

Inclusion, Diversity and Equality Strategy



Together we are RHP



Our values underpin everything we do and throughout all aspects with us, you'll see these underlying messages:

- We're **real**, being open and honest about what we can and can't do. We're authentic and show we care. We take our jobs seriously but never ourselves.
- We're **easy to do business with**, that means being clear, knowledgeable and friendly, keeping people updated at every step.
- We're **purposeful**: we go after what counts and love working together to make great things happen.

Inclusion. Diversity. **They're more than just words for us.**

It's part of our values. **It's part of being RHP Group.**

It's at the heart of our vision to be one of the best service providers in the UK and an excellent employer. We recognise that having a culture of inclusion, providing equality of opportunity, and valuing diversity are vital to our success.



We can only deliver on this by putting people at the heart. We can only be the best service provider if we know our customers, who they are, what their needs are and embrace what they bring to us. To be the best means services that anyone can access and find easy to use. We need to design our services for our customers.

We can only be an excellent employer by creating the best environment for our people to be real and bring their authentic self to work. We want our employees to feel included, that their voice and opinion matters and that they can grow during their time with us. We know through experience that different ideas, perspectives, and backgrounds create a stronger and more creative work environment that delivers better results. It fuels our innovation and connects us closer to our customers and the communities we serve.

We want our employees to reflect the diversity of the communities that we serve and influence. We aim to be a place where people can be free to be themselves no matter what their identity or background.

It is important to us that whether you are a customer or an employee you feel valued, appreciated, and free to be who you are, regardless of gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, age, neurodiversity, disability status, citizenship, or any other aspect which makes you who you are.

But we also know we are not there yet, and it is something we need to work on every day. We plan to do this through two routes:

1. By having accessible and easy to use services
2. By welcoming a diverse workforce who are supported by a culture of inclusion.

We can also do this by moving to conscious inclusion, where through our everyday activity and long-term strategic planning we ensure that inclusion is embedded from the very beginning and not tacked on at the end.

1. What it means to us



Inclusion, equity, and diversity can mean different things, so our definitions are below:

Inclusion - is our goal. It is what drives what we do. We are truly inclusive when we deliver:

- a. services or other provisions where all those who need it feel it is welcoming, relevant, and equally accessible and accountable to all and
- b. a workplace and organisation where everyone feels welcomed, valued, treated fairly, can be heard and respected and has an opportunity to thrive and contribute.

Equity refers to fair and just practices and policies that ensure people can thrive. Equity is different than equality in that equality implies treating everyone as if their experiences are the same. Being equitable means acknowledging and addressing structural inequalities - historic and current- which advantage some and disadvantage others. Equal treatment results in equity only if everyone starts with equal access to opportunities.

We will only achieve these when we have **diversity** of thought, experience and understanding that can add value to decisions about essential services such as ours and how we work. It covers much more than the protected or visible characteristics and includes personalities, life experiences, aspirations, and lifestyles. By having richness of diversity within our organisation we can better understand better our customers to deliver more services, be more innovative and deliver

the results we want. Therefore, the more we can access and empower diversity, the stronger we will be.

By law we must not discriminate against the nine protected characteristics, nor would we want to, and this is a core part of what underlines this. By building conscious inclusion at the heart of our organisation, it should ensure that we encourage, support, and enable diversity across all strands.

2. Responsibilities



The Board is ultimately responsible for ensuring an inclusive organisation which promotes equality and diversity.

The Chief Executive has lead responsibility for ensuring that RHP Group's strategy in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion for employees and customers, as well as this policy, is fully implemented. The Executive Director of People and Business Services is the operational lead.

All members of the RHP Group have a responsibility to promote diversity and inclusion.

3. Where are we now



If we are to serve our customers best, then we need to know who our customers are and how we internally reflect them.

Who is our community?



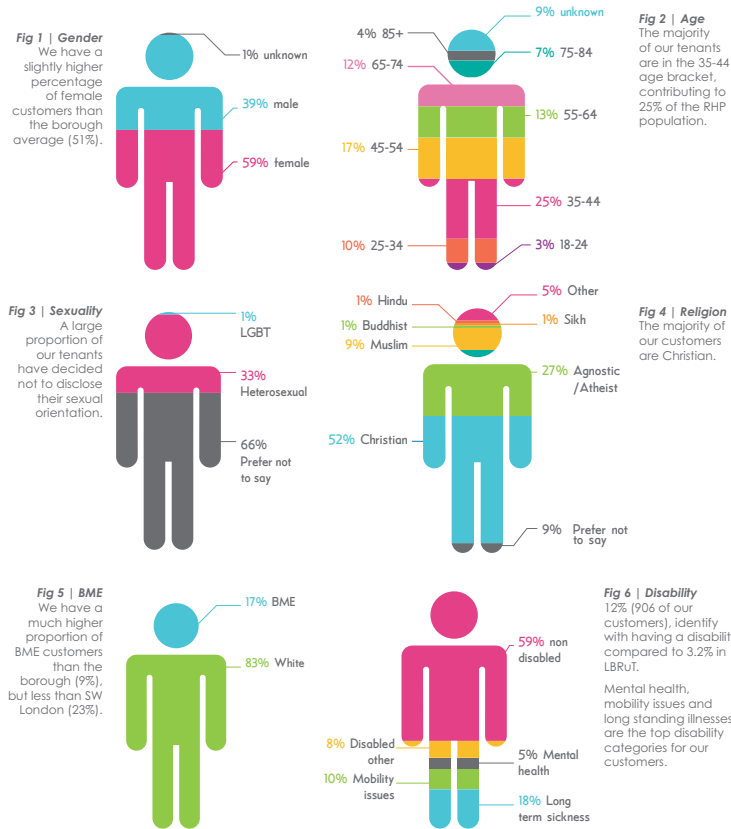
Whilst the Group operates across Greater London and Berkshire, most of our housing stock can be found in 3 main boroughs and the headline statistics can be seen below.

The data has been pulled from various sources between 2010-2019, so is outdated and will be updated once a new census takes place. The main strands of gender, disability, ethnicity and sexuality have been focused on as it can then correlate to employee data.

Group		Richmond Upon Thames	Kingston	Hounslow
GENDER	Male	49%	49%	51%
	Female	50%	51%	49%
DISABILITY	Yes	11.5%	Not stated	15%
	No / unknown	88.5%	Not stated	85%
ETHNICITY	BAME	14.1%	33%	64.5%
SEXUALITY	Heterosexual	90%	Not stated	Not stated
	Gay/ Lesbian/ Bisexual	About 10%	Not stated	Not stated

Who are our customers?

RHP last profiled our customers in 2016 and the summary of this can be seen in the picture below:



For Co-op Homes 73.78% of respondents were female, with 25.6% male and 0.6% identifying as neither. 68.75% identify as white British, Black African 7.5%, White Other 5% and Black Caribbean, at 4.38%.

Whilst we know that there will not have been significant changes in our customer base, it highlights a gap in our knowledge and so we cannot assess how our services best meet the needs of our customers. How can we ensure equity if we don't know the starting point?

Who are our employees?



When employees were asked in a survey July 2020 about the culture:

- 93% said that 'people here are treated fairly regardless of their age, disability, race, ethnic origin, sex or sexual orientation'.
- 87% of employees said that 'I can be myself around here'.

This is incredibly positive and talks of the culture being supportive of inclusion. But the statics do not indicate that we are inclusive overall as can be seen below:

Group		RHP Board	CHS Board	Executive Group	Leadership Team	Employees
Gender	Male	60%	71%	60%	50%	47%
	Female	40%	29%	40%	50%	53%
Disability	Yes	0%	0%	0%	0%	7%
Ethnicity	BAME	0%	0%	0%	0%	24%
Sexuality	Heterosexual	100%	71%	100%	92.5%	96%
	Gay/Lesbian /Bisexual	0%	0%	0%	7.5%	4%
Total numbers		10	7	5	8	256

Whilst gender is well balanced across the organisation, the same cannot be said for the other main areas of focus. The diversity which comes from ethnic background, physical and mental ability as well as sexuality is notably lacking and requires focus.

4. What we are going to do



There are 3 key goals:

Goal 1:

Develop and sustain an inclusive organisation

Goal 2:

Recruit, retain and advance a diverse organisation.

Goal 3:

Integrate diversity, equity and inclusion into what we do

If effectively implemented these goals, strategies and critical tasks will achieve the following:






- a culture of inclusion
- a stronger sense of belonging and inclusion across employees, resulting in better engagement
- increased ownership to deliver better services to our customers
- improved customer engagement and satisfaction, and as a result a reduction in complaints & grievances
- voice of the customer embedded at all different levels of the organisation
- a stronger, resilient organisation which can better meet the needs of the community.

Inclusion Action Plan






GOAL ONE | Develop and sustain an inclusive organisation

What	Why	Critical Tasks	When	Outcome
<p>Board and EG leadership</p>	<p>Visible leadership is critical to embed and ensure real change occurs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Annual Board and EG strategy sessions on inclusion to review progress and agree future focus. ➤ Training to be built into the Board and EG development plans. ➤ EG and LT only to speak at events where the panel/speaker line-up includes a diverse range of people (gender and ethnicity in particular). We will also ensure we send a diverse range of people to speak at and contribute to events. 	<p>Annual</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The Board and EG are supported to visibly lead this area.</p>
<p>Organisational commitment</p>	<p>An inclusive culture is built through our people constantly supporting and enabling it. We need a 'community of practice'- who enhance their knowledge and skills as well as lead on key projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop and enable the Inclusion Network to lead on key projects and promote inclusion across the organisation. ➤ Introduce mentoring and coaching programmes within the organisation to ensure equity of opportunity. ➤ Inclusion is a golden thread through all work including L&D, policies etc. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Within 21-22</p> <p>Q4 21 onwards</p>	<p>Leadership of this is across all areas and levels of the organisation.</p>
<p>Use data to drive insight and action</p>	<p>With limited understanding of where we are now, it is hard to understand what is driving certain aspects and what we can do differently or indeed do the same. Data also helps keep this visible and drive direction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Create a base set of data to understand where we are now. This may involve asking employees to update their RHP People information and a campaign around this. See below for customers. ➤ Develop a set of reports which are regular reported to the EG and Board. ➤ Develop methods to gain qualitative insight to enhance the insight. ➤ Have a question in surveys on 'I feel comfortable talking about my religion, sexuality or disability if I want to and not be discriminated against.' 	<p>Q3 20-21</p> <p>Q4 20-21</p> <p>Q1 21-22</p> <p>Next main survey</p>	<p>Detailed reporting half yearly to EG and annually to Board.</p> <p>Improved overall diversity statistics within RHP over time to 2025 by which we reflect our local community and customers.</p> <p>Baseline and then improvement.</p>

GOAL ONE | Develop and sustain an inclusive organisation






What 	Why 	Critical Tasks 	When 	Outcome 
Share stories and keep them alive	Raising awareness is a key part of building culture, helping us understand and learn.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ A yearly educational calendar of activity focused on all strands of diversity & inclusion to promote stories, educate and advance the conversation. ▶ Reverse mentoring introduced to support senior leaders in their understanding. ▶ Ensure that Great Place to Think speakers are from a range of backgrounds, and speak opening about inclusion. ▶ Learn from other RSLs and share best practice. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Q1 21-22</p> <p>Q1 21-22</p> <p>21-22 plan Ongoing</p>	Increased awareness in issues which impact our employees.
Policies and procedures	How we do things can impact consciously or unconsciously on what we do. Keeping these under review with a conscious inclusion lens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ensure inclusion is embedded through policies and procedures. ▶ Any update, change or creation of a new policy or procedure should be reviewed for inclusion impact. ▶ A review should take place 6 months after a new policy or procedure has been introduced to assess against diversity data and whether any unintended consequence has been created. 	<p>Review through year</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	Policies and procedures support an enable an inclusive organisation.
Unknowns unknown	Many of the actions are to address things we know, there may be things we don't where external support could enhance what we are doing and provide additional insight.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Source external consultancy support which add value and additional insight. ▶ Research and join an external inclusion group/forum/network which will enhance RHP's work by joining with others. 	<p>Q4 20-21</p> <p>Within 21-22</p>	RHP is constantly learning and enhancing its plan, activity and impact.

GOAL TWO | Recruit, retain and advance a diverse organisation






What 	Why 	Critical Tasks 	When 	Outcome 
<p>Diverse Leadership</p>	<p>The leadership in the organisation is not diverse and therefore may act in a way which hinders equity and inclusion. Therefore, a key part of this goal is to have by 2025 RHP & CHS Boards, EG and LT that are reflective of the community and employees we serve. People should still be recruited where they have the right skills but there should be a clear focus and strategy to change this.</p> <p>Given the size of the organisation and the numbers involved percentages are being used as one or two people can have a big impact across the groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ When positions become available on our Boards, EG, or LT a focus should be given to where we advertise and how we encourage a diverse range of applicants to reply. ➤ Where recruitment agents are used this must be a focus and requirement. ➤ Throughout the recruitment process the data must be monitored and tracked, with reporting and analysis after to continually learn how to attract the best diverse candidates to RHP. ➤ Gain feedback from both candidates and successful applicants, embedding learnings from this into the process. ➤ Make a positive and deliberate step to identify diverse leaders within our organisation and to train them. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>By 2025 to have improved across the Boards/EG/LT representation with the aim of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ BAME to 20%. ➤ To maintain the gender split within a ratio of 40-60%.








GOAL TWO | Recruit, retain and advance a diverse organisation

What 	Why 	Critical Tasks 	When 	Outcome 
<p>Recruitment practices which encourage diverse applicants, are equitable and help us appoint the best people who live our values</p>	<p>In order to reflect the communities we serve, it is important for there to be a diverse workforce. This also ensures we remain open to diverse thinking which encourages better creativity, innovation, and service to our customers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review and implement a strategy for where we advertise which attracts a broader range of candidates - are there agencies which can connect with that enhance it? ➤ Language in advert and JDs to promote inclusive culture. ➤ Remove applicant names from shortlisting and assess after 6 months whether this has positive or negative impact. ➤ Bring in external support to review our practices including potential uses of things like the UK Disability Symbol. ➤ Explore unconscious attitudes to inclusion as part of the recruitment process. 	<p>Q4 20-21</p> <p>Q3 20-21</p> <p>Q4 20-21</p> <p>Q1 21</p> <p>Q1 21</p>	<p>Data analytics which show diversity of candidates applying through to shortlisting and then appointment.</p>
<p>Managers understand how inclusion attracts and retains employees, which delivers high quality performance</p>	<p>Managers have one of the biggest impacts on who joins and stays in an organisation. Their skill and understanding in this is critical to success.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Train recruiting managers in good recruitment practice including conscious inclusion. ➤ Train managers (from EG down) as to why inclusion matters and the impact it can have. 	<p>Over 2021</p> <p>Over 2021</p>	<p>100% managers trained in 2021 and a yearly programme developed.</p>

GOAL THREE | Integrate diversity, equity & inclusion into what we do

What 	Why 	Critical Tasks 	When 	Outcome 
<p>Demonstrate internal and external commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion</p>	<p>This needs to be more than words and we need to be held to account internally and externally our work and progress.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Build into our communication plans core messaging around this and that there is a focus throughout the year. ➤ Statement visible on website and share our work in this area. ➤ Annual external report on progress published each year. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Q1 21-22</p> <p>Annual</p>	<p>Customers and employees known and can talk about RHP's approach to inclusion.</p>
<p>Get to know our customers</p>	<p>Like employees we can only design inclusive services if we know who our customers are, what matters to them and how they interact and feel about RHP.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pilot 'In Their Shoes' to bring stories of our customers into our work. ➤ Develop our Purpose Architecture gained through customer insight. ➤ Ensure that the voice of customer is heard at all key levels including Board, to shape our strategies and work plans. ➤ Invite customers from different groups to participate in policy setting to ensure we understand how our services affect them and learn what barriers we need to breakdown. 	<p>Q4 20-21</p> <p>Q4 Q2 20-21</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>There is a better understanding of our customers which shape our long term strategies.</p>
<p>Profile</p>	<p>Using the insight about our customers we should continue to make sure that we shape our services to be inclusive, but this may vary depending who are customers are - knowledge that we need to continue to grow.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Profile our customers every 2 years. ➤ Encourage online profiles to be completed through the customer portal. ➤ Use the profiling work to shape our services, especially how we personalise and tailor our response. 	<p>21-22</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>21-22 onwards</p>	<p>Documented information about who are customers are which is used to assess progress but also design of services.</p> <p>Data is used to inform service design and where known about a customer the service they receive.</p>

GOAL THREE | Integrate diversity, equity & inclusion into what we do

What 	Why 	Critical Tasks 	When 	Outcome 
Service design	Designing a process/service/way of working that begins with the customer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop key customer personas so these can be used to shape our design of services. Embed service design into how we work to ensure inclusion is a key theme from the beginning. Build in processes to gain customer feedback as part of any process/system design including the website to ensure we are constantly evolving our offer. 	<p>21-22</p> <p>Q3 20-21 onward</p> <p>Q3 20-21 onward</p>	Customer insight and feedback is a documented part of how we do things (plan/do/check/act).
Conscious inclusion	Being aware of unconscious bias is useful but more powerful is conscious inclusion where we are making sure that what we do includes rather than excludes people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train the organisation on conscious inclusion including developing techniques to build it what we do. Ensure inclusion training is part of the annual mandatory L&D programme. 	<p>21-22</p> <p>21-22</p>	100% of employees understand conscious inclusion and what they need to bring into their work.
Contractor	We should work with organisations that enhance further what we do.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure our contractors have inclusion and diversity as a core part of how they work. Regular update our contractors so they know our approach to this and how they can support such as London Living Wage etc. Build partnership charters with key contractors that demonstrates our commitment to this. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>21-22</p>	Assurance through audit of procurement.