures and good practice guidance so they are clear about their responsibilities and how to apply diversity requirements into working practices. Service users will be kept up to date on equality issues via newsletters and consultation days. Service users will also be encouraged to actively participate in the Diversity Working Group and participate in various training sessions in order to gain additional knowledge and share experiences.

Leadership, Governance and Management

The Board, Responsibilities and Commitment

The Group Board will incorporate the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance to ensure that all working practices and business activities reflect the principles of equality and diversity.

The organisation's Boards will aim to:

- Have composition and leadership that reflects the diversity of the communities it serves. This will be reinforced through a recruitment policy for appointment of Board Members.
- Consider all legislation and the wider community issues when decisions of the organisation including direction and growth, are to be addressed.
- Ensure that all service users, employees and contractors are treated appropriately by the organisation and provide training or support where necessary.
- Act quickly where any breach of legislation occurs.
- Attend training and briefing sessions on legislation, good practice guidance and public sector duties.

Management, Responsibilities and Commitment

The Executive team, led by the Group Chief Executive are accountable for prioritising the delivery of the Equality Strategy and for ensuring that sufficient resources are made available to deliver the strategic objectives.

Divisional Directors and Managers

Divisional Directors are individually responsible for ensuring the Equality Strategy and Action Plan is fully implemented in their respective areas of responsibility. All Managers must consider the implications of equality and diversity in any activities that they plan or carry out. They should also work to increase awareness of equality and diversity issues amongst their teams.

Managers are also responsible for the monitoring of their employees and the direct or indirect dealings of any issues that arise.

Human Resources

Human Resources will provide training, advice and guidance on all current diversity legislation and regulatory requirements to Board Members, employees and service users where appropriate.

Employee's Responsibilities

All employees within Sadeh Lok Housing Group, including its subsidiaries have a clear duty to promote and offer support in matters of equality of opportunity and diversity in the work place.

Sadeh Lok Housing Group - As an employer

Recruitment & Selection

Sadeh Lok Housing Group shall aim to develop a workforce profile that reflects the diversity of the community it serves. In order to work towards this aim, targets will be set for recruitment.

The monitoring statistics will act as a means to identify under represented groups within the organisation and devise strategies to address and overcome these gaps.

The same principles will be applied to the composition of the Board.

Learning and Development

The organisation will provide all Board Members, employees, service users and volunteers with relevant training to ensure that they have an appropriate level of knowledge and understanding so that they can recognise the diverse needs of the community and deliver appropriate, high quality services.



Provider of Services

Service Delivery All Service Areas

We are working with service users across the Group service areas to set clear, measurable and challenging equality and diversity standards which meet our customer needs. We will then monitor these standards in conjunction with service users to ensure no particular group of individuals have barriers to accessing our service.

Complaints

One of the key areas we will look at is our complaints procedure to ensure that we are able to respond effectively to any areas of discrimination or barriers to access, highlighted through the process. We will ensure our complaints procedure is accessible and promote it to all service users.

We will learn from customer feedback, particularly complaints and change our policies and procedures where appropriate to address any issues.

Service Delivery Housing Specific

We monitor all new residents across all diversity strands and assess at tenancy commencement any specific needs the resident and their family may have.

Access to Information and Advice

To ensure our service is accessible, all information includes translation details in the five main community languages, as well as large print, Braille and plain English. As we gather up to date information on our resident profile we are reviewing these languages to ensure they are the most appropriate to meet the needs of our customers.

Resident Participation

We offer residents the opportunity to be involved in the decision making process with Sadeh Lok Housing Group in a way and level to suit individual needs. This ranges from full Board Membership to attending meetings, being part of a Reader Group, mystery shopping or completing surveys.

Resident Satisfaction

Housing Services will monitor customer satisfaction by the seven diversity strands to enable us to obtain comprehensive and meaningful feedback on service delivery.

Dealing with Harassment including Incidents of Domestic Violence

Our procedures for dealing with harassment are set out in the Anti Social Behaviour policy. In addition we will develop, in conjunction with residents and other stakeholders, a policy for dealing with domestic abuse. We will monitor anti social behaviour, harassment and incidents of domestic violence by diversity strands to highlight any group who may be particularly vulnerable.



Development and Regeneration

The organisation will be sensitive to the needs of all communities. It will work in liaison with partners, Local Authorities and other stakeholders to ensure that all new developments promote balanced and sustainable communities and that the location and design of homes will not adversely affect or discriminate against, directly or indirectly, the needs of any particular community or group.

Asset Management

The organisation's Asset Management Policy will be regularly reviewed to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

Procurement of Services

In the procurement of goods and services, the organisation recognises its responsibility to ensure that there is no discrimination in the allocation of work and to promote equality issues. All those responsible for the procurement of goods and services will comply with the Groups Procurement Policy.

Contractors Responsibilities

Those who carry out services on behalf of Sadeh Lok Housing Group will sign up to the organisations Equality and Diversity Policy and Dignity at Work Policy and any obligations as identified by our regulators.

Equality Impact Assessments

In the formulation of new or the amendment of existing policies on employment, provision and procurement of services Sadeh Lok Housing Group will aim to ensure that no individual or group is treated less favourably. Therefore all new and revised policies and procedures will be equality impact assessed prior to approval and publication.

Monitoring and Review

The progress against the strategy will be reported to the Group Board on a quarterly basis. The results will then be communicated to all employees, service users and contractors.

Consultation on the Development of the Strategy

All Board Members, employees, service users and contractors will be consulted on the development of the Equality Strategy and associated Action Plan. It is envisaged that the strategy and action plan will be reviewed on an annual basis or earlier if significant changes in legislation arise.

Equality & Diversity Strategy

The author of this strategy is Ms Penny Gilyard and it has been approved by both the Sadeh Lok Equality & Diversity Working Group and the Group Board.

If you would like a full copy of the strategy and the action plan please contact hrrservices@sadehlok.co.uk, or visit www.sadehlok.co.uk, providing your full name and contact details. Alternatively you can call **01484 435715**.

The organisation's Asset Management Policy will be regularly reviewed to ensure that it is fit for purpose...

Glossary of terms

Age

Where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds).

Disability

A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Ethnicity

The word 'ethnicity' can be used to describe how people are defined, differentiated, organised and entitled to group membership based on shared physical or cultural characteristics. Ethnicity can also be used in reference to a consciously shared system of beliefs, values, practices and loyalties shared by members of a group who perceive themselves as a group. Ethnicity can essentially be thought of as an attachment that a person or a group feels towards a common cultural heritage.

Gender

Categorisation based on sex, which places people into two bi-polar opposite groups; male and female.

Gender Reassignment

The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a woman'. Same-sex couples can have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters.

Pregnancy

Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby.

Race

Refers to the protected characteristic of Race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

Religion / Belief

Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

Sex

A man or a woman.

Sexual Orientation

Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

Transgender

A term used to describe people whose gender identity or expression differs from their birth sex.

If you would like to receive this information in an alternative format, for example another language, Braille, large print, alternative colours or in audio format please contact our office on 01484 435715 menu option 1, where a member of staff can help. **(English)**

ئەگەر ئۇسۇلغا ئۆزگەرتىش كېرەك بولسا، مەسىلەن باشقا تىلدا، بىرلىكچە يېزىق، چوڭ خەت، باشقا رەڭلەر ياكى ئاۋدىيو شەكىلىدە، بىزنىڭ ئىشلىرىمىزغا 01484 435715 نومۇرىدا 1 نۆمۇرغا بېسىپ، بىزنىڭ ئىشلىرىمىزدا بىر خىل ئىشلىرىمىز بار، بىز سىزگە ياردەم بېرىشكە تەييارمىز. **(Kurdish)**

اگر آپ کو ہنرمندوں کی معلومات کی وضاحت چاہی تو براہ کرم براہ کرم ہمارے آفس سے جا کر گفتگو کریں۔ ہمارے آفس پر 01484 435 715 پر رابطہ کریں۔ ہمارے آفس پر 01484 435 715 پر رابطہ کریں۔ ہمارے آفس پر 01484 435 715 پر رابطہ کریں۔ **(Urdu)**

Ako želite ove informacije objašnjene (prevedene) na vašem jeziku ili stampano velikim slovima, brailloevim pismom (za slijepe osobe), ili audio (kasetama) formatu, molimo vas da nazovete nas uređ na br.01484 435 715 gdje nasi članovi su na usluzi. **(Bosnian)**

આ માહિતી તમને તમારી ભાષામાં સમજાવવામાં આવે અથવા યોટી છાપાઈમાં, બ્રેઇલમાં અથવા ઓડિયો સ્વરૂપમાં મળી શકે એવું જો તમે ઇચ્છતા હોય તો, મહેરબાની કરી અમારી ઓફિસનો 01484 435 715 નંબર પર સંપર્ક કરો જ્યાં અમારા સ્ટાફનો કોઈ સભ્ય તમને મદદ કરી શકે છે. **(Gujarati)**

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ, ਬੁੱਲ, ਜਾਂ ਆਡੀਓ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਦਫ਼ਤਰ ਨਾਲ 01484 435 715 'ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ ਜਿਥੇ ਸਟਾਫ਼ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਮਦਦ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ। **(Punjabi)**

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