

Report of the Director of Housing

Housing Services Directorate's Equality and Diversity Annual Report for 2004/05

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To consider the Housing Services Directorate's Equality and Diversity Annual Report for 2004/05.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The production of an annual equality and diversity action plan and annual report by each directorate is a requirement of the Council's equality and diversity policy. The Select Committee considered the Directorate's Action Plan, which sets out equality and diversity targets for 2005/06, at its meeting held on 10 March 2005. Attached is the annual report which details progress on the targets agreed by the Select Committee in the Directorate's Action Plan for 2004/05.

3.0 Proposal

- 3.1 That Members consider and comment on the Housing Services Directorate's Equality and Diversity Annual Report for 2004/05.

4.0 Finance

- 4.1 Any costs associated with the Annual Report will be met from within existing budgets.

5.0 Law

- 5.1 The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 replaced Section 71 of the Race Relations Act 1976 with a general duty on public authorities to work towards the elimination of unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups.
- 5.2 The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 introduced a new general duty on public authorities to promote disability equality.
- 5.3 The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 renders unlawful certain kinds of sex discrimination. In particular, Section 25 makes it unlawful for the Council in providing facilities or services (such as those arising pursuant to the statutory functions of the Council) to discriminate against any person seeking to obtain or use those facilities or services on the grounds of gender.
- 5.4 Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council is empowered to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of its functions.

6.0 Equal Opportunities

6.1 The annual report contains details of initiatives undertaken in implementing the Council's equality and diversity policy.

7.0 Recommendation

7.1 That Members consider and comment on the attached annual report.



Handwritten signature of John Stringer, written in cursive, positioned above a horizontal dashed line.

**On behalf of John Stringer
Director of Housing**

Contact officer: Saroj Norman, ext 5058

DUDLEY MBC

HOUSING SERVICES DIRECTORATE

ANNUAL REPORT ON EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY 2004/05

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 All Directorates of the Council produce an annual equality and diversity action plan and an annual report on equality and diversity which sets out progress against the previous year's action plan targets. The Housing Services Directorate's Action Plan for 2005/06 was approved by Select Committee on the Environment on 10 March 2005.
- 1.2 This document is the Annual Report and its purpose is to set out background information about the Directorate, its employees and its services; the developments in equality and diversity within the Directorate over the last financial year; and achievements against targets contained in the Directorate's Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2004/05 and against targets from the Directorate's completed RES service reviews.

2.0 Services Provided by the Directorate and Developments in Equality and Diversity

- 2.1 The Council currently manages and maintains 24,067 properties (as at 31 March 2005) which includes a range of property types, including traditional and non-traditional houses and bungalows and flats.
- 2.2 The Council has an obligation to ensure that all of its Council Housing stock meets the Government's 'Decent Homes' standard by 2010. The Directorate undertook a major consultation exercise during 2004/05, with tenants and other stakeholders, to consider the need for additional investment to carry out work not only to meet the Standard, but also other desirable maintenance and improvement works. The Directorate used a number of different approaches to engage the wider community in the process, which included a letter and door knocking exercise for BME tenants and visits to day centres across the borough to consult with disabled tenants. This Housing Options Appraisal process culminated in a survey of tenants opinion, which resulted in a firm preference to 'stay with the Council'. The Directorate is now planning for the future within current resources.
- 2.3 As in previous years, performance in 2004/05 on the allocation of Council property to BME households compared to applications, highlights a strong relationship between the two, with the proportion of BME applications (as at 1 April 2005) at 11% and the proportion of BME applications housed during 2004/05 at 12%.

- 2.4 The number of homeless acceptances involving BME households is disproportionately high at 17%. One contributing factor may be acceptance of households leaving NASS accommodation which may be addressed by a change of procedure and will be further analysed by a comparison with the 05/06 figures. Only two homeless acceptances resulted from racial violence/racial harassment.
- 2.5 There is a particular issue regarding temporary accommodation for homeless women. The numbers of single men and women presenting as homeless are almost identical, but apart from domestic violence refuges, there is very little temporary accommodation for women. The Homelessness Review Group will include this within a Homelessness Action Plan to be produced by end summer 2005.
- 2.6 In 2004/05, twelve priority need acceptances were the result of physical disability and 25 of mental illness or disability – these are both lower than in the previous year.
- 2.7 An analysis of available repairs data (i.e. where a tenant's ethnicity or disability is recorded) is shown below:

	BME %	Disabled %
Repairs logged 1.4.04 – 31.3.05	5% of total	7% of total
Repairs completed 1.4.05 – 31.3.05	5% of total	7% of total

It must be noted that repairs completed during the year are not necessarily the same repairs logged during the year, but a general comparison of the proportions does seem to point to the absence of bias at the 'front end' of the system. More qualitative analysis of the repairs service and its' impact on tenants is being undertaken through the RES Year 3 review of the service and this will be formally reported upon in next year's Action Plan and Annual Report.

- 2.8 The Directorate consults annually with the Community Representatives Panel in order to elicit their priorities for the forthcoming year's annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan. At the last meeting, it was suggested that the Directorate's staff undergo disability awareness training to raise awareness of disability issues. As a result, the Training section devised a program and the training is now being successfully rolled out to staff.
- 2.9 At the same consultation meeting, it was suggested that the Council should resume the annual community open meetings. This suggestion was taken to the officers corporate Equality and Diversity Group and the decision taken to hold an annual open meeting leading on from production of the Annual review of Equality and Diversity, some time during early autumn.
- 2.10 The Directorate undertook a tenant's satisfaction survey in 2004 and a breakdown of the results was obtained for BME tenants and for tenants from Sheltered Housing Schemes. The BME breakdown generated a number of suggestions for improvement which will be incorporated into a Diversity Strategy which the Directorate will produce, in consultation, by the autumn.

- 2.11 The Sheltered Housing breakdown showed very high satisfaction levels – 90% - with the Housing Service compared to 71% in general needs accommodation. 97% of sheltered housing tenants were satisfied or fairly satisfied with their accommodation. In terms of tenant profile, 76% of sheltered housing tenants stated that they have at least one member who suffers with a long-term illness or disability. Only 2% of sheltered housing tenants are from a BME background and various initiatives have been used successfully to increase interest from BME communities, and other hard to reach groups such as visual and hearing impaired – these are continuing.
- 2.12 The Council has looked to the provision of housing schemes that support predominantly older people within the borough. This strategy resulted in the Henry Court sheltered housing scheme, which is a joint venture between Nehemiah and Accord Housing Associations and the Council. The scheme successfully accommodates a diverse multi-cultural group of tenants, some of whom have a physical disability.

3.0 Employee Statistics

- 3.1 The workplace profile as at 31 March 2005, by gender, disability and ethnicity is set out below. This would usually contain a comparison to Council-wide figures. However, although the Directorate is able to produce its own data for the year, the new corporate personnel/payroll system is not yet able to produce the full range of employment monitoring data for 2004/05. Therefore for comparison purposes, the table includes the Directorate's data for last year.

	March 2005		March 2004
	No.	%	%
Female	384	37%	37%
Male	641	63%	63%
Black and Minority Ethnic (BME)	39	4%	3%
Disabled	29	3%	2%

Staff turnover 2004/05 – 5.9%

- 3.2 It will be noted from the table that whilst the gender balance within the Directorate remains the same, the levels of BME and Disabled employees have risen slightly, compared to the previous year. However, more detailed analysis of recruitment data does still point to areas of concern within the recruitment process in terms of the appointing of BME and disabled applicants and this is being partly addressed through targets set out in the 2005/06 Action Plan. In addition, the Directorate's Diversity Group has set up an Employment sub-group to look at the issues in more detail and work is also being carried out within the Corporate Equality and Diversity Group to address the issue across the Council.
- 3.3 The Directorate has struggled for several years to encourage women into the manual workforce. However, in September 2004, five women joined the Directorate under the 'Women into Construction' initiative, which is partly funded by the Learning and Skills Council. The initiative has proved extremely successful and the Directorate intends to build on this and recruit more female workers into the construction workforce in this and future years.

4.0 Race Equality Scheme Reviews

- 4.1 In accordance with the timetable for the Council's Race Equality Scheme, the Directorate is currently finalising, or has completed, its Year 3 reviews. The action plans from these reviews will be formally reported in the Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2006/07.
- 4.2 Reports on progress against action plans arising from Years 1 and 2 reviews are set out at Appendix A.

5.0 Achievements Against the Directorate's Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2004/05

- 5.1 The achievements against the Directorate's Equality and Diversity Action Plan targets for 2004/05 are set out at Appendix B(i), which reports the Directorate's contribution to Corporate Equality and Diversity priorities, and Appendix B(ii) which reports on the Directorate's own priorities.

Housing Services Directorate
Implementing the Race Equality Scheme: Progress on Action Plans for Year 1 Reviews

AREA OF REVIEW: STRATEGY				
Subject	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Further Monitoring to be Undertaken	1. Include all Strategy targets in Key Priorities Improvement Plan with Interim targets, where applicable	April 2003	Assistant Director of Housing (Strategy & Private Sector)	Strategy targets included in Key Priorities Improvement Plan drawn from the Housing Strategy, Homelessness Review and Strategy. The Supporting People Improvement Plan with its key diversity focus will also feature within the developing Key Priorities Improvement Plan for 2004/05.
	2. Re-establish survey of new tenants to establish whether they got the property type they wanted	Ongoing	Assistant Director of Housing (Housing Management)	All tenants within six weeks of moving in are visited to assess satisfaction levels with a range of service areas including the lettings process.
	3. Voids, allocations, homelessness Best Value Review Action Plan included for an initial survey to be carried out with another one due September 2003. This is to be developed to ask more qualitative questions re: meeting of aspirations/needs	Sept 2003	Best Value and Information Officers	Qualitative questions now included in the 'new tenant' monitoring process with supplementary surveys to form part of any detailed Choice Based Lettings proposals.

AREA OF REVIEW: STRATEGY (continued)				
Subject	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Additional Data Needs to be Collected	4. Utilise Citizen's Panel surveys	Ongoing	Best Value and Information Officer	<p>There are a number of ways in which additional data on applicants and tenants can be collected – including the customer satisfaction surveys which are carried out at local level and as a borough wide requirement every 3 years to meet KPI requirements. This work is often coordinated within the communication team but is also carried out by the policy development section, particularly in relation to the borough wide survey. These methods are also supplemented from time to time by service review work, which includes the establishment of public consultation exercises and research on the outcomes of consultation which has already taken place, including work undertaken through citizen's panels. Considerable activity has taken place both to obtain further information and update Housing records in relation to ethnicity and to assess customers' satisfaction with the Housing Service via an update of the borough wide customer satisfaction with the housing service survey. The survey results have been analysed and improvements included in appropriate action plans.</p>

AREA OF REVIEW: STRATEGY (continued)				
Subject	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Additional Data Needs to be Collected (continued)	5. Joint Strategy/ Business Plan Process	2003/04 onwards	Assistant Director of Housing (Strategy & Private Sector)/ Group Accountant	Joint process developed and both Strategy and Business Plan adjudged 'fit for purpose' by ODPM. First Business Plan/Housing Strategy to achieve 'fit for purpose' in the Midland region.
	6. Look at report writing capabilities of Housing Management system	Ongoing	Housing ICT Manager/Review Managers	The report writing capabilities of the system itself are perfectly adequate in terms of reporting data by ethnicity, gender and disability. There are however limitations dictated by the availability and quality of data entered into the system. It is not possible to report on data that is not held and the quality of the report is directly related to the data that is held. Targets to improve the availability and quality of data held have been included in the Housing Strategic and Improvement Plan 2005-2008.
Further Consultation to be Undertaken	7. Develop and extend current consultation process to become ongoing rather than one-off	Ongoing	Principal Strategy Officer	This has been 'on hold' pending revision of the BME Housing Strategy. One of the targets/goals of this Strategy will be to establish a routine and regular consultation process. Target for completion is December 2005.
	8. Utilise Housing Strategy Conferences	Ongoing	Principal Strategy Officer	Conferences have been held on a twice yearly basis covering a variety of strategies/topics.

AREA OF REVIEW: STRATEGY (continued)				
Subject	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Other Information to be provided	9. Install a monitoring form on the Housing Strategy Internet site	Ongoing	Marketing & Communications Manager	A monitoring/feedback form was designed by the Housing Strategy Division to accompany the Housing Strategy document. Both the form and the document have been included on the housing web site.
	10. Set up procedure for monitoring requests for Housing Strategy	Ongoing	Principal Strategy Officer	Completed – procedure has been set up – to date no request for translation facilities has been received.
How Might Services be Better Accessed?	11. Implement Cultural Awareness training across Directorate	Ongoing	Human Resources Development/ Corporate Liaison Officer	Target complete.
	12. Consider the use of audio /video material for Housing Strategy Dissemination	Ongoing	Marketing & Communications Manager	Audio and large print facilities have been made available on request – no request received to date.

AREA OF REVIEW: ALLOCATIONS				
Subject	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Further Monitoring to be Undertaken	1. Retrieve and analyse waiting list data e.g. Lettings by type and ethnic origin on a regular basis and report to DMT	Annually from Sept 2003 onwards	Area Manager Brierley Hill District	Data collected for the year 2004/5 & will shortly be reported to DMT.
Additional Data Needs to be Collected	2. Develop detailed data analysis further for allocation functions	Ongoing	Area Manager Brierley Hill District	This work will be programmed when item 1 is completed.
Further Consultation to be Undertaken	3. Consultation with BME Groups needs to be established as well as links with community organisations	July 2003 onwards	Area Managers Brierley Hill & Stourbridge Districts	Process of consultation will be established based on data collected in 1, above.
Other Information to be Provided	4. To start investigating the interactive on-line provision of information	December 2003	Area Manager Brierley Hill District	Information and access to services are available on-line and will be enhanced within Choice Based Lettings.
How Might Services be Better Accessed?	5. Through participation in seminars, exhibitions, with Community Groups, Internet and Call Centre	Ongoing	Area Managers Brierley Hill & Stourbridge Districts	The Housing Website is in place for information and communication with the Directorate. Further developments in respect of E-forms in progress. Dudley Borough Direct is the 24 hour call centre facility which has access to language line and the facility to use in-house interpreters during office hours.

AREA OF REVIEW: PARTICIPATION DEVELOPMENT				
Subject	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Further Monitoring to be Undertaken	1. Monitor the ethnic breakdown of all Tenants and Residents Associations	By October 2003	Principal Participation Development Officer (Dudley Area)	A snapshot review of Tenant & resident association meetings between Sept 2003 and Dec 2003 showed that 2.05% attending were from BME background.
	2. Continue to review above	Ongoing	Principal Participation Development Officer (Dudley Area)	Attendance registers at TRA meetings to be amended to show ethnicity of residents attending meetings. Stats to be provided to Diversity Group on a six monthly basis.
Additional Data Needs to be Collected	3. Implement systems to ensure collection of tenants ethnic origin and language needs at 'sign-up' stage	Ongoing	Assistant Director of Housing (Housing Management)	Revised Tenancy sign up checklist currently going through consultation process and will be implemented shortly.
Further Consultation to be Undertaken	4. Develop links with at least 4 groups representing the BME community in Dudley with a view to: a) engaging BME tenants b) Raise awareness of social housing with BME people who are our potential tenants	Ongoing	Principal Participation Development Officer (Dudley Area)	Meeting took place with DREC and links identified with Afro-Caribbean, Asian & Chinese communities. Greater emphasis will be placed on reaching hard to reach groups within the TP Strategy review, in line with KLOE s 5 & 31.

AREA OF REVIEW: PARTICIPATION DEVELOPMENT (continued)				
Subject	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Other Information to be provided	5. Provide information via Directorate's intranet site	March 2004	Principal Participation Development Officer (Dudley Area) /Marketing & Communications Manager	Relevant information now goes on the intranet, although this is not available to tenants. We will ensure that information is available on the internet by Oct 2005. This will include an ethnic origin feedback form to monitor access by BME tenants.
How Might Services be Better Accessed	6. Explore alternative methods of contacting BME tenants	December 2003	Principal Participation Development Officer (Dudley Area)	A survey undertaken in 2003 showed that the most popular forms of consultation was a postal survey and contact by telephone to complete a short questionnaire. BME Focus group to be established by October 2005 to develop an effective approach to engaging with BME tenants.

AREA OF REVIEW: HOMELESSNESS/HOUSING ADVICE				
Subject	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Further Monitoring to be Undertaken	1. Monitor Homelessness applications annually and report to DMT	September 2003 onwards	Area Manager Brierley Hill	Completed. BME households made up 14.8% of full duty acceptances in 2003/4 and 17% in 2004/5. The reasons for this over representation are being examined.
	2. Monitor Housing Advice service annually and report to DMT	September 2003 onwards	Area Manager Brierley Hill	Completed. Enquiries from BME households formed 13% of all enquiries in 2003/4 and 12.11% in 2004/5. There is to be a review of Housing Advice services during 2005/6.
Additional Data Needs to be Collected	3. Collate and analyse 2001 census data	When available	Assistant Director of Housing (Strategy & Private Sector)	An analysis of data by ethnicity has been produced corporately. The information will be used to inform strategy development.
	4. Collate data on Homelessness allocations by ethnicity	Quarterly	Area Manager Brierley Hill District	First quarter (April – June) will be analysed in July 05
Further Consultation to be Undertaken	5. Extend consultation with BME groups and establish links with community organisations	Ongoing	Homelessness Review Group	This will form part of the BME Housing Strategy, which will be finalised by December 2005.

AREA OF REVIEW: HOMELESSNESS/HOUSING ADVICE (continued)				
Subject	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Other Information to be Provided	6. Lettings information to be made available on Internet	November 2003 onwards	Area Manager Brierley Hill District/Policy Development Officer	General information now available. Development of Choice Based Lettings included in Service Plan for 2005/6 and 2006/7
How Might Services be Better Accessed?	7. Introduction of video link at one District Office to access homeless advice and services	October 2003 onwards	Area Manager Brierley Hill District	Videolink & weekly surgeries now available at all Area Offices. BME households represented 13% of all enquiries in 2003/4 and 12.11% in 2004/5.

Implementing The Race Equality Scheme : Progress On Action Plans For Year 2 Reviews

AREA OF REVIEW : SUPPORTING PEOPLE

Subject	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Further monitoring to be undertaken	Further analysis of service user outcomes Recruitment of resources for this work is imminent	Start October 2004	Supporting People Manager	Service user monitoring forms part of service reviews and assists in the assessment of the individual provider.
Additional data needs to be collected	Pilot project funded via ODPM Service user referral and move on data to be collected to further inform strategic process	Start December 2004	Supporting People Manager	Appropriate data is now being collected and collated – to be analysed.
Further consultation to be undertaken	Service user consultation generally Resources to be identified	Start July 2004	Supporting People Manager	Consultation with service users is a high priority for all providers/directorates. Instead of undertaking additional consultation it is intended to work with others and share the results.

AREA OF REVIEW: SUPPORTING PEOPLE (continued)				
Subject	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Other information to be provided	Electronic newsletter and other information to be available via the website	Start September 2004	Supporting People Manager	Dudley SP information is available on the internet and a local website is being developed which could have provision for an electronic newsletter.
How might service be better accessed?	More benefits included to passport clients into receiving subsidy (i.e. CTB) By removing the tenancy related element and providing service cross tenure Need to present report to Commissioning Body	Start April 2005	Supporting People Manager	This will be progressed via the Commissioning Body if necessary once the outcomes of the review of the SP grant spent is completed.

AREA OF REVIEW : HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Subject	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Further monitoring to be undertaken	1 Check levels of uptake among BME groups last year to see if new Housing Assistance scheme is meeting targets	August 30th 2004 Information on and needs of client group in this area found from MVM database and will continue to be researched	Principal Officer (finance and support services private sector housing)	Outcomes for 2004/05 have shown BME take-up of 29%. This is a significant increase in take-up over 2003/04. Further research through future house condition survey on ratio of BME groups to non decent housing. Focused Marketing of Housing Assistance to vulnerable groups including BME also to be considered prior to March 2006.
Additional data needs to be collected	Reasons for BME groups not taking up the service	Dec 2004 (Cancelled requests for service sent to C&R for investigation and to see what further assistance can be given in Nov 2004. To be reviewed March 2005)	Principal Officer (finance and support services private sector housing)	Cancelled requests for grants sent to Care & Repair for investigation and to see what further assistance can be given to these clients. They are still working on client refusals and a report is expected by September 2005.

AREA OF REVIEW: HOUSING ASSISTANCE (continued)				
Subject	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Further consultation to be undertaken	1 Afro Caribbean 2 Asian 3 Other	From December 2004 (Consultation database live March 2005)	Principal Officer (finance and support services private sector housing)	The consultation database is to be used as a tool to consult with BME users and Groups on our service provision. In addition, other methods of access for BME groups are to be evaluated by Aug '05
Other information to be provided	Receive information from Consultation database	Ongoing	Principal Officer (finance and support services private sector housing)	See above.
How might the services be better accessed?	Meeting with BME groups	Ongoing	Principal Officer (finance and support services private sector housing)	Access to service to be reviewed in the light of consultation outcomes.

AREA OF REVIEW : NOISE NUISANCE

Subject	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Further monitoring to be undertaken	1 Check levels of uptake among BME groups last year to see if Noise nuisance procedure treating everyone equally	August 30th 2004 Information on client group in this area found from MVM database and will continue to be researched.	Principal Officer (finance and support services private sector housing)	Poor returns on ethnic monitoring for the year demonstrates a need to be more proactive in the collection of data. Methodology to be reviewed. Monitoring database to incorporate ethnic groupings by August 2005.
Additional data needs to be collected	Reasons for BME groups not taking up the service	From December 2004 all clients withdrawing complaint will be asked for their reasons if unknown	Principal Officer (finance and support services private sector housing)	Although not supported by data, as yet, it does appear that the traditional means of accessing the service are not being used by BME groups. We are seeking advice on appropriate advertising both in terms of format and distribution.
Further consultation to be undertaken	1 Afro Caribbean 2 Asian 3 Other	From December 2004 (Consultation database live March 2005)	Principal Officer (finance and support services private sector housing)	The consultation database is to be used as a tool to consult with BME users and Groups on our service provision. In addition, other methods of access for BME groups are to be evaluated by Aug '05

AREA OF REVIEW: NOISE NUISANCE (continued)				
Subject	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Other information to be provided	Receive information from Consultation database	Ongoing	Principal Officer (finance and support services private sector housing)	Policy/procedure/access to service, etc. to be revised in the light of consultation outcomes.
How might the services be better accessed?	Meeting with BME groups	Ongoing	Principal Officer (finance and support services private sector housing)	Access to service to be reviewed in the light of consultation outcomes.

AREA OF REVIEW : ESTATE MANAGEMENT

Subject	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Further monitoring to be undertaken	Incorporate ethnic monitoring into new procedures, ie. Racial Harassment procedure	Ongoing	Assistant Director of Housing (Housing Management)	The current system, in respect of the Racial Harassment Policy, incorporates ethnic monitoring when measuring satisfaction with the service. The Authority is purchasing a web based recording system which will incorporate monitoring. Should be fully operational by Housing by March 2006.
	Carry out an analysis of data currently collated	December 2004	Performance Manager	Work delayed due to development of the performance management framework. Data collection and analysis targets have been reviewed and included as a target within the Housing Strategic Plan 2005-08.
	Improve the accuracy and better use of the information held on First Housing	March 2005	Assistant Director of Housing (Housing Management)	Completed – the language question is not asked at application stage but will be filled in at a later stage. Targets for improvement of the database have been included in the Service Improvement Plan 2005-08.
Additional data needs to be collected	Ensure accurate information on ethnic origin is received and inputted on database at Lettings stage	September 2004	Assistant Director of Housing (Housing Management)	The problem that the fields on First did not match the application form have been resolved. Staff understand the importance of accurate recording. Correction of inaccurate information is an ongoing task – intended for example to update details on repairs visits.
	Train PHMs/AHMs on First Query	March 2005	Housing ICT Manager	Housing ICT now provide a service to produce reports, therefore PHMs and AHMs don't need training. Target complete.

AREA OF REVIEW: ESTATE MANAGEMENT (continued)				
Subject	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Further consultation to be undertaken	Further consultation to ascertain information BME tenants would like to receive	March 2005	Participation Development Officers	Have met with Dudley Race Equality Council to discuss the way forward. The outcome is to set up BME focus group(s) and formulate an Action Plan by end June 2005.
Other information to be provided	Leaflets/handouts need to be translated into the most commonly used languages in the area	Ongoing	Marketing and Communications Manager	This work has now been superseded by the Corporate Customer Communications Working Group who are producing guidelines. A customer satisfaction framework has been developed which will incorporate this work
	Easily available customer satisfaction forms	Ongoing	Policy Development Team	
How might the services be better accessed?	Suggestion boxes in each office for customers	Oct 2004	Customer Services Officer	Suggestion books to be provided in all Housing reception areas, area offices and estate offices by July 2005.
	Develop service standards which are published in the Front of House areas of each office and are monitored in conjunction with tenant groups	December 2004	Policy Development Team	Directorate-wide service standards have been developed in conjunction with tenants groups and published in Home Affairs April 2005. Performance against these standards are being monitored through customer satisfaction surveys and mystery shopping. Results are reported, monitored and reviewed through DMT.

AREA OF REVIEW : SHELTERED HOUSING

Subject	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Further monitoring to be undertaken	Obtain information from First Housing to ascertain BME tenants and share the information with Homecall on a regular basis	By April 2005	Sheltered Housing Area Officers	List of tenants obtained from First Query View from Service desk Housing. All data inputted onto a spreadsheet and data can be filtered to gain information required.
	Develop a programme to continually review and above	Ongoing	Sheltered Housing Area Officer	Updated list to be requested every 3 months and spreadsheet to be amended accordingly.
Additional data to be collected	Look at methods of developing and storing information recorded from the equal opportunities form	By April 2005	Sheltered Housing Area Officers	As above
	Develop a programme to continually review the above	Ongoing	Sheltered Housing Area Officer	As above
Further consultation to be undertaken	Develop a programme of an ongoing consultation exercise process to both BME and other diverse groups	Ongoing	Sheltered Housing Area Officer	List of community groups obtained and visits to be made to community groups on a rolling programme.
	Hold open days within Sheltered Housing Schemes to give first hand insight on what services are available within Sheltered Housing to include all aspects of service delivery	By April 2005	Sheltered Housing Area Officer	First open day held in August 2004 at Margaret Vine Court in Halesowen inviting BME groups. Further open day to be held in July 2005 at Jack Newell Court, Coseley to invite BME communities and other diverse groups such as visual and hearing impaired. Invitations, event arrangements and promotional literature currently being developed to take account of specialist requirements in terms of language, diet, and relevant practical support e.g. hearing loops.

AREA OF REVIEW: SHELTERED HOUSING (continued)				
Subject	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Other information to be provided	Work with agencies such as Race Equality Council to ensure information on the services that are available, reach the BME community in local newspapers which are widely read by the BME community	By March 2005	Sheltered Housing Area Co-ordinator & Marketing	Promotional material and arrangements for the BME Open Days was developed in conjunction with 'Action Project' within Dudley Race Equality Council, and incorporated translation services, promotional material in a range of languages, and a guest list derived from 'Action Project's' database of residents in BME communities. The event was also publicised in BME press.
	Develop posters to share information in community languages and display in community areas	By March 2005	Sheltered Housing Area Co-ordinator & Marketing	<p>The Open Day attracted in excess of 40 guests representing a wide range of BME communities, and follow on outcomes have included requests from representatives for sheltered housing staff to make further presentations direct to individual community groups; further enquiries about the Council's carer's card and bogus callers services; and an actual application for a tenancy in one of the Council's housing with Care schemes. All of these outcomes have now been successfully actioned.</p> <p>A meeting has also taken place with Housing's communications and information team to determine a process for embedding this general process into the development of ongoing customer information in relation to sheltered housing, much of which is earmarked for update during 2005/6</p>

AREA OF REVIEW: SHELTERED HOUSING (continued)				
Subject	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Progress
Other information to be provided (continued)				Through its communication and information team, the Housing Directorate also actively participates in the Council's corporate working group reviewing the council's approaches to customer communications and translations services, and will be further defining and embedding best practice in this area. This will be taken on board within Sheltered Housing.
How might the services be better accessed?	Ensure that all Sheltered Housing staff attend Equality and Diversity, Disability awareness, Social Issues awareness and Cultural Awareness briefings which are organised by Human Resources	Ongoing	Sheltered Housing Area Co-ordinators	All existing sheltered housing staff have now attended the relevant training and new recruits will be included in future training programmes which are organised on a regular basis within the Housing Directorate.
	Raise awareness of language line in the event of an emergency situation and in the event of there being no other interpreting services available	Ongoing	Sheltered Housing Area Co-ordinators	All staff within the Directorates' call centre/home call team, who act as the first line response in emergency situations are aware of and familiar with the use of language line. Additionally, advertisements referring to the availability of Language Line has been included in the tenants newsletter 'Home Affairs' on two occasions in the past year, and also brought again to the attention of Housing staff through the staff newsletter 'Open Door'. Additionally the sheltered housing team has developed arrangements to provide ongoing awareness amongst sheltered housing staff through team briefings and team meetings. The existence of the Housing Directorate's own internal team of staff with translation skills has also been similarly promoted using these media. There is also evidence that the services of the translation team have been called upon by sheltered housing/home call users, particularly in relation to users with hearing difficulties who required the use of 'signing' services.
	Raise awareness and encourage the use of interpreting services set up by the Housing Directorate	Ongoing	Sheltered Housing Area Co-ordinators	

Housing Services Directorate – Progress Report on the Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2004/05Housing Services Contribution to Corporate Equality and Diversity Priorities

Corporate Equality and Diversity Priority (and Lead Officer)	Council Plan Priority	Housing Services Contribution	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/ Performance Indicator	Progress/ Final Outcome
1. Race Equality Scheme	Fairer				
(a) Complete Year 2 reviews		Year 2 review managers have received the training on carrying out reviews and will complete reviews by due date. Year 2 reviews are: - Estate Management - Private Sector Housing - Supporting People - Warden Services	Complete reviews by 31 May 2004	Achievement of the Council's RES Action Plan	Year 2 reviews completed. Action Plans reported in Equality & Diversity Action Plan 2005/06. Review of progress of Years 1 and 2 reviews included at Appendix A.
(b) Commence Year 3 reviews		Year 3 review managers to receive training before reviews can commence. Year 3 reviews are: - Asylum Seekers Service - Contact Centre - House Sales - Rent Collection - Repairs	Complete reviews by 31 May 2005	Achievement of the Council's RES Action Plan	Year 3 Review Managers received training and reviews commenced. Gypsy service to be added to Year 3 review schedule.

Corporate Equality and Diversity Priority (and Lead Officer)	Council Plan Priority	Housing Services Contribution	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/ Performance Indicator	Progress/ Final Outcome
<p>(c) Commence review of Council's RES and coordinate with work on Equality Standard (See 2 below)</p> <p>(Principal Corporate Services Officer)</p>		<p>Supporting corporate work through membership of Equality and Diversity Advisory Group specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - undertake peer assessment of scheme implementation across the West Midlands through Regional Office of CRE - Scope work required, identify timescales, mechanisms and resources 	<p>Revised Scheme to be published by 31 May 2005</p>	<p>Achievement of the Council's RES Action Plan</p>	<p>Peer assessment undertaken and useful info gained, although CRE withdrew support before project concluded. Workshops held to continue the process of review of the Council's RES and the resulting action points and outcomes formed part of the revised scheme. Position statements on progress with Years 1, 2 and 3 reviews have been produced. Revised scheme published May 2005.</p>
<p>2. The Equality Standard for Local Government</p> <p>(a) Progress work on the Standard and establish new timescales</p> <p>(Principal Corporate Services Officer)</p>	<p>Fairer</p>	<p>Supporting corporate work through membership of Equality and Diversity Advisory Group by undertaking pilot equality needs/impact assessment to assist in scoping work</p>	<p>Revised targets for achievement of the standard to be set following outcome of pilot scoping exercise</p>	<p>Achievement of appropriate level of Equality Standard</p>	<p>Council has reached Level 1 of the Standard and is working on self assessment against Level 2. Pilot scoping exercise put on hold, but EDAG drafting an Action Plan to achieve remaining elements of Level 2 and to achieve Level 3. Initial target complete.</p>

Corporate Equality and Diversity Priority (and Lead Officer)	Council Plan Priority	Housing Services Contribution	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/ Performance Indicator	Progress/ Final Outcome
<p>3. Disability Discrimination Bill</p> <p>(a) Evaluate likely implications</p> <p>(b) Commence preparations for introduction of Act</p> <p>(Principal Corporate Services Officer)</p>	Fairer	Supporting corporate work through membership of Equality and Diversity Advisory Group. Once implications have been evaluated then action and Lead Officer will change	By 31 March 2005	Bill assessed for impact. Implications reported and fed into service planning process. Directorate to have achieved compliance with the Act by due date	Work is being carried out within EDAG, and reported to Corporate Board and Cabinet, to prepare for the introduction of the new DDA 2005. This will involve, inter alia, the drafting of a Disability Equality Scheme by Dec 2006. Initial target complete and new targets are included in 2005/06 Action Plan.
<p>4. Workforce targets</p> <p>(a) Establish targets for BME proportion of workforce in Directorate and work towards addressing under-representation</p> <p>(Personnel and Payroll Manager)</p>	Fairer	Head of Personnel and Support Services will be reporting shortly on proposed targets to Corporate Board, including targets for Housing Services	By 31 March 2005 and annually	Workforce to be a fairer representation of the community in which it works	Housing Services Diversity Group has established an Employment sub-group which has established targets to address under-representation within the workforce. Directorate is to achieve 3% craft / manual and 6% staff BME representation by March 2006 and these targets have been included in the Equality & Diversity Action Plan 2005/06. Initial target complete and implementation targets are in 2005/06 Action Plan.

Corporate Equality and Diversity Priority and Lead Officer	Council Plan Priority	Housing Services Contribution	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/ Performance Indicator	Progress/ Final Outcome
<p>5. Best Value Performance Indicator 2b</p> <p>(a) Achievement of 50% score against this corporate health PI on equality</p> <p>(Principal Corporate Services Officer)</p>	Fairer	Supporting Corporate work through membership of Equality and Diversity Advisory Group to improve processes/establish systems for collection of relevant data where these currently do not exist	By 31 March 2005	Achievement of 50% score	Score of 57.9% achieved for 2003/04. Target for 2004/05 set at 63.2%, against which assessment is currently being undertaken. Work undertaken across WM authorities to more clearly define how to measure performance against the indicator.

Housing Services Directorate –Progress Report on the Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2004/05**Housing Services Equality and Diversity Priorities**

Housing Services Equality and Diversity Priorities	Council Plan Priority	Detailed Action/Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/Performance Indicator	Progress/ Final Outcome
1. Implementing three year programme contained within RES	Fairer	SEE APPENDIX B(i), PRIORITY NUMBER 1			
2. Implementation of disability awareness training (HR Development Officer/ Corporate Liaison Officer)	Fairer	Training Section to devise and run program of disability awareness training for all employees	By 31 May 2005	To raise awareness of disability issues	Development of programme is complete. Disability Awareness training is being rolled out to groups of front line staff from March 2005 onwards. Additional events planned later in year to include other employee groups. Target complete.
3. To continue to make all staff aware of equality and diversity issues (HR Development Officer/ Corporate Liaison Officer)	Fairer	To continue with the program of mandatory briefing sessions for all staff	Ongoing	To raise awareness of equality and diversity issues within the workforce	Equality and Diversity briefing sessions are firmly embedded in training programme. All existing staff have attended and new starters receive training within 3 weeks of commencement. Target complete.

Housing Services Equality and Diversity Priorities and Lead Officer	Council Plan Priority	Detailed Action/Target	Target Date/ Milestones	Planned Outcome/ Performance Indicator	Progress/ Final Outcome
<p>4. To promote understanding and awareness of diversity and equality issues within the various consultative mechanisms available to the Directorate</p> <p>(Area Managers/PD Team)</p>	Fairer	<p>Participation Development Team to forge closer links between Community Representatives Panel; DFTRA; Area Panel; Borough Forum; Area Committees; etc, to promote understanding and awareness of diversity issues</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>To be reviewed quarterly</p>	To raise awareness of diversity and equality issues	<p>Participation Development Team to liaise with Community Representatives Panel to develop areas of joint working to promote diversity and equality issues. A training programme for the various consultative structures is being developed, which will include a module on Diversity and Equalities to further promote an awareness of diversity issues amongst the various groups.</p>
<p>5. To clarify the categorisation of households in relation to 'non-traditional' households</p> <p>(Area Manager – Brierley Hill)</p>	Fairer	<p>Area Manager with the portfolio for Homelessness and Allocations to address the issue</p> <p>To make the appropriate resulting system amendments</p>	31 March 2005	The enhancement of accessibility to the waiting list	<p>This issue will be addressed within the report/analysis of waiting list data to be reported to DMT.</p>