Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy

2021 - 2024

Livv housing group

Introduction

I'm immensely proud that equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are integral to our business. It's vital that all our customers and employees can live and work (respectively) in a welcoming and inclusive environment which fosters a culture of mutual regard and respect.

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy supports the Group's vision and is guided by our values. It sets out our proposals for not only fulfilling our legal and ethical duties but also promotes a culture where the diversity of our employees and customers is valued. Our aspirations are supported by a principle of practice where we seek to consistently demonstrate excellence in equality, inclusion, and fairness in all we do.

Our new strategy shares our deep commitment to EDI and sets out our core principles and priorities for development in the coming years. Our overarching goal is to embed and sustain the best practice in all aspects of the Group's business and activities through engagement and partnership with members of our community, customers, and employees. It's an ambitious agenda, but I'm confident that we can achieve our goal if we work together.

Léann Hearne
Chief Executive

Our vision

We want Livv Housing Group to be known for its proactive and innovative approach to EDI. We aim to create opportunities, reduce barriers, and challenge aspirations for everyone, particularly under-represented groups.

We're fully committed to making sure there is no unjustified discrimination in our processes for recruitment and selection, performance management and pay, and that promotion and retention is fairly granted across all our operations.

We also want to work with our customers to understand how their needs are met and work with a range of partners to provide solutions that provide inclusion for all.

EDI runs through everything we do, and our goal is to develop an inclusive culture where we can act as the leader, role model and conduit in changing perceptions or assumptions.

We're determined that our approach to EDI is much more than our legal or statutory obligations. Through our approach we'll make everyone's lives and experiences richer, and ultimately contribute to developing more inclusive societies.

Our ambition is to build a diverse workforce that reflects our communities and the wider society, to be recognised as a fair and inclusive employer and landlord.

We must fully embrace EDI, working alongside our customers and local, regional, and national partners to be the provider of choice for great homes, tackling tough issues like: skills and employment, poverty, domestic violence, mental well being and anti social behaviour.

What is equality, diversity, and inclusion?

The terms ‘equality’, ‘diversity’ and ‘inclusion’ are often used interchangeably but they’re very different concepts.

Together they allow organisations to perform at their best, meet the needs of customers and stakeholders and enable employees to be the best versions of themselves.

Livv Housing Group has a strong set of corporate values. Those values support our vision, shape our culture, and describe what makes us different. They guide the way we make decisions and work with our customers, employees, and stakeholders.

Our values

Making a difference daily

We invest in our people, our customers and in the creation of a fairer society.

Positively open

We are open to feedback at all times, as we strive to deliver a first-class customer experience.

Forging the right way

We’re creating an inspiring road which others will want to follow.

Together as one

Our teams work on another level of cohesiveness to enable us to deliver better outcomes.

Equality

Equality is about fair and impartial treatment.

To us it means ensuring that equality of opportunity is available to everyone. We ensure that our employees and customers are treated fairly and according to their needs so that no-one is treated differently or discriminated against because of their characteristics.

Diversity

Diversity means all the ways in which we differ. It also means recognising and valuing that difference in all of us. It includes the differences we can see but also the differences that we can't see and those differences are recognised, respected and valued.

Inclusion

Inclusion means ensuring that everyone is given the opportunity to participate. For us this means ensuring that no-one feels left out and that everyone feels that they belong.

We aim to ensure that our employees and customers feel included in our mission, that they have a say in our plans and activities and their views are heard, supported, and respected.

Our strategic themes

The Group completed an EDI review in Spring 2021. The review included engaging our customers, employees, senior leadership team and board members to understand what we do well as a business and areas we could improve.

The review commended the significant work that we've done to highlight the importance of equality and diversity and highlighted that there was a genuine desire across the business to develop and continue evolving the approach.

Employees felt that Livv Housing Group was a good place to work, with employees feeling supported and engaged. They were clear on the career and learning opportunities available to them if they wished to take them.

We've used the feedback to develop our strategic themes to continue to enhance and embed our approach to EDI which we feel are fundamental to meeting our priorities over the next three years.

Employee inclusion and engagement

Customer inclusion and engagement

Develop an inclusive culture

Attracting and retaining a diverse workforce

Employee inclusion and engagement

Creating opportunities for employees to achieve equitable outcomes, celebrate differences and promote inclusion.

Our ambition

Livv Housing Group aspires to be an employer of choice that brings out the best in employees by providing an inclusive working environment.

We know that employees who feel they belong are committed and less likely to leave our business. We understand that potential employees value employers that respect diversity and encourage people to embrace and celebrate differences.

Our ambition is for all employees to feel included. We're committed to supporting, understanding, and making adjustments where necessary to accommodate individual needs.

Our employees

We want everyone at Livv to value their experience with us. We'll provide opportunities for them to learn and grow to enable them to deliver excellent services to our customers.

The actions we take will ensure that everyone has a voice, their views on our approach are heard and everyone is treated fairly and with dignity and respect.

What we will do:

- Create employee groups and networks to raise awareness and ensure EDI is being led from within our workforce.
- Ensure that employees are offered appropriate interventions to support their physical and mental health conditions.
- Develop surveys to seek employee's views on our approach to EDI to ensure we can continue to improve and adapt with best practice.
- Review and enhance our equality, diversity, and inclusion training.
- Review how we communicate about EDI to our employees, including keeping them up to date with diversity policies and practices.

Customer inclusion and engagement

We're committed to creating opportunities for our customers and communities to grow, develop and thrive.

Our ambition

Everything we do is designed to improve the wellbeing and quality of life of our customers, and to contribute to achieving positive impacts through flourishing communities.

Our customers are all different and need tailored support. We must understand those individual needs so that we're able to offer opportunities that achieve fair outcomes.

Our customers and communities

Through our Community Investment Strategy 2020-2023, we've already identified opportunities to meet our community needs. These include important issues such as anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse and the various challenges facing customers from young through to older people.

Our Customer Engagement Strategy 2020-2023 focuses on embedding customer involvement and engagement for service development and delivery. The EDI Strategy is linked to both strategies as we focus on listening, understanding, and responding to the individual and diverse needs of our customers.

We'll ensure that the voice of our customers is considered where there is an impact on the services we deliver, the homes in which they live and the communities in which they thrive.

What we will do:

- Engage with a representative range of customers to ensure that the services we provide are designed with them in mind.
- Promote employment opportunities within the Group to customers using relevant communication channels.
- Analyse customer data to help us shape and adapt our services to our customer's needs.
- Provide training that enables our employees to recognise and respond to the diverse needs of our customers.
- Provide customer training and development to enable barriers to inclusion to be removed.

Developing an inclusive culture

Providing a supportive and inclusive environment where everyone feels valued.

Our ambition

We recognise that diverse teams make better decisions and having different people with different perspectives and backgrounds leads to better designed services for our customers.

We'll promote an environment of EDI in all areas of our day-to-day business and activities. We'll encourage our employees, customers, and stakeholders to recognise that we all have a personal responsibility to deal with others with dignity and respect.

Our culture

We'll promote a culture which values talent beyond stereotypes and helps people reach their potential by contributing their best beyond any prejudice.

Regardless of their identity or background, everyone deserves the opportunity to develop their skills and talents to their full potential, work in a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment and feel confident to share their views.

We need to ensure that our day-to-day activities encourage this so we'll continually review our processes, procedures, and our working practices to ensure that our approach doesn't put any group at a disadvantage.

What we will do:

- Develop a framework for robust and reliable equality data to be collected, analysed, reported, and used in decision making.
- Develop training for equality impact assessments to ensure we consider EDI when reviewing relevant policies and procedures in our business.
- Include EDI awareness as a mandatory element of our leadership development training and our induction for our employees and board members.
- Review our procurement processes to ensure that our partners have to demonstrate their commitment to EDI as part of the contract process.
- Review our approach to networking to ensure that we have opportunities to keep up to date with best practice guidance and to share learning.
- Provide tools to support employees with their challenges in their home and work life.
- Continue to refresh our approach by listening to feedback from our employees.

Attracting and retaining a diverse workforce

We'll attract, retain, and develop a diverse workforce to ensure that everyone can succeed to the best of their ability.

Our ambition

We will attract and retain a workforce that is representative of our wider society. We strongly believe that attracting and retaining a diverse workforce will enable us to drive better performance across our business and have a positive impact on how we deliver services to our customers.

We aim to model best practice in identifying and preventing discrimination, bias or other unfair treatment in our approach.

Our culture

Positive recruitment practices will continue to be important. They will help us to find the right people with the rights skills and experience for the right roles.

We recognise that any activities in this area need to support us to recruit new employees but also create an inclusive approach that enables us to retain and progress talent.

To attract diverse talent, we must remove any barriers that prevent candidates from applying for our roles.

What we will do:

- Keep reviewing what we do to ensure our approach helps us retain our workforce.
- Review our recruitment, selection and onboarding approach to ensure our methods are inclusive and encourage candidates from underrepresented groups.
- Explore how we can diversify our candidate pools through inclusive internships, work experience and other relevant opportunities with a particular focus on socio-economic disadvantage.
- Explore pledges and accreditations that will support our commitments to EDI whilst demonstrating that commitment to potential candidates.
- Improve our careers site and job packs to include our commitments to EDI.

Our public pledges

Not only does our strategy have a strong commitment to equality, but we've also made public pledges on how we want to champion EDI throughout our people practices as an employer.

They include our commitment to:

- the Disability Confident Employer Scheme
- the Living Wage

These pledges provide us with strong frameworks to work within and the guidance to help us make sustained progress and lasting change.

However, we recognise that we need to enhance this approach by reviewing our membership of programmes and forums which may aid our work in promoting EDI.

Monitoring our progress

To ensure that these key objectives are achieved, we'll implement and monitor detailed actions that will specify targets, timescales, and responsibilities. These actions will be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant and reported to our committees. We will also update our Board annually.

Our action plan will include specific EDI objectives and goals – some of these objectives will be about maintaining our current position while others will be about where we need to make progress.

We'll take an evidence-based approach to understanding our position on an annual basis through analysing the various forms of data we collect and seeking intelligence on what we could do differently as we move forward.

Our analysis will not only review demographic data but also seek insight into our success in building an inclusive culture. It'll gain the views of employees and customers, as well as reviewing the results of any relevant surveys.

This in-depth analysis will also enable us to measure and therefore celebrate our success and hold ourselves to account and take remedial action if needed.

Communication and engagement with our employees and customers will be key and each annual plan will be supported by a communications plan.

Our three year roadmap to success

Start ▶ | Year 1 aims | Year 2 aims | Year 3 aims

Set our baseline

We'll start by:

- using our data to review and baseline our current EDI position
- developing actions plans to deliver our EDI commitments

Establish accountabilities and belonging

Our ambitions for Year 1 are to have:

- reviewed our staffing to ensure that we have the correct EDI resource
- committed our senior leadership to lead actions on EDI
- set actions for addressing underlying reasons for representational disparity
- considered our people processes through an EDI lens and altered as appropriate
- improved employee diversity confidence through training and development opportunities

Embed our commitments

Our ambitions for Year 2 are to have:

- tested that our culture truly enables unfair treatment to be questioned constructively
- developed an EDI framework for working with our suppliers
- created succession plans for under-represented groups
- reviewed measurements against our EDI actions

Lead and promote excellence

Our ambitions for Year 3 are to have:

- taken an active leadership role on EDI
- a workforce that is representative of the areas we operate in
- listened, reviewed and refined our approach as things have changed

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