

**Equality,
Diversity
& Inclusion
Strategy**
2021-2026





Strategic objectives

“Diversity is about being invited to the party. Inclusion is being asked to dance.” Verna Meyers.

In this metaphor, equality may be seen as providing a bus to take everyone. Whilst seemingly fair, equality does not take account of everyone coming from a different starting point. Inclusion ensures that everyone can join the bus from their different starting points. In other words, everyone is treated fairly and no one suffers disadvantage or discrimination.

At Eastlight, we aim to celebrate our differences and give everyone the opportunity to play an active role in shaping our inclusive services and contributing to the development of our business and communities. Together we will build a culture where difference is celebrated and valued.

We will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour or micro aggressions. Each of us at Eastlight has an obligation to call out such behaviour whenever we experience or observe it, and as an organisation we will support everyone in doing this.

There are nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. These are reflected in the nine diversity strands that are equally important at Eastlight.

We aim to be an inclusive employer and landlord, developing an environment and services which are sensitive to all nine protected characteristics.

We believe that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) targets and priorities are affected by societal changes and the needs of the organisation. To embed equality and inclusion properly, we will not be able to do everything at once. In the two legacy organisations we have done some good work on gender issues, and now, for our first couple of years, we want to prioritise race and disability. There has been recent increased focus on the issue of racism through Black Lives Matter and we have a high number of customers or their family members

with disabilities. These strands were identified by customers, Board and our people during our Future of Eastlight Festival workshops. This does not mean we do not value the other areas. The more focused work is, the more likely to succeed. We will continue to work on all the other areas but have set specific targets for these two.

Diversity Strands

Age

Disability

Gender Reassignment

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Pregnancy and Maternity

Race

Religion or Belief

Sex

Sexual Orientation

Primary Objectives

This is how we will become an inclusive and accesible employer and ensure all of our customers have a voice.

- Further develop our reputation as an organisation which cares passionately about our people and customers, with equality, diversity and inclusion and our values at the heart of all we do to improve our reputation as an employer and landlord of choice
- Eastlight will become an inclusive and accesible employer; ensuring that all our people are given opportunities to realise their potential and contribute to the business, regardless of background, identity and beliefs
- We will create a culture where there is a clear and common understanding, language and aspirations
- Provide accessible homes, ensuring they are adaptive to specific needs and requirements including cost, attributes and characteristics
- Provide accessible services for customers and communities
- Develop and support partnerships with other organisations that will improve equality, diversity and inclusion at Eastlight and in the communities we serve



Delivery Plan

Period	Measure	Core strategic activities
To March 2021	Collect all nine diversity strands data from our people and Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the make-up of our people, leadership and Board
To April 2021	Facilitated conversations with our people and board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand the temperature of current feeling and the developing culture internally, among our people, in respect of the race and disability strands
To May 2021	Develop regular reporting on gap analysis and progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key Performance Indicators agreed and included in Board and Leadership Team dashboards
TBC	Launch a new total reward package for our people that supports inclusion and celebrates diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved reputation Improved diversity Become employer of choice
To June 2021	Race and disability training sessions for all our people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved knowledge and understanding
To July 2021	Collaborate with other Housing Associations to understand an ED&I baseline position in respect of points of excellence and common gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Points of excellence and common gaps identified across the East of England Medium term commitments shaped
To September 2021	Unconscious bias training for all our people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved knowledge and understanding
To September 2021	Collect two diversity strands data (race and disability) from our customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the make-up of our customer base
To September 2021	Consider the impact of our communication systems with our customers in respect of race and disability and create an action plan to address any issues identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved access for our customers
To October 2021	Explore the use of 'invisible creations' to help remove the stigma of disability. Products that are inclusive and aid mobility. Products are dual-purpose, discreet and may be strategically placed around the home to help reduce decline in health and make daily living easier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More accessible homes in respect of disability and age

Period	Measure	Core strategic activities
To December 2021	Carry out a gap analysis on race and disability between our people and our customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of gaps in our representation of our communities in respect of race and disability
To December 2021	Determine which of our customers have specific needs because of a disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps to ensure homes and services are accessible strands
To December 2021	Create a representative and inclusive photo bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal and external branding and communications which represents our communities
To January 2022	Carry out an assessment of progress in respect of our peoples' understanding of ED&I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the current mindset of our people and our developing culture in respect of all nine diversity strands
To March 2022	Agree parameters and an action plan to address needs of customers with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs identification
To June 2022	Impact assessment of our total reward package and our people policies across all nine diversity strands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessible and inclusive employee value proposition Improved recruitment process, representative candidate pools and simple to understand inclusivity policies
To December 2022	Improve gender diversity in the Repairs and Customer Services teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBC
To December 2022	Liaise with contractors to establish whether their ED&I policies are effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBC
To December 2022	Encourage and develop diversity of thought in the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBC
To December 2023	Understand the gap between the make-up of our customer base and the make-up of our people, our Leadership and our Board in respect of all diversity strands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBC
To December 2023	Collaborate with other Housing Associations in the East to improve inclusivity as leaders, employers and landlords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBC




Visit: www.eastlighthomes.co.uk

 www.facebook.com/eastlighthomes

 www.instagram.com/eastlighthomes

 www.twitter.com/eastlighthomes

 www.linkedin.com/company/eastlight-community-homes-

February 2021

Eastlight
Community Homes