Peabody

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy *2023-2026*

Building a diverse and inclusive organisation

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Foreword

Our vision is to be a diverse and inclusive organisation where everyone can flourish. One where everyone at every level, from the board and leadership to our wider teams, reflects our residents and customers. A place where every single person has the freedom to be themselves. And one which attracts diverse and talented people from a range of backgrounds.

Without this, we simply can't deliver a great service. It's as simple as that.

We need diversity of thought, a range of lived experiences and new ways of thinking and working to help us truly transform. Only then, can we firmly put our customers at the centre of every single thing we do.

Our new group EDI Strategy sets out the priorities and actions we're taking to do this, alongside our People Strategy. Linking closely with our purpose and guiding values, we set out how we'll build on the progress we've already made in EDI. I believe it's focused on the issues that matter most to our residents and our people.

I'm particularly excited about the range of colleague-led diversity networks that we'll continue to support. The energy and passion of the colleagues leading these crucial networks ensure our people can be open and express themselves with their peers. They provide valuable insight and ideas on how we can improve, as well as being powerful communication platforms with which to engage our teams.

In publishing this strategy, it's important to emphasise that EDI is not just a box to be ticked. It should permeate the whole organisation and be a core part of our culture and the way we do things. It will require a collective effort from everyone to achieve our goal of being a truly diverse organisation at all levels where everyone can be their whole self at work.

I look forward to working with all of you to achieve our EDI vision and aims.

Ian McDermott
Chief Executive

Introduction

Our purpose is ‘helping people flourish’. We do this by providing great homes and services, making a positive difference to the customers and communities we serve and by creating a diverse, inclusive and inspiring place to work. We’re an organisation with colleagues and customers at our heart and equality, diversity and inclusion is a core part of our culture. Our foundations for creating a diverse and inclusive organisation are well established. This strategy sets out a refreshed approach, outlining what we intend to achieve over the next three years.

We’ll deliver six strategic EDI priorities over the life of the strategy. We plan to focus on a smaller sub-set of three of them over the next 12 months.

Our vision for EDI
Our vision is to create an organisation which is an inspiring and inclusive place to work. One where our colleagues and customers can develop and grow together in a culture that supports growth and celebrates diversity.

Why are we publishing this strategy?
We’re publishing this strategy at a time of unprecedented challenges across the UK. The growing cost-of-living crisis has magnified and focused attention on the impact of inequity faced by many people. So, it’s now even more important that we redouble our efforts to address the inequalities our colleagues and customers may face.

By creating an organisation that values a diversity of perspectives, we’ll have a better understanding of the needs of our colleagues and customers. This will lead to better organisational performance and outcomes.

What do we mean by equality, diversity and *inclusion?*

Equality
is about fair and equal access - ensuring that our colleagues and customers have the same opportunities, regardless of their protected characteristics or socio-economic status. While equality sets out the foundations to ensure fair and equal access, we also recognise the importance of equity. This is about ensuring our colleagues and customers have what they need to achieve equal outcomes. Put simply, equity means understanding that not everyone starts out in the same place and making adjustments to ensure fairness based on individual needs.

Diversity
is about celebrating the varied social and ethnic backgrounds and different genders and sexual orientation of our colleagues and customers. It's about valuing and harnessing these differences to create a more inclusive, effective and productive organisation.

Inclusion
means actively working to meet the needs of our colleagues and customers and taking action to remove any barriers to participation. It's also about creating an environment where everyone feels valued and respected and able to be themselves. For us, this means ensuring that no-one feels left out and that everyone feels they belong.

How the strategy will be *delivered*

Everyone has a role to play in delivering this strategy. That includes every member of our senior leadership team who will have annual EDI objectives. Our directorates will also develop and deliver EDI action plans based on locally identified priorities and the priorities contained in this strategy.

This strategy doesn't stand alone. We'll embed our approach to EDI throughout our people processes, the local service delivery model, community engagement and investment, wellbeing and cultural transformation.

How we'll measure success
We'll measure the success of this strategy by taking an evidence-based approach to understanding our progress and analysing the various data we collect. This will include our workforce and customer diversity data, gender and ethnicity pay gap data, findings from our employee engagement surveys, EDI pulse surveys and customer satisfaction surveys. We'll also seek insights from our colleague-led diversity networks to help measure our success and understand where we need to improve.

In addition, each of the priorities contained in this strategy will have clear delivery plans and targets. We'll also publish an annual review of this strategy, ensuring we build on our successes and learn from our mistakes.

Our strategic priorities
Our strategic EDI priorities build on those contained in our previous EDI Strategy. Together these will be central to building a diverse and inclusive organisation over the next three years.

Our six strategic priorities

01
Tackle inequality and discrimination

02
Provide high-quality inclusive, accessible services that meet the needs of our customers

03
Embed EDI throughout each stage of the employee lifecycle

04
Improve the diversity of our senior management team and our board

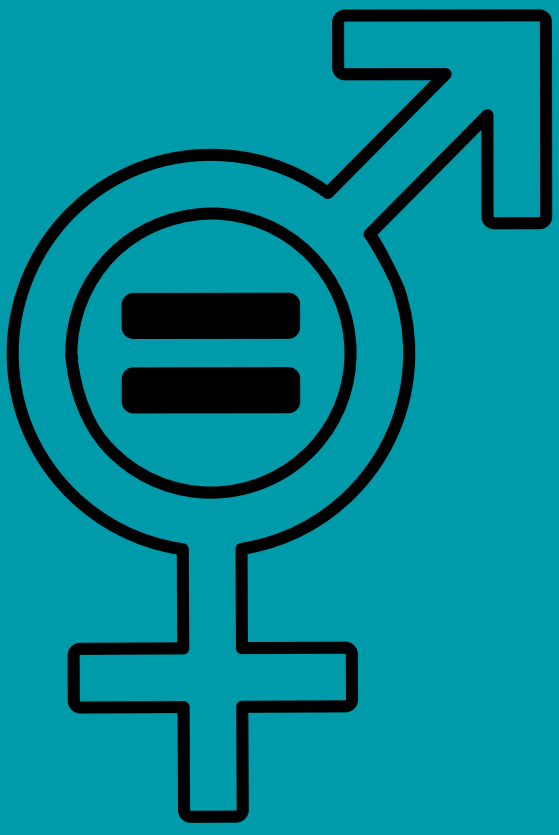
05
Improve the quality of our workforce and customer diversity data

06
Promote, develop and support our colleague-led diversity networks

Priority 1

Tackle inequality and discrimination

We recognise that the effects of inequality and discrimination are far-reaching. So we'll look both in and outside our organisation to deliver change within the sector.



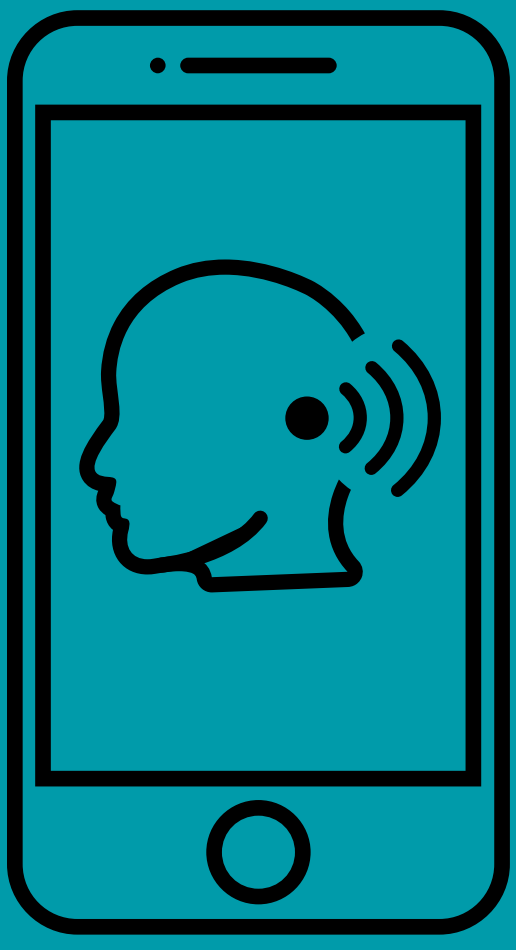
To help achieve this we will:

- Assess the impact our policies, processes and practices have on equality and take action when we identify an adverse impact on colleagues and customers from a protected group.
- Adopt a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination in any form, taking robust action where we find evidence of it.
- Commit to being an anti-racist organisation and demonstrate it in our actions.
- Take action to improve the experience of our disabled colleagues and customers.
- Collaborate with other organisations and networks and use our influence to lobby for support for disadvantaged groups and changes to public policy.
- Embed our approach by understanding that different types of inequality can combine to create new and previously unknown obstacles. We'll also recognise that the causes of inequality and exclusion can't be solved by focusing on a single issue or approach.
- Celebrate the rich diversity of our colleagues, residents and customers through awareness campaigns.
- Contribute to, or commission our own, research to understand inequalities faced by our colleagues, residents and communities and how we can address them.
- Use the assessment and benchmarking tools provided by the EDI organisations we are members of to improve our organisational practices.
- Require our suppliers and partners to share our commitment to EDI.
- Always use inclusive and accessible language in our policies and internal and external communications.

Priority 2

Provide accessible services that meet our customers' needs

We'll improve the wellbeing and quality of life of our customers and provide high-quality inclusive, accessible services that meet their needs.



To help achieve this we will:

- Involve our customers and residents in shaping the design and delivery of our services.
- Improve the quality of the data we hold about our customers and residents and use it to inform the design of services that are tailored and appropriate to their needs.
- Analyse customer satisfaction survey results by protected groups and use them to increase our understanding of the inequalities and improve our practices.
- Make sure our resident engagement activities are open to all and that those involved represent our customer base.
- Support and partner with organisations that are led by, and serve, a diverse range of customers and communities.
- Ensure our service delivery policies include rigorous processes to tackle hate crime, domestic abuse and safeguarding. We'll also make sure colleagues are trained and able to provide customers with the support they need.
- Ensure that all our customer communication is accessible by using alternative formats such as audio and translation services.
- Through our development programmes, create sustainable mixed communities and provide high-quality homes irrespective of tenure.

Priority 3

Embed EDI into our whole colleague journey

Attracting and retaining diverse and talented people will be key to our success. Our EDI Strategy and People Strategy will act as joint enablers in attracting more diverse candidates into the organisation. Our priority is to embed EDI into our whole colleague journey and make inclusion relevant to everyone.

To help achieve this we will:

- Continually review and assess the impact of equality on each stage of the employee lifecycle to ensure that the associated processes are fair and inclusive for everyone.
- Ensure we have diverse shortlists and interview panels to support the appointment of more diverse candidates.
- Ensure our approach to EDI is included in our induction and onboarding processes.
- Create a diverse workforce that reflects the communities we serve at all levels.
- Develop talent programmes to support colleagues from underrepresented groups who are seeking to develop and progress in their careers.
- Ensure EDI is a core component of our learning and development offer.
- Take action to reduce our gender and ethnicity pay gaps.

Employee lifecycle

Priority 4

Improve the diversity of our senior management team and board

We'll increase the diversity of our senior management team and board so that they are more representative of our workforce and the communities we serve.

To help achieve this we will:

- Increase the ethnic minority representation of our senior management team from 15% to 30% by 2025 and of our board from 20% to 30%.
- Continually review the employee profile of our senior managers and address any areas of underrepresentation we identify.
- Utilise the Rooney Rule when recruiting for senior level roles and assess its impact.
- Ensure that we meet our EDI responsibilities contained within the National Housing Federation Code of Governance.
- Continue to support programmes focused on the development and progression of ethnic minority colleagues and evaluate outcomes. We'll also ensure that colleagues completing the programmes are provided with further opportunities to support their career progression and development.
- Provide bespoke programmes to support the development and progression of colleagues from other diverse groups, including women, LGBTQ+ colleagues and disabled colleagues.

Priority 5

Improve the quality of our workforce and customer diversity data

We'll work hard to improve the quality of our data. This will help us understand more about our performance as an employer and service provider and identify areas to improve.

To help achieve this we will:

- Significantly reduce the data gaps for ethnic minority, disabled and LGBTQ+ colleagues and customers.
- Continually analyse and monitor the diversity of our workforce to ensure we're representative of the communities we serve.
- Review our recruitment data to understand trends and highlight any issues in recruiting diverse talent so that we can address them.
- Use the National Housing Federation equality data tool and national census data to understand how representative we are compared to our customers and communities.
- Use the results of our employee engagement surveys, EDI pulse surveys and feedback from our diversity networks to understand how fair and inclusive we are and where we need to take action.
- Regularly publish our workforce and customer diversity data internally and on our website.

Diversity of our workforce 'not known/not declared'

Ethnicity

19%

not known/not declared

Disability

26%

not known/not declared

LGBTQ+

29%

not known/not declared

Priority 6

Promote, develop and support our colleague-led diversity networks

Our diversity networks play a central role in influencing and supporting our EDI agenda. They represent the views of their members and create a sense of community for colleagues to come together. So we'll develop and promote our diversity networks (ability, family, gender, race equality and LGBTQ+) so they can grow and can continue to have impact.

To help achieve this we will:

- Provide dedicated funding and resources.
- Use internal awareness campaigns to actively grow the membership of each network.
- Support each network to deliver their action plans - focused on the priorities of their members.
- Support the executive-level sponsors to be effective champions and allies.
- Ensure that the network leads have protected time to enable them to undertake their roles.

Year one strategic *priorities*

	Key tasks	Timescales	Leads/ Supporting teams	Measures of success/Data and assessment tools
01 **Improve the experience of our disabled colleagues**	**1.** Review reasonable adjustments processes to ensure that they are consistently applied and meet the needs of colleagues that need support.	April and ongoing	• EDI Team • People Relations Team • Ability Network • Peabody Academy	• Requirements of the Reasonable Adjustments Policy are fully met. • Reasonable adjustments learning and development provided to managers.
	2. Utilise tools and resources from the EDI organisations we are members of to improve the experience of disabled colleagues.	May – August	• EDI Team • Ability Network • Business Disability Forum • Peabody Academy	• Employer's Disability Confident scheme reviewed, and action taken to achieve disability confident leader status. • Assessment undertaken of our workplace practices, utilising the Business Disability Forum's disability SMART benchmarking tool. • Learning and development provided to hiring managers. • Colleague engagement surveys utilised to understand the experience of disabled colleagues and inform actions.
	3. Improve the disclosure rates in relation to disability held on Core HR.	May – June 2023	• EDI Team • People Operations Team • SLTs	• Workforce diversity data campaigns resulting in 10% improvement in disability declaration rates.
02 **Improve the diversity of our senior management team and board**	**1.** Develop programmes focused on meeting the G15 CEOs' commitments to increasing the ethnic minority representation of the senior management team from 15% to 30% by 2025 and the ethnic minority representation of our board, from 20% to 30% by 2025.	April and ongoing	• EDI Team • Peabody Academy	• Progress in achieving the 30% commitment continually reviewed and reported.
	2. Participate in programmes (such as the G15 Accelerate programme and Black on Board) focused on the development and progression of ethnic minority colleagues.	April and ongoing	• EDI Team • Peabody Academy	• Programme outcomes reviewed to ensure that the programme objectives are being met. • Regular engagement undertaken with the programme participants to ensure they are being provided with support and achieve the programme outcomes. • Opportunities identified for colleagues completing the programmes to access further career development and support.
	3. Provide programmes focused on supporting the development and progression of colleagues from other diverse groups, i.e. women, LGBTQ+ and disabled colleagues.	TBC	• Peabody Academy • EDI Team	

Year one strategic *priorities*

	Tasks	Timescales	Leads/ Supporting teams	Measures of success/Data and assessment tools
03 **Improve the quality of our workforce and customer diversity data**	**1** Develop programmes focused on significantly improving the diversity data declaration rates for ethnic minority, disabled and LGBTQ+ colleagues and customers.	April – August	• EDI Team • People Team • Comms Team • Data Quality Team • Locality MDs	• Series of campaigns undertaken focused on encouraging colleagues to provide their diversity data on Core HR. • In year 1: 10% reduction in not declared/not known – for ethnicity disability and sexual orientation.
	2 Analyse and monitor the diversity of the workforce and provide workforce monitoring data reports to each directorate.	April and ongoing	• People Operations Team • EDI Team • Data Quality Team	• Directorate-level colleague diversity data regularly reviewed and utilised to identify areas for improvement.
	3 Review recruitment data to understand trends and highlight any issues in recruiting diverse talent.	April and ongoing	• People Talent and Reward Team • EDI Team	• Recruitment data regularly reviewed and utilised to identify areas for improvement.
	4 Use the National Housing Federation equality data tool and national census data to understand how representative the organisation is - compared to customers and communities.	June and ongoing	• EDI Team • People Operations Team • Data Quality Team	• Peabody colleague and customer diversity data submitted to the NHF. • Engagement undertaken with the housing associations that have achieved 90% disclosure/ completion rates in relation to their employees and customers to inform and improve our processes and practices.
	5 Use the results of colleague engagement surveys and feedback from the diversity networks, to identify priority areas of action in relation to EDI.	May and ongoing	• EDI Team • Diversity Networks • Comms Team	
	6 Regularly publish workforce and customer diversity data internally and on the Peabody website.	June and ongoing	• Comms Team	
04 **Promote develop and support our colleague-led diversity networks**	**1** Actively grow the membership of each network through internal awareness campaigns.	April and ongoing	• EDI Team • Diversity Networks	• Information about the diversity networks is included in Induction. • Profile of the networks is raised, and membership increased.
	2 Undertake consultation with the diversity network members to identify their priority areas of focus and inform their action plans.	June – August	• EDI Team • Diversity Networks	• Network annual action plans produced and delivered and communicated to the People Team and executive director sponsors.
	3 Support the executive level sponsors to be effective champions and allies.	June and ongoing	• EDI Team • Exec Sponsors • Diversity Networks	• Executive director sponsors actively championing the diversity networks they are supporting – including promoting EDI-related awareness events.

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