



Board Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Version: v5.0 Sept 2024

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1. Our approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Board Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy sets out the Board of Harpenden Building Society's (the "Board") approach to and provides a high-level indication of the Board's objectives regarding equality, diversity and inclusion.

Harpenden Building Society is committed to Equality, diversity and inclusion, promoting a culture that actively values difference and recognises that people from different backgrounds and experiences can bring valuable insights to the workplace and enhance the way we work. It recognises that everyone has a right to feel comfortable at work, accepted for who they are and made to feel included. It strives to foster a feeling of belonging. To support the Leadership Team in setting the right tone from the top, the Board will undertake relevant equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) awareness training annually, to ensure their interactions with each other, and the wider Society, promotes the intended culture. The Board also review, at least annually, the Society wide EDI policy and discuss the Society's progress against its EDI objectives.

The Board firmly believes in the importance of a diverse Board membership, in its broadest sense and promotes an inclusive culture across the Society in line with our Values. We believe the diversity of skills, knowledge, experience, backgrounds, opinions, and other distinctions including gender, age, race, disability and neurodiversity strengthens the capability of the Board and, therefore, the effectiveness of its independence, judgement and decision making.

2. Supporting Board Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Board, through the Nomination Committee (the Committee), strives to recruit directors with diversity of skills, knowledge, experience, cognitive thinking, socio-economic factors and professional backgrounds, as well as taking into consideration the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 (Amendment) Regulations 2023.

New Board appointments are made on merit, taking account of the specific skills and experience, independence and knowledge needed to ensure a rounded Board. An effective and diverse board then has the foundations to be able to support stakeholders' views, challenge management and achieve the Society's overall strategic aims by having a wider range of perspectives represented at Board level.

The Committee and the Society as a whole continues to be committed to increasing ethnic and cultural diversity across the Society and supporting the development, succession, and promotion of talented individuals, regardless of gender, race or other protected characteristics.

The Committee reviews and assesses Board composition on behalf of the Board on an annual basis and recommends the appointment of Directors. The Committee will agree, annually, the measurable objectives for Board diversity and recommend them to the Board for adoption.

3. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Objectives

Whilst all aspects of diversity are important, with regard to gender diversity specifically, the Board intends to maintain a balance, with a target of one third of the Directors being ~~are~~ women or non-binary provided that this is consistent with the prevailing skills and diversity requirements of the Society as and when seeking to appoint a new Director to the Board. It is recognised that there will be periods of change on the Board and that this number may be smaller for periods of time while the Board is refreshed, however, it is our longer-term intention to at least maintain this balance.

The Board ensures a range of questions, relating to diversity, forms part of its Board effectiveness review. The Nominations Committee will report annually in the corporate governance section of the Harpenden Building Society Accounts on the agreed objectives and the progress against these objectives.

When recruiting Board candidates, the Committee will seek first to engage recruitment firms that have signed up to the Voluntary Code of Conduct for Executive Search firms. To ensure the best chance of success, the Committee will ensure (where it is able to) the recruitment process starts early, to allow sufficient time for diverse candidates to be sourced. The Committee will work with executive recruitment firms that maintain a particular focus on helping organisations meet its diversity needs.

4. Document Control

Document Reference:	Board Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
Approval Authority:	Society Board
Document Owner:	Chair
Document Author:	Director of People and Culture
Version Number:	V5.0 September 2024
Approval Date:	September 2024 Nominations Committee
Effective Date:	following Board approval
Next Review Date:	September 2025

5. Version Control

Version	Author	Date	Description
2021.V2.0	Tracy Campbell	9/9/21	Amended to expand on inclusion and measurement of diversity factors
2022 V3.0	Tracy Campbell	2/9/2022	Minor housekeeping updates, expansion of diversity commitment and search process
2023 v4.0	Tracy Campbell	15/9/23	Annual review – minor amends
2024 V5.0	Gemma Fient & Shirine Vincent	04/09/2024	Annual review – deemed fit for purpose.