



## Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2025-2028

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## Foreword

At Derby Homes, we are committed to fostering equity, valuing diversity, and building an inclusive environment. We understand our role in integrating these values across every aspect of our work, benefiting both our workforce and the communities we serve.

Derby's rich mix of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives creates a vibrant place to live and work. This strategy reinforces our dedication to making sure all customers and employees feel valued, respected, and empowered, while ensuring equitable access to housing services and opportunities for all.

The voices of our customers have been central to this strategy's development, with valuable input from our Customer Voice scrutiny group and online feedback and consultation feedback. Additionally, establishing dedicated equity, diversity, and inclusion forums for both staff and customers will help us strengthen our efforts and hold leadership accountable to our goals.

This strategy sets out our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion in line with legislative standards, the Housing Ombudsman's "Relationship of Equals" report, and the Regulator's Consumer Standards.

By working together, we can build a welcoming community that embraces individual contributions and meets the needs of all residents. We invite everyone to join us in this journey toward a fairer and more inclusive future for Derby Homes.

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## Definitions

Although equity, diversity and inclusion are often used interchangeably, they have different meanings.

**Equality** is the absence of discrimination based on a person's protected characteristic. The Equality Act 2010 was designed to legally put an end to all types of victimisation and to advance equity of opportunity.

**Equity** is ensuring people are treated fairly and reasonably.

**Diversity** is the recognition and value of differences between people. Diverse workplaces create cultures and practices that value the differences of their staff.

**Inclusion** refers to an individual's experience within the workplace and in wider society.

It is important to recognise that while equity, diversity and inclusion are different, they need to be progressed together as one cannot exist without the other.

## Legislative Framework

Derby Homes operates within the framework of several key pieces of legislation that guide our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion:

- **Equality Act 2010:** This act protects individuals from discrimination based on protected characteristics, including age, disability, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, and marriage or civil partnership.
- **Public Sector Equality Duty:** Under this duty, which sits under the Equality Act 2010, we are required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between all people when carrying out our activities.
- **Human Rights Act 1998:** We acknowledge the importance of human rights in safeguarding the dignity of every individual.

We will ensure that our policies and practices are legally compliant and our approach to equity, diversity and inclusion reflects the principles outlined in the legislation.

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## Influences from the Industry

Housing Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman's "Relationship of Equals" report emphasises the importance of treating tenants fairly and equitably. Key recommendations from the report have informed our strategic objectives:

- Inclusive Engagement
- Responsive Services
- Accountability and Transparency

## Consumer Standards from the Regulator of Social Housing

The Regulator's Consumer Standards outline expectations for registered providers in terms of tenant engagement and service delivery. Our strategic objectives will focus on:

- Fairness and respect
- Diverse needs
- Tenant Involvement and Empowerment
- Relevant Information
- Communication methods
- Diverse communities
- Representative communities
- Access and Support
- Homes and Neighbourhoods

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## Strategic Objectives

To implement our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion strategy, we will focus on the four following strategic objectives:

### Leadership

Leadership plays a crucial role in promoting and sustaining equity, diversity, and inclusion within Derby Homes. We think that effective leaders not only model inclusive behaviours but also create an environment where diverse perspectives are valued and integrated into decision-making processes. We will do this through:

- Reflecting our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion at the very top of our organisation, through our mission statement and Delivery Plan.

- Through on-going commitment to an equity, diversity, and inclusion champion at Board level, to provide advice, scrutinise progress, and help shape our future approach to inclusion.
- Ensuring the Board and the Senior Management Team take an active role in driving the equity, diversity, and inclusion agenda, ensuring it is embedded into all decision-making processes.
- Equipping leaders and managers with the tools and training to recognise, support, and advocate for diversity, fostering a culture of inclusion at every organisational level.
- Championing diverse recruitment and retention practices, including mentoring employees so they have opportunities for advancement.
- Supporting the formation of groups for under represented or shared interest groups within the workplace, such as groups for women, LGBTQ+ employees, ethnic minorities, or disabled employees.
- Regular reviews of strategies, policies and practices to remove barriers that may hinder inclusivity using equalities impact assessments.

## Customer inclusion

Our strategic objective on customer inclusion is to ensure that all customers feel valued, heard, and empowered, with meaningful opportunities to participate in shaping the services and communities that impact their lives. We will do this through:

- Tailoring our services to meet the diverse needs of customers, ensuring equitable access to housing support and resources.
- Treating all tenants and prospective tenants with fairness and respect in every interaction.
- Striving for fair, equitable outcomes and providing equal access to housing services, with additional support to overcome barriers faced by marginalised groups.
- Engaging customers in shaping policies, valuing diverse perspectives and ensuring that under-represented voices are actively involved.
- Ensuring communication is clear, accessible, timely, and tailored to customers' diverse needs, including reasonable adjustments for disabilities, language barriers, or limited digital access.
- Collaborating with residents and partners to create safe, inclusive, and welcoming communities by promoting diversity and addressing discrimination and hate crimes.
- Continuously reviewing and improving services to accommodate the varying needs of people from all backgrounds.

- Emphasise equity, diversity and inclusion principles, in visual and verbal communications reflecting diversity in representation and language.
- Using diverse imagery and narratives in marketing materials, websites, and social media, where relevant.

## Employee inclusion

Our strategic objective on employee inclusion is to create a supportive and equitable workplace where every employee feels respected, valued, and empowered to contribute fully, fostering a culture of belonging and collaboration. We will do this through:

- Ensuring recruitment, retention, and promotion practices are free from bias, attracting a diverse workforce that reflects the communities we serve.
- Providing ongoing training and development on equity, diversity, and inclusion for all employees and Board members, ensuring they understand their role in delivering inclusive services.
- Upholding a high standard of accountability and transparency in our operations, providing clear information about our equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives and performance.
- Supporting groups for underrepresented or shared-interest groups within the workplace, such as groups for women, LGBTQ+ employees, ethnic minorities, or disabled employees.
- Providing inclusive policies to support diversity such as remote working, flexible hours, parental leave, and job-sharing to accommodate diverse needs, especially for those with caregiving responsibilities or disabilities.
- Ensuring physical and digital accessibility in the workplace and adapting facilities to accommodate diverse needs, such as gender-neutral bathrooms, prayer rooms, or quiet spaces.
- Promoting diversity through recognising cultural, national, or awareness events (e.g., Black History Month, Pride Month, International Women's Day) to foster a sense of belonging and celebrate diverse identities.
- Promoting wellbeing sessions for employees to share their experiences, suggestions, and concerns about inclusion, helping leadership to address issues effectively.
- Creating branding guidelines for internal marketing, ensuring that all visual and verbal communications reflect diversity in representation and language.
- Using diverse imagery and narratives that resonate with various communities in marketing on our intranet and internal employee updates.

## Inclusive procurement

Our strategic objective on inclusive procurement is to build a diverse and equitable supply chain by fostering opportunities for underrepresented suppliers, ensuring fair processes, and promoting inclusive practices across all procurement activities. We will do this through:

- Creating transparent, bias-free procurement criteria and selection processes that provide equal access and opportunities for all suppliers, regardless of their size or background.
- Establishing equity, diversity and inclusion expectations for suppliers, encouraging them to adopt inclusive practices within their own organisations.
- Offering resources, to help suppliers understand procurement requirements, improve their competitiveness, and strengthen their ability to participate in future contracts.

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## How we will deliver against this strategy

Delivering against our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy requires a structured approach that involves planning, implementation, monitoring, and continuous improvement. Here are some of the ways we will deliver against the strategy:

**Increase Awareness and Training:** Provide regular training for staff and board members on equity, diversity and inclusion issues, legislation, and best practices to foster a culture of inclusivity.

**Data Collection and Analysis:** Develop robust data collection mechanisms to monitor the demographic makeup of our residents and identify areas for improvement in service delivery. Collecting and analysing data on tenant and employee demographics to identify gaps and address inequalities.

**Engagement and Consultation:** Establish regular forums and feedback mechanisms to engage with diverse communities, ensuring their needs are prioritised in our services. Engage employees at all levels in the planning and implementation of this strategy and related policies to understand their perspectives and needs.



**Partnerships and Collaboration:** Work with local organisations, community groups, and stakeholders to promote equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives and share best practices.

**Monitoring and Evaluation:** The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum will lead on regularly review policies and practices in relation to equity, diversity and inclusion, to ensure continuous improvement, with transparent reporting on our progress. Annual reports will be made to the Board relating to this.

**Set Specific, Measurable Goals:** This may be related to the Gender Pay Gap review, Rainbow Accreditation, increasing representation of tenants on our Boards or reviewing presentation of our overall satisfaction scores.

**Involve Leadership:** Secure commitment from the Board and Senior Management Team to ensure our leaders are actively advocating for equity, diversity and inclusion.

**Allocate Resources:** Ensure that the necessary resources (financial, human, and technological) are allocated to support this strategy.

**Acknowledge achievements and raise awareness:** Celebrate milestones and successes towards developing equity, diversity and inclusion, share relevant celebrations and awareness raising campaigns.

## Conclusion

Delivering against our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is an ongoing commitment that requires active participation from all levels of the organisation. Derby Homes is dedicated to fostering an inclusive environment that reflects the diversity of our community and workforce. By adhering to relevant legislation, engaging with our residents, and aligning with best practices in the housing sector, we aim to create a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion that enhances the quality of life for all our residents and employees.

We will review this strategy every three years to ensure it remains effective and creates a more equitable and inclusive environment that responds to the needs of our community.

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## References

- Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- [Housing Ombudsman, "Relationship of Equals" Report](#)
- [Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards](#)