



Brent Housing Partnership
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy
April 2015 - Mar 2017



**Everyone's
Included**

Introduction – Our vision

Brent Housing Partnership (BHP) is a not-for-profit company set up in 2002 to manage its stock, BHP signed a new 10 year management agreement with Brent Council in 2013. As at the 1st April 2014 BHP managed 12,093 properties of which 8,433 were tenanted properties and 3,660 were leasehold properties in Brent. BHP has delegated responsibility from the council to supervise and monitor the performance of Brent's two Tenant Management Organisations, Kilburn Square Housing Co-op (246 homes) and Watling Gardens Housing Co-op (165 homes).

In addition to managing and maintaining homes for Brent Council, BHP is a Registered Social Landlord and owns 331 properties in Brent, the majority of which are let as social rented accommodation. We were able to acquire and build these properties with a grant from the Housing Corporation and through loans from the council.

BHP has 134 permanent employed staff who are from diverse backgrounds. We try to have a workforce that broadly reflects the community we serve, including the right mix of skills and culture from staff to provide the right services to our residents. We want to ensure that there is a good awareness of the business benefits of equality, diversity and inclusion amongst staff at all levels.

Brent Housing Partnership Board is committed to monitoring the way services are provided and ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion is at the heart of everything we do. BHP Board understands their legal and regulatory duties to promote equality and diversity. The Board consistently take equality issues into account as part of the policy development and other decision making processes. The Board champions equality and diversity both within BHP and with outside organisations.

At BHP we are committed to the promotion of equality and we value the diversity of both our residents and our staff. We understand that equality and diversity are fundamental to the effective delivery of our services and our performance as an employer. Brent Housing Partnership is committed to tackling inequality. We celebrate the diversity of Brent and see this as a strength and resource.

One of our priorities in the Equality Diversity & Inclusion Strategy (EDI) 2013 – 2015, was to ensure we achieve the Leaders in Diversity award by April 2014.

We successfully achieved the Leaders in Diversity award last June which has enabled us to:

- benchmark against good practice
- established a framework to identify gaps in managing diversity
- helped us to develop and improve processes for the organisation
- to become nationally-recognised not just within the housing sector

We have worked with our customers, staff, Board members, stakeholders and partners to redefine our objectives and outcomes. We want to ensure that we align ourselves with the Equality Act 2010, our regulators, and to maintain the Leaders in Diversity Award. Our aims over the next two years are to concentrate on our areas that need improvement.

Our EDI Strategy 2015-2017, sets out our current and future actions and priorities over the next few years. We will continue to embed the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of the services we provide, our key strategies and policies, and in our employment practices.

Our legal duties

In line with Brent Council as a public body the Equality Act 2010 requires BHP to meet certain statutory duties. The purpose of the statutory duty is to assist public bodies to tackle persistent and long standing issues of disadvantage.

In line with the Equality Act 2010, we are committed to:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advancing equality of opportunity between people
- fostering good relations between people

We seek to be an inclusive and a diverse organisation so that all our current and future residents, staff and contractors are treated fairly and equally and receive equal services and opportunities regardless of the following characteristics:

- age
- caring responsibility
- disability
- gender
- gender reassignment status
- gypsy or travelers heritage
- medical status, including HIV/AIDS Status
- marital, Civil Partnership or relationship status
- national Origin
- parental responsibility
- physical abilities
- physical appearance
- pregnancy and maternity status
- race or ethnicity
- refugee status
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- socio economic Status
- employment status

We are committed to the principles of Human Rights which are fairness, respect, equality, dignity, and autonomy. These principles underpin the Human Rights Act and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and are explicitly reflected in Brent Council's core values.

A human rights based approach is about putting people first in decision- making and empowering them to understand and stand up for their rights. It is about ensuring that individuals and institutions who are responsible for planning and providing services understand those rights, and are accountable for ensuring that they are respected, protected and fulfilled.

BHP is committed to adopting a human rights based approach. This means that BHP will ensure that both the standards and the principles of human rights are integrated into policy making, the day to day running of the services, and the management of our staff.

Brent Borough Profile

Between the 2001 and 2011 census, Brent's population increased from 263,464 to 311,215. This represents an overall increase of 18% (or approximately 50,000 people) during the ten years. The wards with the biggest increase in population were Harlesden (40%), Kensal Green (40%) and Wembley Central (34%). Kenton saw the smallest increase in population (2%) in the borough.

Since the 2001 census, the age group 0 to 4 saw the largest increase. This increase presents a number of challenges concerning the provision of appropriate childcare and schooling arrangements in Brent. In 2001, there were 30,237 people resident in Brent aged 65 and over. By 2011 this increased by 8% to 32,676. Despite the increase in older people, Brent's population is relatively young with 44% aged below 30 years. Furthermore, the age group 75 years and over saw an increase of 17% between 2001 (12,583) and 2011 (14,732). Overall ward level population changes between 2011 and 2013 for children under 5 years old are shown in figure 2.

1 in 7 (14.4%) people say they have a disability that affects their day-to-day activities. In Stonebridge the figure is 16.5 % and in Queens Park it is 11.5%.

The change in the population from the Census 2001 – 2011 show that, the White population has gone down 10,000. The Asian population has increased by 30,000. The black population has gone up by 10,000. The other groups has gone up 10,000 (other – Arab; mixed other and any other ethnic group).

Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups now account for 64% of the total population (2011 census) compared to 55% in 2001. The white ethnic group saw a reduction between 45% (in 2001) and 36% (in 2011). The white population live mostly in Mapesbury, Brondesbury Park, Queens Park and Kilburn. The black population live mostly in Stonebridge, Harlesden and Kensal Green. The Asian population live mostly in Alperton, Wembley Central and Kenton.

In 2011, there were 1,721 more males (156,468) than females (154,747) equating to a gender ratio of 50.3 to 49.7.

Based on Stonewall and The Gender Identity Research and Education Society estimates LGB people make up between 5 and 7% of the UK population 15,600 – 21,800 people in Brent, 1% of the UK population experience gender variance 3,100 people in Brent. 0.02% of the UK population will undergo gender transition 60 people in Brent.

The percentage of residents who described themselves as Christian decreased from 48% in 2001 to 41% in 2011 (figure 8). Those with Muslim faith comprise 19% of the population. 18% of Brent's population are Hindu and this is the second highest in the country after Harrow. 11% of Brent's population reported that they had no religion. In England, 25% of the population reported that they had no religion.

There are 149 languages spoken in Brent. 63% of the population speak English as their main language, followed by Gujarati 8%, Polish 3%, Arabic 2%, Portuguese 2%, Tamil 2%, Somali 2%, Romanian 2%, Urdu 2% and other 13%.

Our Residents

Knowing our residents

One of our priorities within the EDI Strategy 2013-15 was to ensure that we improved our understanding of customer profiling, insight and segmentation. We understand it is essential to have an in depth understanding of our residents by collecting and analysing information about them. Collection of data and using that data to enhance service provision remains a key priority. We use this information to make sure we communicate with residents in the way that suits them best. It also allows us to tailor services to try to meet everyone's needs.

Customer insight data

Age - Customer Insight data shows that out of 8,958 tenancies – 67% (5,773) tenancies fall within the range of 46 years and older with the largest age group being between 46 and 55 years at 26.5%. The percentage of Brent's population from the 2011 Census shows the largest age group as the 25-34 years age group at 20.8%.

Disability - Customer Insight data shows that out of 8,958 tenancies - 21% (1,865) tenancies have told us their disability / multiple disability information. Of which, 77% of tenancies have told us that they are registered disabled and 59% have mobility impairments. The percentage of Brent's population who reported that their day-to-day activities were limited due to their disability, from the 2011 Census, is 14% and of these 7% felt they were limited a lot.

Ethnicity - Customer Insight data shows that out of 8,958, 15% of tenancies did not report their ethnicity, however from the remaining 7,707 tenancies - 65% are from a BAME background, of which 47% are from a Black background, 12% from an Asian background and 21% from a White background. The percentage of Brent's BAME population - from the 2011 Census shows that 64% are from a BAME background.

Sex - Customer Insight data shows that out of 8,958 tenancies - 58% are female. The percentage of Brent's population from the 2011 Census who reported are female is 49.7%.

Gender Reassignment - Gender Reassignment data is a new addition to this year's annual report – next year it will be possible to identify year-on-year trends. Significant positive progress has been made with the collection of information about our workforce Gender Reassignment data. The 2011 Census did not include information on Gender Reassignment for Brent's population.

Marriage and Civil Partnership - It was difficult to draw comparisons with the Customer Insight data as it is reported as it was a new area and reported in different categories. However, the percentage of Brent's population who reported their Marriage and Civil Partnership status from the 2011 Census is 42% Single, 43% Married and 0.3% Civil Partnership. Over the coming years we will aim to improve the data on this category.

Pregnancy and Maternity - Maternity data is a new to the report and the Customer insight data did not have information on this category. However, the percentage of Brent households who have parenting responsibilities from the 2011 Census is 34%. The 2011 Census did not include information on Pregnancy and Maternity for Brent's population.

Religion and Belief - Customer Insight data shows that out of 8,958 tenancies, 43% (3,878) tenancies have reported their Religion and Belief information. This data shows that out of the 3,878 tenancies - 64% are from a Christian faith, 24% are from a Muslim faith and 3.4% are from a Hindu faith.

From the Customer Insight data, 57% (5,080) tenancies showed that no data has been recorded for tenancy Religion and Belief. This figure includes 2,324 tenancies which are shown as Not Stated.

The percentage of Brent's population with a Religion and Belief from the 2011 Census shows that 41% are from a Christian faith, 19% are from a Muslim faith and 18% are from a Hindu faith. Religion and Belief data for employees is broadly similar to that of Customer Insight data even though there is an area of missing data.

Sexual Orientation - Sexual Orientation data is a new addition to this year's annual report – next year it will be possible to identify year-on-year trends. Significant positive progress has been made with the collection of information about the workforce Sexual Orientation data.

Customer Insight data shows that out of 8,958 tenancies – 69% of tenancies have reported their Sexual Orientation information. This data shows that out of the 6,175 tenancies - 69% consider themselves Heterosexual and 30% 'prefer not to say'. The 2011 Census did not include information on Sexual Orientation for Brent's population.

Our Staff

Knowing our staff

BHP monitors trends in all aspects of employment, including recruitment, promotions, learning and development, disciplinary, grievances and leavers by protected characteristics to ensure all areas of employment are accessible, inclusive and non-discriminatory. We to have a workforce that broadly reflects the community we serve and to have the right mix of skills and culture from staff to provide the right services to our residents.

Age – Data shows that the average age of our staff is 47 years old, which is representative of our tenants where the largest age group is between 46 and 55 years.

Disability – Data shows us that only 4.9% of staff consider themselves to be disabled, which is a significant decrease from the 7.5% who did in 2012/13.

Ethnicity – Data shows us that 68.9% of staff are from a BAME background, which is reflective of our tenants, however the breakdown across different BAME groups is not significantly different from our residents, but is significantly different to the borough. Our breakdown of staff groups indicates 42% are from a Black background, 18% from an Asian background and 31% from a White background.

Sex – Data shows that the gender of our staff is reflective of our tenants with 57% of our staff being female.

Gender Reassignment - Gender Reassignment data is a new addition to this year's annual report and the figures which have been recorded on our system are so high in comparison with the general population that we will look at requesting staff to resubmit this data.

Marriage and Civil Partnership – As with tenants it was difficult to draw comparisons with the Customer Insight data as it is reported as it was a new area and reported in different categories. However, the percentage of staff who recorded their Marriage and Civil Partnership status is 30% Single and 33% Married. Over the coming years we will aim to improve the data on this category.

Religion and Belief – Approximately 24% of staff have chosen not to disclose their faith, but those who have are not representative of the tenants with 49% being from a Christian faith, 3% being from a Muslim faith and 8% being from a Hindu faith. This is a significant under-representation of those of a Muslim faith.

Sexual Orientation - Sexual Orientation data is a new addition to this year's annual report – next year it will be possible to identify year-on-year trends. Significant positive progress has been made with the collection of information about the workforce Sexual Orientation data.

Data shows that of those who have reported their Sexual Orientation information, 66% consider themselves Heterosexual and 33% 'prefer not to say', with only 0.4% identifying as LGBT, which is a significant decrease from the 1% who identified in 2012/13.

Our Board Members

The Board, through its Governance and Remuneration Committee, monitors BHP's Equality and Diversity Strategy and action plan. The Committee regularly receives reports of progress on actions and recommendations for decisions.

BHP Board is currently reviewing the role of an E&D Board Champion. This Board member will have a particular role to influence all board members to champion, to challenge, to support and to learn:

- **Champion** - to ensure E&D is considered by all Board members by encouraging Board members to provide leadership on E&D issues and be role models themselves.
- **Challenge** - to encourage all Board members to challenge key decisions of any impact of equality and diversity and hold the Senior Management to account on E&D issues.
- **Support** - to act as a link between the Board and the Senior Management Team on E&D issues, in particular in communicating and supporting BHP E&D strategic objectives, the E&D Policy and Strategy and work of the Investors and Leaders in Diversity Champion Groups.
- **Learn** - all Board members receive regular E&D briefings. BHP has a strong commitment to creating a diverse workforce and governance structure which aims to broadly reflect the diversity of the community it serves. BHP will always encourage underrepresented groups to apply in its recruitment initiatives.

All Board reports which impact on services, policies and procedures are always accompanied by a relevant Equality Analysis, which support the Board and Committees to consider equalities in its decision making processes.

BHP has also started to monitor trends in Board appointments in order to manage board succession and representation. We have a board that broadly reflects the community we serve and have the right mix of skills and culture to manage the services to our residents.

We Have... During 2013/14:

- Collected profiling information on our Board members to ensure that Boards and committees' broadly reflect the diversity of the communities in which we provide services.
- The Board Away Day included equality and diversity as a recurring theme in discussions
- Included equality and diversity as a section within the Board Manual of Governance and on all reports to Board and Committees.

Our strategy has four main aims each of which link to the Strategic Aims

Aim One – The effective implementation of statutory and regulatory requirements for equality and diversity, in the delivery of services and employment practices. (Safe and Well Run)

Our outcomes:

- Demonstrate our implementation of the Equality Act 2010.
- Embed our Equality Analysis Framework within the organisations policies and practices.
- Understand the impact on our residents of the Localism Agenda, Welfare Reform and Borough Plan.

Aim Two – Service are delivered in ways that respond to the needs of our current and new residents. To promote a culture of mutual respect and understanding between staff, residents, partners and stakeholders. (A great Place to Work with Strong Partnerships)

Our outcomes:

- To improve our information and understanding of customer profiling and customer insight
- To treat all residents with fairness and respect and provide choices, information and communication that is appropriate to the needs of our residents.

Aim Three – Managers and Board Members demonstrate effective leadership on equality diversity and inclusion. (A great Place to Work with Strong Partnerships)

Our outcomes:

- To maintain the Leaders in Diversity Award.
- Effective leadership from all managers and clear, transparent accountability for delivering on equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Raise the awareness and profile of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Group (ED&IG)
- Promote our priorities and success to our staff, Board, residents, partners and stakeholders.

Aim Four – Promote an environment where employees succeed and feel valued (A great Place to Work with Strong Partnerships)

Our outcomes:

- Ensure staff, Board, residents, partners, and stakeholders at all levels understand the needs of the community that we serve.
- Ensure staff employment profile at all levels, reflect the community that we serve.
- Explore and develop opportunities for staff networks
- Continue delivering Equality & Diversity training for staff, Board and resident reps.
- Ensure employment practices are free from discrimination, bullying and harassment, and develop a way in which staff to raise concerns.

Equality Analysis

An Equality Analysis (EA) is the process of systematically analysing a proposed or existing strategy or policy to identify what effect or likely effect will follow from the implementation of the policy for different groups in the community or for staff. EAs are concerned with anticipating and identifying the equality consequences of strategies, policies and service delivery. EAs are also conducted when we are taking away a service or changing the way in which services are delivered.

The purpose of conducting equality impact assessments is to assess whether the policies which guide your work, the procedures you operate and the day to day working practices you have developed, are likely to have a positive or negative impact on different groups within our diverse community, and amongst employees.

Having made this assessment you can take action to **prevent direct discrimination** and **indirect discrimination** and **promote equality of opportunity** to improve residents, leaseholders and staff experience.

EAs should be used as far as possible, to ensure any negative consequences for a particular group or sector of the community are eliminated, minimised or counterbalanced by other measures. We carry out EAs not just to meet our statutory duties but to change outcomes and make a difference to peoples' lives. We need to develop a robust system for carrying out Equality Analysis, through to publication.

Key areas/ functions in BHP that should be subject to an Equality Analysis:

- Tenancy guidance
- Communication Strategy
- Repairs Policy
- Leaseholder services
- Rent arrears collection / action
- IT systems (for the collection of equality monitoring data)
- Building design
- Procurement and contracting
- Budgets
- Closure or changes to service provision
- Employment policies & practices

Where are we now....

Knowing Our Residents

It was one of our priorities within the EDI Strategy 2013 – 2015 to ensure we improve our understanding of customer profiling, insight and segmentation. We understand it is essential to have an in depth understanding of our residents by collecting and analysing information about them. Collection of data and using that data to enhance service provision remains a key priority. We use this information to make sure we communicate with residents in the way that suits them best. It also allows us to tailor services to try to meet everyone's needs.

We have...

- Analysed information held on our Housing Management System, and ensured the organisation uses one data set against the main tenant by age, ethnicity, disability, gender, marriage and civil partnership, religion and belief, language requirements and sexual orientation.
- Used equality profiling for the first time within the Complaints Performance Overview report 2012/2013.
- Identified our residents who have a disability or are receiving disability related benefit and invited them to the International Day for People with Disabilities event held we hosted in December 2013 and 2014.
- Produced a detailed report which outlines BHP's current main tenant profiling and recommendations for future customer segmentation to improve data collection, and use it both to tailor services and identify any groups who may be unfairly disadvantaged.

Consulting our Residents

We are committed to involving all sections of the community to ensure we offer the opportunity for residents to provide feedback through informal ways.

We have...

- With local disability organisations and BHP's Disability Forum, made up a series of guides which became the "Everyone's Included" Handbook. These guides are designed to raise awareness amongst BHP residents, staff, Board members, partners and contractors.
- Organised an event to mark International Day for People with Disabilities on 3 December 2013 & 2014.
- The "Everyone's Included" logo was designed by children from South Kilburn estate and St. Raphael's estate.
- We have included equality and diversity updates in every edition of our resident magazine 'Partnership News'
- We produced a 2013-2014 Cultural Calendar for all staff to use when planning meetings with residents.

Our Staff achievements

We have...

- Held two annual staff conferences focusing on 'Building Stronger Communities' and 'Open, Honest and Transparent'.
- A prayer room is available at the Brent Civic Centre office for staff and residents to use

HR Policies

During the achievements of Leaders in Diversity we revised and launch the following HR policies:

- Dignity at Work Policy
- Equality in Employment Policy
- Flexible Working Policy and Procedure
- New and Expectant Mothers at Work Policy
- Two Ticks Disability Employer

Links to other key strategies

Leaders in Diversity requires us to ensure that we are committed to developing an organisational culture, in which equality, diversity, inclusion and fairness for all are genuinely valued, and is written in all appropriate documents.

Our ED&IS is linked to the following key documents and processes which set out the key principles of how the services are delivered;

Service provision:

- Communication Strategy
- Pre-tenancy Guide
- Tenancy Guide
- Leaseholders Handbook
- NHF EDI Framework Reviews
- Board Reports (Equality Analysis)
- Equality & Diversity Annual Reports

Employment Practices:

- Equality in Employment Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Flexible Working Policy & Procedure
- New & Expectant Mothers At Work Policy

Roles and responsibilities

Board: Ensure that BHP comply with the Equality Act 2010 in particular the Public Sector Equality Duty, and deliver the outcomes in the EDI Strategy.

Executive Leadership Team: Ensure that the monitoring of the EDI Strategy is through the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Group, represented by managers from the Senior Leadership Team.

Senior Leadership Team: The responsibilities for the development of service documents and reports for equality analysis lie with the respective service managers.

Equality & Diversity Inclusion Group: Monitor the outcomes and progress in the EDI Strategy, Delivery Plan.

All Staff: Ensure that they comply with the principle of the Equality & Diversity Policy and managers, lead on their responsible areas of the EDI Strategy.

Equality Officer: Prepare reports on the progress of the EDI Strategy to the Board, Executive Leadership Team and Senior Leadership Team.