



Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement of Intent



People, culture & change

Contents

Statement from our Chief Executive Officer	p3
Our Commitment.....	p4
Anti-Racism Statement	p6
What is Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)	p7
Our Legal and Governance.....	p8
Our Values.....	p9
Key Contacts	p10
Resources	p10

Statement from our CEO

‘We have work to do, but are firm in our commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion’

At Incommunities, we embrace our customers’ different backgrounds and cultures, their individuality, and their different needs. We have put in place a two-year strategy for Incommunities, which will build a platform for strengthening our business. In doing this we will tailor the services we offer to the diverse needs of our customers and communities, with equity and inclusivity at the heart of how we operate.

Working in diverse communities and having a diverse workforce is real strength for us, which we will continue to cultivate, and will lead to better decision making, innovation, improved wellbeing, and overall, a happier personal experience for all.



We are pleased to set out our commitments to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in this Statement of Intent to our customers and colleagues. We will build a more comprehensive strategy together with our customers and colleagues, to ensure that we move forward in a well-informed and collaborative way.

In the meantime, we know we have work to do and will continuously take steps to create a fair and inclusive environment. This Statement of Intent outlines our commitments and our progress so far, as a first step to embedding Equity Diversity and Inclusion in the heart of our culture. First and foremost, we commit to being Anti-Racist, and will not tolerate racism or any other form of discrimination in our organisation.

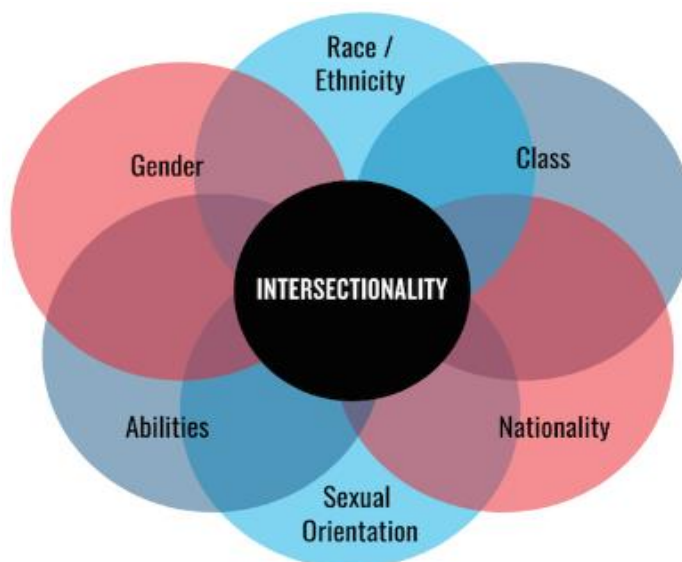
Our immediate priorities and our newly agreed values support this commitment – and I confirm that the Leadership Team and Board at Incommunities are united behind this Statement of Intent and will develop clear actions to ensure we quickly improve and embed our commitment to our diverse communities and colleagues.

Rachael Dennis, Chief Executive Officer



Our Commitment to Equity Diversity and Inclusion

We are committed to strategic action that positively impacts the societal issues in our area. It's important to consider that people's experience differs based on their background, and society is not fair and equal. We have a zero-tolerance approach to any form of discrimination. Race inequality is a primary focus for us as this is the biggest issue we face and is why we feel we need a strong commitment to being an anti-racist organisation. We are equally committed to diversity of all kinds, understanding the impact on underrepresented groups and taking positive action to address these issues. We will shape our strategy in consideration of all protected characteristics, but also considering intersectionality and the experience and barriers of those affected on multiple levels.



Our Objectives

Our Responsibility – To empower all our colleagues to take responsibility to embed Equity, Diversity and Inclusion into our services, and back this up with policy and procedures to enforce this.

Our People – To enable all colleagues to feel they can speak up and contribute to a culture that puts EDI at the heart of our culture, bringing our inclusive value to life. We are improving our induction and onboarding journey to show this is a priority from day one and make sure we are bringing in the best talent.

Developing Others – We will invest in our Leaders ensure all colleagues receive training to support their understanding of EDI principles and how we embed EDI into our culture and ways of working at Incommunities.

Our Customers and Communities – We will improve our understanding of our customers' diverse backgrounds and demographics, so that we amplify their voice and build strategic action to improve the diversity of our customer involvement, so that we hear more from underrepresented groups.

We are proud of the actions we have already taken around these objectives, and of the actions we have planned. You can read more in our plan of action on page 9.

Measuring success

We will use data and more in-depth listening exercises to establish a baseline of where we are now and what the current experiences are of our customers and colleagues. This will help us shape and prioritise the actions we need to take against our objectives and will be detailed in full in our EDI strategy. We will set out our outcomes for the areas we need to improve, and we will use data to measure our progress. We will also work with our customer and colleague networks so that we are listening and seeking continuous feedback so that we have a better understanding of their experiences, which will tell us if people feel that we are making progress.

Anti-Racism Statement from our Senior Leadership Team

Racism comes in many forms and can be systemic and historical, but also interpersonal and casually ignored. It's crucial however that we don't. It's crucial that we acknowledge, listen and act to make real sustainable change to address racism. We still have communities that lack representation from different racial groups, and racial inequality in our area and across the country.

Moving from being non-racist to an anti-racist organisation is a challenge that we need to take to ensure all our colleagues and customers have their voice heard.

West Yorkshire is inclusive of many different cultures and religions. It's clear from the recent census that the multiculturalism is only growing. It's important as a social housing provider we not only acknowledge this but celebrate and be a part of this changing culture. Crucially, we must recognise that representation matters, and ensure our workforce is representative of the local community. Presently, approx. 20-25% of our staff population identify as being from ethnically diverse backgrounds. We are committed to increasing our ethnic diversity, with action already taken by our Board and senior leadership team. We will continue to recognise and address barriers to ensure talent from all backgrounds feel welcomed at Incommunities and progress successfully in their careers.

Leadership engagement in this area is key, and this statement demonstrates how important this is to us all at Incommunities. We must continue to move forward and change our culture.

We know it's not always going to be comfortable, talking about racism never is; but we want to create safe spaces for all to share their experiences and shape initiatives that will bring to together our community, and reject racism.

How we will be accountable as leaders

- Zero Tolerance to racism throughout our organisation. We will take action to protect our colleagues and customers from racial discrimination through continual revision and change to our policies and procedures, learning from mistakes, and taking quick action against any form of racism or discrimination.

- **Listen ➡ Learn ➡ Action**

We will take action to amplify the diverse voices of our customers and colleagues to shape sustainable change. We want to create spaces where everyone feels comfortable to speak up, be heard and get involved in our anti-racism improvements and actions.

What do we mean by Equity, Diversity and Inclusion?

Equity

Is often used interchangeably with equality, but there's a core difference: Where equality is a system in which each individual is offered the same opportunities regardless of circumstance, equity focuses on distributing needs based on the individual and tries to correct imbalances by creating more opportunities for those in society that historically have less access.

What this means at Incommunities is that we will tailor the services we provide to meet these needs as best as possible and recognise that our customers and colleagues have individual needs.

Diversity

Acknowledges all the ways in which people differ, encompassing the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. While diversity is often used in reference to race, ethnicity, and gender, we embrace a broader definition of diversity that also includes age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. It's also key to include diversity of thought, values and opinions.

What this means at Incommunities is we need to acknowledge and embrace the diverse characteristics of all our customers and colleagues and actively encourage diversity within our community and workplaces.

Inclusion

Is the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported and valued to fully be involved. An inclusive environment embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people. It's important to note that while an inclusive group is diverse, a diverse group isn't always inclusive. Increasingly, recognition of unconscious or 'implicit bias' helps organizations to be deliberate about addressing issues of inclusivity.

What this means at Incommunities is it is vital we create environments within our workplaces and communities that are welcoming, respectful and support all people to be their authentic selves.

Following feedback from our colleagues, we will use the term **Ethnically Diverse** moving forwards. This is a more inclusive language than the formally used BAME and more recently used Minority Ethnic term to describe those from diverse ethnic and racial groups.

Our Legal Responsibilities and Governance



The Equality Act 2010 contains statutory requirements to

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

Additional legislation that will shape our strategy and actions

Social Housing Equality Framework

You can view this [here](#)

Public Sector Equality Duty

Key objectives set up in the legislation are: -

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different groups

Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

As a registered provider we are required to respond to the needs of our customers and: -

- Treat all customers with fairness and respect
- Demonstrate that we understand the different needs of our customers
- Identify customers with additional support needs in relation to the equality strands

In addition to the above, we know that EDI works best when there is networking and shared best practice across the housing sector. We are involved in several networks and benchmark ourselves against other housing providers via the National Housing Federation EDI tool.

We are also active members of Housing Diversity Network and Chartered Institute of Housing.

Our Values and Behaviours

Our values and behaviours define us. They say who we are and what we stand for.

Our organisational values and behaviours do the same, they let our customers and stakeholders know who we are as an organisation and what they can expect to see from us.



Our Vision

Improving lives Incommunities

Key Contacts

We welcome your feedback and comments on this statement and our actions moving forward. Please share your thoughts by emailing inclusion@incommunities.co.uk

Colleague suggestion form available on inconnect

Business Enquiries: 01274 254000

Use our online form to contact us with a compliment, comment, or complaint

Press Enquiries: press@incommunities.co.uk

Resources

[Plan of Action.docx](#)

[Home - Housing Diversity Network](#)

[National Housing Federation - About the National Housing Federation](#)

[Chartered Institute of Housing \(CIH\)](#)

Report on Race and Housing - [forty-years-of-struggle-a-window-on-race-and-housing-disadvantage-and-exclusion1.pdf \(wordpress.com\)](#)

Learn more with the following Ted Talks and Videos

[Implicit Bias | Concepts Unwrapped - YouTube](#)

[Bradford – Our Time, Our Place: City of Innovation - YouTube](#)

[How to Go Beyond Diversity and Inclusion to Community and Belonging | E'Ula Green | TEDxOU - YouTube](#)

[Lets stop talking about diversity and start working towards equity | Paloma Medina | TEDxPortland - YouTube](#)

[How to Outsmart Your Own Unconscious Bias | Valerie Alexander | TEDxPasadena - YouTube](#)

[Don't Put People in Boxes - YouTube](#)



Incommunities Limited is a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Society Act 2014. Registered in England with the Financial Conduct Authority No. 30178R. Registered address: Shipley, West Yorkshire, BD17 7BN.