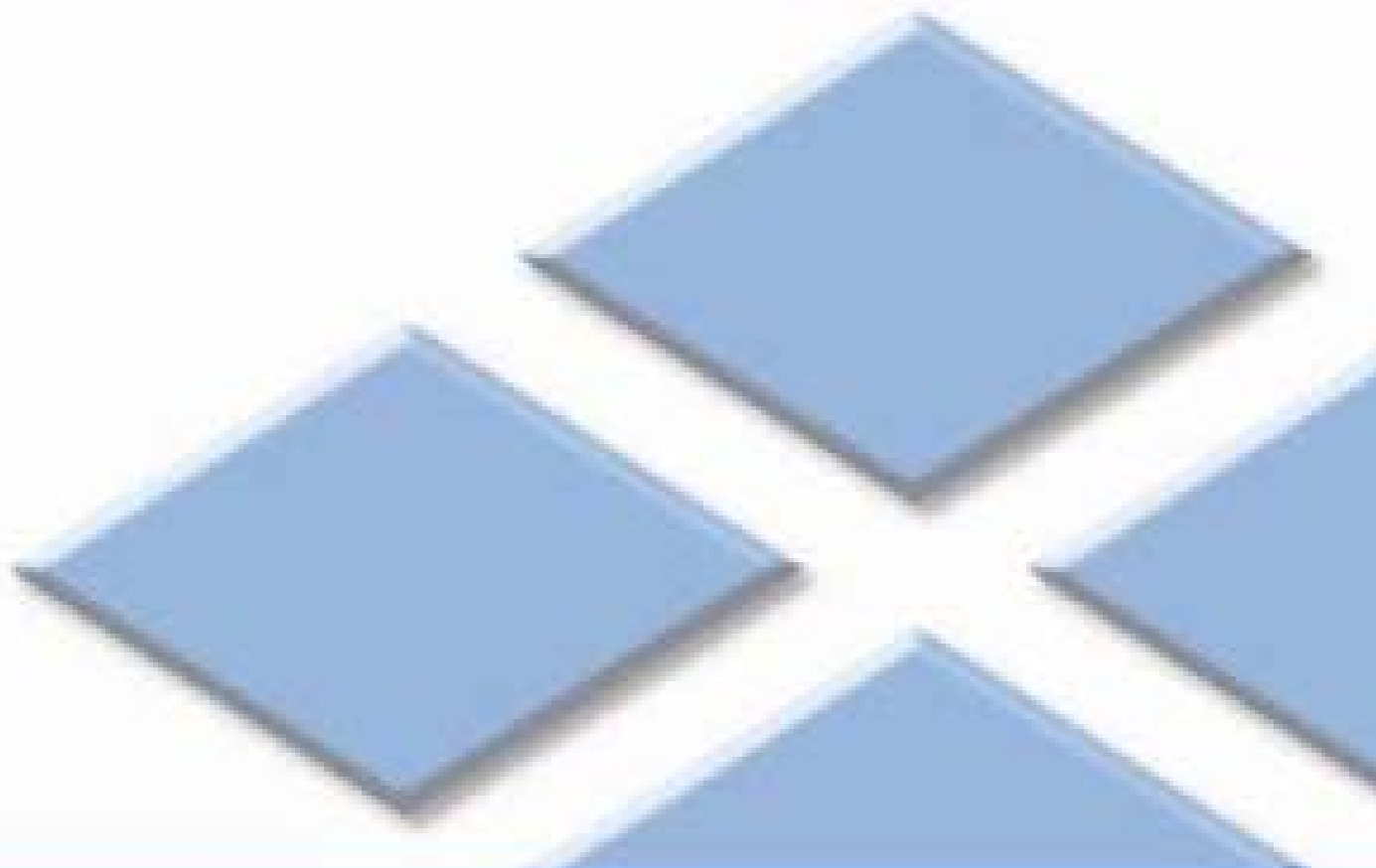


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Working Together Group

Progress Report 2011 - 2012





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Introduction

Mission statement

The WTG will help GGHT to integrate equality, diversity and inclusion through each service area in GGHT. The WTG will be a source of invaluable knowledge and will work to remove the difficulties that will arise along the path to excellence in 'SHEF'

Aims

The aim of setting up the WTG was to ensure that GGHT has in place systems to enable it to fulfil both the general and specific duties under the Equality Act 2010.

The group currently make a positive contribution to the lives of GGHT Staff, Customers, Stakeholders, Residents and Partners in the area of equality, diversity & inclusion by:

- Providing a means for all Staff, Customers, Stakeholders, Residents and Partners to voice their concerns and needs as well as raising issues relating to equality and diversity within GGHT & its wards.
- Providing a forum for discussion of equality and diversity issues.
- Promoting knowledge and information on aspects of diversity and building this into everyday practice and behaviour through specific projects.
- Being involved in consultation on all GGHT's new policies / procedures / Strategies to ensure they do not have any negative impact on any group.
- Consulting in the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) / Equality analysis process
- Acting as independent advisors regarding Equality & Diversity issues for GGHT.
- Providing opportunities for partnership working.

The purpose of this report is to show you how far the WTG has come in its first year, inform you of the groups current performance and also to explain the plans for the future in regards to equality, diversity & inclusion.

Progress on objectives

The WTG has 7 objectives they must achieve and also 8 desired outcomes they must strive to accomplish. Below you will find the progress on these objectives over the last 12 months.

Objective 1:

To help GGHT work through the SHEF action plan



Progress:

The WTG has had the SHEF action plan as an agenda item at all **6** meetings.

The WTG have helped troubleshoot on the following SHEF actions:

- Increase the diversity of GGHT's Board
- Increase participation within tenant participation from GGHT's hard to reach groups
- Completing the diversity audits through a mystery shopping approach across 6 GGHT services
- Encourage career applications from a wider section of the community
- Enter the Stonewall Workplace equality index entry for the first time.
- Engage with hard to reach groups on policies / practices and service changes

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From the WTG troubleshooting these problems, we have had the following positive outcomes:

- The WTG decided that although the diversity of the Board was important, it was more important to verify that there were no barriers to the Board recruitment process. This led to the Governance & Policy manager now **collecting the applicant data** for the Board to analyse whether or not there are barriers to participation.
- The WTG came up with **5 new ideas** to attract younger people, deaf people and disabled people to engage with Tenant Participation.
- The WTG have so far carried out **26 diversity audits** and have another 42 to complete.
- The WTG have consulted on and **agreed an action plan** which should hopefully increase the diversity of the applications GGHT gets for job roles. This is to be implemented from April 2012.
- GGHT entered the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index for the **first time** in September 2011.
- So far the WTG have **consulted on 3 policies**: ASB Policy, Communications strategy and inclusive campaigns strategy.

Objective 2:

- To ensure GGHT fulfils its promises in the E&D service standards



Progress:

The WTG have had the service standards as a specific agenda item for **1** out of 6 meetings.

The service standards are:

GGHT will ensure that customers receive equal access to all services irrespective of age, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, transgender status, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity and marriage or civil partnership.

GGHT will ensure that all staff are trained on equality & diversity issues and are well equipped to deal with our customers' individual needs.

GGHT will offer an interpreting service to all our customers who have difficulty communicating in English or who use British Sign Language.

All communications such as leaflets, surveys and letters will be available in the customers preferred format. These include large print, printed on different colours, different languages, audio tape, Braille and picture format

The WTG has done the following to help us fulfil our promises under these service standards:

- Deafness Support Network has entered into a **partnership** with GGHT to supply British Sign language interpreters on request.
- Halina Kelly the Polish community advocate has acted as a community interpreter **3** times which has saved GGHT roughly £150.
- Jane Garside the LGB Community advocate attended the LGB learning lunch in February 2011
- Penelope Bassi from TransWirral facilitated **training** in July around learning about the 'trans' community.
- The WTG have carried out **26** diversity audits to find barriers to 6 GGHT services. Action plans for improvement will be created as a result of the recommendations made by the WTG.

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Objective 3:

To share information that may help shape GGHT services so that services may be tailored to individual needs.

Progress:

Intelligence sharing has appeared on all 6 meeting agendas. The WTG has shared 56 Pieces of intelligence during the 6 meetings.

A few examples of intelligence shared are:



“70% of people aged 65+ have significant hearing loss”

“Polish parents whose children attend Warrington Polski School wish to learn how to read and write in English. It’s a common problem that Polish people who can speak fluent English cannot read or write in English.”



“There will be a big LGB consultation event’ in which the LGB community in Warrington will come together to tell service providers exactly what type of services they would like us to offer.”

“One of the most important projects for OPF currently, is breaking down isolation for older people who have lost their partners and whom are now living alone.”



“There have been more hate incidents in Orford targeting Polish GGHT tenants. Polish tenants feel they have no one to tell as they do not trust the Police as the Police relationship in Poland is very different.”



“WECA would like to organise Warrington’s first Mela which is a celebration of all of Warrington’s cultures and ethnicities”



“There will be a cricket match coming up with the aim of bringing different faiths together”

“A positive outcome from the Mela was finally engaging with the Chinese and African Caribbean communities.”



TransWirral “Hate crime seems to be part of the transition process but it depends on where you live to its severity.”

“The Polish Community does not have information at hand to understand where services are and what services are offered...”



From these examples of intelligence sharing GGHT has:

- Started work on a project **with the DSN which will be targeting** our customers 65+ with information on their hearing and referrals to the NHS to stop significant hearing loss.
- Started work on creating a **Polish community group** which will have within its aims the task of helping GGHT’s Polish customers to read and write English.
- Attended the **Big LGB consultation** event and as a result are now part of the LGB steering group for the town. The steering group are now working towards Pride in 2012.
- GGHT partnered WECA in the first ever **Mela festival** of Warrington and will continue to do so annually.
- GGHT have **trained 147 staff** in understanding and reporting hate crime.
- GGHT had Halina Kelly carry out diversity audits on 6 services to find out where

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there are barriers for Polish people to inclusion. Halina has made recommendations for improvement which will be carried out.

Objective 4:

To ensure all GGHT policies, practices and procedures are compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and have no negative impact on any individual or group

Progress:

So far the WTG have consulted on 3 policies and procedures.

It has also just been decided that the WTG will also consult on all EIA's carried out before they are passed.

Objective 5:

To ensure all GGHT services are equally accessible to all



Progress:

The WTG have so far carried out **26 diversity audits** and have another 42 to complete.

So far suggestions for service improvement have included:

- Having a mobile phone which deaf people can use to **text in**. Some people are moving away from using the traditional text-relay service as it costs them more money to use than a simple text.
- Have a **sign on the wall** near the counter in Bank House for younger customers who are in wheelchairs. The counter is too high so if there is a bell to ring which is reachable by the sign, staff members can come around to talk to the customer.
- Have close **places of worship** on the Choose a home website on the property description so customers know if they have a temple or church etc close by for them to attend if they would like to.

- Work with the Supplier of the telephone translation service to cut down **customer waiting times**.
- Have a section on the Choose a home website which lists the **support offered** to tenants and vulnerable groups.

If you would like to view more suggestions for service improvement as a result of carrying out the diversity audits, please contact Cam Kinsella.

Objective 6:

To help to diversify GGHT's workforce

Progress:

The WTG have had this item on **1 out of 6** meeting agendas. The WTG agreed on an action plan for improvement to increase the diversity of the workforce applications which will be implemented from April 2012.

The WTG have also been trained in **understanding why** we collect diversity data at application level and also exactly what GGHT does with the data.

Objective 7:

To help to improve E&D performance across the organisation



Progress:

Some of the ways in which the WTG has helped to increase positive performance across GGHT are:

- The WTG has been helping to monitor the progress of the **SHEF** Action plan and this has appeared on all 6 meeting agendas.
- The WTG has given their thoughts on places to advertise **Board recruitment** to

increase the diversity of applications. The Board profile has increased in its diversity.

- The WTG have agreed an action plan to increase the diversity of the **workforce**.
- The WTG have carried out **diversity audits** to improve services for particular groups which will hopefully increase satisfaction of our services by protected groups.

Non cashable savings:



- **26** diversity audits were carried out with 42 more to complete. This service usually is a bought service but has been completed by the organisations and community groups with **no monetary cost** incurred to GGHT.
- WTG members range from having job titles of Assistant director of operations, Executive director of Operations, Community advocate and Founders of community organisations amongst other titles. Their **knowledge and experience** within inclusion is invaluable.
- The project ‘Silence isn’t Golden’ which GGHT are carrying out with DSN will aim to **cut down ASB** as a result of noise. This meaning ASB officers time will be saved on these cases.
- Cheshire Police’s Diversity Unit (Deb Ardern sits on the WTG) **trained 147 staff** in understanding and reporting hate crime. This had no monetary cost to GGHT.
- GGHT are in the planning stages of setting up a Polish community group with the aim of teaching Polish People to read and write & also being a support for hate crime. Teaching Polish tenants to read and write will **cut GGHT’s interpretation and translation cost** as it is the most requested language.
- Penny Bassi of TransWirral facilitated **Trans training** for 24 staff at no monetary cost To GGHT.

Value for Money

This section will show the costs and savings associated with the WTG and its running to ensure transparency; and also to show WTG’s value for money.

There have been 6 WTG meetings in total and these have cost GGHT:

WTG Running costs		
Item	Times the item was used	Total Cost
Room Hire	6	£289.20
Hospitality (lunch)	6	£504
E&D Officers time	9 hours	£126.18
	Total cost	£919.38

There have also been cashable and non cashable efficiencies made as a result of having the WTG.

Cashable savings		
Item	Times the item was used	Total estimated Saving
Polish interpreting	3	£150
	Total Saved	£150

Meeting Attendance:

Meeting attendance is as follows:

Meeting Attendance		
Meeting	% Attendance	% of non attendees who fed in their thoughts by email
1	64.7%	14.3%
2	60%	20%
3	59%	27.3%
4	60%	27.3%
5	62%	18.2%
6	62%	18.2%
Average	61.3%	20.9%

There have been no less than 13 people attending each meeting which is **very positive** and shows a great **commitment** from WTG members.

More work needs to be done to reaffirm that **all members should appoint deputy's to attend in their absence**, or at least send their thoughts and comments by email prior to the meeting.

Looking Ahead / On the Horizon

The WTG has shown itself to be an invaluable source of knowledge for GGHT and has produced both cashable and non cashable savings for the organisation; whilst also helping the organisation work towards compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

The WTG will continue to work to achieve the **8 objectives** it was given January 2010 until these are reviewed by the group in January 2013.

GGHT hopes to increase the average attendance of the group by at least **5%** and this will be a target for 2012.

GGHT will also create **sub consultation email groups** from the WTG covering all of the protected characteristics to be used for consultation purposes.

The WTG has shown itself to be value for money and also committed to putting in time and effort to work towards inclusion for GGHT tenants and the residents of Warrington. GGHT & the WTG hope to build on our past achievements and continue to remove barriers to inclusion for all groups.

The WTG's desired outcomes for 2012 are:

- GGHT will have E&D integrated through every service area due to SHEF.
- E&D will be monitored to track progress
- GGHT will have collected at least 75% customer profile information
- Excellent customer focused services tailored to specific needs
- Increased satisfaction from all customers in each service area
- Workforce diversity increased
- To achieve 'excellence' in SHEF.
- The promises in GGHT's E&D service standards will be fulfilled.

Thank you...

GGHT would like to sincerely thank all members of the WTG for their involvement and continued support.