

# Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

## Our Statement of Intent

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## 1. Document Overview

<b>Purpose</b>	This statement sets out to describe how Thrive will interact and design ways of operating that are respectful, useful and supportive of everyone.		
<b>Audience</b>	Customers, Colleagues, Partners, and Board Members		
<b>Data Classification</b>	For internal and external use		
<b>Review Cycle</b>	36 months		
<b>Last Review</b>	November 2024	Next Review	xx
<b>Relevant Legislation</b>	Equality Act 2010		

## 2. Document Version History

Version	Date	Author	Reviewer	Changes & Additions
V1.0	May-22	Jo Barrett	AllTogether WG	Review of exiting policy in line with legislative changes
V1.1	May-24	Jo Barrett	Customer WG Colleague WG CCG Forum	Refresh to include behaviours and making reasonable adjustments

V1.2	Nov - 24	Jo Barrett	Customer WG Colleague WG CCG Forum	Amends to reasonable adjustments for clarity. Section on positive intention.
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### 3. Introduction

We want to create an experience that assures everyone we come into contact with that we:

- Are committed to respecting the experiences and beliefs of the people we engage with,
- Are flexible, understanding people's needs differ,
- Don't make judgements about people's life choices/personal characteristics,
- Make good rational decisions based on creditable criteria.

This statement seeks to articulate the cornerstones from which our approach to being a professional landlord and employer are based.

### 4. Scope

This statement sets the foundations from which we expect our colleagues to behave, design and deliver services to our customers. We also want to create a work culture that embraces the diversity of every Thrive team member, a place where colleagues can be the person they want to be.

The underpinning principles apply to Board Members and third parties engaged with us to deliver services to our customers and colleagues.

### 5. Statement of Intent

#### 5.1. Inclusive by Design

In order to deliver our services, we will develop policies, strategies and processes that are free from direct and indirect discrimination, ensuring we understand what we need to do, how we do it and by when.

We will endeavour to create efficient systems and processes that are underpinned by fair, respectful and efficient principles, taking into account that people have different needs, will access our services in different ways and may have different expectations of us based on lived experience. That's our baseline position.

We understand that a 'one-sized fits all' approach will not reflect the needs of everyone and so we will ensure there is always flexibility built into what we do so that we can tailor our processes to better reflect the needs of the people impacted within the scope of what's possible.

#### 5.2. Language and tone of communications

Lots of the things we do are required through regulation or legislation. The temptation often is to fill written communications full of complex and technical language. At Thrive we want to keep all communications simple, avoiding jargon and only referring to legislation/regulation when it's necessary.

Customers will be asked to express their preferred language for communications or record a preference for larger text or braille. We use the 'browse aloud' online accessibility tool so we can engage with customers in the language they find the easiest to use or have text enlarged and can signpost customers to support if they cannot access this online service.

We will use multiple channels of external communication, emails, texts, newsletters, our website, and the My Thrive Hub, the majority of which can be finetuned to meet customers

preferences. We rely considerably on digital forms of communication where possible, but fully appreciate talking to us maybe the customer preferred method of engagement with us. We will use multiple channels of internal communication, emails, texts, OneThrive, the Thrive Hub some of which can be finetuned to meet colleague preferences. We seek to balance digital communications with opportunities to engage face to face with team members, other key colleagues and the wider Thrive team.

### 5.3. Positive Intention

In the work we do our intention will always be centred on doing the right thing as a professional landlord and employer. Our intent comes from a desire to be:

- Respectful and empathetic
- Accommodating and flexible
- Open and honest

When we review our services to customers and colleagues, we will test ourselves to ensure we are upholding this position with a desire to continuously improve the way we conduct our business.

Working in this way our intention is to foster a positive, inclusive and tolerant business. It's therefore, important to us that everyone is respectful of each other, particularly when beliefs and life choices, as examples, conflict with our own. We will not tolerate intolerance, and contracts; employment or tenancy could be put in jeopardy, if actions and/or behaviours are not in keeping with our position.

### 5.4. Positive Intervention

We appreciate both customers and colleagues of Thrive may face actions, words and/or behaviours that are intended by the perpetrator to offend, hurt and/or propagate hate and intolerance. Customers and colleagues experiencing this from a neighbour, contractor, or member of the Thrive team must report the matter using any of the communication channels set out below:

- Customers – Contact Centre 0800 9176077
- Colleagues – Contact line manager, or a member of the People & Culture Team.

We will work with partners like the police, local authority, specialist services to support the victim and deal with the perpetrator. We will use our Safeguarding Policy to support customers and our Health and Wellbeing commitment to support staff.

Customers and colleagues should understand any investigation that determines acts that are rooted in intolerance, abuse of power, position, stature, or anti-social behaviour, specifically racial discrimination and sexual harassment will not be tolerated and could terminate the tenancy or employment contact.

We continually review the skills and knowledge of colleagues so that we keep developing in these areas to help us take positive action, currently referred to as our Allyship Programme.

### 5.5. Listen and Learn – understanding the 'lived' experience.

We need to be open to feedback, we need to listen and take on-board what customers and colleagues tell us about their experiences of interacting with us. This is particularly important when things have gone wrong, and the experience has been less than satisfactory.

Each issue allows us to put things right and make things better for next time and may indeed prevent someone else from having a bad experience in the future.

### 5.6. Unique

We are sure we have all been called special at some point in our lives and it's true, each of us is unique and we want to support everything that makes our customers and colleagues distinctive. In 2010 the Equalities Act consolidated existing legislation to protect 9 different characteristics. Despite legislation being in place in the UK for many years, Thrive understands that many people in the UK living with one or more of these characteristics, continue to experience discrimination.

We will do all we can to ensure the way we conduct our business does not directly or indirectly put anyone with one or more of these characteristics at a disadvantage. But more than that we want to embrace uniqueness allowing us to go beyond current legislation.

It doesn't matter to us what colour you dye your hair, if you're tall or short, what school you did or didn't go to, the clothes you wear or the music you enjoy, we just ask that we all conduct ourselves in a respectful way, that does not demean or promote the intolerance of others.

### **5.7. Reasonable adjustments**

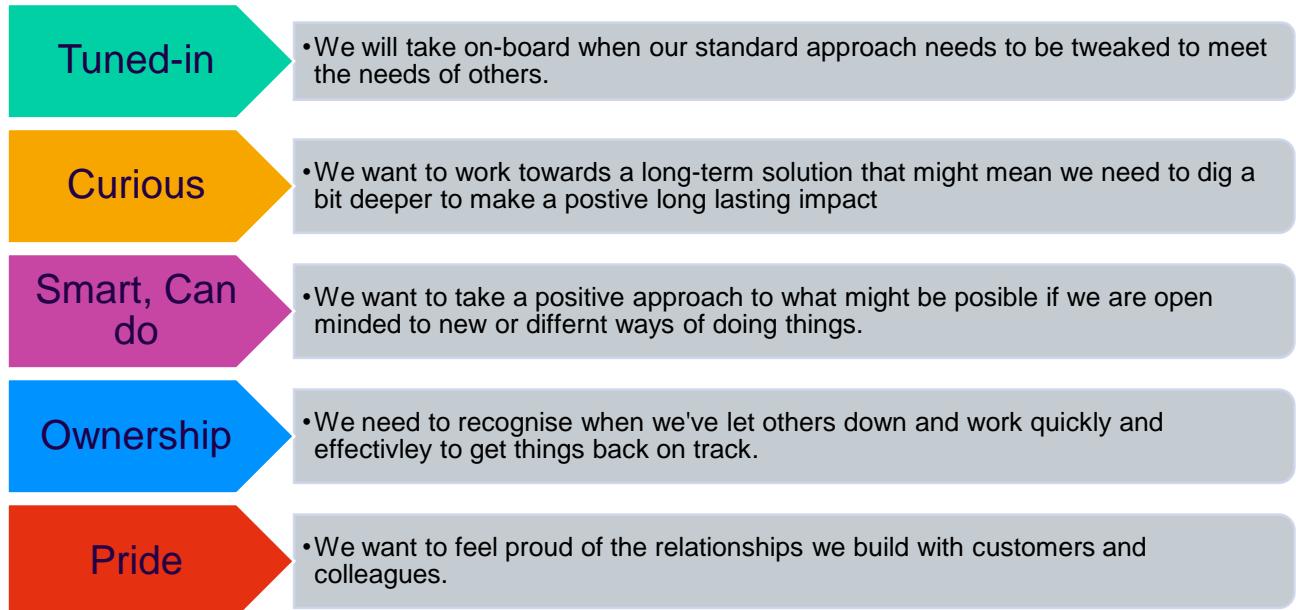
We understand that our customers and colleagues may need some adjustments to ensure that they can access all our services and/or thrive within the workplace. In line with the Equality Act (2010) we will agree on reasonable adjustments to ensure that we remove or reduce any disadvantage related to a disability or vulnerability such as a short-term or long-term physical or mental health condition that may not be classed as a disability, domestic abuse or safeguarding. Some examples include:

- Doing a repair more quickly
- Adding additional locks or security measures
- Doing minor repairs that are not done as standard (e.g. replacing strip lighting for someone who can't do it themselves because of their physical health)
- making changes to the workplace
- changing someone's working arrangements
- finding a different way to do something
- providing equipment, services or support

We will ensure that any reasonable adjustments are specific to the person. We will try our very best to accommodate wherever possible and if this presents difficulties, we will discuss this openly ensuring all options have been explored. We understand that sometimes our customers and colleagues with a disability or vulnerability may not need and/or want adjustments however this may change over time, and we are ready to listen and respond as required.

## **6. Thrives Core Behaviours**

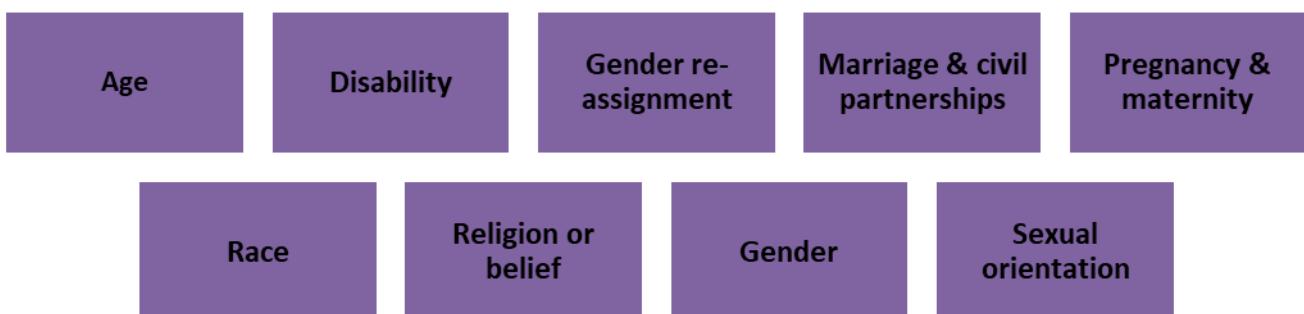
Working with colleagues across Thrive, we have established 5 core behaviours we believe support the culture Thrive strives to foster. To demonstrate how our behaviours can support the delivery of this statement we have set out below some examples:



Customers and colleagues are entitled to hold us accountable if we behave in a manner that isn't in keeping with these examples. To be clear that doesn't mean we can always deliver exactly what you are looking for but it does mean we need to demonstrate empathy and provide clarity.

## 7. Treating Everyone with Respect

This policy has been impact assessed in line with Thrive Homes' obligation to comply with the Equality Act (2010). We aim to design inclusive services, policies and behave in a way that does not discriminate on the grounds of:



While we are not required by law, we seek to ensure we do not discriminate on any basis that is rooted in prejudice, for example we are not influenced by:



Every effort will be made to ensure that decisions made reflect this commitment.

## 8. Other Related Policies and Guidance

This policy links to other policies Thrive has in place, including but not limited to:

- Customer Sub-strategic Plan.
- Colleague Sub-Strategic Plan

As a business we try hard to keep all these related policies aligned with each other. If you do spot any inconsistency, please do contact the Author at your earliest opportunity and make your concerns known. Your support to keep information clear and consistent will always be welcomed.

## **9. Policy Approval**

As this policy is a core component of how Thrive manages its business the document will be evaluated by the CCG Forum, both the Customer and Colleague Working Groups and CCG Committee as part of any review.

## **10. Support and Further Guidance**

This policy has been drafted with input from colleagues across Thrive. If you have any concerns on how to interpret or follow its requirements, please make your concerns known to your manager or a member of the Governance Team.

Each Thrive team member has a responsibility to work in a way that's consistent with the expectations set out in the documents and its implied intent. Should you witness or become aware of anyone consciously or unconsciously not following this policy you must alert your line manager or member of the leadership team as soon as possible.