



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy

Revised September 2023

Foreword

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are central tenets in our business. We strongly believe that EDI policies in isolation are likely to fail. We want our EDI policies to be embedded in our organisational strategy and culture so that it shapes the way we conduct our business.

We live in a global world which is interconnected by technology. Indeed, the ever further development of digital technology will reinforce our reliance on each other. As an organisation we need to embrace this changing dynamic.

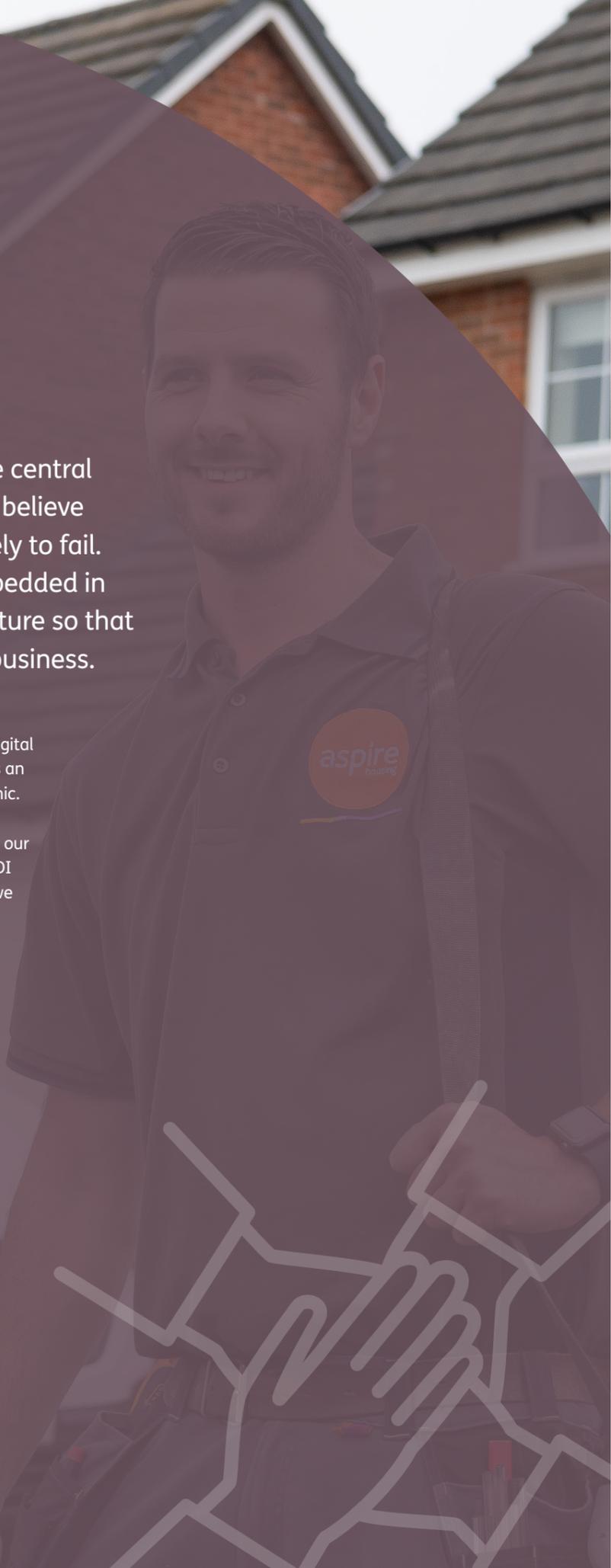
We know that diversity is good for our business and for our social purpose. Our organisational culture which has EDI running through all our strategies should ensure that we deliver an excellent service to all our communities.

Our Board and Executive Team will own these commitments and hold the organisation to account in delivering them.



Aman Dalvi
Chair

Sinéad Butters
Group Chief Executive



Our vision & values

Building Better Futures by putting People First

Our vision is “Building Better Futures, by putting People First”. We do this by living our values and always striving to work in a smarter, simpler, slicker way.



we are ambitious

Challenging ourselves to test the boundaries of conventional thinking and go the extra mile for our customers and communities for results that exceed expectations.

we are creative

Looking to improve our solutions and create new original versions with even better outcomes for our customers, partners, colleagues, and communities.

we are collaborative

Working together, sharing knowledge, ideas and best practice with a collective passion, energy, and mutual respect – all of which ensures we are Building Better Futures.



Our strategy

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy outlines our commitment to supporting colleagues, customers, and other stakeholders to help them deliver our vision and values. Our aim is to provide tailored services to individual needs, removing barriers where we can.

Our Ambition

We will be an exemplar in EDI, recognising, respecting, accepting and celebrating people's differences. Our culture will be welcoming and inclusive, free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

Alignment

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is aligned with our Corporate Strategy. We will deliver our Corporate Strategy themes through the commitments, actions and outcomes delivered by this strategy.

We will go beyond our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to:

- Identify and eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between different groups

We will support local and national campaigns aimed at enhancing equality, diversity and inclusion. We will involve customers and local community groups.



Key themes & actions

- ✓ Colleagues
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Governance
- ✓ Suppliers
- ✓ Policy
- ✓ Customers
- ✓ Partners & Stakeholders

Strategic aims

- We will ensure equal access to our services, based on need.
- We will recognise, respect and celebrate people's differences.
- We will have a workplace that is welcoming and free from discrimination.
- We will value people as individuals.
- We will aim for our Boards and Leadership team to be reflective of the diverse communities we serve.
- We will create a culture where people can be themselves.



Headline actions

Governance

- Provide training to Board and Committee members in EDI and unconscious bias.
- Implement a Trainee Board Members programme, to prepare under-represented groups for Governance roles.
- Develop EDI targets reportable to Executive and Board.

Colleagues

- Review EDI data collection and expand this to reflect current guidance and best practice.
- Establish a Colleague EDI Forum to oversee EDI activity and reporting.
- Develop action plans in relation to gender and ethnicity pay gaps.
- Refresh EDI training and embed learning through team action plans.
- Build EDI awareness into the induction process.
- Champion the work of the EDI forum across the business and promote annual EDI plans.

Customers

- Improve EDI data collection mechanisms.
- Improve data on engagement with customers
- Offer EDI training to all involved customers.



Policy

- Include reference to EDI in next version of Corporate Plan and develop specific EDI objectives.
- When policies are renewed, ensure they make reference, where appropriate, to the latest EDI legislation
- Review and relaunch Equality Impact Assessment process, and provide training to reviewers.
- Publish EDI Strategy on websites.
- Refer to EDI in customer annual reports.

Suppliers

- Review procurement policies to ensure EDI is included in assessment criteria.
- Provide training for contract managers to establish our procurement requirements and assessment criteria.
- Work with our procurement partners and local suppliers to explore how we can best use our spending power to support our EDI commitments.

Communication

- Ensure the imagery used in our communications reflects the communities we serve.
- Provide information in ways that suits the audience's needs.

Partners & Stakeholders

- Work alongside partners to promote inclusion and help tackle inequalities.
- Enhance our role as a community anchor through our community investment activities

Measuring our success

We will measure the success of our EDI Strategy through:

- Maintaining our HDN Diversity Network accreditation and improving the number of distinctions for good practice.
- Retain our Disability Confident Status and progress to Level 3.
- Increased diversity of our workforce, including BAME, LGBTQ+ and disabled colleagues.
- Increased diversity of our Boards and Committees.
- Accreditation as a Mindful Employer.

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