



Diversity and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2023

1. Introduction

Maryhill Housing is committed to improving the diversity and wellbeing of all staff and will strive to create a strong values based culture that has a positive affect on all aspects of working life for those at Maryhill Housing. The Diversity and Wellbeing Strategy endorses the Association's belief in the value of our people and provides a framework for working towards the aims of the strategy.

Maryhill Housing recognises that creating a positive working environment where equality and diversity is celebrated, taking a strategic approach to diversity and wellbeing, encouraging staff to take responsibility for their own wellbeing and that of their colleagues, promoting mental wellness and improving psychological wellbeing by contributing to a wider agenda of giving something back; are all key enablers in Maryhill Housing achieving its organisational vision.

Maryhill Housing has a strong determination to create an inclusive working environment. The draft Diversity and Wellbeing Strategy acknowledges that wellbeing and diversity are closely linked issues; employees with high levels of wellbeing are more inclusive, and workplaces that are inclusive foster enhanced employee wellbeing. Maryhill Housing recognises how important it is to respond appropriately the unique needs of different employees, particularly as the workplace becomes more diverse.

For the purpose of this Strategy, diversity, health and wellbeing are seen as embracing the whole person; both physical and mental health, as well as social inclusion. It is greater than simply an absence of ill health, workplace safety risks and disease, and is defined as a feeling of physical, emotional and psychological wellness. (From the World Health Organisation definition of health (1948) and the CIPD report 'Growing the Health and Wellbeing agenda; from first steps to full potential' (2016).

This is embedded within the Vision, Values and strategy of Maryhill Housing, as detailed below:

- Vision:** Great Homes in Strong and Thriving Communities
- Mission:** Providing great housing and services for our customers; supporting strong, inclusive communities in North West Glasgow.
- Values:**
 - Think Customer First
 - Deliver on our promises
 - Celebrate diversity
 - Keep improving

2. Steps for Success

- Creating a shared understanding of what physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing is and a commitment to its importance at Maryhill Housing by all staff.
- Role modelling by SMT, leaders and all managers across MH, as they have a pivotal role in creating a diversity and wellbeing culture.
- Ensuring good governance around the safety of staff and recognition of MH's responsibility in terms of its legal duty of care for staff.
- Working within a framework that provides a fair and focussed approach to diversity and wellbeing that fosters inclusiveness, equality, innovation, creativity, productivity and engagement for everyone.
- Committing time and resource consistently.
- Creating a network of committed diversity and wellbeing champions across the organisation who come together as a single group; part of the Maryhill Housing Wellbeing Group (formerly the Healthy Working Lives Working Group).
- Empowering staff to take ownership of their wellbeing and to make informed choices.
- Working collaboratively across support services, including but not limited to occupational health and other relevant services and resources to support staff and MH to become better informed.
- Ensuring that all policies and practices support a culture of diversity and wellbeing.
- Recognising that there is a strong link between emotional wellbeing and employee recognition and also enabling staff to giving something back to the communities we serve.
- Communicating regularly, and in ways that are inclusive, to promote the benefits of wellbeing across the organisation.

3. Background

Over the past four years significant work has gone into enhancing the diversity and wellbeing of employees within the Association and a considerable amount of that work has been driven by the Healthy Working Lives Working Group. The Group was established within Maryhill Housing in 2016 and since then the Association has successfully achieved Bronze and Silver accreditation from Healthy Working Lives in partnership with Public Health Scotland. The potential to achieve Gold accreditation now exists.

The organisation has also put diversity and wellbeing at the core of a number of policy changes; including adoption of the Unacceptable Actions Policy, update of the Stress Policy and the Flexi Time and TOIL policy and the introduction of an induction policy. Maryhill Housing has invested in a range of diversity and wellbeing training

for managers as we endeavour to establish a robust system of support for our staff. We continue to strive to improve staff engagement in diversity and wellbeing issues; for example, recently producing healthy@home; a weekly interactive bulletin of information to support staff during the current coronavirus pandemic.

There have been a number of indicators to suggest that the impact of the work being done on wellbeing is making a positive impact. The percentage of days lost through sickness absence has dropped from 9.4% in 2018/19 to 6.3% in 2019/20. There has also been a decrease in the percentage of total staff turnover from 23.3% in 2018/19 to 21.5% in 2019/20. In the past two years, following results from our Best Companies Employee Engagement Survey, wellbeing scores have positively improved. This is an indicator that wellbeing is very important to employees and feedback from our HWL survey in 2019 supports the fact that employees want more focus on wellbeing.

4. Aims of the Strategy

The Diversity and Wellbeing Strategy sets out what the organisation wants to achieve in 2020-2023. The Strategy becomes part of our overall business strategy and will reflect our values and our culture. It supports our business objective to attract and retain an empowered professional staff team.

The main aims of our strategy are to:

- Create a positive environment where equality and diversity are celebrated.
- Take a strategic approach to diversity and wellbeing
- Encourage personal responsibility for wellbeing
- Promote Mental Wellness
- Give something back

4.1 To create a positive environment where equality and diversity is celebrated and everyone is valued; knowing that they are part of a supportive organisation. We will:

- Ensure that our leaders and managers are always sufficiently equipped to support the wellbeing of employees and developed to effectively deal with matters of an equality and diversity, health, safety and wellbeing nature in line with our policy and procedures.
- Strive to ensure that every aspect of our recruitment and selection process is free from bias; that our vacancies are promoted consistently and that our reach is wide in terms of where our vacancies are promoted.
- Ensure that, wherever possible, we will make reasonable adjustments to make work accessible to all existing and potential employees.
- Regularly review, and consult on, our policies and procedures in line with MH's Policy Schedule with the intention of including aspects of equality, diversity (through Equality Impact Assessments) and wellbeing, making them accessible and user friendly; putting our people at the heart of our policies; with a focus on work life balance.
- Promote inclusion to existing staff so that all staff, regardless of their background, feel part of the organisation.
- Ensure that promoting and developing our diversity and wellbeing culture is a cornerstone of our induction process.

- Continue to appropriately govern our health and safety matters; being guided by our Health and Safety Control Manual. With the Corporate Services Officer having day to day responsibility for H&S matters and being managed by the Head of Corporate Services, organisational health and safety matters will be presented to the Assurance Board on a quarterly basis.
- Ensure that we have safe working practices at all times e.g. clear guidelines for how we undertake lone working, how we work during the Covid-19 pandemic and manage our Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as well as how we approach our risk assessments.
- Continue to address issues as highlighted in our staff engagement and satisfaction surveys, or by any other channel that we consider alerts us to an issue. We will endeavor to raise awareness of the issue through a focused programme of information and activity.
- Carry out organisational stress audits by analysing the outcomes of the Best Companies employee engagement annual survey.
- Be aware of our workplace profile (age, gender etc.) and ensure that our approach to workplace diversity, health, safety and wellbeing will make a difference to those that work for us.
- Ensure that all staff continue to have access to a structured annual appraisal supported by a regular conversations with line managers about wellbeing (using the wellbeing wheel) and that this process is embedded throughout the organisation.
- Have a collaborative working relationship with Trade Unions
- Support homeworking and other innovative approaches to how we work, where technology and job role make this possible.
- Develop clear frameworks for staff to seek and receive prompt practical support e.g. Diversity and Wellbeing Champions (Mental Health First Aiders), DSE Assessors, H&S Advisor, Employee Counselling Service.
- Be aware of best practice to ensure that our organisation's performance, in the area of diversity, health and wellbeing, is at the forefront of good employment practice.
- Ensure that there is a clear understanding amongst staff of how and where to access support, information and resources.
- Make sure that the work of the Diversity and Wellbeing Group is visible throughout the organisation; providing a focus for staff to engage and get involved.

4.2 To develop a strategic approach to diversity and wellbeing and co-ordinate employee diversity and wellbeing matters through a single channel to ensure a joined-up approach. We will:

- Embrace the framework of the Healthy Working Lives award scheme, delivering campaigns that address the priorities identified for the organisation; using it as a framework and taking proactive steps to not only maintain the standard within each of the levels, but to strive to benchmark MH against the highest level of attainment.
- Develop further the Diversity and Wellbeing Group by establishing a network of diversity and wellbeing champions from each team across the organisation, co-ordinated by the HR Team.
- Ensure that membership of the Diversity and Wellbeing Group is open to all members of staff and that there are no barriers to becoming involved.

- Promote social, physical and mental wellbeing through regular staff diversity and wellbeing events and campaigns that address staff diversity, health, safety and wellbeing priorities
- Ensure SMT support for the aims and objectives of the Diversity and Wellbeing Group and their annual calendar of diversity and wellbeing events and campaigns; including committing dedicated budget on an annual basis.
- Bring together those across the organisation that currently play a role in staff diversity and wellbeing e.g, mental health first aiders, staff awards group etc.to become part of the wider network of diversity and wellbeing champions.
- Ensure that all diversity and wellbeing champions receive regularly training and update their skills and provide a quality contribution to the group.
- Broaden the remit of the group to include being consultative on organisational matters relating to staff diversity and wellbeing.
- Create a sense of belonging and connection for all through a clear and communicated programme of activities and campaigns that take account of feedback from staff engagement surveys.
- Continue to deliver a comprehensive staff Health and Safety service via the Corporate Services Department.

4.3 To support and encourage employees to take responsibility for their own wellbeing, and that of their colleagues, and to focus on how they can maintain the highest standards of health, safety and wellbeing. Our staff will:

- Recognise what constitutes their own personal wellbeing
- Uphold the values of the organisation particularly in the area of celebrating diversity and being inclusive.
- Participate fully in organisational processes such as appraisals and one to ones.
- Identify and undertake L&D that further the aims of the Diversity and Wellbeing Strategy.
- Be open to raising issues with their line manager at the earliest opportunity
- Use the organisational systems as support e.g. HR, Diversity and Wellbeing Champions, counselling services and occupational health
- Seek support from health care professionals when required.
- Discuss concerns about workload or any other issue that is causing staff stress at work to reduce the risk or hazard
- Recognise the principles and importance of good work life balance and manage their working hours and leave appropriately.
- Comply fully with risk assessments and all other health and safety compliance measures.
- Comply fully with the health and safety requirements of MHA.
- Follow the detail of the Absence and Attendance Management Policy where there is a period of absence.
- Engage in team activities as required
- Engage with and contributing to MH's diversity and wellbeing agenda by engaging with the diversity and wellbeing champions and getting involved in the activity of the Diversity and Wellbeing Group.

4.4 To promote mental wellness and reduce the mental ill-health stigma. We will:

- Strive to develop a culture that is capable of dealing effectively with the mental health of all employees.
- Develop our line managers, through a programme of mental health awareness training, to be able to support employees with their mental health at work.
- Provide a general mental health awareness session annually for all staff.
- Ensure that the Diversity and Wellbeing Champions are trained to deal with mental health issues.
- Continue to support staff by making available fully trained mental health first aiders within the organisation.
- Ensure good management around the return to work of those who have suffered mental or physical health problems associated with poor mental health, including flexible working and phased return to work, in accordance with the Absence and Attendance Management Policy.
- Ensure that there is regular dialogue about wellbeing during appraisals and one to ones.
- Promote the importance of maintaining good mental health through information campaigns and events for all staff.
- Continue to allow staff access to the healthy@work hour to engage in activities that promote positive mental health
- Provide access to free and confidential counselling for staff

4.5 To recognise that a greater sense of diversity and wellbeing is created where people feel valued and are enabled to value others by giving something back to their wider communities and upholding MH's corporate social responsibility We will:

- Ensure that our values are lived in all that we do.
- Place value on the small things like saying thank you, being inclusive and doing what we say we will do.
- Celebrate success throughout the year, by having quarterly peer to peer staff awards linked to our values.
- Compliment these awards, by having an annual informal celebration where staff and Board members come together and staff awards are made; the categories being reflective of our values.
- Recognise and reward the contribution and loyalty of employees when a long service anniversary is reached. This will be done in line with our Long Service Policy.
- Ensure good governance around how we value our people by ensuring regular review of our Entitlements, Payments and Benefits Policy in line with our policy schedule.
- Explore the introduction of a staff corporate social responsibility programme.
- Provide a mechanism for staff to nominate a local and a national charity of choice on an annual basis (at the end of each financial year), and to encourage them to support that charity by undertaking a programme of activity whereby staff have one year to raise funds.
- Continue to provide 'dress down' days where any employee wearing casual clothing on these days must give a donation to charity, either by collecting a small donation to the corporate charity collection or by making a donation of money or food for the local foodbank.
- Select 2-3 other charities that will receive one off support during the year because they are linked to a campaign that is being recognised by the

- Association. For example, a cancer awareness campaign and a MacMillan Coffee Morning
- Continue to manage the Donations Budget in a way that supports local community causes throughout the year as well as the staff nominated annual charities.
- Offer our tenants and factored owners 'The Customer Kitty' that awards one off grants for a variety of things that might not otherwise be affordable
- Explore Employee Giving through our payroll that allows staff to donate, in a tax effective way, to the corporate charities by a direct deduction from salary.

5. Evaluation

It is important that an effective monitoring regime underpins the Employee Diversity and Wellbeing Strategy to ensure that we are achieving both the aims of the Strategy and maximising cost efficiencies throughout the Association. Organisational performance information is produced on a quarterly basis. For this purpose, the Association uses Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure staff turnover and absence rates. The targets are reviewed and set annually and are benchmarked against not only industry norms, but also using sector analysis. H&S performance is reported quarterly to the Assurance Board.

The effectiveness of the approach taken by the Diversity and Wellbeing Group will be externally assessed by HWL in line with the accreditation framework. This will evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy.

The Diversity and Wellbeing Group will meet every month to monitor and review progress against the healthy working lives annual delivery plan.

We may use a range of metrics to measure the success of the implementation of the Diversity and Wellbeing Strategy.

5.1 Internal Measures

- Analysis of the employee engagement survey – Best Companies on an annual basis – feedback and actions completed
- Performance monitoring of the Wellbeing Group activities against the Diversity and Wellbeing Strategy
- Employee Diversity and Wellbeing Key Performance Indicators i.e., Absence and Turnover.
- Health and Safety audits that take place on a two year cycle at an organisational level
- Informal feedback provided to the Diversity and Wellbeing Group from staff or stakeholders
- Equality and Diversity measures

5.2 General organisational outcomes

- Improved organisational performance reporting in line with the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) measures.
- Sickness absence rates
- Staff turnover and the associated cost of recruiting and training new staff
- Attraction – number of applicants per recruitment campaign (employer of choice); with particular attention to those from a BAME background

- Mistakes, accidents and near misses
- Number of promotions and internal moves
- Any employee relation measures such as number of disciplinary and grievances (bullying) as well as capability cases.
- Number of 'Did Not Attend' for learning and development events
- Stress related referrals to Occupational Health – qualitative and quantitative changes
- Number of ill-health retirements

6. Role of the Diversity and Wellbeing Group

Engaging all staff is crucial if the aims of the Diversity and Wellbeing Strategy are to be achieved and employee diversity, health, safety and wellbeing is to really be improved. The Strategy has been developed following consultation with managers, staff, unions and the Diversity and Wellbeing Group (formerly the Healthy Working Lives Working Group).

The Healthy Working Lives Working Group was established in 2016 to develop a strong organisational culture of health and wellbeing through a targeted programme of activities and campaigns. The Group has a remit to monitor the impact of its work on the diversity, health and wellbeing of staff and to consider HR KPIs in doing so. A further aim of the group has always been to achieve, and maintain, the highest standard of accreditation in line with the HWL framework. The HWL Working Group has a very successful track of delivering against its objectives; securing both Bronze and Silver accreditations. Therefore, it has consistently delivered its activities in line with the accreditation framework defined by the Scottish Centre for Healthy Working Lives. It is important that the success of the group is further developed and that the outcomes of the framework are maintained.

The outcomes of the HWL framework focus organisations to:

- Develop a healthier workforce
- Decrease sickness absence and presenteeism in workplaces
- Have safer and healthier workplaces
- Improve the engagement and productivity of individuals

In order to deliver the Diversity and Wellbeing Strategy, it will be the role of the Diversity and Wellbeing Working Group to:

- Develop a commitment within MH for the Diversity and Wellbeing Strategy, so that its support grows and strengthens.
- Act as a consultative group for organisational staff diversity and wellbeing matters.
- Promote the Diversity and Wellbeing Strategy through briefings, activities, intranet, newsletters and other literature.
- Promote the Diversity and Wellbeing Strategy through close liaison with other relevant programmes such as Healthy Working Lives and all other relevant corporate and local employee initiatives.
- Align activities to support the annual corporate charities where possible.
- Make use of all available research in this field, and of any other relevant information updates and resources.
- Produce an annual Diversity and Wellbeing Delivery Plan to support the Diversity and Wellbeing Strategy.

- Monitor and evaluate progress against the Diversity and Wellbeing Delivery Plan to Senior Management Team on an annual basis.

7. Operationalising the Strategy

An annual Diversity and Wellbeing Delivery Plan will be produced. This is designed to meet the strategic aims of the Diversity and Wellbeing Strategy. The delivery plan will also reflect priorities from the annual staff engagement survey

The delivery plan will link to the work of the Diversity and Wellbeing Group and will contribute to the bank of evidence to support accreditation through the Healthy Working Lives framework.

8. Relevant links

Maryhill Housing already has comprehensive policies, procedures and guidelines in place which aim to ensure that the working environment remains diverse, safe and healthy. These policies and procedures are updated in line with the Policy Schedule; ensuring the highest level of governance and compliance. All staff are regularly made aware of their existence and they are available in the Staff Information area of the central drive.

8.1 Relevant and linking policies/procedures and processes:

- Absence and Attendance Management
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Induction Policy and Procedure
- Alcohol and Substance Misuse
- Flexible working
- Flexi-time and TOIL Policy
- Clothing at Work Guidelines
- Unacceptable Actions
- Shared Parental Leave
- Stress Management
- Dignity at work
- Learning and Development Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Terms and Conditions of Employment

8.2. Health and Safety

- H&S Control Manual
- Risk Assessments including Covid-19, General Job Role, Working at heights, Maternity, DSE, Driving at Work, Lone Working, manual handling etc.
- Free Eye Tests and contribution towards corrective eye wear (VDU use)
- Smoke Free Policy
- First Aid Training / First Aiders
- Lone Working Policy
- Safe Shores Device

8.3 Wellbeing

- Benchmarking exercise
- Health and Wellbeing Internal Communication
- Regular staff engagement survey – Best Companies/jPulse Surveys
- Mental health awareness training for managers
- Free 24 hour access to Employee Counseling Services
- Annual appraisals and monthly one-to-one supervision
- A regular programme of ‘staff conversations’
- Annual Christmas all staff informal meeting.
- Team meeting structure
- Learning and Development Afternoons
- Recognition and celebrations of success – Annual staff awards, quarterly staff recognition awards, long service awards and external awards e.g. Chartered Institute of Housing.
- Annual flu jabs and staff health checks
- Regular homeworking
- Covid-19 testing for symptomatic employees and family members