

Equality Scotland Housing for Older People

MESSAGE OF SUPPORT FROM STEWART MAXWELL, MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND SPORT

I am delighted to have been asked to write this article for the Equality Scotland newsletter. The work of your organisation is greatly valued and over the last seven years has made a considerable impact all over our nation.



As we look forward we need to realise that Scotland is changing in a fundamental way: older people are forming an increasing proportion of our society, and will play an increasing role in our prosperity and future. I believe that, too often, population ageing is seen in negative terms and we need to challenge this perception and promote a more positive vision for our future. The skills and life experience of older people are an asset in any nation, and Scotland can and should benefit from its changing age profile. This is why the Scottish Government endorses *All Our Futures; Planning for a Scotland with an Ageing Population*.

As the implementation of *All Our Futures* moves forward the Scottish Government is committed to working closely with stakeholders and with the newly established Commission for Equality and Human Rights to increase understanding of age as an equality strand and the implications of ageing for different groups of older people. Similarly, the Scottish Government is committed to promoting equality and tackling discrimination more widely. It is vital that all of Scotland's communities, whatever their background or individual needs, are able to access the information and services they require and that services are responsive to their individual needs. A wide programme of work is being taken forward across the Scottish Government and in the public sector more widely to help this happen.

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This Newsletter is also available in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese (Cantonese), Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu.

NEWSLETTER

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All Our Futures also sets out many issues for the Scottish Government, one of which is to challenge the negative stereotypes of getting older. We intend to do this through a campaign to combat ageism as we recognise that all groups in Scottish society are ageing, including people from the minority ethnic communities and disabled people.

Alongside the ageism campaign the Scottish Government will establish the National Forum on Ageing, which will champion the work of *All Our Futures* and help take it forward, and through the Scottish Centre for Intergenerational Practice we intend to forge links between the different generations in Scotland to facilitate the sharing of experiences, learning and skills.

We very much welcome initiatives such as the Equality Scotland Newsletter which help to raise awareness among our diverse communities of the projects and services available to them. Ultimately, this is helping to improve people's lives, which is also our overarching aim as the Scottish Government.

Lottery Funding



The Associations are delighted to have been successful in receiving funding of £219,149 from the Big Lottery Fund for the **Services for Older People** project. The objective of the project is to help older people from BME communities to access benefits and other services to which they are entitled. Two new staff members have been appointed to take this project forward.

The project, which is part of an Equal Opportunities Programme run jointly by Trust, Hanover (Scotland) and Bield Housing Associations, will benefit at least 600 older people from BME families. The project involves focused outreach work with BME communities to help older people to overcome barriers to accessing benefits and services.

The Lottery award will provide funding for three years and the project will be carried out throughout Scotland by two dedicated Older Person's Services Co-ordinators.

Accessing the benefits system can be a problem for older BME people for a number of reasons from language and literacy problems to cultural attitudes and a lack of staff trained to understand different cultural needs.

The co-ordinators will be contacting community organisations, public agencies and BME older people at start of the Year 2008. For further information on the project please contact Rohini on 0131 444 4950.



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

The Happy to Translate Logo initiative is pleased to announce that the initiative has rolled out nationally and more new organisations have joined. We would like to welcome the following new organisations on board:

Grampian
Housing Association



Maryhill
Housing Association



Glen Oaks
Housing Association



The Initiative is also pleased to announce that it has fully developed its Intranet for participating organisations and general public websites. Only member organisations can access the password protected Intranet website, however there is free and open access to the general public internet website at www.EqualityScotland.com.

As the Happy to Translate Logo initiative is expanding and continues to involve more participating organisations, the structure has been divided into two groups. These are a governing body, the Strategic Advisory Group, which will oversee policy and strategic development, and a Members' Forum for all member organisations.

The initiative hopes that member organisations of the Initiative will meet periodically at the Members' Forum to debate and share good practice on issues relating to the use of the Happy to Translate Logo.

If your organisation would like to receive information on applying for membership, please contact the Happy to Translate Logo support team on 0131 444 4951 or info@happytotranslate.com.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

SUPPORT PROJECT



This Job Opportunities Support Project has already assessed or worked with more than 200 BME people seeking to overcome barriers to both employment and career advancement in housing and the public sector.

The Project helps to equip BME people with the knowledge, skills and contacts they need to get into housing and public sector. Progress has been very encouraging and so far 231 people have been assessed and 23 of them have secured jobs.

The programme continues to provide individual support and also arranges workshops to build confidence and teach interview techniques. It also arranges placement opportunities and can report that so far ten placements have been completed successfully.

A variety of local public sector employers were enlisted to provide work placements for BME candidates. These include; Lothian & Borders Police, Stevenson College, the Procurator Fiscal, Trust, Hanover & Bield Housing Associations, NHS Lothian, Melville and Port of Leith Housing Associations.

The Programme is focused on helping BME people to gain equal access to job opportunities and to identify and tackle specific barriers which they might encounter. It delivers positive outcomes for both BME people seeking jobs and for public sector employers seeking talented recruits.

If you are looking for a job in Edinburgh and Lothians, please contact Nasreen Amjad on 0131 444 4953 OR namjad@trustha.org.uk

LIVE WELL IN LATER LIFE - EXTENDING CHOICES FOR CARE AND SUPPORT IN EDINBURGH

The City of Edinburgh Council and NHS Lothian Joint Capacity Plan and Commissioning Strategy 2008 - 2018.

The Joint Capacity Plan will guide how and what services will be provided to meet the needs and expectations of older people who need care and support until 2018.

For further information please contact Tricia Campbell on 0131 553 8304 or email tricia.campbell@edinburgh.gov.uk



JOB FAIRS - GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

The Associations organised four annual job fairs in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee and Aberdeen, in partnership with the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations and the Chartered Institute of Housing (Scotland). The Job Fair programme has now come to an end and a follow-up report will be produced which will highlight the barriers to job opportunities faced by individuals from BME communities. In addition, a Good Practice Guide will be produced for employers. These publications will be launched in Aberdeen at the Chartered Institute of Housing Conference which takes place in March 2008.

Copies of these publications will be made available on our website www.EqualityScotland.com after the launch.

The EqualityScotland.com website

The EqualityScotland.com website continues to have a high number of hits to both the English language and community language sections. We also continue to receive excellent feedback on the website's contents and the quality of the information it contains.

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WELCOME

Neeru Bhatnager and Anthony L K Chu, Older People Services Co-ordinators have joined the Equal Opportunities Team in January 2008. We welcome them to the team and the new Administrative Assistant.

GOODBYE

Zakra Ali, Equal Opportunities Admin Assistant is leaving the Associations and is moving to West Yorkshire.



Farewell

SURGERIES/INFORMATION

Are you 60+ and would like advice on services for older people including housing and benefits? The advice given will be confidential, in your language and at a place most convenient for you.

Please contact Equal Opportunities Programme to make an appointment.

This newsletter is a joint publication by **Trust, Hanover (Scotland)** and **Bield Housing Associations**. Previous issues can be viewed at **www.EqualityScotland.com**. If you would like to make comments or suggestions, or if you want your event or project to be considered for publication, please contact:



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