



Belonging Policy			
Last Reviewed	March 2023	Next Review	February 2026
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive		

Policy Statement: Freebridge is committed to developing a culture of belonging; where all colleagues are provided with a positive, inclusive, safe working environment, that enables each colleague to reach their potential and deliver outstanding services to its customers.

Board and the Leadership Team are committed to upholding not just the legal aspects of complying with the Equality Act, but morally to provide all colleagues with a 'Great Place to Work' by creating an environment where all colleagues receive equitable treatment, respected and are heard.

The Leadership Team will review colleague engagement results to determine the impact of belonging initiatives.

The Leadership Team recognise that a culture of belonging requires proactive engagement with colleagues and as such will provide all colleagues with:

- Lived Experience Forums; safe learning environments to provoke conversation and enable understanding to develop our culture of belonging and prevent discrimination
- Volunteering opportunities to support activities within the community (including attending Out and Abouts) and other charities.
- A voice to share their views that can positively influence people policy/processes to enable all colleagues to be 'themselves at work'
- Decisive action to address any reported forms of discrimination within the workplace
- Equitable access to development opportunities for all colleagues
- Values and a behavioural framework to ensure continual development of our culture of belonging (as detailed within My4 process)

Policy Detail:

We shall:

- Ensure that there is an inclusive working environment.
- Develop a culture where people will want to work – making diversity a part of the day job.
- Ensure that diversity is high profile within the organisation and that it is led by the Chief Executive and supported by the Board and Leadership Team – individuals will be encouraged to take a lead on specific aspects of diversity that are relevant or of interest to them.

- Regularly review its approach to embracing diversity.
- Take a value-based approach to diversity – in particular promoting Working Together.
- Adopt a zero-tolerance policy towards discrimination on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity/race, gender/sex, religion/belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy & maternity and marriage/civil partnership or any other characteristic protected by applicable law.
- Encourage more understanding and focus around diversity.
- Encourage people to “be themselves” at work.
- Promote an environment where diversity feels more exciting and there is a feeling of fairness and inclusion.
- Engage with staff to keep them up to date with the latest thinking.
- Be aware of all forms of discrimination in its operations, activities and dealings with communities and strive to eliminate them.
- To provide services that meet the diverse needs of our tenants.
- Provide choice, access and quality of services that meet the diverse needs of customers and the communities in which we work.
- Take prompt responsive action in all cases of harassment and conflict.
- Work towards promoting better understanding and integration in our communities.
- Comply with our regulatory and legal equality responsibilities as a minimum.
- Understand the outcomes required by the approach taken within this policy.
- The policy links closely with the following policies, [Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime](#), [Domestic Abuse](#) and [Safeguarding of Children and Young People](#).
- Make staff, tenants and stakeholders aware that diversity is one of our core values
- Make decisions in a fair and open manner.

Freebridge are committed to developing an organisational culture which values people from all sections of the community. This involves creating an inclusive environment that builds on everything that makes people unique and gives everyone a fair and equal chance to be successful.

Freebridge will encourage more understanding and focus around diversity, encourage people to be themselves at work, to promote an environment which feels more exciting, fair and where all staff are included.

We shall engage with staff to:

- Keep them up to date with the latest thinking.
- Increase awareness of all forms of discrimination in our operations, activities and dealings with communities and strive to eliminate them.
- Provide services that meets the needs of our tenants.
- Provide choice, access and quality of services that meet the diverse needs of customers and the communities in which we work.
- Take prompt responsive action in all cases of harassment and conflict.
- Work towards promoting a better understanding and integration in our communities; and
- Comply with our regulatory and legal equality responsibilities.