



Board Diversity & Inclusion Policy

1. Our approach to Diversity and Inclusion

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

Harpenden Building Society is committed to 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 and race strengthens the capability of the Board and, therefore, the effectiveness of its independence, judgement and decision making.

2. Supporting Board Diversity

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

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, nationality, or ethnic background.

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. Diversity Objectives

Whilst all aspects of diversity are important, with regard to gender diversity specifically, the Board intends to maintain a balance so that, as a minimum, one third of the Directors are women 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 ensure 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 search 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 search firms with a particular focus on helping organisations meet its diversity needs.

4. Document Control

Document Reference:	Board Diversity Policy
Approval Authority:	Society Board
Document Owner:	Chair
Document Author:	Head of People
Version Number:	V4.0 September 2023
Approval Date:	15 September 2023 Nominations Committee
Effective Date:	1st October 2023 following Board approval
Next Review Date:	September 2024

5. Version Control

Version	Author	Date	Description
2020.1	Katherine Logan	04/06/20	New Policy
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