



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

## **1.0 Introduction**

We are a Registered Provider (RP), formed in 1967 as a response to a chronic housing shortage in the London Borough of Croydon. We currently own and manage over 1500 homes in the London Boroughs of Bromley, Croydon, Merton and Sutton. As well as managing our owned stock, 23 homes are managed on behalf of other housing providers.

We specialise in providing homes for those residents who require General Needs, Supported and Older Persons accommodation. In addition to this we also provide access to home ownership through shared ownership, Help to Buy and London Living Rent homes.

As a housing provider and employer, we can reduce the disadvantages that some people experience, by making our services more responsive and accessible to a diverse range of individual and community needs. We are committed to listening to our internal and external customers and involving them in the development of services and recognising the value of their diversity.

We want our colleagues to feel that in everything they do they are valued and are making a difference and that the Board actively promotes fairness and the elimination of prejudice in all the activities of the Association.

## **2.0 Where are we now?**

During our previous business plan Commitment2020, we signed up to the Chartered Institute of Housing Equality and Diversity Charter and delivered a number of initiatives through this including detailed and impactful resident surveys, support for the Legacy Youth Zone, promotion of ccha's Horizon programme which tackles worklessness and offering residents digital workshops. However, since the last strategy was developed in 2016, ED&I in the housing sector has changed dramatically and a lot of progress has been made and we feel that it is necessary to re-evaluate our baseline position before taking improvements forward.

Our Board and our staff team as a whole are representative of our local community as demonstrated by the Diversity profile for each group given in Appendix 1 although we aim to increase the diversity even further in the next 5 years particularly around age, disability and gender. Our Board are diverse, not only with a mix of different work experience and knowledge but backgrounds and life experience. Our staff team also reflect the diversity of our community which is really positive but if you focussed in on the Senior management team, this is less diverse, and there is work to be done in our recruitment processes but also on succession planning to ensure that existing staff are supported to be able to take advantage of opportunities within the organisation when they arise. This is also an area which has been highlighted by the staff team themselves through the last two staff surveys.

This new ED&I strategy supports the new business plan ccha2025 and underpins our commitment to promote equality, diversity, and inclusion (ED&I), and to meet the needs and expectations of all our employees and customers. Our goal is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society, and for each employee and customer to feel respected and valued.

### 2.0 Strategic Objective and Values

Our Business Plan ccha2025 aspires to deliver our key strategic objective:

*Staff and partner engagement - We will be an employer and partner of choice.*

Alongside the ccha2025 business plan our new core values were developed by all at ccha for both our employees and customers:

<b>C - Care</b> We care about our customers, staff and our wider environment	<b>R - Resilient</b> We are resilient and effective in challenging times
<b>A - Adapt</b> We adapt and embrace change to achieve our goals	<b>E - Everyone</b> Our strength is in our unity with everyone playing their part

### 3.0 Definitions

**Equality** is about ensuring that all people are treated equally. This does not mean treating everyone the same, but recognising the differences in life situations, in experience and ensuring that there is equality of opportunity for all people, taking their needs into account.

We will continuously strive to let every person feel that they are receiving fair treatment and have equal opportunities and rights, irrespective of their background, income, circumstances, or protected characteristics.

**Diversity** means valuing the uniqueness of individuals, celebrating difference, and recognising that everyone through their own mixture of skills and experience has a valuable contribution to make.

**Inclusion** means that every person feels appropriately respected, valued, and welcomed as a customer or colleague.

We recognise that there are many different types of barriers that make people feel excluded, so we will continuously strive to ensure individuals are being included in our services and employment.

Under the Equality Act 2010, we have a legal duty to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and foster good relations between key equality strands. These include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

#### **4.0 Strategic objectives of the new ED & I Strategy**

As an organisation we have committed to a renewed focus on ED&I over the next 5 years with four key strategic objectives detailed below to give an overview of ccha's plan moving forward.

- **The organisation has a clear idea of its strengths and weaknesses with regards to equality, diversity and inclusion and areas for development.**
- **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion is core to the organisations values and ethos and communicated to staff, residents, and service users.**
- **Prejudice-related incidents are dealt with effectively and staff, customers and contractors have confidence in the process.**
- **A diverse team with engaged and talented staff who are innovative and truly understand customer needs.**

Alongside the strategy is a summary of the action plan which has been included in this document as Appendix 3. The action plan will inevitably develop and change as we move through the next 5 years, but the focus will always return to the key objectives. Appendix 3 highlights our statutory requirements towards ED&I.

#### **4.1 The organisation has a clear idea of its strengths and weaknesses with regards to equality, diversity and inclusion and areas for development.**

We delivered a lot through the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy up to 2020 but the world has moved on significantly since 2016 when this strategy was set and we wanted to re-establish our base position in terms of both resident services and staff practices. We felt that we could not move forward with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion until we had a clear idea of where our strengths and weaknesses lay and where the focus for the future needed to be. The desired outcome from this inward analysis was to ascertain a clear starting point

in order to create a 5-year action plan with smart long-term objectives and accurate ways of measuring progress.

Corporately whilst we develop and improve internal structures for ED&I based on current findings, operationally ccha will continue to fulfill this objective by gathering further information.

We will continually update progress on the ED&I journey with regular organisational reviews of the action plan during the first 2 years. Achieving this key objective will ensure we create solid foundations for organisational change going forward.

### **Measures of Success**

- Insight into the current staff perception of ED&I at ccha
- Establishment of a base position for ED&I for staff and residents
- A fully trained management and staff team who understand ED&I which will promotes a culture of acceptance

## **4.2 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is core to the organisation's values and ethos and communicated to staff, residents, and stakeholders.**

We want to create clear and transparent processes of communication to understand ccha's values and ethos through varying forms of communication including ccha's website, hub and correspondence. ccha have an effective communications and marketing team who lead on this; however, we want to expand this so that it is embedded in the culture for everyone we work for and with.

We want to ensure fair and equal access to services for all and put our customers at the heart of our business – listening to them and taking action to deliver the type of service they want from us.

We aim to develop and support a culture that is inclusive and welcoming to all, with equal opportunities in training, promotion, learning and development which in turn empowers and enables all employees and customers to thrive and prosper.

Employees and customers will be able to articulate the organisation's commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

### **Measures of success**

- ED&I Management group and ED&I champions amongst our residents and staff
- Robust ED&I structure and processes
- Inclusive ED&I culture within ccha

- Meaningful ED&I information for staff, residents and stakeholders to support our business plan objectives

#### **4.3 A diverse team with engaged and talented staff who are innovative and truly understand customer needs.**

A diverse team with engaged talent creates stronger creativity, innovation and a better understanding of our customer needs, giving a truer representation of our customers and communities.

A workforce that promotes equality and diversity and that respects and values their colleagues for who they are and what they believe.

Therefore, through analysis and review of our current recruitment processes, we will gain a better understanding on creating and maintaining a diverse workforce and what is required to improve it.

##### **Measures of success**

- We want to ensure that no applicant, temporary worker or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.
- We want to recruit and retain a workforce that is truly reflective of our customers and the communities in which we work.
- We aim to have a workforce and board that are fully representative of the demographic of our residents, measured through personal data collection and public census data.

#### **4.4 Prejudice-related incidents are dealt with effectively and staff, customers and contractors have confidence in the process.**

ccha currently has several generic processes allowing internal and external customers to report issues or incidents, however we want to expand on this. Therefore, ccha will create clear and specific sets of actions and steps for both customers, employees and contractors around communicating. We want them to have their voices heard and have various methods and mediums to do this, to ensure there is an easy and accessible process for everyone and that these processes are communicated regularly.

To identify and eradicate discrimination and harassment, we need employees, customers, and contractors to know that ccha have a strong ED&I ethos and do not tolerate any form of discrimination.

As a result of improved processes and communication being made through specific formal channels, we should have clear data on these incidences to enable appropriate action and improvement.

### **Measure of success**

- We will not see an increase in prejudice related incidences occurring, but we will promote an environment where people feel free to come forward if it does occur.
- Clear message to residents regarding ccha's approach to ED&I

## **5.0 Measuring and monitoring performance**

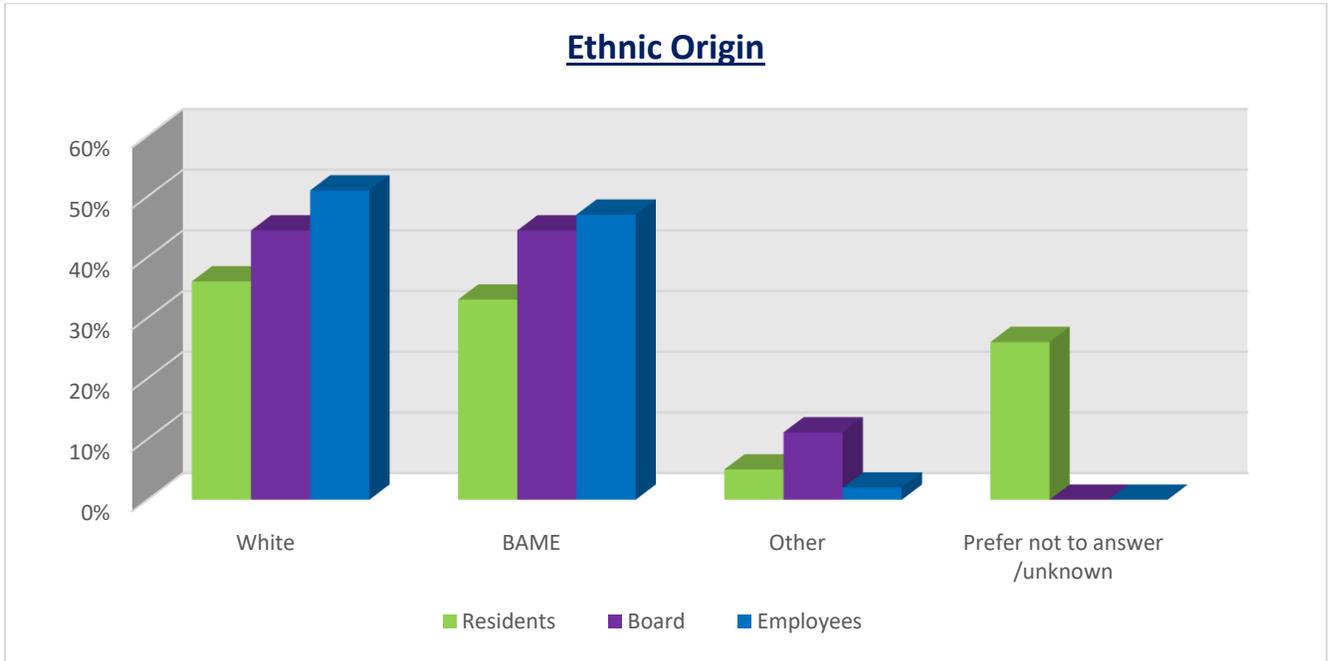
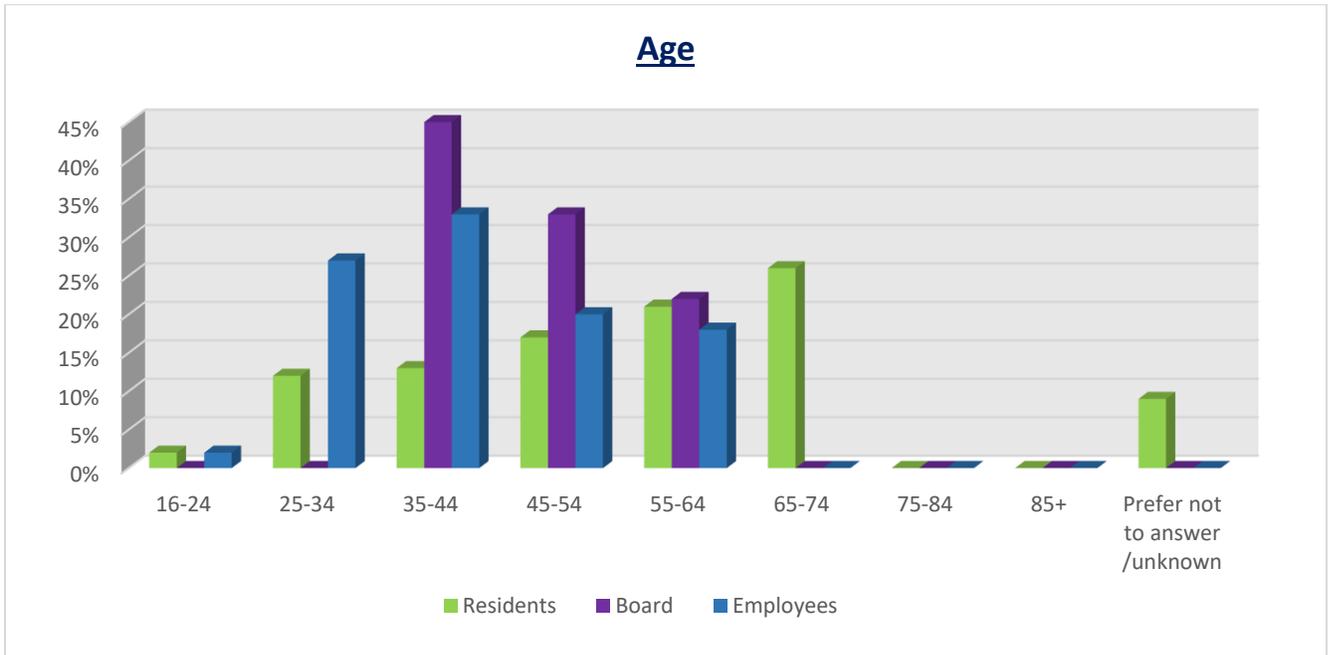
**5.1** We aim to develop a meaningful set of Key Performance Indicators which allow us to measure our performance against our strategic objectives but also promote a culture of continuous improvement.

## **6.0 Summary**

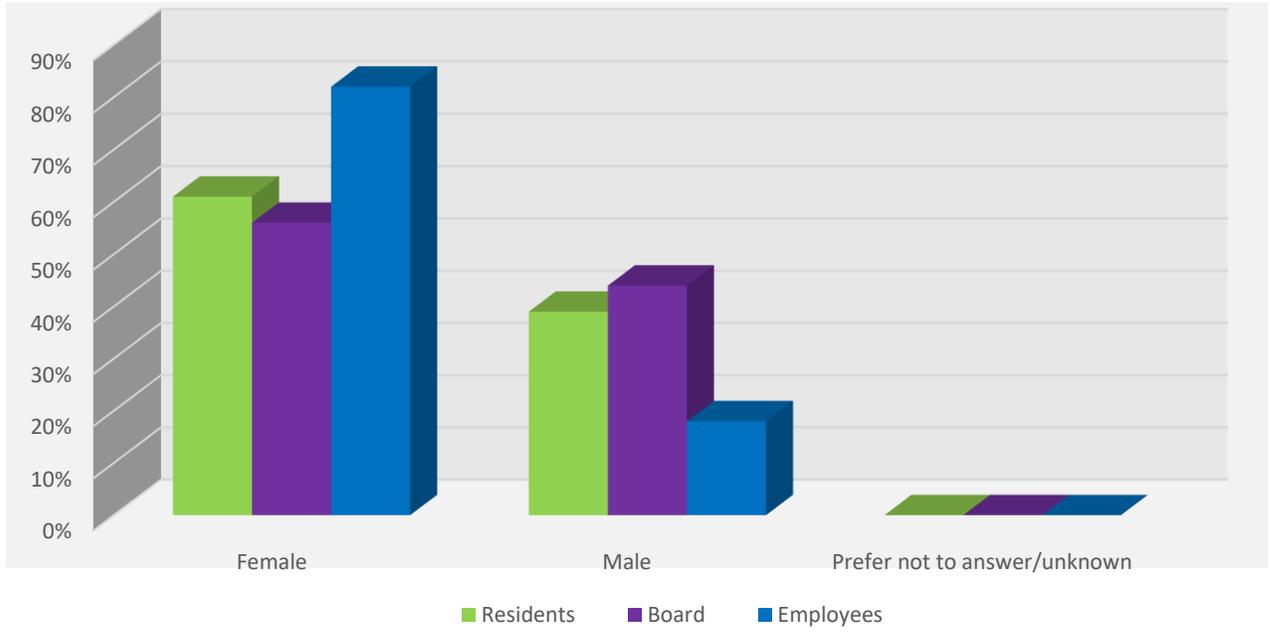
Board members, employees, contractors, customers, and stakeholders all have a crucial part to play in promoting and embedding equality, diversity and inclusion at ccha and within the communities we work. This will be achieved by each individual recognising their responsibility in contributing to the success of the strategy and fully committing to creating a sustained shift in culture and thinking. We must all recognise the need for positive change and challenge our unconscious bias as individuals in order to move the organisation forward.

Creating clear pathways and removing barriers to any form of discrimination is imperative to ensuring all colleagues and customers are treated equally, valued and empowered, developing a culture where all can thrive and prosper at ccha.

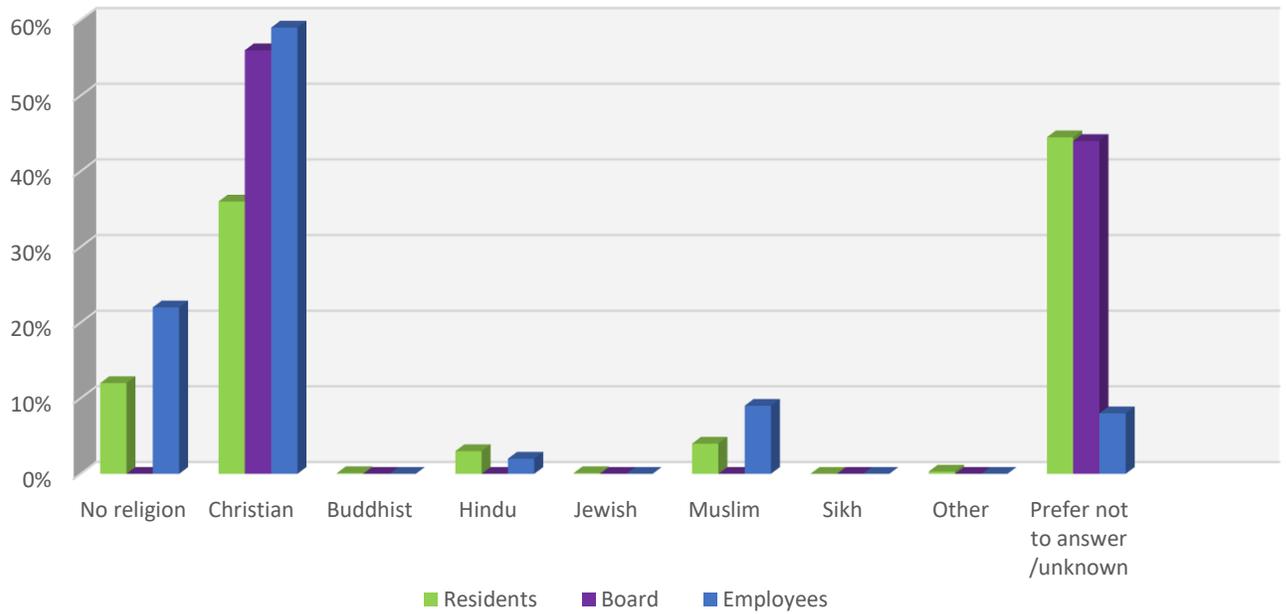
**Appendix 1: Board, employee and community profiles as of December 2020**



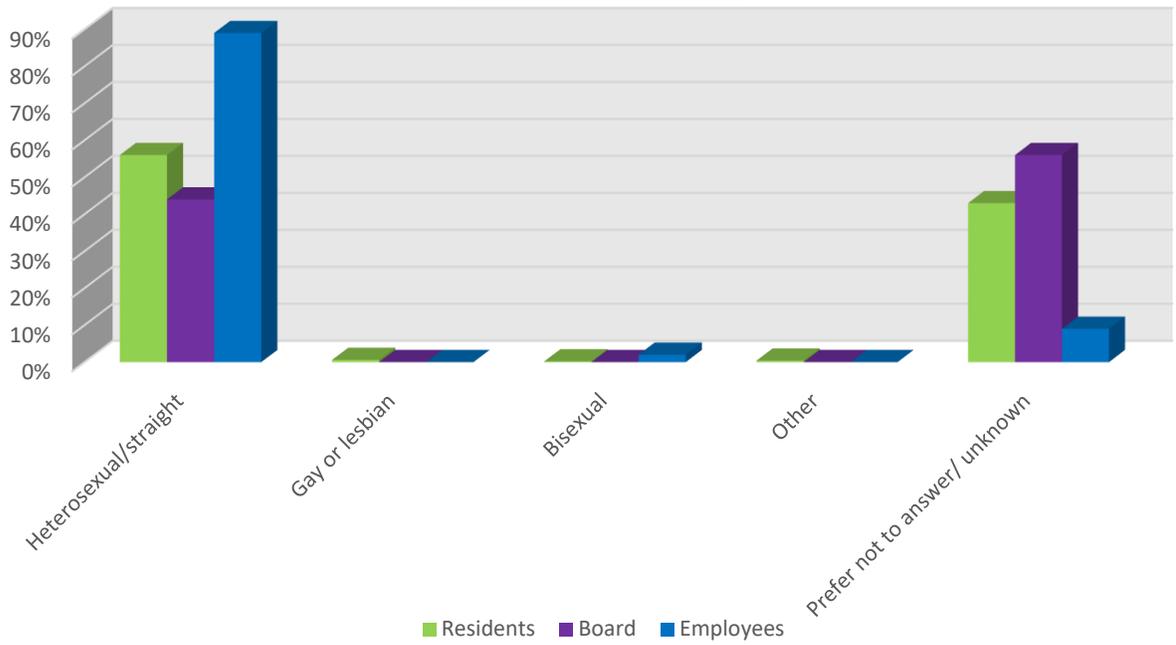
## Gender



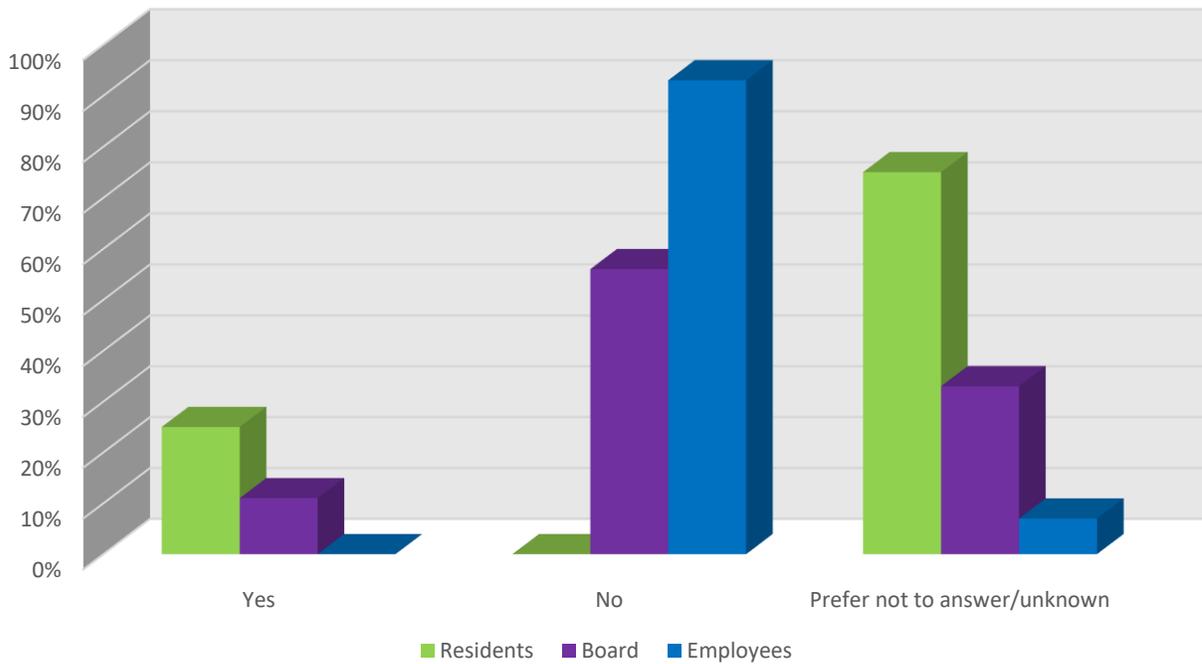
## Religion



### Sexual Orientation



### Disability



<b>AGE</b>	<b>16-24</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-54</b>	<b>55-64</b>	<b>65-74</b>	<b>75-84</b>	<b>85+</b>	<b>Prefer not to answer /unknown</b>
Residents	2%	12%	13%	17%	21%	26%	0%	0%	9%
Board	0%	0%	45%	33%	22%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Employees	2%	27%	33%	20%	18%	0%	0%	0%	0%

<b>ETHNIC ORIGIN</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>BAME</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Prefer not to answer /unknown</b>
Residents	36%	33%	5%	26%
Board	44.4%	44.4%	11.1%	0%
Employees	51%	47%	2%	0%

<b>GENDER</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Prefer not to answer/unknown</b>
Residents	61%	39%	0%
Board	56%	44%	0%
Employees	82%	18%	0%

<b>RELIGION</b>	<b>No religion</b>	<b>Christian</b>	<b>Buddhist</b>	<b>Hindu</b>	<b>Jewish</b>
Residents	12%	36%	0.1%	3%	0.1%
Board	0%	56%	0%	0%	0%
Employees	22%	59%	0%	2%	0%
<b>RELIGION</b>	<b>Muslim</b>	<b>Sikh</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Prefer not to answer /unknown</b>	
Residents	4%	0%	0.3%	44.5%	
Board	0%	0%	0%	44%	
Employees	9%	0%	0%	8%	

<b>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</b>	<b>Bisexual</b>	<b>Heterosexual/straight</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Prefer not to answer/unknown</b>
Residents	0.2%	56%	0.4%	43%
Board	0%	44%	0%	56%
Employees	2%	89%	0%	9%

<b>DISABILITIES</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Prefer not to answer/unknown</b>
Residents	25%	0%	75%
Board	11%	56%	33%
Employees	0%	93%	7%

## **Appendix 2: Our Equality and Diversity requirements**

### **Regulatory**

We recognise the importance and value of involving our customers and the outcomes placed on us to do so, from the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH), our regulatory body. Specifically:

#### **Customer service, choice and complaints**

- Provide choices, information and communication that are appropriate to the diverse needs of our customers in the delivery of all standards
- Have an approach to complaints that is clear, simple, and accessible and that ensures that complaints are resolved promptly, politely and fairly

#### **Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of customers**

- Treat all customers with fairness and respect
- Demonstrate that we understand the different needs of our customers, including those with additional support needs.

### **Legal**

We are legally obliged to adhere to the requirements of:

#### **Equality Act 2010**

As a Social Housing Provider, the Equality Act 2010 places a general duty upon us to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

The Equality Act explains that having a due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where they are different from the needs of other people
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

#### **Human Rights Act 1998**

As a Social Housing Provider, we need to consider three articles contained within the Human Rights Act in providing all our services:

- Article 6 – right to a fair trial
- Article 8 – right to respect for private life, family life and the home
- Article 14 – prohibition of discrimination

### Appendix 3: Summary of the action plan

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN YEAR 1 & 2			
Strategic Objectives	Responsible team	Measure of success	Timescale for delivery
<b>The organisation has a clear idea of its strengths and weaknesses with regards to equality, diversity and inclusion and areas for development</b>			
<p>ED&amp;I staff survey - where we are now?</p> <p>Conducting an independent self-evaluation audit</p> <p>Management training sessions on ED&amp;I</p> <p>Staff training/workshop sessions on ED&amp;I</p> <p>Work with the operational teams to establish what our current practises are and where we want to get to and then extend this action plan to achieve this</p>	<p>Human Resources/Operations</p>	<p>Results of the staff survey fed into ED&amp;I action plan</p> <p>Assessment of our base position with regards to ED&amp;I for residents through surveys and focus groups - data collection and analysis, to understand 'Who are residents are?'</p> <p>Completed self-evaluation audit, focusing on customers and providing inclusive service</p> <p>Training for managers on how to encourage reporting of ED&amp;I issues and provide staff support.</p> <p>Set out clear standards and behaviours which will feed into the staff handbook, policies and procedures</p>	<p>September 22</p>
<b>Prejudice-related incidents are dealt with effectively and staff and residents have confidence in the process</b>			
<p>Develop a Dignity at Work Policy</p> <p>Develop Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy</p> <p>Review ccha's current Grievance and Disciplinary Policy</p> <p>Review current staff Code of Conduct</p> <p>Ensure links to other ccha strategies which sit under EDI umbrella when due for review</p> <p>Review customer service and complaints procedure to include guidelines on reporting and dealing with ED&amp;I issues</p> <p>Provide a clear equality statement and strategy on ccha website and HUB</p> <p>Ensure that ED&amp;I is considered and included in all wider communications</p>	<p>Human Resources</p> <p>Communications</p>	<p>Clear policies and procedures in place for residents which promote and support ED&amp;I</p> <p>EDI impact assessments are carried out will all policy, procedures and strategies at review point.</p> <p>Clear message to residents regarding ccha's approach to ED&amp;I on the website via ED&amp;I Strategy and Statement</p>	<p>May 22</p>

