



St. Leger Homes
OF DONCASTER

March 2022

2022 - 2026



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY

St Leger Homes of Doncaster

Providing homes in neighbourhoods that people are proud to live in



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FOREWORD

St Leger Homes deliver services to over 20,000 homes, but housing is not just about bricks and mortar – it is about people. The people who deliver the services and the people who receive them - they matter. Over 8% of our tenants identify as being in an ethnic minority group, nearly 25% have a disability, nearly 1% identify as LGBTQ+ and over 15% of our tenants are age 75+. Our employees also come from diverse backgrounds, however we have some way to go to be truly reflective of the community we serve.



Dave Richmond - Chief Executive

At our core we want to support and celebrate individualism and ensure no one person, employee or customer, is disadvantaged by their individuality. We can only do this if we are committed to ensuring that all our tenants and employees are treated fairly and with respect and have equal access to the services we provide, regardless of their personal characteristics.

This Equality and Diversity Strategy underpins our Fairness and Equality Statement and our values and behaviours. It reaffirms our commitment to taking into account 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 Employees.

We have done some great work already, but we need to do more to ensure our organisation is more representative of the community we serve, at Board and at employee level, and that we take every opportunity to involve our diverse customers and communities in how we deliver our services. By truly engaging with all our customers we will drive an improved customer experience.

This starts at the very top of the organisation and this Strategic Plan has been influenced and approved by the St Leger Board. I hope you feel the Strategy is taking us in the right direction, but I also hope you feel it provides the building blocks for St Leger Homes to be truly inclusive.

Dave Richmond



INTRODUCTION TO THE STRATEGY

This Strategy sets out the direction St Leger Homes will take during 2022 to 2026 to support our tenants, employees and other stakeholders who access our services. It demonstrates how we will build on the work we are already doing to ensure we celebrate and embrace diversity and inclusion and are doing more than just meeting our legal obligations when supporting our employees and delivering our services.

The Strategy has been informed by feedback from our tenants and employees and is driven by the need to ensure that our tenants and stakeholders are not disadvantaged when receiving our services and that all our employees, regardless of their individuality are fully supported as an employee of St Leger Homes.

This Strategy therefore also includes actions for ensuring our employees are engaged and informed to deliver the best possible service and to put the customers at the heart of everything we do.

For the purpose of this document, employees include full-time, temporary and agency employees, and stakeholders include partner organisations and anyone who may contact us for service.

The Strategy helps to support and renews our commitment to the delivery of the 5 overarching commitments contained in our Fairness and Equality Statement.

The commitments in our Fairness Statement drive sustained and positive changes for both employees and tenants. Each of the commitments has a sponsor at the Executive level who will lead on ensuring that the actions in this strategy deliver against these commitments.



STRATEGY OVERVIEW

WHO IS THE STRATEGY FOR?

Predominantly tenants and employees, but also any other stakeholders who access our services.

OUR AMBITION IS TO BE

An organisation that truly reflects, respects and celebrates the diverse nature of Doncaster in our workforce, and our communities, to deliver the best outcomes for employees and customers.

OUR KEY OBJECTIVES

- 1** To understand our customers and support their needs;
- 2** To ensure the organisation is a leader in inclusion and fairness;
- 3** To engage customers effectively, foster good relations and advance equality in our local communities;
- 4** To fulfil our safeguarding responsibilities to the highest standards;
- 5** To develop a progressive and diverse workforce, in a workplace free from discrimination and harassment;

LINKS TO OTHER STRATEGIES

This Strategy is cross-cutting. It is closely aligned to the People Strategy and the Communications Strategy and supports the delivery of the Housing Management Strategy, the Tenant Voice Strategy and the Customer Access Strategy.



ACTIONS WE WILL TAKE TO ACHIEVE OUR OBJECTIVES

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society.

The Act details a number of characteristics personal to individuals which are protected by law. These characteristics are age, disability, gender, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy or maternity status, race, religion and belief and sexual orientation.

We have a duty under the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard to ensure we treat all tenants with fairness and respect, that we demonstrate we understand the different needs of our tenants, including in relation to the equality strands, and that we understand and respond to diverse needs in the way in which we provide services and communicate to our tenants.

The publication of the Social Housing White Paper places greater emphasis on the need to listen to the voices of tenants, to ensure these do not go unheard. This Strategy includes actions to take the time to listen to and to understand the experience of all our tenants when accessing or receiving our services and our employees' experiences when working at St Leger Homes.

Above all, we want to foster good relationships, promote equal opportunities and build trust, delivering services with respect, to ensure no one feels disadvantaged by their individuality or by being themselves.

We do however want to go on meeting more than our statutory obligations to promote an inclusive culture that will deliver better engagement, employee well-being and improved service delivery.

We have therefore set ourselves a number of actions to deliver our 4 Key Objectives, to be delivered over the lifespan of this Strategy. These are shown on the next page, together with the desired outcome of each action.



1 UNDERSTAND OUR CUSTOMERS AND SUPPORT THEIR NEEDS

Action	Outcome
Review local lettings policy	A policy which ensures that no one feels inhibited from applying for a council home and which takes into account our customers' diverse needs.
Improve the knowledge we have about our diverse tenants by making it easier for people to record and update their relevant personal information and will encourage them to do so	Increase in diversity data declaration rates
Review our customer diversity data down to person level to cross match with service requests to identify and engage with tenants who are not accessing our core services	Better understanding of who is not accessing our services due to diversity issues to make access easier
Carry out a number of promotional and engagement campaigns to increase the level of employee and customer data we hold	Increase in diversity data declaration rates
Investigate use of Voicescape to increase the level of diversity data we hold on our tenants and to keep this up to date	Increase in diversity data declaration rates



2 TO ENSURE THE ORGANISATION IS A LEADER IN INCLUSION AND FAIRNESS.

Action	Outcome
Develop a coordinated internal campaign of activity, involving employee representatives to engage the workforce, cement our commitment, raise awareness and education on all areas of equality, diversity and inclusion, including the visible celebration of diversity, linking this to a similar program of external campaigns	Improved diversity in management and leadership roles
Investigate the introduction of a Board mentoring/diversity programme.	A Board that is more representative of our tenant community
Consider appropriate development activity to break barriers for colleagues from more diverse backgrounds to access leadership roles	An organisation that is more representative of our tenant community
Undertaken an internal campaign that encourages the use of pro-nouns when referring to colleagues	Culture where staff can be themselves and where this is respected by colleagues
Carry out a full diversity audit and self-assessment to gauge and challenge our current diversity status	A series of improvement actions identified as part of the self-assessment process

Action	Outcome
Celebrate our diverse employees and cultures through a series of internal events	Culture where staff can be themselves and where this is respected by colleagues
Work with the Minorities Partnership Board to increase the number of ethnic minority employees and to link this to upskilling local communities	Increase in the % of BAME employees throughout the organisation.
Apply for and achieve diversity accreditation to demonstrate our commitment to equality and diversity for our tenants and employees.	Achieve accreditation to demonstrate our commitment to equality and diversity and to ensure effective leadership and processes are in place that deliver positive outcomes for our tenants and our employees.



3 ENGAGE CUSTOMERS EFFECTIVELY, FOSTER GOOD RELATIONS AND ADVANCE EQUALITY IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

Action	Outcome
<p>Establish local connections with a range of diverse groups to ensure improved communication and engagement : disability, ethnic minority, sexual orientation and older persons groups</p>	<p>Better understanding of how the way in which we deliver our services impacts on tenants with protected characteristics so that we can deliver services to better meet the needs of our tenants</p>
<p>Review the membership of the Get Involved Group and encourage more diverse tenants to join the group</p>	<p>A group that is used to comment on our service delivery and to provide feedback on how we deliver our services that is more representative of our community</p>
<p>Carry out a series of end to end mystery shopping exercises/journey mapping exercises involving tenants from our diverse community</p>	<p>Better understanding of the service received by our diverse tenants when accessing our service and to ensure</p>



4 TO FULFILL OUR SAFEGUARDING TO THE HIGHEST STANDARDS

Action	Outcome
Continue to deliver our rolling programme of safeguarding training for staff and partners	Staff will feel confident about raising concerns, will be well trained and knowledgeable, and will be effective in supporting those in need of our services.
External campaign on hate incidents	Increase awareness and reporting to improve outcomes and resolutions and decrease incidents
Review the guidance documents on hate crime incidents	Provide better advice to our tenants
Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation	Improve our partnership working, processes and response to domestic abuse
Improve our approach to mental health	Provide earlier and targeted support to tenants with mental health.



5 TO DEVELOP A PROGRESSIVE AND DIVERSE WORKFORCE, IN A WORKPLACE FREE FROM DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

Action	Outcome
<p>Become a member of the Housing Diversity Network and develop a plan to implement the benefits of the membership.</p>	<p>Improved awareness and consideration of equality, diversity and inclusion across the organisation.</p>
<p>Review the Equality and Diversity Training delivered to all employees ensuring that it is sufficient to meet our accreditation levels (for example Disability Confident Level 2) and implement a minimum 2 yearly refresher period</p>	<p>To ensure all employers are aware of and kept up to date on diversity issues. A more inclusive culture that embraces different perspectives measured by satisfaction scores from the Pulse Survey.</p>
<p>Undertake a full review of external and internal recruitment process, to ensure that it is accessible and promotes inclusion and diversity, including introducing diversity to our interview panels, working with external agencies to expand our diverse candidate base and reviewing job descriptions to ensure they are written in a way which encourages applications from diverse backgrounds.</p>	<p>Increase in the number of diverse employees across, ethnic minority, people with disabilities, and LGBT+ groups.</p>

Action	Outcome
Review development routes across the organisation ensuring that they are accessible and representative of our diverse workforce.	Increase in % of BAME employees in senior management positions.
Implement a framework for employee networks and establish a number of diversity networks across the organisation to cultivate inclusion.	Reduction in incidents of discrimination and opportunities for diverse employees to feed into decision making around service delivery and employee support.
Introduce external benchmarking for internal equality and diversity	Increased awareness of best practice, awareness of gender identification and respect for LGBT+



OUR SUCCESS

Overall outcomes we want to achieve

- An organisation and Board that is more representative of the community we live in;
- An increase in the diversity of the Senior Management Team (SMT);
- A culture where all individuals are happy and comfortable expressing their individuality and can bring their 'whole self' to work;
- An increase in the number of diverse people making use of social housing and actively involved in influencing and shaping the services we deliver.
- Services to all our tenants that are delivered fairly and equally to all.

HOW WE WILL MEASURE OUR SUCCESS?

- 6 monthly report to Employment and People Committee on progress against actions;
- Heads of Service will take ownership for updating actions where they are taking a lead role;
- Quarterly EDI Dashboard Reports detailed performance across a range of diversity indicators;
- Feedback from Pulse Surveys;
- Annual Fairness and Equality Review;
- % of complaints;
- % increase in the number of diverse employees and in senior positions;
- Feedback from customers.

HOW WE WILL KNOW WHEN WE HAVE ACHIEVED OUR AMBITIONS?

Our tenants, employees and stakeholders will continue to tell us that:

- We treat them with dignity and respect;
- We value them as individuals and respect and accept their differences;
- They do not feel disadvantaged when receiving our services;
- Our workplace culture is inclusive, welcoming and free from discrimination and harassment



MONITORING OUR PROGRESS

A yearly action plan, showing actions due for completion within the current year, our plans to deliver the Strategy and how they link to the achievement of our corporate objectives will be reported to Board and will detail specific delivery timescales. Heads of Service will take ownership for updating actions where they are taking a lead role.



Contact Us:
St Leger Court
White Rose Way
Doncaster
DN4 5ND
Tel: 01302 862862