

EQUALITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND
Public Authority 2007 - 2008
Annual Progress Report on Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and
Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Order (DDO) 2006

This report template includes a number of self assessment questions regarding implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties from **1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008**. This template also includes a number of questions regarding implementation of Section 49A of the DDO from the **1 July 2007 to 31 March 2008**. Please enter information at the relevant part of each section and ensure that it is submitted electronically (by completing this template) and in hardcopy, with a signed cover letter from the Chief Executive or, in his/her absence, the Deputy Chief Executive to the Commission by **30 September 2008**.

In completing this template it is essential to focus on the application of Section 75 and Section 49. This involves progressing the commitments in your equality scheme or disability action plan which should lead to outcomes and impacts in terms of measurable improvement for individuals from the equality categories. Such outcomes and impacts may include changes in public policy, in service provision and/or in any of the areas within your functional remit.

Name of public authority (Enter details below)

Clanmil Housing Association

Equality Officer (Enter name and contact details below)

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DDO (if different from above):

S75 Executive Summary

- What were the key policy/service developments made by the authority during this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations and what outcomes were achieved?
- 1.1 Clanmil Housing Association is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. In its Equality Scheme, the Association gave an undertaking to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) on each policy, or group of related policies, where screening had indicated significant issues in relation to one or more of the nine equality dimensions.
 - 1.2 As the representative body for housing associations, the Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations (NIFHA) has been assisting its members in the implementation of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 by co-ordinating a joint approach to the equality obligations. Clanmil Housing Association is part of this joint exercise which is intended to maximise resources for equality work and to minimise the administrative impact on consultee and/or stakeholder organisations.
 - 1.3 The Association screened all of its policies during 2004-05. The results of this exercise, including the proposed EQIA programme, were subject to a 12 week period of public consultation between July and September 2005.
 - 1.4 During 2007-2008, Clanmil aimed to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations through ongoing work in the following key areas :-
 - Housing for Travellers
 - Anti-Social Behaviour
 - Enhanced and relevant communication
 - Disability Action Plans
 - Promotion of Language Line
 - Review of Monitoring based on Equality Commission Monitoring Guidance
 - EQIA's
 - Ongoing Community Consultation

- Development of social housing for all in housing needs
- Delivery of Care to wide spectrum of tenants
- Adaptations in relation to disability
- Tenant Participation

Full details of these ongoing areas are included within the report.

- What are the main initiatives planned in the coming year to ensure the authority improves outcomes in terms of equality of opportunity and good relations for individuals from the nine categories covered by Section 75?

1.1 Community Consultation

During 2008-2009 a new Community Consultation Strategy will be drafted, consulted and communicated to all stakeholders. This will clearly set out the steps staff will deliver to engage with local, relevant communities in the areas in which we are delivering housing solutions.

1.2 Training & Development

During 2008-2009 there will be an ongoing focus on equality of opportunity training to highlight ways to promote better equality of opportunity among the nine groups.

1.3 Review of Strategic Plan

The Association will have a new strategic planning process underway, which will highlight the equality duties and how they will feed into the operational plans for the forthcoming three years, to provide a focus on equality issues.

1.4 Adaptations / Development Programme

The Association will continue to deliver a high quality adaptation programme, based on the special needs identified for tenants with disability requirements.

The development programme in the next year will continue to identify areas of housing need and deliver homes.

1.5 Housing Policy – points/allocations

There is an ongoing review by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive on point and allocations which relate to how homes are allocated.

1.6 Rent Setting Policy

A new rent setting policy will be developed and adopted to ensure a more relevant process for setting points for housing.

- 2 Please give examples of changes to policies or practices which have resulted in outcomes. If the change was a result of an EQIA please tick the appropriate box in column 3:

	Outline change in policy or practice which have resulted in outcomes	Tick if result of EQIA
Persons of different religious belief	•	
Persons of different political opinion	• Revised Rehabilitation of Offenders Policy which clarifies the process for those with convictions	
Persons of different racial groups	• Wide range of diversity awareness events carried out under a review of our Activities Policy (see page) • Second grouped housing scheme for travelers approved	
Persons of different age	• Removal of the retirement age – Fair Retirement Policy issued – a number of staff have been encouraged to stay on with Clanmil.	
Persons with different marital status	•	
Persons of different sexual orientation	•	
Men and women generally	•	
Persons with and without a disability	• Adaptations – all works under £1,000 now authorised in-house without OT recommendations – this	

	<p>speeds up adaptation of a property for tenants with a disability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protection of Vulnerable Adults Policy to protect our most vulnerable client groups	
Persons with and without dependants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhanced maternity provisions – longer time off for staff on maternity leave with pay	

Section 1: Strategic Implementation of the Section 75 Duties

- Please outline evidence of progress made in developing and meeting equality and good relations objectives, performance indicators and targets in corporate and annual operating plans during 2007-08.

Clanmil Housing Association incorporates its strategic approach to Section 75 in a range of high level actions set out in its Strategic and Operational Plans along with more specific action through a series of performance targets at corporate and departmental level.

Promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations is incorporated in the Association's core values, which were developed by the staff of the Association and state, "We will apply the principles of equality and fairness to all aspects of our work".

Our mission statement also has an equality focus,

"Clanmil Housing aims to be a primary provider of high quality homes at the lowest possible economic rent for everyone in housing need.

It is committed to providing an open and professional service, which is all embracing and sensitive to the needs of the individual".

Our work has a clear equality focus and considerable progress is being made in mainstreaming equality. Our policy is developed with equality issues being foremost in a range of compliance checks that have been put in place.

Work is underway in developing the new strategic plan from April 2009 - March 2012 and the equality agenda will remain a key strategic objective.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2006-2009 AND THE CORPORATE PLANS 2007 – 2008

The Strategic Plan 2006 – 2009 has Equality as one of the main threads of the Plan, and provides focus for the delivery of the plan over the next 3 years (excerpt) :

Service delivery

By providing a high quality services which meets the requirements of our customers.

7.	By promoting equal opportunities and good relations in carrying out all its functions, in particular with regard to the nine categories outlined in the Equality Scheme.	
7.1	Ongoing compliance with Appendix 5 of the Equality Scheme.	Yr 1/2/3
7.2	Two Equality Impact Assessments completed each year.	Yr 1/2/3

Governance

Clanmil will sustain the highest level of Governance and Accountability in all areas of operation.

1.	By implementing the outcomes of the Best Value Review of Governance and Accountability.	Yr 1
2.	By completing Equality Impact Assessment on Governance.	Yr 2

Each department within the Association also operates an annual operational plan which are the priorities for the year.

There are four main departments within the Association: Housing Management, Finance, Corporate Services and Property Services. All annual departmental plans include the following:-

To participate in the progression of the Equality Scheme Section 75 duties			
To complete Equality Impact Assessments where relevant and in accordance with the agreed areas of impact assessment.	Ongoing	Equality Impact Assessments are completed within agreed timescales	
Departmental policies are screened with reference to promoting equality within the 9 section 75 groups.	Ongoing	Screening of policies completed as applicable	

Also the following are taken from individual departmental plans that have more objectives directly relating to some of the 9 categories or the good relations duty:-

Corporate Services (extract from operational plan 2007-2008)

<p>To commit to developing and supporting staff within the Association, treating staff in a fair and consistent manner. To foster and develop team working, promote innovative thinking and provide effective leadership with each department.</p>	Ongoing	<p>To ensure promotion of all equality legislation in policies, procedures, culture and ease of working.</p> <p>To conduct regular Corporate Services Meetings.</p> <p>To encourage new ideas of working with the team.</p>	<p>HOCS</p> <p>HOCS</p> <p>HOCS</p>
<p>To co-ordinate the progression of the Equality Scheme Section 75 duties for Clanmil Housing.</p>	Ongoing	<p>To co-ordinate the preparation of agreed areas of impact assessment, and ensure each department completes Equality Impact Assessments within agreed timescales.</p>	HOCS
	September 2007	<p>To co-ordinate the consultation process to comply with the legislation.</p> <p>To ensure the Board are briefed on the progress of the Scheme.</p> <p>To ensure Appendix 5 of the Scheme is progressed.</p> <p>To ensure the Annual Report to the Equality Commission is completed</p>	<p>HOCS</p> <p>HOCS</p> <p>HOCS</p> <p>HOCS</p>

<p>To assess and minimise risk with particular reference to the Risk Management Strategy.</p> <p>To review quarterly.</p> <p>To have effective systems in place to minimise risk.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>All risks identified and mitigating actions in place.</p>	<p>HOCS/MT</p>
<p>To manage and co-ordinate the training policy and programme for the Association.</p> <p>To ensure accurate budgeting to manage the training needs.</p> <p>To ensure training is linked to the business objectives, effectively evaluated and disseminated as appropriate.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Successful implementation of training policy.</p> <p>Issued/reviewed Manuals in each department.</p> <p>Training programmes scheduled within budget.</p> <p>Learning points communicated to staff.</p> <p>Equality training is progressed in line with Appendix 5 of the Equality Scheme</p>	<p>HOCS</p>

	Where there is need, to support and promote opportunities for social housing.			
		By Mar 09	Development Team to familiarize themselves with the procurement arrangements for supporting people.	DM/DOPS/DOH
			Where need has been identified, progress schemes accordingly.	DOPS/DOH

	<p>To participate in the progression of the Equality Scheme Section 75 duties</p> <p>To complete Equality Impact Assessments where relevant and in accordance with the agreed areas of impact assessment</p>	Oct 06	Complete the EQIA on Maintenance	MO/MM/DOPS
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HOUSING MANAGEMENT GENERAL OPERATIONAL PLAN 2007 – 2008

	To work to achieve the standards as set out in the Customer Charter		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve standards in practice 	All staff
	To promote tenant participation in accordance with core values To review tenant involvement in accordance with the Best Value principles.	6 months after handover of new development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To convene a tenants meeting in schemes 6 months after handover to actively encourage the formation of a tenants association. • To provide ongoing support and training for tenants groups • To attend tenants meetings and AGM • To provide training for HO/MO • To consider tenant applicants to the BOM in line with Best Value review of Governance 	
	To continue to develop and support the Tenant Forum		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold four meetings a year consult Tenant Forum on policy and performance issues • To promote greater representation to the Forum 	DOH/HO/HM HOs HMs DOH
	To inform and consult with residents/community groups in the development stage and in management	At each new development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft a Consultation Policy and Procedure for Clanmil in liaison with Property Services Department. • Liaison between HO and DO on consulting with residents groups • Input to design and management plans for all new developments. 	HM HM/HSM/HO

SUPPORTED HOUSING OPERATIONAL PLAN 2007-2008

	<p>To comply with the Quality and Assessment Framework of the six core standards of Supporting People for supported housing schemes</p> <p>1. Needs Assessment 2. Support and Planning 3. Security, Health & Safety 4. Equal Access & Opportunities 5. Protection from Abuse 6. Complaints</p>	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To facilitate Supporting People Review • To achieve level C in all 6 core objectives • To provide training and information to all staff on the Supporting People requirements and standards • To clarify roles and responsibilities with Joint Management Partners re: completion of QAF 	HSMSHO	
	<p>To complete sample Quality Assessment Framework for all the Sheltered Schemes</p>	Dec 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample completed 		
	<p>To promote tenant participation in accordance with core values</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To liaise with Joint Management Partners to promote tenant participation and involvement. • To encourage regular informal tenants meetings and receive feedback on services • To review and produce Tenants Handbook for Supported Housing 	<p>HSM/HSW/HSO</p> <p>HSM/HO/AA</p>	

SHELTERED HOUSING OPERATIONAL PLAN 2007-2008

KEY TASK	TARGET DATE	MEASURE	STAFF RESPONSIBLE	ACHIEVED
<p>Promote social activity to promote health and well being for tenants</p>	<p>Monthly</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the social interaction of tenants in sheltered housing by providing programmes of meaningful activities in each of the sheltered schemes which meet the choices and interests of the tenants. • Recording attendance at organised activities in according with procedure • Organise and attend one activity or meeting each month in the evening. • To provide or seek to arrange a lunch for tenants including use of outside agencies where appropriate. 	<p>SCO/HO/ PSCO/AA</p> <p>SCO/SSCO/HO DOH/AC/SCO/HO</p> <p>SCO/SSCO</p> <p>SCO/HO</p> <p>SCO/ ACO</p>	

	<p>To promote tenant participation in accordance with core values</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To convene an annual tenants meeting in schemes and to encourage the formation of a tenants association. • To carry out post letting interview in person or by phone within 6 weeks of start of tenancy to check tenant has settled in well and action any issues arising from the interview. • To carry out tenant satisfaction surveys and report back on outcome to tenants, staff and Tenant Forum as required. • To provide ongoing support and training for tenants groups • To attend tenants associations/ house committee meetings as required and AGM • To submit contributions to the Clanmil Chronicle 	<p>HO</p> <p>HO/SCO/AA</p> <p>HO/SCO</p> <p>HO/SCO/AA</p> <p>HO/AA/HM/DOH</p> <p>HO/SCO/ACO PSCO</p>	
	<p>To continue to develop and support the Tenant Forum</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold four meetings a year to consult Tenant Forum on policy issues, report on Best Value and performance. 	<p>DOH/HO/HM/ AA</p>	

HOUSING WITH CARE OPERATIONAL PLAN 2007-2008

	<p>To provide a high standard of care and support to the individual resident in line with the core values and equality legislation. To ensure a good skill mix of well trained staff in line with RQIA guidelines/Social Care Council.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Evidenced by observation by senior staff and Home Manager, ISO audit, inspection by Regulation Quality and Improvement Authority, staff supervision and feedback from residents and visitors. Enhanced through training on care related topics and values and attitudes.</p> <p>Appropriately skilled staff employed to ensure adequate cover in HWC homes at all times.</p> <p>Policies screened to include equality principles.</p>	<p>All staff for action. Leadership by Home Manager</p>	
	<p>To promote the independence of residents to enable them to continue to function and continue to use their skills.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Evidenced by observation, ISO audit, staff supervision, and feedback from residents and visitors.</p> <p>Review of Care and Support Plans.</p>	<p>All staff for action and leadership by Home Manager</p>	
	<p>To ensure places are allocated to persons in need of residential care and in keeping with equality principles.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>To put in place Resident Selection Scheme for admissions. With DSD for approval – awaiting approval.</p>	<p>DOH</p>	
	<p>To maintain care and support plans in line with person centred principles.</p>		<p>Evidenced by observation, audit and inspection and feedback from residents and relatives.</p> <p>Regular Review of Care Plan – 2 Monthly.</p> <p>Copy to be offered to residents.</p>	<p>Care Assistants Senior Carers and Home Managers</p>	

	To promote the involvement of the residents and relatives and to consider advocacy and relatives involvement. To assess tenants' satisfaction within HWC homes.		Evidenced by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements put in place to achieve this. • Survey residents on their views on service available. • Residents meetings at least twice per annum. 	Home Managers	
	To investigate models for the future in order to provide best quality care for residents in HWC homes.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop/investigate options with Health Care Trusts/Professionals then ensuring meeting resident need in the future. 		
	To undertake Equality Impact Assessment			Home Managers	
	To participate in the progression of the Equality Scheme Section 75 duties		Departmental policies are screened with reference to promoting equality within the nine Section 75 groups.		
	To complete Equality Impact Assessments where relevant and in accordance with the agreed areas of impact assessment	Ongoing	Equality Impact Assessments are completed within agreed timescales	JMB/All	

Section 2: Screening

- Please provide an update of new/proposed/revised policies screened during the year.

Clanmil took part in a joint screening exercise during 2004-2005 co-ordinated by NIFHA which identified 16 main policy areas – of these 10 were screened in for EQIA. A consultation document was released for public consideration from 22 July 2005 to 30 September 2005. The Commission was included on the circulation list for this document. Clanmil are currently coming to the end of their third year of the five year timetable for of EQIA's, with Equality Impact Assessments on Maintenance and Housing Management.

Title of policy subject to screening	Was the <u>F</u>ull Screening Report or the <u>R</u>esult of initial screening issued for consultation? <i>Please enter <u>F</u> or <u>R</u></i>	Was initial screening decision changed following consultation? <u>Y</u>es/<u>N</u>o	Is policy being subject to EQIA? <u>Y</u>es/<u>N</u>o? If yes indicate year for assessment.
Access and Communications	F	No	Yes 2006
Complaints	F	No	Yes 2006
Housing Management	F	No	Yes 2007
Maintenance	F	No	Yes 2007
HR Policy Pre employment	<u>F</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes 2008</u>
Care and Support	<u>F</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes 2008</u>
Charging Policies	F	No	Yes 2009
HR Policy during employment	F	No	Yes 2009

Section 3: Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

- Please provide an update of policies subject to EQIA during 2007/08, stage 7 EQIA monitoring activities and an indicative EQIA timetable for 2008-09.

EQIA Timetable – April 2007 - March 2008

Title of Policy EQIA	EQIA Stage at end March 08 (Steps 1-6)	Outline adjustments to policy intended to benefit individuals, and the relevant Section 75 categories due to be affected.
Housing	6	Adjustments included within individual EQIA's
Maintenance	6	Adjustments included within individual EQIA's
HR Pre-Employment	2	Considering consultee responses
Care & Support	2	Considering consultee responses

- Where the EQIA timetable for 2007/08 (as detailed in the previous annual S75 progress report to the Commission) has not been met, please provide details of the factors responsible for delay and details of the timetable for re-scheduling the EQIA/s in question.

Ongoing EQIA Monitoring Activities April 2007- March 2008

Title of EQIA subject to Stage 7 monitoring	Indicate if differential impacts previously identified have reduced or increased	Indicate if adverse impacts previously identified have reduced or increased
None		

2008-09 EQIA Time-table

Title of EQIAs due to be commenced during April 2008 – March 2009	Existing or New policy?	Please indicate expected timescale of Decision Making stage i.e. Stage 6
HR Pre Employment	Existing	October 2008
Care and Support	Existing	October 2008
HR During Employment	Existing	April 2009
Charging Policies	Existing	April 2009

Section 4: Training

- Please outline training provision during the year associated with the Section 75 Duties/Equality Scheme requirements including types of training provision and conclusions from any training evaluations.

Course Title	How Many Sessions	Staff attended	External Trainer
Preparing Disability Action Plans	1	1	√
Legal/Equality Aspects of Recruitment & Selection	2	14	√
Employment Law Conferences with Legal Island	2	2	√
Access NI/POCVA	2	3	√
Anti-Social Behaviour Training	3	3	√
Conflict and Dispute Resolution	1	9	√
Diversity at Work	1	1	√
S75 Monitoring Guidance	1	1	√
Employing Migrant Workers	1	1	√
EQIA Training	1	2	√
Home Adaptations and Occupational Therapy Recommendations	1	2	√

International Women's Day Conference	1	1	√
Race Relations	1	25	√
Equality Training	3	30	√
Induction Training	4	30	
Investigating Harassment Complaints	1	9	√
Traveller Awareness Training	1	14	√
The Common Selection Scheme	1	10	
Protection of Vulnerable Adults	3	30	
Values and Attitudes	3	42	
Support / care plans for special tenant needs	4	37	
Safety in the Home for Older People	1	2	√
Reminiscence Training	1 session Over 2 days	12	√

Section 5: Communication

- Please outline how the authority communicated progress on delivery of the Section 75 Duties during the year and evidence of the impact/success of such activities.

The organisation's commitment to equality has been communicated both internally and externally in a number of ways.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

- Provision of a briefing for staff at Head Office at our weekly ANNA sessions on the Equality duties
- Quarterly reports to the Clanmil Board of Management on the progression of the Equality Scheme.
- Equality Awareness training and Traveller Awareness training were conducted across the association. Further details are available in section 4.
- Awareness sessions for staff with NICEM on race relations in Northern Ireland
- Abbreviated version of both the Section 75 Equality Scheme and EQIA's posted to all tenant / employee addresses.
- Full published Equality Scheme and EQIA's on the Clanmil website
- Circulation of the "E-Cards" – emailed updates on the Equality Scheme, produced by NIFHA, circulated to the Management Team for information.

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

A commitment to meaningful communication which is timely and relevant to the end user is a commitment that Clanmil are keen to progress.

- The inclusion of an update on the progression of the Equality Scheme Section 75 duties in the Annual Report.
- The Strategic and Operational Plans which is consulted on and includes Equality as a key performance indicator
- Inclusion of articles in the tenant magazine, The Clanmil Chronicle which have included during 2007 - Equality Scheme update, youth involvement in scheme namings, a focus on our scheme for people with mental health problems, National Falls

- Day to raise awareness for older people, Celebrating diversity with the Ugandan childrens' choir and a Cross border Chinese exchange and Grey Matters Day.
- A completed EQIA on Access and Communications.
 - The work of staff in our sheltered schemes and regional offices where staff are providing a personal service in terms of dealing with requests at a scheme level. These staff were trained in the use of language line during 2007.
 - The development of a provision of language interpretation and translation services including the telephone based Language Line service, and the development of a bank of translation services to assist with ad hoc requests. Also the development of pictorial health and safety fact sheets for staff to assist them follow procedures when English / the written word is not their first language.
 - the Textphone, The Loop system, Website enabled with "Text Only" and "Browsealoud"
 - The development of an efficient and effective consultation network with tenants and residents, through our tenant forum and Tenant representation on the Board and on key fora.
 - Joint working projects with both statutory and voluntary sector bodies.
 - The developing role of Community Consultation and the ongoing exercise in disseminating information to community groups in keeping with the Good Relations duty.

Types of Communications

The most common ways in which Clanmil Housing communicates with internal and external customers are:

- By telephone / textphone
- By written correspondence
- By email / through the website
- In person
- Through tenant newsletters / staff newsletters / Annual Report

Examples of information commonly requested by customers are:

- Housing applications
- Allocations
- Rent enquiries
- Neighbourhood disputes
- Repair requests
- Employment applications
- New Housing Developments
- Complaints updates
- Details of support and care services

Offices

Head Office, Northern Whig House, 3 Waring Street, Belfast BT1 2DX. The opening hours are 9.00am – 5.00pm with a telephone service from 8.00am – 6.00pm. There is also an out of hours service for emergency requests which is staffed 24 hours.

Regional Office, The North West Regional Office at 20 Somme Park, Altnagelvin, Londonderry, BT47 2NE. The opening hours are 9.00am to 5.00pm. There is also an out of hours service for emergency requests which is staffed 24 hours.

Telephone

Head Office – 028 90 876000 / Textphone 028 90 329914

North West Regional Office – 028 71 342573

Out of hours Telecare service – 028 90 421010

Repairs line – 028 90 876019

Language Line - 02084303040

Website/E-mail

The website www.clanmil.org.uk – The website has been developed and enabled with Text Only and Browsealoud to enable access for those with visual / hearing impairments.

Written Correspondence

The communications policy states that business correspondence and promotional literature will be formatted in no less than font 12, but ideally in font 14. We are also looking at adopting the Guidelines of the Plain English Campaign.

Personal Contact

There is a daily contact procedure for all tenants in sheltered housing.

There is an induction and support plan meeting with new tenants in sheltered housing which is subsequently reviewed.

There is a sign up procedure for new tenants and a “Getting To Know You” session in person for all new tenants in new developments.

There is a procedure for tenants to view properties which they have been offered at new development schemes.

In Sheltered Schemes there are scheme based staff, who provide personal contact for tenants on site.

There is a personal care and support service for tenants in Housing with Care and in Supported Housing schemes.

There are home visits to all tenants requesting to transfer.

There are appointed duty officers available in Head Office for personal tenant visits 9.00am – 5.00pm Monday to Friday.

Any tenant may request a home visit.

Meetings

Clanmil has a policy of tenant partnership strategy which includes quarterly Tenant Forum meetings. PowerPoint presentations assist in the visual communication with tenants.

There are 2 general tenant meetings at each of the schemes annually. Clanmil issue a written notification to tenants announcing details about the tenant meeting. The notifications are issued to each tenant and also placed on the notice board at sheltered schemes. There are arrangements in place at each sheltered schemes/Housing with Care and Supported Housing to discuss issues personally with any tenant including those with a disability / illness / literacy impairment.

Pre tenancy training for tenants in new developments.

Consultation meetings are arranged to seek feedback from tenants on proposed changes to services affecting them. For example proposals to carry out improvement works in tenants homes and encouraging the establishment of Tenants Associations.

Tenant Forum Members are invited to the AGM

Tenant representatives sit on the Clanmil Board of Management and on key fora.

One to one meetings for tenants are arranged for tenants who have personal difficulty / illness accessing the public meetings.

Clanmil Housing is continuing to develop a Community Consultation Policy.

Translators, Advocates and Signers

The association has signed up to the installation of language line to provide accessibility for customers from other ethnic backgrounds. We also hold a bank of translation services which we have utilised on an ad hoc basis as and when requested and we have a list of registered signers that would be used if required. There was one request for translations in 2007-2008.

Applications for housing include information on the forms for requesting alternative languages and formats.

Section 6: Data Collection & Analysis

Sources of information

The following were used in considering available data relevant to the impact of the Access and Communications Policies.

- (a) Internal management information on the profile of tenants and service users
- (b) 1991 Northern Ireland Census Data
- (c) Office for National Statistics
- (d) Northern Ireland Research and Statistics Agency
- (e) DDA audits
- (f) NICORE (Northern Ireland Continuous Omnibus Recording) – statistics of all lettings made by the Association
- (g) Housing Waiting list data
- (h) Qualitative Feedback from telephonists and reception staff
- (i) Tenant satisfaction surveys – 8 completed annually
 - Tenant follow up survey 6 weeks after tenancy commencement
 - Aids and Adaptations Survey
 - Tenant satisfaction survey for Cosy Homes
 - 5% telephone sample for repairs completed
 - 5% personal visit sample for repairs completed

- (j) Completed Best Value Reviews
 - Treasury Management
 - Risk Management
 - Neighbour Nuisance
 - Complaints
 - Pets
 - Rent Arrears (current Tenants)
 - Rent Arrears (past tenants)
 - Approval of Purchase Invoices
 - Recruitment & Selection
 - Review of the provision of financial information to internal users
 - Voids and Allocations

Equality Scheme
Centre for Social Housing Studies
Life Cycle Costings
Design Brief
Development Service
Selection and appointment of consultants

- (j) Complaints register
- (k) Statistics on use of language line, interpretation services and provision of alternative information formats
- (l) Response to Equality Scheme Consultation by Disability Action
- (m) Equality Commission Codes of Practice

The key issues highlighted by analysis of the above data sources are presented in this section.

Profile of Service Users

Total housing stock as at 31.03.08

	Units	% of stock
Housing with care	42	2.1%
Supported	73	3.7%
Sheltered	954	48.5%
General Needs	771	39.3%
Category One Elderly	121	6.1%
Group housing for Travellers	6	0.3%
Total units	1967	100%

The principal sources of equality information about tenants are tenant surveys and NICORE lettings statistics.

The Association does not allocate a tenancy to anyone under the age of 16 in compliance with the rules of the common selection scheme. Details below cover only the new lettings from 2007/2008 and have been taken from the NICORE report. We are currently upgrading our

IT systems to enable us to provide accurate age profile reports for all tenants.

Total new lettings 345

Age

Age 18 - 24	42 = 12%
Age 25 – 44	135 = 39%
Age 45 – 59	43 = 12.4%
Age 60 Plus	125 = 36.2%

Marital Status

Married	54 = 15.7%
Unmarried	158 = 45.9%
Divorced	25 = 7.2%
Widowed	50 = 14.4%
Separated	58 = 16.8%

Disability

Yes	95 = 27.5%
No	250 = 72.5%

Dependants

Care of a child	156 = 45.2%
Care of a disabled person	30 = 8.7%
Care of an Elderly person	7 = 2%
No dependant	152 = 44.1%

Gender

Male	128 = 37.1%
Female	217 = 62.9%

Ethnic group

White	340 = 98.5%
Irish Traveller	2 = 0.6%
Black Caribbean	3 = 0.9%

Religious Belief

Protestant	115 = 33.3%
Catholic	201 = 58.3%

Mixed	1	= 0.2%
No Religious Belief	14	= 4.1%
Other - not stated	14	= 4.1%

At present, Clanmil does not collect data on political opinion or sexual orientation. The 2004 Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey indicates that 1% of respondents described themselves as gay or lesbian. A research report by Youthnet argues that analysis of the Census 2001 indicates that between 2 and 10% of the population may be lesbian, gay or bisexual.

According to the 2004 Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 39% considered themselves to be unionist, 23% stated that they were nationalists whilst 37% stated that they were neither.

- Please outline any use of the Commission's Section 75 Monitoring Guide.

Clanmil attended training by the Equality Commission on the new monitoring guide organized through NIFHA 20.02.08.

Clanmil also referred for advice to the Commission in designing a new monitoring form for all staff and applicants of the association to include capturing statistical information on all nine of the equality groups (previously we only collected information on seven of the groups).

Section 7: Information Provision, Access to Information and Services

- Please provide details of any initiatives/steps taken during the year, including take up, to improve access to services including provision of information in accessible formats.

During 2007-2008, Clanmil assessed all the main contact methods for stakeholders and commenced an action plan to increase the level of Access to Information and Services to many of the 9 groups under the Equality Scheme.

- The website was enabled with “Browsealoud” and “Text Only” to enable those with hearing and sight impairments to access the information of the website
- The installation of a Textphone at Head Office and training for staff by RNID in the operation of the textphone.
- The reproduction of tenants handbooks in large font for all our sheltered schemes as a reference guide for tenants
- The ongoing use of the mobile Loop system for people with hearing impairments so they can fully participate in tenant meetings.
- The use of the audio cassettes “ Access to Housing” produced by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to assist people with sight impairments.
- The audit of Head Office at Northern Whig House and the adjustments made following the audit :-
 - Pictorial signage on toilets etc.
 - Braille signage on lifts / door access
 - Installation of child changing facilities for visitors to the building
 - Proposals to create a child friendly area in reception
- Positive Corporate imagery representing our key customer base displayed at reception which includes disability, family housing, sheltered housing for the elderly and diversity.
- The development of pictorial / visual presentations on power point for tenant meetings, to encourage greater understanding and participation at tenant forum meetings.
- The commitment and installation of the use of Language Line to assist staff to process queries and applications for those of whom English is not the first language.

DDA Audits

Clanmil have externally trained the maintenance manager/officers re carrying out access audits, and a programme of these for all Clanmil properties has now been concluded.

Any issues identified were given a priority rating and those that required immediate response have been acted upon. Other areas which are not required by the legislation, but may require consideration by Clanmil in terms of improving access to schemes, is being collated, and will be discussed and agreed imminently by the Management Team. A report on additional improved disability access issues will be presented to the Management Team prior to December 2008.

Section 8: Complaints

- Please identify the number of Section 75 related complaints:
 - received and resolved by the authority (including how this was achieved);
 - which were not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant;
 - which were referred to the Equality Commission.

There were no Section 75 complaints received in the reporting period.

Section 9: Consultation and Engagement

- Please provide details of the measures taken to enhance the level of engagement with individuals and representative groups during the year.

Tenant Participation

This is key to the success of Clanmil Housing. During 2005-2006, a Best Value Review of the Tenant Participation Strategy was drafted. There are 2 places reserved for tenant representatives on the Board of Management and this includes a place for the chair of the Tenant Forum. There are four meetings annually and Forum Members are consulted on policy issues and information is provided on

performance. During 2007, there were tenants also co-opted onto key fora within the association, including the finance and audit committees.

Tenants also played a pivotal role in the review of many of the service areas under the Best Value Reviews.

One area that has not proved successful at present is attracting general family tenants to the tenant forum. This is a key strategy area for our Housing staff and they are looking at the format of the forum to try to ensure a greater participation from general family tenants. It is generally recognized that it is difficult to get general needs tenants involved in an organized forum and committees however we are looking at other ways engaging our general needs tenants in community development.

Community Consultation

Detailed in the section under Good Relations, again during 2007, the development team within Clanmil are working towards designing and implementing a community consultation strategy which involves inclusive consultation at all stages of the development process to work with community groups and political representatives in delivering social housing in those areas.

The staff are involved in organizing and attending awareness sessions open to all members of the local community (this may involve attendance at evening meetings) making presentations to groups which would include an introduction on who Clanmil are, what do they do, what do they propose to develop, timescale for delivery and a general outline of how the scheme will be managed. We fully recognize that any development should have the support and ownership of local communities, and whilst community consultation can be challenging, we recognize the importance of constructively engaging with local groups to ensure that people will want to live in the homes that we build. We have also now commenced the formation of project groups which comprise Clanmil staff and local community representatives who will work together to oversee the design, construction and management of a scheme.

During 2007-2008, there were approximately 6 organized community consultation evenings.

Where there are established community or resident groups, there are ongoing consultation meetings during and after the development of the scheme.

Other Initiatives for participation

- The building at Northern Whig House has become a meeting place for many smaller community groups. During 2007-2007, we have rented out the communal offices and training facilities in the Head Office to groups such as Citizens Advice Bureau, Springboard (a training organization for young people leaving care), COSO (the Coalition Organisation for Sexual Orientation) and The Rainbow Project and LASI (Lesbian Advocacy Services Initiative).
- Allowing the groups to use the facilities at reduced cost has increased participation with some of nine equality groups, and has provided them with excellent and safe facilities to meet. The building has been used for an ongoing series of meetings by representative groups with different sexual orientation for consultation meetings with the PSNI to look at issues affecting these groups.
- We also had a permanent work placement with the Orchardville Society, providing work experience for adults who have serious physical disabilities. This was a long standing arrangement for over five years and provided much needed experience in an office environment, with staff support, for men and women who would otherwise not have this experience. Unfortunately Orchardville, through lack of government funding had to cease this project in March 2008.
- During 2007, we sponsored an event called Arts for Older People, donating £1,000 towards arts projects to encourage more senior citizens to play an active role in the arts, which has resulted in a production

- In conjunction with South and East Belfast Trust, we produced a video to promote our housing schemes for people living with dementia. This has raised the profile of the development of such schemes, which use assistive technology to encourage and promote greater independence and assist in risk management.
- In relation to staff participation in Equality issues, during 2004 and 2006, we conducted Staff Attitude surveys within Clanmil and key to the process was questions on equality of opportunity in relation to all aspects of their working lives with Clanmil. The results were very pleasing in that staff rated equality of opportunity high within Clanmil with less than 1% dissatisfied with equality issues.
- Our Activities Co-ordinator's are represented on the East Belfast Senior Forum and the Down Over 50's Forum. They are also involved with groups such as Engage with Age, and use these fora to network and share ideas. Two of our tenants from Greenville Court sit on the East Belfast Senior Forum, which is also represented by people from the Short Strand Community Centre, the Indian and Polish communities.

Engagement events at sheltered schemes throughout Northern Ireland

OUTREACH EVENTS AT SCHEMES

All Schemes

- Falls Awareness Day – 26th June 2007 – Safety awareness for the elderly.

The Savoy, Bangor & Cook Court, Newtownards

- Intergenerational project on community safety with young teenagers from North Belfast – 8 week event which ran from April – May 2007 with Staff and tenants from The Savoy,

Bangor. The project was a joint venture organised by Age Concern & Include Youth.

- Cross Border Trip to Dublin with Chinese group. The first trip took place on 14th and 15th May and the second on 10th & 11th September 2008. The event was organised by Sam Girvan, Senior Scheme Co-ordinator and Pia Gore, Activities Co-ordinator. Tenants from The Savoy in Bangor and Cook Court, Newtownards also attended.

Barbour Court, Enniskillen

- Age Concern hold monthly meetings at the scheme which is attended by many tenants. Day trips/three-day trips are well attended by tenants.
- Operation Christmas Child – this involved tenants supplying Christmas presents for children in Eastern Europe.
- Autumn 2007 – a visit from University of the Third Age (U3A)
- Women of the World – workshops with worldwide clothing taken by an Indian lady throughout March 2008
- Bog People – drama workshop encouraging mixing and discussion around perceptions relating to religion and political opinion.
- Silver Surfers Day – 25th May 2007 – computer training for the elderly.
- Outing to Donegal - annual event which this year took place on 25th June 2007 – outing for tenants and persons from ethnic minorities – organised by St. Vincent de Paul
- Carol Singing from Enniskillen Girls Brigade – 19th December 2007 – tenants from all persuasions attended and enjoyed so much they have requested again in 2008

- Sign Language demonstration organised by one of the tenants at Barbour Court – April 2007
- Blind Centre hold meetings in Barbour Court every month – a lot of tenants and others who live in the area but not in the scheme have attended the meetings. They have covered sessions regarding difficulties the blind face on a day-to-day basis. They also organised Tai Chi classes for tenants and other persons from neighbouring schemes owned by other Housing Associations.

Forest Glen

- May 2007 – fundraising event for local disabled girl to highlight need for increased rehabilitation centres for the young who are disabled as a result of head injuries.
- Annual Xmas Carol Events – organised by local Multi-Cultural / Religious Groups
- Raffle / lunch – organised to raise money to give to local Baptist Church for Missionary Work in foreign countries (tenants decide who to donate to).

Abercorn Court, Portrush and Head Office, Belfast

- Rock Ministry Ugandan Orphanage Children's Choir – performed for staff at head office and for the tenants at Abercorn Court

Other Events

- Bottia – armchair bowling organized for those tenants who have mobility difficulties
- Film nights – we arranged a licence with an archive footage company in order to show old films and documentaries. This was primarily established to target our male tenants and include them in activities which would be of specific interest to them.

- Astronomy Club – this was established at Hughes Court in order to target our male tenants. The club meets on a weekly basis.
- Glentoran Christmas Dinner – in December 2007, one of our Activities Co-ordinator arranged a free Christmas Diner for some of our tenants in East Belfast. This was funded by Glentoran Football Club and was a cross community event which involved 250 elderly people from East Belfast and the Short Strand area.
- Turkington Project – this project provided funding for the elderly in conjunction with the Workers Educational Association. Clanmil benefited from this project by offering art classes at Stronge Court and computer classed at Henderson Court. The art classes were so successful at Stronge Court that the tenants work was exhibited at a Conference and because of the high levels of participation, we have been able to secure a further 10-week class.
- Closing the Gap – this was a cross generational project which involved children/tenants/ cross community groups/children with physical and learning disabilities. We worked alongside Dance United who secured £40,000 funding. Children from Campbell College Boys and Ashfield Girls were involved in the project which culminated in a Dance Extravaganza at the Culloden Hotel.
- National Falls Day – as part of National Falls Day, children from Seaview Primary School in Glenarm visited our scheme at Forst Glen. The children and tenants participated in arts and crafts and painted a mural at the scheme.

Section 10: The Good Relations Duty

- Please provide details of additional steps taken to implement or progress the good relations duty during the year. Please indicate any findings or expected outcomes from this work.

Clanmil Housing Association have incorporated their Good Relations duty into the policies and procedures for Community Consultation within the Association. This has been an ongoing area of work for Clanmil and staff have embraced the opportunity for more face to face meetings with community groups, meetings with political representatives and the unique racial groups with which Clanmil currently work.

Residential Segregation / Integration

Clanmil will;

- Housing Associations, in partnership with the Housing Executive, are analysing the viability and sustainability of mixed-community housing, with one scheme completed in Enniskillen under the Shared Futures model.
- Facilitate and encourage mixed-community housing in the social and affordable sector as far as this is practicable, desirable and safe.
- Clanmil have a current development proposal which it is considering developing as mixed community housing which will take into consideration the lessons learned from the first pilot project of such housing. This is scheduled for the development programme in 2008/2009 and located in Lisburn, when Clanmil will apply for project approval and funding.
- Clanmil are actively pursuing opportunities for Shared Future Housing.

Race Relations

In terms of race relations, Clanmil, on the request of the Department for Social Development, took on to deliver the first grouped housing scheme for Irish Travellers in the Belfast area.

Extensive consultation took place prior to construction to ensure what we built met both the travelers expectations and their culture :-

- how the houses were orientated i.e locating the kitchens at the front of dwellings to mimic a caravan settlement
- provision of work yards and space for the caravans to be stored at the rear of the dwellings
- special provision in the tenancy agreement to allow travel within the year
- close links with traveler support group, An Munir Tober to enhance services in terms of health, childcare and education.

Due to the involvement in this scheme, and the specialty Clanmil have developed in this housing need, we now have advanced proposals for an additional traveler's scheme at Bessbrook of 6 traveler homes.

In August 2007, Clanmil staff took part in a pilot project on Anti-Racism Awareness. This training was provided through a joint venture with Tides Training and the Multi Cultural Resource Centre. The training was facilitated by a trainer from Northern Ireland and a trainer from Poland, and explored the effects of racism and discrimination. This included an open session where the Polish participant talked personally about her experiences of racism and took questions from the attendees. The session also covered areas such as migrant workers, asylum seekers and refugees.

Please also refer to section on Engagement

Interface Areas

Clanmil recognises that wherever there is housing need, we have a responsibility to deliver in challenging areas. As a result, working with local community groups and elected representatives have become inherent and fundamental to the way we deliver housing;

- Clanmil has implemented a working procedure on community consultation, so staff are aware of outreach consultation with

community groups at the inception of a development. During 2008/2009, this will be incorporated into a policy for all staff.

- When a scheme is proposed to be built, we immediately establish contact with the local community groups and elected representatives
- Clanmil invite representatives from the community groups to join Clanmil staff to form a project group to oversee the design and construction of the scheme.
- Information evenings are held for the wider community to give information on the development and allay fears.
- We involve local communities in the naming of the schemes, to ensure ownership
- Following episodes of interface violence at a particular scheme, Clanmil worked closely with the Northern Ireland Office and the owners of the adjacent site to find a resolution which included applying for grant funding to help with boundary treatment to enhance security for our tenants.
- In a recent example of an interface scheme between the Falls Road and the Shankill, we have worked very closely with both sets of political representatives, NIO and the developer to ensure the scheme is built to help preserve the safety of both communities.

Political Representation

There is ongoing communication with the local political and elected representatives through the development of any housing scheme. This is to ensure that they are kept updated about the scheme design and are fully supportive of the scheme proposals.

The local politicians are invited to attend the community consultation events.

- Please outline any use of the Commission's Good Relations Guide.

No use of Good Relations Guide but will be referred to when drafting the new written Community Consultation Policy during 2008-2009.

Section 11: Additional Comments

- Please provide any additional information/comments

HOUSING SELECTION SCHEME:

Clanmil allocate properties in complying with the rules of the Common Selection Scheme, designed by the Housing Executive. The Common Selection Scheme is currently the subject of an equality impact assessment (EQIA). However during 2005-2006 a significant amendment in relation to sexual orientation and disability was introduced in advance of the findings of the EQIA. This related to the award of intimidation points which had previously been restricted to applicants who were victims of terrorist, sectarian or racist violence or harassment. The amended rule now recognises that the motivation for this form of attack can be motivated by hostility because of an applicant's sexual orientation and or disability.

HUMAN RESOURCES MAINSTREAMING:

The principles of fairness and equality of opportunity are central to all personnel policies within Clanmil. We are committed to ensuring that its personnel policies and practices meet all legislative and best practice requirements in regard to equal opportunity. An Equality of Opportunity Policy Statement is in place with supporting policies in relation to flexible working arrangements worklife balance initiatives and Harassment/Victimisation.

The policies in relation to flexible working arrangements provide a range of Work Balance schemes and initiatives designed to help employees. In addition to the provision of 'Flexi Time' working, which is presently enjoyed by over 40 staff, we also have flexible hours for all other staff. We currently have 1 employee on a career break.

During 2007 we continued to promote our worklife balance package for staff. Clanmil employees can now increase their time with family through initiatives such as buying and selling annual leave, paid

dependants leave, increased paid bereavement leave increased promotion of flexible working and a day off for their birthday!

In addition to the Equal Opportunity monitoring which is carried out in respect of a range of staffing issues, appeals processes are built into personnel policies to provide mechanisms to ensure that fairness and equal opportunity requirements are being met.

We are committed to the active promotion of equality of opportunity for people with a disability, and make reasonable adjustments on an ongoing basis for our existing employees who become disabled, and for any new employees joining our workforce who are disabled. We operate a comprehensive Occupational Health Service for staff and have provided all staff with a health benefits package, which includes a free confidential counseling service.

NORTH BELFAST STRATEGY

Following extensive consultation with local communities and politicians in 1999 and 2000, the Housing Executive's Board approved the 'North Belfast Housing Strategy', a seven-year £133 million investment plan to regenerate this sector of the city. The Strategy achieved cross party support and was launched in October 2000. Clanmil is one of the nine selected partners who work with the Housing executive and local communities to deliver housing solutions in the North Belfast geographic area.

North Belfast, in addition to having a wide range of other challenges, has some of the most acute housing problems in Northern Ireland. These are characterised by an inefficient housing market due to segregation, intimidation, and interface violence, together with vacant and derelict land and houses.

The Strategy has 5 key themes which are being implemented over a seven-year period. One key theme that Clanmil are closely involved in is:

Increasing the housing supply

By 2006 Clanmil will have contributed 233 units and by the end of the 7 year strategy, Clanmil should have completed a further 186 units of accommodation. This will be a provision of 24% of the total identified by the Housing Executive. Eggbox completed – at 69 dwellings however 24 of these then went to Flax Housing Association – we have the 15 units programmed and currently on site in the lower Antrim Road infill scheme in this years programme. We are also progressing the site at 100 Cliftonville Road (this is in our ownership) for 8 units of CAT 1 properties subject to project approval being issued to be on site by March 09.

We are also looking to progress (subject to being brought into the programme) the potential to deliver a further 14 units at Whitewell Road

THE WEST BELFAST HOUSING & REGENERATION STRATEGY

"Greater West Belfast is fundamentally important in achieving strategic residential targets and objectives in the City as a whole".

West Belfast Sectoral Study, 2002

The Greater West Belfast Housing Strategy is a seven year investment plan running from April 2003 to 2010 which involves an estimated expenditure of £202m to tackle a broad range of housing issues.

Challenges

The Strategy has three main themes:

- Maximising Housing Supply
- Improving Housing Conditions
- Regeneration through Partnership.

Maximising Housing Supply

- There are 412 new social homes on site against strategic target of 275.
- 184 new social housing units have been completed to date.
- There have been 82% of starts on Brownfield sites in comparison to Regional Development Strategy target of 60%.
- A Group Housing scheme for 6 Traveler families has been completed at Glen Road.
- Applicants on the waiting list showed an increase from 2,279 to 2,496.
- There has been a fall in the number of homeless cases approved, from 653 to 543.

Clanmil is working in partnership with local communities, elected representatives and strategic authorities, as part of the West Belfast Strategy, to deliver new social housing units, and by the end of 2006 will have 229 units in management in the greater West Belfast area and further schemes at the development stage.

Currently progressing on site with schemes in West Belfast at Phase 2 Norfolk Road – 18 units.

Currently investigating potential opportunities in West Belfast that if these come to fruition over the next 3 years should provide 366 new units of accommodation for family housing.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Clanmil is committed to tackling anti social behaviour and during 2005-2006 developed an Anti Social behaviour policy and trained all relevant staff in dealing with Anti Social behaviour. Clanmil have introduced the following to help address anti social behaviour:

Clanmil Security Group

A safety group has been working in Clanmil to look at safety issues, particularly since the increased threat to older people, and this has focused mainly on improving awareness and safety within our sheltered schemes.

This has included increased links with the PSNI to provide briefing sessions to tenants and security assessment of several of our schemes, security advice articles in the Clanmil Chronicle, erection of 6 CCTV systems at sheltered schemes and increased personal security measures on the schemes e.g. peep holes and chain locks on doors.

We have erected additional fencing at a cost of £23,000.00 to improve security at one of our large family housing schemes in West Belfast.

SUPPORTING PEOPLE

The Supporting People (SP) programme is a UK wide reform of the way in which housing support services are commissioned and funded. The programme was implemented in Northern Ireland in April 2003. The overall aim is to:

- Enable people to live safe and fulfilled lives in the community by delivering high quality, responsive and diverse housing-related support services to meet the needs of vulnerable adults in Northern Ireland;
- Ensure that these services make the best use of the available resources; and
- Integrate well with related services and take into account the views of stakeholders.

Client Groups

The Supporting People programme currently funds housing support services in over 900 housing support schemes providing support to approximately 15,000 service users at any one time.

Client groupings include:

- Frail older and young vulnerable people or care leavers;
- People from minority ethnic communities;
- People with physical disabilities, learning difficulties or mental health problems; and
- Those who are homeless or fleeing domestic violence and those who are part of the criminal justice system, or require addiction services or are refugees/asylum seekers.

Clanmil receives funding amounting to £1.325m from Supporting People which is administered by the Housing Executive.

REVIEW OF ADAPTATIONS

We remain committed to adapting our properties, when required, to meet the changing individual needs of our tenants. These adaptations are only possible because of grant assistance from the Department of Social Development, and we aim to complete adaptation work, following of an OT request, within a period of 10 weeks – a target currently being achieved. The number of requests processed is approximately 160 per annum and this number continues to rise.

Clanmil currently progresses requests for Aids and Adaptations on the basis that 100% funding for these continues to be provided by the DSD.

The procurement for Aids and Adaptations requests is carried out through a Measured Term Contract, that was implemented following a competitive tendering process. This Contract is in place from 6 June 2005 until June 2008. Our new procurement exercise is currently underway.

174 Aids & Adaptations requests were received for the period 1 April 2007 – 31 January 2008. These were completed by the Association at a cost of £167,399.00, with grant funding.

SOCIAL HOUSING PROGRAMME

During the financial year 2007/2008, Clanmil commenced construction on 45 new units for social housing, bringing the total number of units under construction at the end of March 2008 to 207. The cost of this development activity was in the region of £26m of which housing association grant of £13million was received from the Department of Social Development.

From August 2008, Clanmil had over 2000 units of accommodation in management.

TRAVELLER SPECIFIC ACCOMMODATION

A comprehensive strategic accommodation needs assessment has been completed and an accommodation programme has now been developed by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. Clanmil are part of this strategy with their Group Housing Scheme at the Glen Road, Belfast. Clanmil are also progressing the design of a second scheme for travellers at Bessbrook in Newry.

Allocation Policy for Group Housing Schemes:

As the department is aware, Clanmil Housing Association is currently providing group housing at the Glen Road, Belfast. These 6 properties are specifically allocated to members of the Irish Travelling Community as defined by the Race Relations Officer (NI) 1997.

While applicants are assessed under the rules of the Common Selection scheme, allocations are made to applicants meeting unique criteria as agreed with representatives of the Housing Executive, DSD, Travellers support groups and members of the travelling community. Allocations are restricted to:-

- 1) All families who have lived together on the site. These will be called the “main families” in the rest of the correspondence.
- 2) New families which have been formed from within the “main families” because of marriage or other reasons, during the life of the project.
- 3) Where members of the “main families” who have lived with the group as a separate family and had been on the site for a reasonable period within the last five years, but who have moved and settled in a different place because:-
 - The site was seriously overcrowded, or
 - Site conditions were having a serious affect on the health of a member of that family, or
 - To provide support to other family members e.g. caring for a close relative, or
 - Absent members of the “main families” who do not meet the criteria but who provide significant care for other family

members who are eligible or to get support from families who are eligible.

In situation number 3) an absent family will have to be able to show that:-

- The situations outlined above apply to them, and
- It is their intention to return to settle permanently with their family, and
- All the “main family” groups agree that the absent family returns and remains permanently on the project site chosen, and
- The absent family does not belong to another family group that has an equal claim to or recognises them as part of their family (not involved in this project).

Where a family has been turned down for housing they will have the right to appeal the decision.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Conscious of the importance of energy efficiency throughout all our dwellings, we progressed the following initiatives during the last few years:-

- Replaced approximately 768 Economy 7 heating systems to more efficient gas or oil heating systems with ‘A’ rated condensing boilers along with loft insulation improvements. Annual carbon savings of 915 tonnes of carbon and 13,745 tonnes of carbon over the lifetime of these heating systems. Work has been carried out in conjunction with the Northern Ireland Energy Agency ‘Cosy Homes’ scheme who have helped fund part of the works.
- Replaced approximately 449 filament light bulbs to low energy bulbs to communal areas of our sheltered schemes -lifetime carbon savings of 75 tonnes (grant funding assistance of the Energy Savings trust).
- Clever Homes project. This project aimed to demonstrate two types of solar ventilation technologies combined with energy efficiency measures. The intention was to enhance indoor air

quality, reduce domestic energy consumption and bills and improve the health and wellbeing of the householder. As part of this project we fitted 24 solar powered ventilation and heating Sunwarm / Ecosmart systems.

- Issued all staff via email with daily Energy Efficiency tips during Energy Savings Week in October 2006 & 07
- Held energy efficiency coffee mornings with all our tenants and Energy Savings Trust Advice centre at all our sheltered schemes throughout Northern Ireland.
- Tenants and staff of Clanmil are embarking on a trial with NIE with the 'Smart meter' project. This smart online product will give Clanmil tenants real-time information about the electricity they use in their home.
- Construct new dwellings to the "very good rating" of the ECO homes standard.

LIFETIME HOMES STANDARD


Lifetime homes is a design concept which promotes barrier free design, so that if a tenant mobility changes during their tenancy, with minor re-figuration, the dwelling can be adapted which would enable tenants to effectively live in our dwellings from the "cradle to the grave".

Promoted by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and now adopted by the DSD, all new dwellings.

All new developments during 2007-2008 were built to lifetime homes standard.



RISK MANAGEMENT

Clanmil Housing has developed a Risk Register which clearly identifies the potential risks faced by the organisation. The risks associated with equality and the failure to comply with anti discrimination legislation and the duties under Section 75 have been clearly set out within the Risk Register. Quarterly the senior management team assess the risks associated with their activities. The risks associated with Equality and Anti discrimination legislation are included as an extract **(as at next page)**:

Likelihood ranking:
Consequence ranking:
Medium, = low 

1 = improbable; 2 = unlikely; 3 = possible; 4 = likely; 5 = probable
 1 = minor; 2 = moderate; 3 = significant; 4 = substantial; 5 = catastrophic

Matrix Zone:  = High,  =

Ref	Risk (threat to achievement of business objective)	Root causes (how the threat could arise)	Responsible	Mitigating Actions (what we are doing to manage the threat)	Embedded monitors/early warning indicators (How we know if we are succeeding)	Proposed action (where mitigating action is currently effective)
11.	Significant claims against the Association – Corporate Services. Inherent score Likelihood: 5 Consequence: 4 Score: 20, Matrix 	Recruitment & selection procedures. Poor documentation. Not following procedures. Unfair dismissal or discrimination. Not adhering to legislation. Lack of training or awareness. Equality breaches. Breach of contract issues.	HOCS	Recruitment & selection training. Internal review of R&S. Best Value Review. Complaints procedure. Confidential reporting policy. Harassment and grievance procedures. Up to date with legislation. Required training. Annual return to Equality Commission. Equality Scheme.	Exit interviews. Appraisals. Surveys. Best Value Review. Regulation by DSD. Less complaints, fewer claims. implementation of Equality Scheme. Residual score Likelihood: 4 Consequence: 3 Score: 12, Matrix 	

Likelihood ranking:

1 = improbable; 2 = unlikely; 3 = possible; 4 = likely; 5 = probable

Consequence ranking:

1 = minor; 2 = moderate; 3 = significant; 4 = substantial; 5 = catastrophic

Matrix Zone: ■ = High, ■ =

Medium, = low ■

Ref	Risk (threat to achievement of business objective)	Root causes (how the threat could arise)	Responsible	Mitigating Actions (what we are doing to manage the threat)	Embedded monitors/early warning indicators (How we know if we are succeeding)	Proposed action (where mitigating action is currently effective)
12.	<p>Non-compliance with the statutory duties of the Equality Scheme.</p> <p>Inherent score Likelihood: 5 Consequence: 3 Score: 15, Matrix ■</p>	<p>Non-adherence to legislation.</p> <p>Lack of awareness.</p> <p>Inappropriate policies.</p> <p>Not actioning consultee recommendations.</p>	HOCS	<p>Action plan. Consultation and participation in NIFHA sub-group.</p> <p>Completion of the Equality Impact Assessments.</p> <p>Report to the Board of Management</p> <p>Awareness sessions to staff. Training on screening of policies.</p> <p>Reviewing policies to ensure adherence to the nine equality groups.</p> <p>Public consultation exercises.</p>	<p>Annual review with Equality Commission.</p> <p>Benchmarking with other HA's.</p> <p>No Equality Commission investigations.</p> <p>No referral to Secretary of State.</p> <p>No adverse publicity.</p> <p>Residual score Likelihood: 4 Consequence: 3 Score: 12, Matrix ■</p>	

Annual Report July 2007/ March 2008
'Disability Duties' Questions

1. How many action measures for this reporting period have been?

21

Fully
Achieved

3

Partially
Achieved

1

Not
Achieved

2. Please outline the following detail on **all actions that have been fully achieved** in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what **public life measures** have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs ¹	Outcomes / Impact ²
National ³			
Regional ⁴	Tenant Board Members Tenant Forum Tenant representatives on key Committees	4 Board meetings per annum 4 meetings per annum 4 meetings per committee per annum	Tenant input into key strategic direction for Board Consultation on key policy areas Tenants involvement in key committees to review
Local ⁵	Tenant Committees at sheltered schemes throughout Northern Ireland	Tenant Committee meetings	Access grant funding Input into events at schemes

¹ **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.

² **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.

³ **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments

⁴ **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level

⁵ **Local** : Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local forums.

2(b) What **training action measures** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Values and Attitudes	3 sessions and 42 staff	Staff trained to identify key behavioural trends linked to disability and adapt service provision to best suit the needs of the tenant. This may relate to dementia, learning disability or physical disability.
2	Equality Monitoring	2 staff attended training with the Equality Commission	Updated information Revised monitoring form issued More relevant data collected on the nine categories
3	Disability Action HR Forum	1 Director attended Disability Action training event	Updated Information Advice on Policy Development
4	Recruitment & Selection training for recruitment panels	14 supervisory / management staff attended 2 sessions	Focus on facilitating disabled applications. Awareness of reasonable adjustments and challenging job criteria
5	Research online disability awareness training	Review of training options to increase awareness for all staff	Online training option costed and selected.
6	Inductions	Equality training key part of staff induction. All news starts in the period trained internally and externally. 4 sessions and 30 staff.	Awareness of key disability issues in providing access to goods and services.

7	Specialised training – Preparing and Managing Disability Action Plans	2 Managers trained	Disability Action Plans prepared, implemented and communicated
8	Adaptations and Occupational Therapy Recommendations	2 Managers trained in the process	More recognition of key disability issues in carrying out adaptations Review of Policy to enable Clanmil to process disability adaptation requests quicker
9	Protection of Vulnerable Adults	3 sessions for 30 staff	Staff are trained to provide a key service whilst ensuring protection for our most vulnerable tenants
10	Support Plans	4 sessions for 37 staff	Support plans produced for circa 1200 tenants, identifying individual tenants needs and highlighting enhanced needs of tenants to deliver the a high standard of care

2(c) What Positive attitudes **action measures** in the area of **Communications** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Textphone installed	4 reception staff trained on the use.	Effective access for customers contacting the association
2	Clanmil Chronicle Tenants Newsletter	5 articles through the year promoting disability issues	Raise the profile of disability issues and provide practical advice for tenants with disabilities

3	Website - Browsealoud	Contract reviewed to continue to provide browsealoud	Allows tenants with sight problems to access the website and key information such as home vacancies
4	Positive Corporate Imagery	Included in signage at Head Office, website and in the annual report	Representative of our customer base Raising the profile of disability in a positive way.

2 (d) What action measures were achieved to ‘**encourage others**’ to promote the two duties:

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Consultation	Community consultation events held to promote housing in areas	Community more informed Support from local representatives Less likely for conflict with local community if they are consulted
2	Partnerships	Key partnerships with Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health, Action Mental, the Health Trusts and Orchardville Society	3 Flats delivered for tenants with mental health needs. Provision of specialist services to tenants with special caring needs
3	New Activities Co-Ordinators	Staff employed to promote activities to tenants. Scheme staff encouraged to promote and develop these activities for their schemes	Programme of events to facilitate better attendance for tenants with disabilities

2 (e) Please outline **any additional action measures** that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
1	Use the District Housing Plans	District plans were used to identify housing need.	Strategy produced for housing need and client groups
2	All public tenders advertised include		Equality compliance form part of the weighting and scoring process
3	Assistive Technology	Helpline upgrades to all sheltered / supported housing schemes	The upgraded systems have additional features which help with a disability to access assistance for their needs.
4	Adaptations to homes	174 requests were received in the period and works to the cost of £167,399 were carried out with grant funding	Homes adapted to suit tenants needs

3. Please outline what action measures have been **partly achieved** as follows:

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones ⁶ / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1	Written Community Consultation Policy	Community consultation happening in practice – needs a written joined up strategy	Highlighting housing need issues for those with disabilities	Time constraints – will be a key objective for 2008-2009
2	Develop at least 100 homes to lifetime home standard	36 homes were started in the period	36 homes designed to be accessible for all, including those with disabilities	This was the amount of homes started in the period. During this period, there were also off the shelf purchases which did not comply with lifetime home standard.

4. Please outline what **action measures have not been achieved** and the reasons why?

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1	Remodelling The Savoy and Giboney Court Sheltered Scheme	Lack of funding for the remodelling – alternative programme of works being provided

⁶ **Milestones** – Please outline what part progress has been made towards the particular measures; even if full output or outcomes/ impact have not been achieved.

5. What **monitoring tools** have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

(a) Qualitative

Management Review of Action Plan
Tenant Satisfaction Survey on Adaptations
Review of tenant call system upgrade
Training Evaluation forms
Committee / Board approval

(b) Quantitative

Monitoring NICORE Stats
Complaints
Employee Monitoring
New Applicants

Monitoring Pre-allocated tenancies re disabled
Reasonable adjustments for staff joining / whilst employed
Action Plan from Disability Audits
Upgrade of tenant call system

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions, has your organisation either:

- made any **revisions** to your plan during the reporting period or
- taken any **additional steps** to meet the disability duties which were **not outlined in your original** disability action plan / any other changes.

Please delete: No

If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

7. Do you intend to make any further **revisions to your plan** in light of your organisations annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes?

Comply wise – built into induction

Review carried out Mobility Scooters at sheltered schemes

Programme of non essential disability related maintenance issues costed, identified by the DDA audits at our properties.



Housing Associations' Joint Equality Exercise

Annual Progress Report 2007-08

The Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations (NIFHA) is the umbrella body for 33 registered and 7 non-registered housing associations in Northern Ireland. Designated housing associations have participated in a joint approach co-ordinated by NIFHA during the development of Equality Schemes and when implementing their agreed EQIA timetable. This joint work is co-ordinated by the Federation's Corporate Services Manager and a representative group comprised of nominated individuals from NIFHA Council, its Professional Practice Committee and seven (service-related) Fora. This group is known as the EQIA Co-ordination Group (ECG).

General

Between April 2007 and March 2008 the Federation provided support for members participating in the Joint Equality process by:

- Issuing 'E Cards' as prompts for action and/or as information updates
- Providing updates on equality & diversity in NIFHA's twice monthly e-News
- Arranging joint events as appropriate
- Commissioning pre-consultation research and managing the contract
- Representing the housing association movement by participating in the NI Housing Executive's (NIHE) Consultative Forum on Equality
- Co-ordinating all relevant Public Consultation exercises
- Arranging joint Public Notices relating to the designated Housing Associations' equality work
- Acting as a conduit for information and consultee responses
- Managing and maintaining a Joint Consultee List
- Liaising with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
- Acting as a liaison point for organisations representing Section 75 groups
- Providing information, advice, support and templates to aid the development of members' Disability Actions Plans

EQIA Process

Between April 2007 and March 2008 NIFHA co-ordinated joint work on the second and third years of the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) timetable. During the reporting period we worked collectively to complete the Year 2 EQIAs and began those scheduled for Year 3.

Year 2 Equality Impact Assessments	Year 3 Equality Impact Assessments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Management policies • Maintenance policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care & Support policies • HR Recruitment & Selection policies

NIFHA's participation in the joint work on the Year 2 EQIA process ended at Stage 6 when the Federation placed public notices announcing the availability of the final reports. All the associations' reports were also made available on request by NIFHA in the form of a composite disc. Requests for individual reports were handled by the relevant association.

In November 2007 NIFHA facilitated a practical event in where representatives of all designated associations reviewed the policy aims and determined the scope of the Year 3 EQIA work. As a result of this training session two working groups were formed to develop housing specific templates for the Year 3 EQIA reports.

The Federation's Corporate Services Manager and members of the two working groups met regularly between January and May 2008 to draft the template documents. All designated associations were given the opportunity to comment on the drafts before the templates were issued for completion. These templates were intended to make cross-sector comparison easier for consultees.

At the request of the Equality Co-ordination Group NIFHA again commissioned IMS Consultants to undertake pre-consultation research. The IMS report on the associations' Care & Support and Recruitment & Selection policies helped inform the early stages of the two impact assessments.

From October 2008 NIFHA's members are due commence Year 4 of the planned EQIA timetable. The housing association's Charging and Human Resources (During Employment) policies are scheduled for review.

Training

During 2007, NIFHA organised a series of seminars to outline the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Order and prepare associations for the implementation of Disability Action Plans. All sessions were administered by Disability Action trainers. Every association was given the opportunity to participate in these events.

NIFHA arranged the practical workshop detailed above and facilitated occasional sessions for individual associations to raise awareness of their equality obligations.

Communications

Throughout 2007-08 NIFHA's Corporate Services Manager continued to liaise with Equality Commission staff and the designated housing associations. In addition, the Federation acted as the main link between members and those with an interest in promoting equality of opportunity, such as consultee organisations, voluntary groups or statutory bodies.

NIFHA staff answered queries, provided general information about associations and co-ordinated the public engagement aspects of the joint exercise. The Federation also used regular publications like POSH magazine or Annual Reports and its revamped website to showcase the work members have done to implement equality of opportunity and promote good relations. These publications are circulated to a wide range of individuals and organisations including all those on the NIFHA's list of consultee organisations and every elected representative in Northern Ireland.

Federation staff accepted speaking roles or actively participated in the events of other organisations as part of our work to promote member associations. The following are examples from 2007-08:

- Corporate Services Manager, Diversity Works event at Science Park, Belfast (September 2007)
- Corporate Services Manager, Human Rights Consortium Conference (September 2007)
- Corporate Services Manager, NIHE Annual Consultative Forum on Equality in Belfast (October 2007)
- Corporate Services Manager, Housing Association equality training session, (November 2007)
- Housing Policy & Research Manager, Community Relations Council event, Belfast (March 2008)
- Corporate Services Manager, NIHE public consultation on New Build Strategic Guidelines, Belfast (March 2008)

Data Collection & Analysis

As in the previous reporting year IMS (NI) Ltd, a market research company was appointed by the ECG to conduct a pre-consultation exercise to help the 34 designated housing associations assess the impact of their policies. Care & Support policies and HR Recruitment & Selection policies had been timetabled for review during 2007-08 so the research focused on these service areas.

The main reasons for carrying out this pre-consultation exercise were:

- It is recognised that pre-consultation is good practice
- Undertaking pre-consultation research had proved useful for the Year 2 assessments of impacts
- The EQIA Co-ordination Group wanted to demonstrate housing associations' commitment to engage with equality representative groups
- Lack of data had been highlighted as an issue during the Year 1 EQIAs
- The data gathered from pre-consultation would enable more effective assessment of the impact of the two policy areas and also provide a focus for any follow up consultation work

The rationale for outsourcing the task was the same as last year, that is:

- It would achieve a more equitable spread of work amongst housing associations participating in the joint approach
- It would make it easier for the ECG to manage the EQIA process

IMS was chosen as it has a good track record in conducting research for public bodies in Northern Ireland and had previously undertaken a similar work for the ECG.

The policy aims and scope of the research project were agreed by the ECG. A total of 150 consultees were sent pre-consultation information and a covering letter. IMS then followed up with the planned telephone surveys making 465 calls in total. A total of 25 surveys were successfully completed.

Unfortunately, the researchers experienced significant problems in getting respondents to complete the surveys by telephone. Both NIFHA and the ECG members were disappointed with the number and quality of the returns. In fact concerns about quality prompted the ECG to add in an Association response column before the document was released for consultation because some of the comments were misleading or inaccurate. The final IMS report informed the early stages of the Year 3 EQIAs and was included with the associations draft reports on the composite disc circulated by NIFHA. This report is available at www.nifha.org.

Information Provision; Access to Information and Services

Although NIFHA is not designated under Section 75 the Federation has made a commitment to producing information and publications like our magazine, POSH, in formats that use accessible fonts and type styles. This commitment was taken into account during the revamping of NIFHA's website in early 2007 and when the Federation re-branded later in the year. Corporate guidelines were developed to reinforce this decision, to help staff understand what standards are required and demonstrate why they are necessary.

The Federation regularly provides information and advice for members in relation to translation, interpretation services and producing material in alternative formats. NIFHA also shares any information received about suppliers of these services. This information sharing is aimed at equipping the housing associations to respond promptly to any requests where accessibility may be a factor. How these services are implemented remains the responsibility of the individual association.

Consultation and Engagement

During 2007-08 NIFHA undertook the following consultation and engagement activities as part of our member support work under the Housing Associations' Joint Equality Exercise:

- Co-ordinated the Formal Consultation the associations' Disability Action Plans by publicising the eight week consultation period in the three main Northern Ireland daily papers (April 2007)
- Conducted two pre-consultation exercises to ensure that the joint consultee list was accurate, up-to-date and valid (July & December 2007). These were in addition to an update based on the feedback received from IMS.
- Co-ordinated the formal consultation on Year 2 of the EQIA programme on behalf of the designated associations by publicising the 12 week consultation period in the three main Northern Ireland daily papers (August 2007)
- Issued a composite disc containing the draft EQIA Reports of the 35 designated housing associations to 160 consultee organisations in August 2007 (additional discs were also issued on request and to each member)
- Circulated all general consultee responses to designated associations (November 2007)
- Facilitated a joint meeting with all designated associations and representatives of the Department for Social Development where members of the ECNI's Statutory Duty Team outlined their views on implementation of the new Monitoring Guidelines. (January 2008)
- Collated final reports of Year 2 EQIAs and publicised their availability in the three main Northern Ireland daily papers (February 2008)
- Throughout the year NIFHA staff regularly participated in a range of Inter-Agency Groups which enable engagement with 'equalities' organisations – this is in addition to electronic networking and consultation with relevant groups. For example, engaged with the Coalition on Sexual Orientation on the issue of developing procedural guidelines for housing staff.
- Where appropriate NIFHA has also consulted with members and provided detailed written responses on relevant consultation exercises by other organisations.

Good Relations Duty

The Federation continued to be an active participant in the Shared Future Housing Advisory Panel, chaired by the NIHE, which comprises 15 different organisations engaged in the development of a workable strategy for supporting mixed community housing across Northern Ireland. NIFHA is involved in this group in its role as an umbrella organisation while individual member associations implement the strategy in the community. During the reporting period the Federation also explored and encouraged the use of the Shared Housing 'brand' in existing housing association developments.

The above-mentioned Advisory Panel had another productive year. Significant outcomes for 2007-08 included:

- Developing a three year Shared Neighbourhoods Programme
- Obtaining International Fund for Ireland Federation funding for that programme

- The second shared housing scheme being built in Sion Mills by Habinteg (Ulster) HA

The Federation's Chief Executive is on the Business Committee overseeing the work of the Shared Neighbourhoods Programme. In addition, NIFHA maintained its involvement with a variety of Inter-agency Groups working to foster good relations, such as:

- Community Relations Council
- Supporting Communities Northern Ireland – NIFHA has a place on the Executive Committee of this organisation
- NICVA

Initiating and maintaining such strategic alliances are integral to our work on behalf our membership. The experience gained through these activities enables NIFHA to offer members useful assistance and share best practice thus enhancing the associations approach to the good relations duty.

Disability Duties

Between January and June 2007 NIFHA undertook a range of activities to assist designated members in producing Disability Action Plans. The Federation's early work in this area was covered in the 2006-07 report.

Subsequent NIFHA support included:

- Providing regular information, advice and support in relation to the development of the associations' Disability Actions Plans
- Responding to members' queries about the Disability Duties
- Developing and sharing template Disability Action Plans that could be used by designated associations
- Arranging training sessions facilitated by Disability Action to ensure members were prepared for this new duty
- Co-ordinating and publicising the associated public consultation exercise as mentioned previously
- Issuing prompts for action to ensure members met the ECNI's time targets for implementing Disability Actions Plans
- Liaison with Disability Action and ECNI as necessary

Once NIFHA's initial work to help members produce Disability Action Plans had been completed responsibility for their implementation was handed over to the individual association.

Lucinda McMurrin

Corporate Services Manager
NIFHA
29 August 2008