

# Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Report 2023-2024



## Our equity, diversity, and inclusion journey

We're committed to delivering fair and inclusive services that are accessible to people of any background. Our Corporate Strategy commits to 'delighting customers' and being 'a great place to work'. We want all our employees and customers to feel listened to, that their views are heard and acted upon, and that they're treated as individuals.

Everything we do is guided by our values. We care about our customers and communities, and we're determined to make a difference. We're bold and open-minded in our pursuit of solutions.

In 2022, we developed our new Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy, supported by an action plan, which we put together in partnership with Housing Diversity Network. We listened to employees and customers to develop the action plan, making sure it reflected their priorities.

This report outlines the progress we've made on the five themes of the action plan. It covers the period January 2022 up to December 2023. We highlight key work we've been doing and our priorities for the future. We still have progress to make, but we have initiatives in place to develop our approach further by listening to customers, communities, and employees.

## What is equity, diversity, and inclusion and why does it matter?

While the terms equity, diversity, and inclusion are often spoken about together, they're not the same and each one has a different meaning.

**Equity** means making sure that everybody has an equal chance to achieve the same outcomes.

**Diversity** is about recognising, celebrating, and valuing our differences as well as our similarities.

**Inclusion** means that all people, regardless of their diversity, have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

It's important to recognise that while equity, diversity, and inclusion are different, they need to be progressed together as one can't exist without the other.

Our EDI action plan is a commitment to meet the obligations and duties under the Equality Act 2010<sup>1</sup> and to promote equal opportunities when delivering services to customers and in our employment practices.

We're committed to tackling inequality in its widest sense and challenging discrimination based on a variety of social and cultural characteristics. Our goal is to make CHP an equitable, diverse, and inclusive place where employees and customers feel happy, comfortable, and safe to be themselves.





<sup>1</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

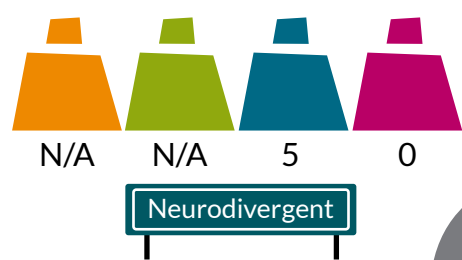
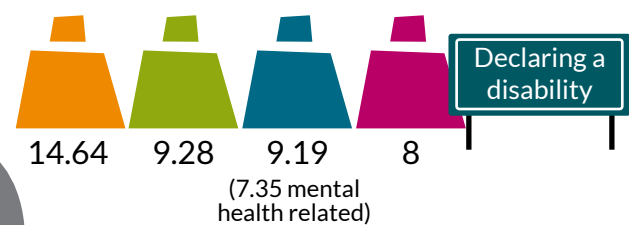
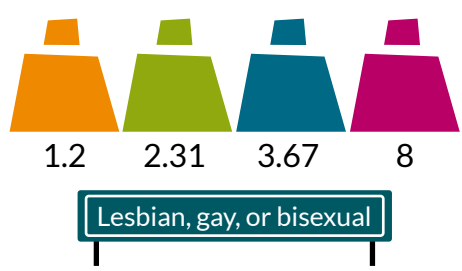
## Objective one

# Knowing our people

We're committed to finding out more about the diverse needs of customers, to shape our services and communications where possible. We also want to understand more about our employees and their needs. To do this we track diversity characteristics of employees and customers, where we can. The table below shows a selection of characteristics and highlights how we align to the local community.

### Our diversity profile

-  Percentage of CHP customers<sup>2</sup>
-  Percentage of the local population<sup>3</sup>
-  Percentage of CHP employees<sup>4</sup>
-  Percentage of CHP Board
- N/A** Not currently available



<sup>2</sup>Based on whole stock population.

<sup>3</sup>Based on Census 2021 data from Local Authorities that we work in.

<sup>4</sup>Data from December 2023.



## Customers

### This year we:

- Started our Connecting Communities, Homes, and People initiative, with the aim of getting to know our customers better and engage with them in their homes and neighbourhoods. We want to know more about our customers and what they need from us to live well. We're using this information to identify any support that may benefit our customers and to check our services are accessible. We're also asking what people would change about CHP and what we could do better. We'll use this information alongside other customer feedback to improve how we work.

## Employees

### This year we:

- Created a 'Be counted' campaign for our employees that aligned with Race Equality Week in February 2023. We educated employees about why it's important for us to know who they are, but also why it's important for them to feel able and comfortable to tell us.
- For years employers have collected data on ethnicity and sexual orientation, and our data was 92 percent complete before this campaign. However, we had far less data on disability, neurodivergence, and transgender, and none on socioeconomic status<sup>5</sup>. We followed up the campaign during Global Diversity Awareness month in October 2023. The progress data from both 'Be counted' campaigns can be found below and shows that employees feel increasingly willing to share personal information about themselves.



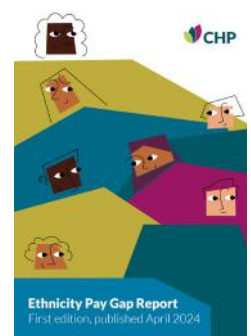
### Percentage of employees that responded about themselves on the following topics.

	January 2023	March 2023	January 2024
Disability	28	70	83
Neurodivergent	22	70	83
Pronouns	28	48	58
Transgender	22	70	83
Socioeconomic status	0	0	64

- Produced our first Ethnicity Pay Gap (EPG) Report, and our second at the start of 2024. The reports show the difference between the average (median and mean) earnings of white and ethnically diverse employees at CHP and what we're doing about the pay gap. Our latest EPG Report which takes data from the financial year 2022/2023 shows that our ethnically diverse employees' median hourly rate is 9.7 percent higher than our white employees' hourly rate.

Our mean EPG suggests that our ethnically diverse employees' hourly rate is 3 percent lower than our white employees.

For more information visit [chp.org.uk/reports](http://chp.org.uk/reports).



<sup>5</sup> A descriptive term for the position of people in society, based on a combination of occupational, economic, and educational criteria.



## What's next?

### Feedback

We're analysing customer feedback to understand if those with different backgrounds and needs are having disproportionately negative or different experiences and need any particular support. We'll use this analysis to improve how we work.

## Intersectionality

We aim to look at the range of diversity that shapes our employees' lived experience. For example, we currently look at gender, ethnicity, and age as three separate categories. In the future, we would like to analyse more than one diverse characteristic at a time. So, rather than looking at engagement just by gender, we may like to look at it by gender, age, and ethnicity.

### Objective two

## Customer service and engagement

We recognise that the people who provide and use our services come from diverse backgrounds, and each have different lived experiences and needs. We'll remove barriers which put individuals at a disadvantage. We'll also ensure that our employment policies and practices don't exclude or disadvantage potential employees from diverse backgrounds.

### Customers

#### This year we:

- Used a diverse and varied range of communications platforms and methods to communicate with our customers in a way that suits them.
- Made sure that when we surveyed customers about their home and our services, that we heard from a representative range of people, for example, of different ages and ethnicities.
- Started to analyse our complaints to see if any particular groups of people are less likely to complain, because we want to make sure all customers feel able to tell us when we get something wrong.
- Trained our Communications Team in Easy Read format. Our aim is to make our communications, policies, and procedures more accessible for people. This includes people with learning disabilities, those who find it challenging to read or write, have memory difficulties, or for people who speak English as a second language.
- Found new ways to engage with a diverse range of customers during our policy reviews. We used different methods to gather feedback and provided different options for people to contribute in the way that suits them. These include web surveys, online meetings, face-to-face workshops, chatting to customers in their communities, as well as analysing feedback and complaints.
- Updated our Anti-social Behaviour and Hate Crime Policy and included a focus on access to services for people with different vulnerabilities. We also understand we need to consider the impact of the anti-social behaviour on the person and that this may be different for each individual.
- Reviewed our Adaptations Policy in line with feedback from customers who had previously experienced our service and had an adaptation to their home, meaning our policy now reflects what's important to customers as their needs change.

## Employees

### This year we:

- Promoted awareness days, weeks, and months to increase understanding of different groups of people, for example through Pride Month, Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller History Month, and Transgender Awareness Week. We linked to further sources of information and support as well as to relevant training. This was driven by our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Working Group that represents all areas of the organisation and all employees. It's made up of employee volunteers with specific experience, expertise, or passion for EDI. The group aims to raise awareness and knowledge of EDI issues and best practice in service delivery, challenging the organisation when necessary and implementing changes.
- Celebrated Global Diversity Awareness Month through discussions about where our employees are from. We also raised money for local LGBTQ+ charity, The OutHouse, through a bake sale.
- Designated some of our employee and customer toilets at our head office as gender neutral, so everyone has access to facilities where they feel safe and comfortable.

## What's next?

### Later Living Strategy

We'll continue implementing our Later Living Strategy. One of the commitments we made in our Corporate Strategy for 2022-2025 was to listen to the views and priorities of current and future customers of older persons' accommodation and review the services we provide. The Later Living delivery group, made up of employees from across the business, has two primary areas of focus. The first is to research and develop what our new Later Living service offering and standard could be. This will be co-created with customers throughout 2024/2025. The second is to engage with customers whose homes are in our sheltered schemes to see what their priorities are and what they'd like to see improved in the future. By working together with customers and employees, we'll consider options for each scheme and develop a detailed plan. This work has already started and will continue over the coming year.

### Vulnerable Persons Policy

We're currently writing a new Vulnerable Persons Policy, setting out what "vulnerable" means at CHP and how we can better respond to customers' needs.



### Objective three

## An inclusive employee culture

We recognise the importance of having an employee culture that fosters inclusivity. It's essential that EDI is a central rather than peripheral concern for employees, regardless of their role, which will enhance our inclusive culture from top to bottom.

#### **This year we:**

- Investigated how comfortable people felt telling us more about themselves in our 'Be counted' campaign. Alongside looking at the demographic data provided, as outlined earlier, we also looked at the percentage of completion, as well as the 'prefer not to say' responses. These two figures show how inclusive our employees feel. In 2022, the completion rate for our diversity data was around 20 percent. In the final quarter of 2023, we had on average 80 percent of the completed data. This shows there has been a shift in the information that our employees are happy to share with us. We now also ask diversity data in our Employee Net Promoter Score (eNPS) survey that allows us to understand how different segments of our organisation are feeling. In our latest eNPS, the average percentage of employees that chose 'prefer not to say' in the diversity questions was 13 percent. We had 0 percent socioeconomic status data in the first quarter of 2023, and in the fourth quarter we had 65 percent of data completed in this category.
- Added pronouns into our job application process to make sure we communicate correctly with applicants. We have enhanced our recruitment processes so that we can adapt them for people with neurodiversity. For example, not everyone will be comfortable delivering a presentation and if this isn't a mandatory requirement for the role, the process can be adapted. In addition to this, we've trained members of our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Working Group on recruitment so they can sit on recruitment panels.
- Introduced a new Respect at Work Policy. This sets out the values, behaviours, and conduct expected of employees and what employees, customers, and members of the public should expect to receive. We also revised our values and with feedback from our employees, created a values-led behaviour framework.
- Created a culture series of personal videos from employees sharing stories on a range of different topics such as mental health, LGBTQ+, suicide, hearing impairment, cancer, and Judaism. These, as well as various campaigns on our communications channels, are aimed at raising awareness of other people's lived experience. It also aims to make employees feel comfortable with bringing their whole self to work and not feeling as though they need to hide who they are. We also ran campaigns on microaggressions to raise employee awareness about how questions, phrases, and terms can negatively impact others.



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- Launched reverse mentoring internally to encourage diverse thought to be included in leadership decision making. This was in recognition of having lower diversity in our Leadership Team than we would like. We've also launched external mentoring to give our employees more opportunity to have a mentor to help their career progression.
  - Voluntarily published our Ethnicity Pay Gap Report. We also published our Gender Pay Gap Report, which is a legal obligation. We're pleased with the changes to the pay gap that we've seen in the past year.
- For more information visit [chp.org.uk/reports](https://chp.org.uk/reports).

## What's next?

### Talent Management Policy

We're working with our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Working Group to strengthen our Talent Management Policy. We'll review how we support diverse talent which may be underrepresented and may face barriers to progression.

### Becoming inclusive as standard

We're committed to making our workplace inclusive as standard and have created guides to share what we do and what we have in place that will help and support all employees. While we know that individual needs may vary, we have proactively implemented non-gendered facilities across all our toilet facilities, among other measures. We're compiling more resources and information to make sure our employees are aware of the support available to them. Our next step is to build these into our workplace design. We also want to share these with potential candidates so that they know what they can expect if they work here.

We'll be building values-based training around respect, vulnerabilities, and behaviours and our e-learning content will be refreshed so it's more bespoke to CHP.

## Objective four

### Leadership and strategic focus

We're dedicated to fostering equity, diversity, and inclusion within our organisation and the communities we serve. We believe this should be reflected throughout the organisation, which includes at higher and strategic levels.

#### This year we:

- Twice used the National Housing Federation (NHF) EDI data tool. This enabled us to look at our diversity versus the local population based on the 2021 Census data. It has a leadership section where we can assess the diversity of our Leadership Team. As a result, we have a specific KPI for the diversity of our Leadership Team, including our Board. Over the last year, this segment of our organisation has become more diverse, but more work is still to be done. We also ran a specific learning and development session for our Board on intersectionality and unconscious bias.
- Partnered with diverse Boards to advertise roles for our Non-Executive Board (NED) recruitment to broaden the diversity of our Leadership Team. As a direct result, appointees included a broader range of diversity characteristics.
- In 2023, we reviewed the annual performance appraisal that our Board undertakes. This involved adding questions on EDI and our open-minded value.

## What's next?

### National Housing Federation Chairs' Challenge

We signed up to the National Housing Federation (NHF) Chairs' Challenge in 2023. This is a public commitment to take our Board on a journey to understand how diverse and inclusive we are and to develop a vision for the future. We're reviewing our process steps in line with the NHF guide to inclusive recruitment for future Non-Executive Director recruitment campaigns.

## Objective five

### Procurement, partnerships, and community investment

It's crucial that we incorporate assessments of EDI principles into the tendering process to ensure contractors have a commitment to EDI that aligns with ours. EDI is now embedded into the procurement process, with equality impact assessments being carried out. Targeted EDI questions are being tailored and included for bidders to respond to and included in the evaluation of the responses.

#### This year we:

- Continued to investigate opportunities to collaborate with local and national groups who focus on issues relevant to EDI, such as race, gender, disability, LGBTQ+, financial inclusion, and unemployment. These have included:
  - Women's Trade Network
  - Hidden Disabilities Sunflower scheme
  - Harry's Pledge (our commitment to supporting carers)
  - Disability Confident
  - Dementia Friends

- Became an accredited dementia friendly organisation with a dedicated working group made up of volunteers from around the business who have a passion for supporting people with dementia. The group brings together different experiences with the aim of improving our services for customers living with dementia and support for employees who may be impacted by caring for someone with dementia. We produced an action plan that prioritises what we'll focus on as an organisation. We hope to extend this group to include customers in 2024/2025.
- Visited local schools to inspire the next generation and talk to them about a career in the housing sector.



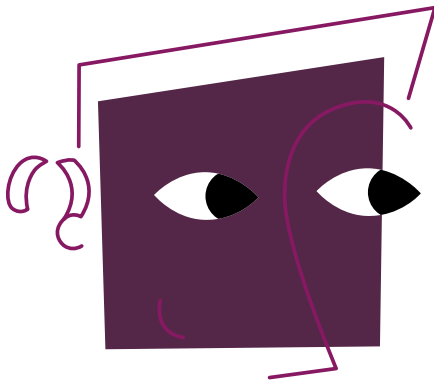
## What's next?

### HouseProud

In February 2024, we signed up with HouseProud to enhance our commitment to LGBTQ+ equality and support primarily for customers. We're working towards our Pledge Pioneer Accreditation, with actions around engaging LGBTQ+ customers, improving visibility, and carrying out employee training.

# Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Report

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