



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Annual Report 2022



Our vision

Our EDI vision is to be inclusive and fair: where colleagues and customers are respected, valued and supported for who they are.

We aim to provide services that are adapted to recognise the diverse needs of our people and communities, enabling them to thrive.

We will achieve this through our values in the following way:



Ambitious – we will be award winning and forward thinking



Considerate – we will take account of people's needs and treat them fairly



Accountable – we will ensure EDI is at the heart of all our decision-making, every day, by everyone



Collaborative – we will listen and respond to people's needs and talk about what we do.

At Beyond Housing we aspire to be an active leader in our communities, aware of who our customers and service users are and able to quickly adapt to demographic changes and trends. We want to be an industry leader recognised as an organisation that is committed to EDI by our colleagues, customers and stakeholders. In 2022, we were proud to be recognised as an Investor in Diversity by the National Centre for Diversity and we are committed to continuing our progress and aiming for Leaders in Diversity Accreditation by 2024.

This report is an 'at a glance' summary of our data, achievements and actions in 2022 and our main aims for 2023.

In 2021 we participated in benchmarking activities with the National Housing Federation (NHF) EDI tool and the Yorkshire and Humberside EDI baseline survey report for the Yorkshire and Humberside Chief Executives Forum. The recommendations in the latter report form the structure of this report. These surveys were not repeated in 2022 but we are committed to full participation as and when they are scheduled.

1. Set ambitious and measurable targets

We have committed to addressing pay gaps and producing a wider 'equalities pay gap report' expanding our duty to report on gender pay gaps, publishing this on our website.

2. Adopt policies and practices to deliver on EDI

We take positive action in recruitment, offering job interview guarantees to applicants with disabilities, armed forces veterans and currently serving reservists under our disability confident 'committed' and Armed Forces Recognition Scheme 'Silver' statuses. We also share all our vacancy adverts with Clean Slate Solutions, who support the rehabilitation of offenders into employment.

We remove personal details from applications in our recruitment portal to reduce the risk of unconscious bias, even though our recruiting panels are fully trained. We also monitor recruitment data at each stage of the application/appointment process.

Equality impact assessments are carried out on all our policies and procedures, and we have amended the review process to bring the impact assessment right to the start, making it integral to the review.

We engaged with the National Centre for Diversity (NCD) to undertake external auditing to independently assess our performance in EDI and shared the results with colleagues. In July 2022 we received notification that we had successfully been

accredited with the Investors in Diversity award. This remains valid until October 2023.

We mandate essential training for all colleagues on EDI and mental health awareness. We also make additional EDI training available through our learning portal.

We've enabled the Recite Me web accessibility and language toolbar on our website to make it more accessible. This tool helps people with common conditions such as sight loss and dyslexia to access our website in a way that suits them best, by allowing users to customise how the website looks in terms of background colours, font sizes and font colours, as well as read website text aloud. It also meets the needs of the one in ten people in the UK who don't speak English as their first language, with the ability to translate our web content into over 100 different languages.

In 2021 we held focus groups with our colleagues to understand where they have experienced or witnessed inappropriate behaviour in the past, explored their sense of fairness in relation to recruitment and reward, and in 2022 we delivered actions arising from the feedback we received on these.

We set up an ally scheme, introducing a four-step programme where people can advocate for each other to build a more positive work culture, helping people be aware of the potential for unconscious bias, discriminatory language, micro-aggressions etc. in the workplace, and recruited over 78 allies across the business.

We have relaunched our EDI Policy and invested in WhistleB, which is an anonymous whistleblowing tool that enables colleagues to report inappropriate behaviour if they feel they cannot raise it another way. No reports of inappropriate behaviour related to EDI were received during 2022.

We have expanded our numbers of mental health first aiders and engaged in several health campaigns and initiatives, led by our team of health advocates. This has led to the achievement of the Better Health at Work Award at gold level in December 2022.

3. Work to improve the quality and use of data

We collect data on customers at tenancy sign up, and on colleagues and the board when they start employment or board tenure. We know there are gaps in our data; the data categories we collect have data missing, there is data we do not yet collect such as gender transition and there are disparities in the data collected from each group. This issue of data incompleteness reflects the trend across the sector (as found in the NHF EDI survey). We aimed to work on this during 2022 and found this presented us with greater challenges than initially anticipated. Work on this will now take place in 2023 so we can use data to understand and effectively deliver against customer needs in the future.

4. Commit to engaging with the rest of the sector to share best practice and learning

Members of our EDI Champions Forum and EDI Steering Group have attended network meetings, training sessions and forums to learn from others about what works and what doesn't.

5. Collaborate with organisations across the region and nationally to use combined resources and influence improved outcomes for under-represented groups

In 2020 we identified our board could benefit from being more diverse. We worked with the Housing Diversity Network and other housing associations in the region to deliver a board trainee programme aimed at underrepresented groups. We sponsored two board trainees on this programme, one trainee continues on the programme.

We also provided sponsorship and mentors to The Girls' Network to help inspire and empower girls from the least advantaged communities in the Tees Valley. During 2022, three mentors were successfully matched with girls in need of support.

We are a member of the Women in Social Housing (WISH) network in both the North East and Yorkshire & Humberside regions. WISH is a networking community aimed at women working in the sector, hosting a schedule of events based around various topics to support women with career development. These events are open to all colleagues at Beyond Housing as part of our membership, with colleagues regularly encouraged to attend.

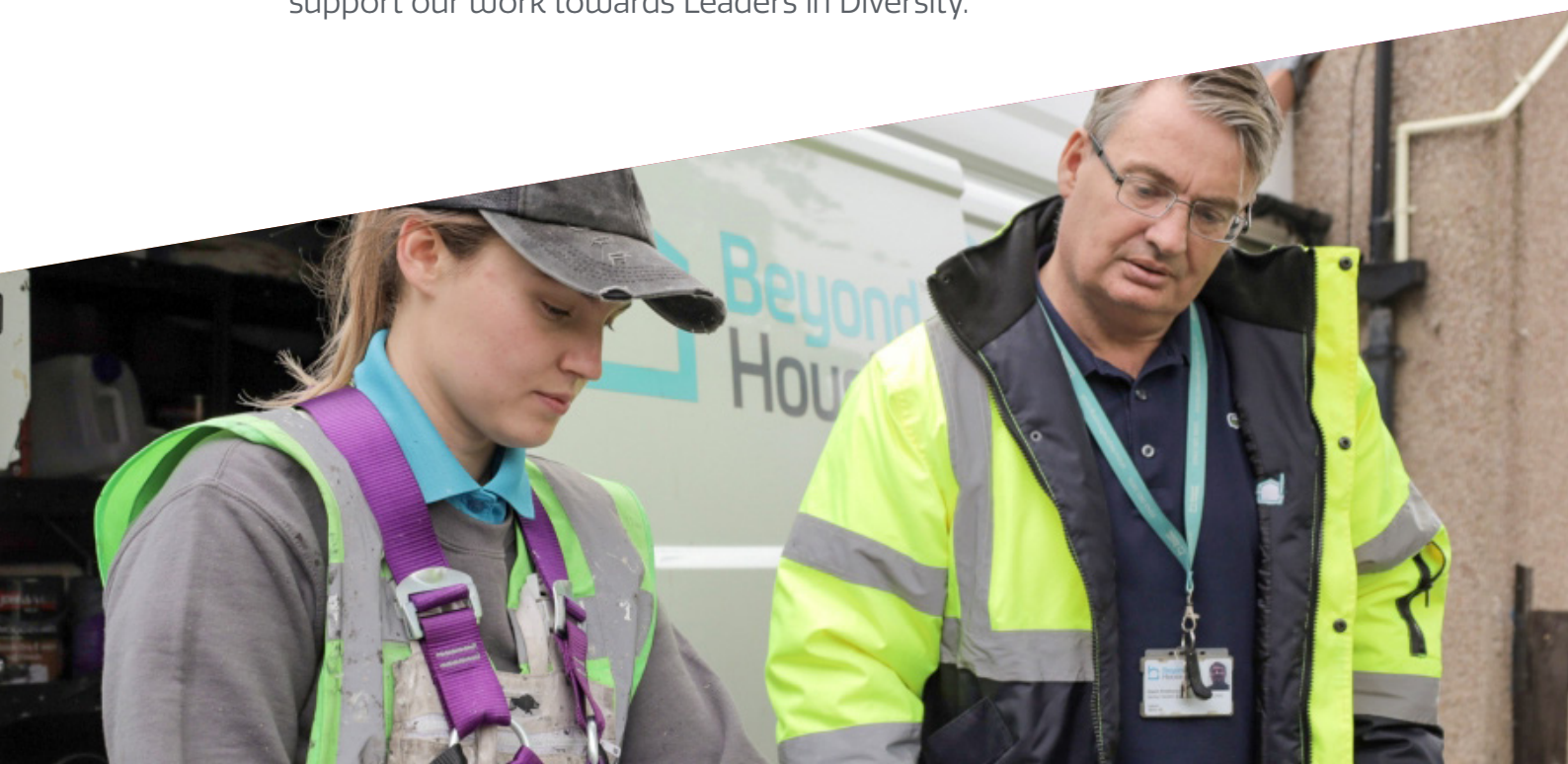
We are collaborating with a number of organisations in our regions through sponsorship to bring awareness to EDI topics, supporting us to build trust in Beyond Housing as a landlord and employer amongst under-represented groups. This has included events run by the WISH network for International Women's Day and Menopause Awareness, the Armed Forces Day national event in Scarborough, and Redcar & Cleveland's Inspiring Women Awards.

Our EDI forums and groups

We have an active EDI champions forum, where colleagues who are enthusiastic about EDI come together to research, promote and champion EDI as well as reviewing equality impact assessments. They run regular EDI based campaigns for colleagues to maintain awareness across the company, linking in with national campaigns and religious festivals.

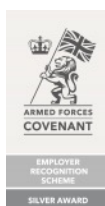
We also have a smaller EDI steering group, who ensure we make progress against our action plan, month by month.

We recruited to a new role of part time EDI Co-ordinator to help strengthen our focus on this area of work. The EDI Co-ordinator has started work on data collection, has revised our EDI delivery structure, researched best practice, promoted the ally scheme, reviewed website content, and developed and progressed our action plan following the achievement of Investors in Diversity to support our work towards Leaders in Diversity.



Frameworks

We are disability confident, committed and recognised by the Armed Forces Covenant Employers Recognition Scheme at silver level. We achieved Investors in Diversity award through National Centre for Diversity and were also listed in their UK top 100 most inclusive employers.



Proudly
supporting
those
who serve



Investors
in Diversity
Award

Achieved.
Valid Until
October 2023

Networks

We are members of the following networks:

1. Housing Diversity Network



2. Women in Social Housing



3. The Girls' Network (Tees Valley).



And we work with Clean Slate Solutions to promote the rehabilitation of offenders, and the First Light Trust to support veterans locally.

Pledges and declarations

As well as the frameworks and networks already mentioned, we also signed up to the CIH's Make a Stand pledge to tackle domestic violence.

A graphic for the 'Make a Stand' pledge. It features a light purple background with a dark purple header and footer. The text 'MAKE A STAND' is centered, with 'MAKE' and 'A' in dark purple and 'STAND' in a larger, bold, magenta font. Below this, the tagline 'Our homes, our people, our problem.' is written in a dark grey font. At the bottom, a dark purple vertical bar is followed by the text 'We've signed the Make a Stand pledge to support people experiencing domestic abuse, have you?' in a dark grey font, where 'Make' is dark purple and 'Stand' is magenta.

**MAKE
A
STAND**

Our homes, our people,
our problem.

We've signed the **Make a Stand** pledge to support people experiencing domestic abuse, have you?

An update on our 2022 actions

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We committed to many actions in 2022 as part of our ongoing plan to deliver our ambitious aspirations for EDI. Here is a summary of our progress:

Review our data on customers and colleagues and develop plans and strategies to obtain more information, keep it up to date and provide assurances about how the data will be used and how confidentiality will be maintained.

We have reviewed the data collected and how it is processed and stored. Improving this will be a key action for 2023.

Achieve the Investors in Diversity accreditation in full with a follow up cultural assessment

We were accredited with 'conditional' level Investors In Diversity Award in October 2021, and as a result of the follow up assessment to confirm progress against our action plan were given full accreditation in July 2022. A further action plan has been developed to continue work in this area.

Launch WhistleB with colleagues and customers

This was launched at the end of January 2022, with continued reminders about the portal to colleagues during further EDI communications and campaigns.

Launch our ally scheme with colleagues

The 'be an ally' campaign commenced in late February with a week long campaign which included videos by enthusiastic colleagues to explain why they signed up to be an ally along with standard videos and campaign messages. This was followed by further campaigning to all colleagues at our connecting colleagues' conferences in April and May. Allies can be easily identified by lanyards, so colleagues know who they are.

Update our EDI statement of principles with SMART targets and relaunch it along with our policy, and our zero-tolerance statement

Our EDI statement of principles and zero-tolerance statement were re-launched to colleagues in March 2022.

Review our accessibility statements

Brook House, Scarborough was surveyed in September 2022 by AccessAble; details of the accessibility of this building can be found at www.accessable.co.uk. Ennis Square, Redcar was undergoing significant remodelling until December 2022; survey of this building is scheduled for early 2023.

Undertake communications campaigns to help colleagues understand our processes that ensure fairness in recruitment and reward

Following the feedback we received in colleague focus groups in late 2021, we engaged in a weekly 'did you know' campaign from January until May 2022 to dispel the myths about recruitment and explain how we aim to build in fairness, respect, equality, diversity and inclusion into the whole process. This enabled a good level of engagement from colleagues.

Review our bullying and harassment policy, converting it to a dignity and respect policy

A first draft of this document has been developed ready for consultation with colleagues through our colleague forums.

Review our EDI calendar of events, campaigns and key messages

A full EDI calendar of events, campaigns and key messages was developed and delivered on a monthly basis for the whole of 2022.

Explore further positive action to support underrepresented groups including looking at barriers to senior positions to help address any equalities pay gaps

We focussed on the launch of our ally scheme, dispelling myths around recruitment, ensuring training and development was available, continuing delivery of the board training programme and the launch of our zero-tolerance approach as our start point in 2022. We will continue to look for further positive action once we have improved data sets that identify where we should focus our attentions.

Our actions for 2023

In 2023 we will build on our work in 2022 to deliver our ambitious aspirations for inclusion:

1. Launch internal campaigns to 'meet your champions' and recruit more willing volunteers to the champions group and ally scheme
2. Conduct an accessibility survey of Ennis Square
3. Consult on our revised 'dignity at work procedure' and launch to colleagues
4. Sign up for Dementia Friends and arrange awareness raising sessions for colleagues
5. Incorporate EDI into our leadership and management development programme, scheduled for delivery in financial year 23/24
6. Regular colleague awareness campaigns, including an EDI month, reminders about WhistleB, zero tolerance, policies and procedures, ally scheme, champions, how to have conversations about appropriate or inappropriate behaviour
7. Collect and refresh data held about customers and colleagues, and use this along with data about our recruitment processes and data from colleague exit interviews so we can direct our attentions to where they are needed most
8. Work towards achieving Investors in Diversity reaccreditation in October 2023, and our longer-term goal of achieving Leaders in Diversity award by 2024.