



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2026-2030

Providing homes in neighbourhoods where people are proud to live





Contents

Foreword.....	2
Why do we need an EDI Strategy?	3
The National and Local Picture.....	4
Previous Strategy	5
Protected characteristics	5
Policies and strategies that underpin The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy	6
Who we are and who we serve	6
Aims of this strategy.....	6
How will we deliver this	10
Monitoring progress	10
Some of our successes	11

Foreword

This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy underpins our Fairness and Equality Statement and our organisation's values and behaviours.

It confirms our commitment to considering the diversity of our tenants and employees and provides the strategic direction for the organisation over the forthcoming years, to ensure that we turn the words in this Strategy into actions that make a real difference to the lives of our Customers and Colleagues.

We have already done some great work; however, we need to do more to ensure our organisation is more representative of the community we serve, at Board and at employee level. We also need to take every opportunity to involve our diverse customers and communities in how we deliver our services.

By openly and honestly engaging with all our customers and colleagues we will drive an improved meaningful experience in the services that we deliver to our communities. This starts at the very top of the organisation and this Strategy has been influenced and approved by our Board.

I hope, like me, you feel the Strategy is taking us not only in the right direction, but also ensuring that St Leger Homes is a truly inclusive organisation.



Chris Margrave, Chief Executive



Why do we need an EDI Strategy?

We are committed to putting residents at the heart of everything we do providing services that are accessible, inclusive and fairly delivered for our staff, tenants and residents living in our neighbourhoods. We do this by living and delivering our organisational values which underpin our priorities at St Leger Homes.

It is important to us that we help everyone to achieve this - the people we serve, our colleagues and our communities. We understand that there are differences in power, experience and opportunity which can lead to inequity and discrimination. We are committed to doing everything we can to address this for the communities we serve and for our colleagues.

For us this is not just about being 'compliant' with our statutory duties, we know that collecting and evaluating the data that our service users give us inform a clear and proactive approach to equality, diversity and inclusion and that provides the opportunity to develop better services and support for our customers and colleagues.

To support this, we have been accredited as 'excellent' in a peer review with the Housing Diversity Network to ensure that our services have Equality, Diversity and Inclusion embedded across the board. We know that running our organisation where everyone feels valued and included will make us a more effective organisation for everyone, which in turns means we deliver better services and support.

Our overall corporate strategy sets out a range of aims and objectives to help us achieve our purpose. Our equality, diversity and inclusion strategy consider how we make sure that all of these elements are woven through everything we do and are embedded into our ways of working. This will ensure that all of us can reach our full potential, access the support that each of us needs, as well as being the best place to work and learn. We have developed this strategy to focus on the actions we will take and how we will demonstrate the positive and real difference that we will make.

The National and Local Picture

Nationally, the UK places 9th out of 38 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries in terms of high economic inequality. Structural inequality affects communities and organisations across the board with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities struggling to gain employment and 24% of BAME people owning their home compared to 56% of White people. This leaves ethnic minority groups in the lower socio-economic sphere.

People from the disabled community further find it difficult to obtain employment as organisations are slow to react to the changes in language needed in vacancies adverts that underpin the value that organisations put on employing people with disabilities (hidden or unhidden) and inclusive interview processes to ensure that people with disabilities can have an appropriate interview that allows them to excel.

Structural inequality has far-reaching effects on the lives of those that are affected by it, for example, people of ethnic minority heritage have a harder time planning for later life due to poor education, lower wages and poorer health.

Government reporting found that businesses encountered barriers to decision making around diversity and inclusion, such as a lack of diversity data and debates that were polarised. It also found those that have access to the data were not using it to make those informed decisions, leading to a miss applying of legislation.

Locally, data tells us that in Doncaster 93% of the population is white while other ethnicities making up the remaining percentage with the fastest growing community in Doncaster being the Nigerian community. All local public sector partners place high importance on equality, diversity and inclusion with several cross-agency groups functioning to ensure it is embedded into service delivery. St Leger homes is advanced in data collection, having collected around 84% of customer diversity data to help us shape services. We have around 8,700 applicants for homes of which 1,500 were of ethnic minority background, meaning around 17% of our potential customers are ethnic minority, far above the 5.9% local community makeup.

Previous Strategy

This strategy replaces the Equality Strategy 2022-26. This strategy is aimed at both customers and colleagues as we understand that equality, diversity and inclusion is not just an outward facing issue. Our EDI strategy sets out our strategic intent and development for equality, diversity and inclusion. This new strategy has been developed through, engagement, consultation and clear alignment to our overall corporate strategy.

The below sets out how we will deliver our purpose through four strategic aims which we believe are the building blocks to delivering a successful strategy:

- Learn
- Connect
- Deliver
- Support

The national context for equality, diversity and inclusion requires us to:

- Meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Meet our legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010
- Deliver the standards in the Social Housing Act 2023
- Meet the requirements of the Human Rights Act (1998)
- Meet our duties under the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

Protected characteristics

There are nine protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act (2010).

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and Belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

In addition, St Leger Homes, in line with the City of Doncaster Council, has added a tenth protected characteristic for carers. This reflects our values and our shared belief that ‘families and carers matter.’

Policies and strategies that underpin The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

- Vulnerable Persons / Reasonable Adjustments Policy
- Equality Policy
- Tenant Voice Strategy
- Housing Management Strategy
- Corporate Plan
- Respect Standard
- Good Neighbour Charter
- Reasonable Adjustments Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

Who we are and who we serve

St Leger Homes of Doncaster, an Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO) exists to provide and manage social housing on behalf of The City of Doncaster Council. We support people to reach their potential and live well in their community with independence. We are a provider of housing throughout the city; and additionally provide support services for mental health, wellbeing, homelessness, community events and community groups. We have around 900 colleagues and manage around 20,000 homes with around 23,868 customers. We also have around 8,700 potential customers bidding on homes through the Doncaster HomeChoice website. We are accountable to our customers, colleagues, board members and our shareholder (The City of Doncaster Council).

Aims of this strategy

1. Learn

It is important that we understand both our customers and our colleagues to ensure that we can fully support them with the things that they need. In order to achieve this, we need our colleagues and customers to tell us about themselves. We have had some success with this - we have collected around 84.8% of customer data and 50.3% of colleague data.



However, in the past there have been significant hurdles to overcome to ensure that customers and colleagues are open to divulging the information that we need.

To overcome these barriers, more work around myth busting on why we are asking for personal information aimed at both customers and colleagues needs to be undertaken alongside further training to customer facing colleagues on how and why this information is important as a valuable source in shaping and delivering the support and services that we deliver.

It is also important that we make use of prominent voices within the communities both internally and externally to ensure that misgivings around diversity data are overcome whilst also adhering to our Respect Standard.

Furthermore, learning about what services and support communities are looking to St Leger Homes to deliver is essential to shaping what we focus on. This can be done through surveys, interactive focus groups and targeted communications.

How will we deliver this

- Delivering and promoting myth busting internally and externally
- Through internal training and awareness
- By aspiring (in partnership with our peers) to collect 95% of diversity data on our customers
- Through using community leaders such as religious leaders, community group leaders, peer groups such as Team Doncaster groups and others including the third sector to promote the benefits
- Utilising lived experience stories and campaigns
- Introducing tailored training (physical and online)
- Awareness campaigns

2. Connect

Connecting with both our customers and colleagues is essential to a successful delivery of services and support, both within the community and within the business. To that end, St Leger Homes aims to ensure that both customers and colleagues are at the centre of service and support design and delivery.



We will aim to achieve this by ensuring that involvement and change groups are consulted with and involved in the delivery of equality, diversity and inclusion. At every step, voices with lived experience from both the communities that we manage and the colleagues that we sit alongside will have a driving force behind service and support delivery within equality, diversity and inclusion and across corporate service delivery.

We also aim to ensure that colleagues understand the importance of connecting with the communities that we both live, work in and serve. We will do this by ensuring that as part of service delivery, policy or strategy change, our communities are involved in the design of those changes and evidence this through updated Impact Analysis.

How will we deliver this

- Through working groups such as Get Involved Group and One Voice Forum
- Focusing on equality analysis to ensure we understand our customers
- Through surveys and consultation
- By ensuring the involvement groups, both internally and externally are representative of the communities and are involved in decision making and service delivery.

3. Deliver

It is important that St Leger Homes delivers on its promises and actions the outcomes of consultations and working groups to ensure that when we ask for voices, we listen to what is said and incorporate them into actions. We aim to ensure that every service, policy, strategy or support mechanism has the needs of service users at its heart.



Designed with and by those users that access and deliver the services and support that we offer to ensure the communities that we manage are places that our customers want to and are proud to live in and our colleagues are proud to work in.

We think it is important that we are judged not just by those that use the service but by our peers, which is why we consider it important that we continue to be members of the Housing Diversity Network, Minority Partnership Board, Anti Racism Steering Group and the Ethnic Culture Fusion Network.

We also consider it important that we continue to ensure that we are disability committed, this means in practice, that we continue to consider the disability community when we design and offer services or support for those with both physical and hidden disabilities, we actively look for barriers to accessing opportunity and that we that we are working closely with the housing ombudsman and our partner agencies at the NHS, South Yorkshire Police and City of Doncaster Council to share best practice.

How will we deliver this

- By consulting with service users and colleagues in a variety of ways to ensure effective and meaningful outcomes for both internal and external services
- Placing greater importance on Equality Impact Assessments and the actions arising out of these
- Utilising community groups such as the lived experience groups for LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual, and more), Ethnic Minority, Religion and Disability alongside Get Involved Group and One Voice Forum
- Ensuring colleagues understand how to complete Equality Impact Assessments effectively
- Ensure effective communication with our customers using diverse methods and technology – linked to our Communication Strategy and Customer Access Strategy
- working in partnership and collaboration with partners and the Voluntary Community Sector such as Voluntary Action Doncaster
- Continuing to be active leaders in the groups that we are members of whilst seeking out further opportunities to encourage best practice in both our service delivery and in our partners

4. Support

We recognise that everyone that accesses our services, lives in our communities or request support from us will have varying needs.

This leads to us needing to establish equity for customers and colleagues as one process of delivery will not be suitable for every customer.



It's important to us that customers and colleagues can get the best outcomes from the interactions that they have with us.

We will ensure that where possible support will be tailored to the individual by promoting a progressive workforce that understands that each person's needs may be different – even when accessing the same service – and that our colleagues can provide the support needed to get the best for both the customer and St Leger Homes.

We understand that it is not only the services that we offer that can affect our customers, but also outside influences such as mental health, wider public health determinates and local community and culture. We aim to work closely with our partners to ensure that we have robust support in place for those customers and colleagues that need it.

How will we deliver this

- Working with partner agencies to deliver the right support in the right way to our customers
- Re-establishing Equality groups for customers with more focus on meeting in the community
- Promoting the internal tenancy support that we deliver
- Listening and consulting with communities to gauge what support is required and tailor where required
- Ensuring teams, services and departments engage and understand the communities they are serving through regular internal communication and engagement with our workforce

Monitoring progress

An action plan will be developed each year that this strategy is active to show actions due for completion, plans for how we envisage the strategy being delivered and how they link to our corporate objectives. Our People Strategy action plan will incorporate employee focused actions. We will also undertake external benchmarking against peers through memberships such as the Housing Diversity Network and look to maintain or increase our external accreditations. We will use a variety of monitoring and feedback mechanisms to achieve this such as Complaints, customer profiling, Gender Pay Gap reporting and tenant satisfaction monitoring. This will be reported to board with details of specific delivery timescales through the equality, diversity and inclusion annual report and through stories in both external and internal newsletters, on the website and intranet as well as social media.

Lead officers or groups set out in the action plan will take ownership for updating their assigned actions.

Some of our successes

- We have set up Equality Involvement Groups for LGBTQ+, Disabled, Ethnic and Religious Customers where we have consulted on several projects ranging from disabled toilets, dignity bathrooms for transgender customers and our current Equality Policy, Housing Management Strategy and solved various issues in the local communities.
- We have been accredited by the Housing Diversity Network after a successful peer review.
- We have led on the South Asia Heritage Month events as part of our Ethnic Culture Fusion Network (ECFN) membership alongside the City of Doncaster Council.
- We have successfully maintained our Disability Committed status.
- We have developed digital access for customers.
- We have developed a Respect Standard arising from our Stop Social Housing Stigma initiative, which has been co-created with customer representatives.