



# Diversity & Inclusion

## Strategic Commitment Annual Report

November 2023

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# Our commitment

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In 2022 we launched our new values: active, collaborative, inclusive and trusted. We additionally set out to build a more inclusive association through the introduction of our Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Strategic Commitment.

- We recognise that we have a long way to go, and our commitment ensures that as we respond to the risks and opportunities we're presented with, we remain focused on delivering the best possible outcomes for our customers, communities, and colleagues.
- Within our D&I Strategic Commitment, we detailed the steps we will take to create an environment that's inclusive and equitable for all.

- ✓ We will increase representation across all levels
- ✓ We will publish D&I data
- ✓ We will be an anti-racist association
- ✓ We will remove inequalities in our services
- ✓ We will educate and engage
- ✓ We will build an inclusive culture

- We have committed to delivering these priorities through three key stages: designing our future, building our inclusive future, and living and working inclusively. We are currently delivery phase two: building our inclusive future.



**Casnewydd Newport  
Zimbabwe Newport Volunteering  
Association  
Mufakose, Zimbabwe**

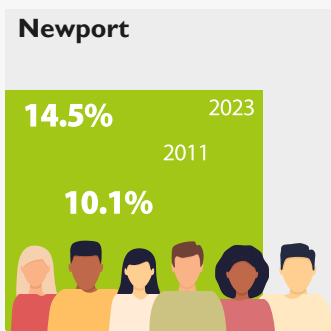
Wales Africa Learning Award 2014





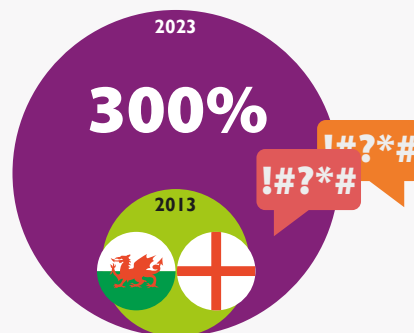
# Our world – operating environment update

## Wales and Newport are becoming more diverse communities



**14.5%** of the Newport population identify as a “non-white” category compared to **10.1%** in 2011.

## Racism remains a societal issue



Hate crime reported in Wales and England has increased **300%** in the ten years since 2013.

## Disability rates and ill health decline in Newport



In 2021, **20.8%** of Newport residents were identified as being disabled. This figure decreased from **22.9%** in 2011.



Over **25%** of Asian households are “**overcrowded**” in Wales. Funding and scheme viability challenges are making it difficult for RSLs to develop larger homes with not one home with 5 or more bedrooms built by RSLs in Wales in 2022/23.

## Increased regulatory focus

Poor data practice and unconscious bias in service delivery practices have been highlighted as causing service failure and disadvantage for households with protected characteristics by regulatory bodies. The Welsh Government have released enhanced operating requirements, to advance equality for LGBTQ+ and ethnic minority communities.



# We will increase representation across all levels

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We believe that representation is important because it increases our education and understanding of our colleagues and customer's needs. Increased diversity will improve our team working, innovation, problem solving and service provision and will benefit the whole association.

## We have .....

### **Within our recruitment processes we have**

- Upskilled managers on inclusion within recruitment
- Ensured our recruitment partnerships reflect our D&I Commitment
- Involved customers in senior recruitment decision making
- Worked to the standards of our 'Disability Confident Employer' status
- Reduced barriers in recruitment criteria

### **Within our recruitment campaigns we have**

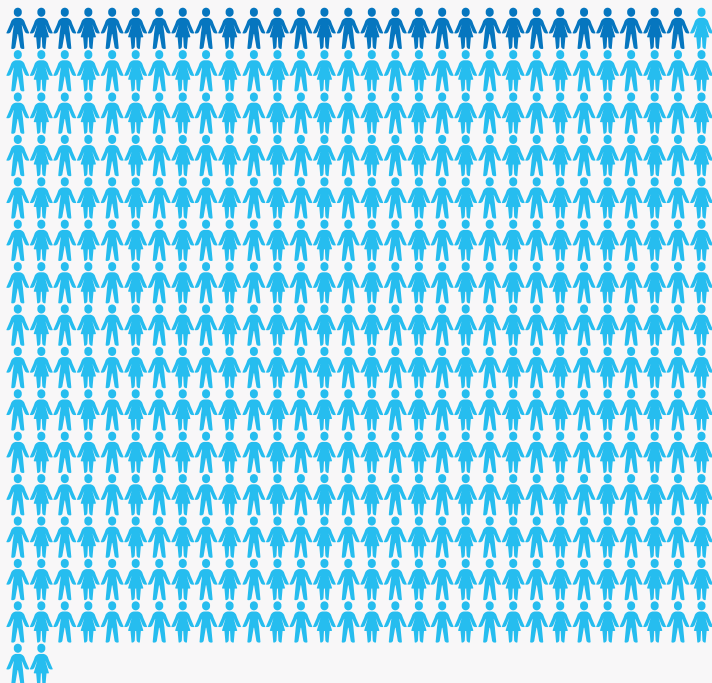
- Targeted recruitment activity towards underrepresented communities
- Increased flexibility in attracting and recruiting Scrutiny partnership and editorial panel membership
- Promoted our ambition to achieve a more diverse workforce through advertising & increased reasonable adjustments
- Participated in the Pathway to Board Programme
- Procured an executive search partner to lead on an inclusion focused campaign, with ambition to increase Board Membership diversity

### **Within our community development work, we have**

- Participated in a wealth of events hosted for minority communities
- Improved accessibility of our communications
- Focused on visibility & gaining insights to inform our decision making
- Used insights to increase the representativeness of the customer voice



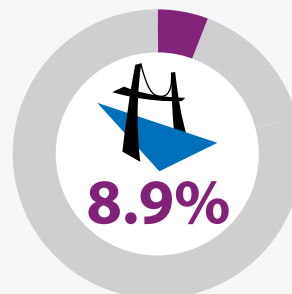
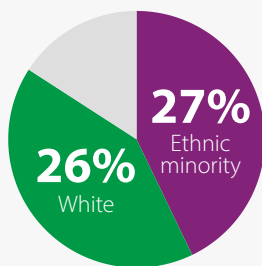
# Insights



The association had **452** colleagues at the year end. **6.4%** identify as ethnic minority compared to **14.5%** of the Newport population.



On average **3.9** candidates were interviewed for each role at NCH during 2022/23. Of these, **26%** of white candidates that were interviewed were appointed to a post and **27%** of ethnic minority candidates that were interviewed were appointed to a post.



**8.9%** of NCH colleagues have a declared disability.



During 2022/23 **14.4%** of applicants were from ethnic minority backgrounds.

**10.1%** of posts awarded were to ethnic minority candidates, compared to **9.1%** in 2021/22.



**4%** of job application were from candidates with a declared disability.



**4.9%** of candidates invited to interview had a declared disability, and **6%** of posts were awarded to candidates with a declared disability.



# We will publish EDI data

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We want to understand the real issues faced by our colleagues, customers and communities and use data and information in an intelligent and systematic way to respond to these challenges. It is extremely important to understand the makeup of our customers and colleagues to ensure that we build a targeted approach to the services we deliver to better reflect our communities.

## We have .....

### We capture D&I data through

- The Home Options Portal
- The 'Getting to Know You' process
- Annual customer wellbeing and core data checks
- Recruitment campaigns & onboarding documentation
- Board diversity monitoring
- Targeted data collection campaigns

### We have improved the quality of our D&I data through

- Developing a D&I Dashboard to enhance data insights capability
- Customer Core Data and Resident Data Action Group priorities
- Developing 'neighborhood wellbeing profiles'
- Introducing a self-serve customer app
- A refreshed ASB system, allowing for improved hate crime reporting

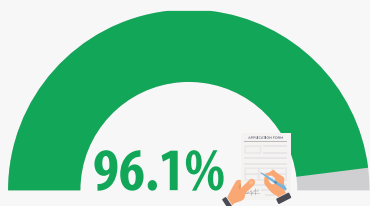
### We are measuring and reporting our D&I performance by

- Publishing D&I performance via the Insights platform
- Recruitment diversity monitoring
- Quarterly & annual progress reports
- Reporting D&I KPIs to board via the Integrated Report

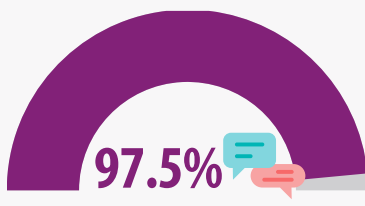
- Publishing colleague survey results
- Analysing and learning from customer and colleague survey results
- Sharing metrics and learning with customer and colleague panels

## Insights

Across the reporting period, we collected the D&I data of:



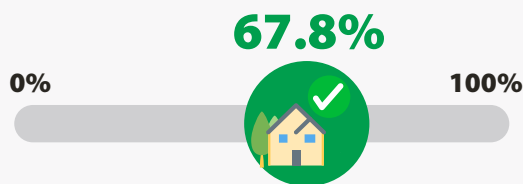
job applicants



of candidate invited to interview



of new colleagues



We currently have **67.8%** of personal data for our residents and have actions in place to increase both completion rates and accuracy



data held on religion



data held on sexuality

Within customer data, there are higher levels of disclosure of categories such as age and gender, and higher levels of non-disclosure for categories such as **religion (39% of data held)** and **sexuality (38% of data held)**.

# We will be an anti-racist association

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We are clear that it is no longer good enough to have a policy that suggests we are not racist; we must become far more proactive and positive in our actions to become an anti-racist association. We will have a zero-tolerance approach to racism; in our policies, processes and procedures, we must ensure that every individual who comes in contact with NCH feels confident that they will not see, hear or experience racism or discrimination.

## We have .....

### **In our policies, processes and procedures we have**

- Positioned our zero tolerance to discrimination within attraction documents
- Supported the reduction of anti-social behaviour & crime through 'Safer Newport Partnership'
- Improved our facilities for colleagues practicing religion & beliefs

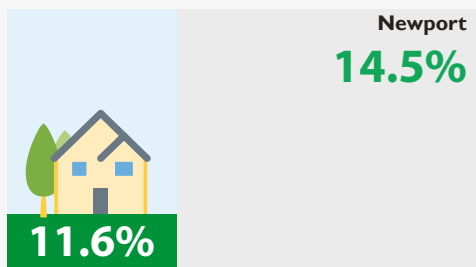
### **In our communications, education and engagement we have**

- Engaged with ethnic minority communities to understand access barriers
- Translated this learning into training and action plans
- Facilitated colleague conversations on access barriers & anti-racism
- Increased the accessibility of our communications
- Increased awareness of hate crime through customer communications
- Delivered training on discrimination, harassment & hate crime
- Remained a key stakeholder in partnerships focused on race & hate crime
- Celebrated cultural diversity through a program of awareness campaigns
- Hosted Customer Drop ins to support refugees and asylum seekers
- Provided ethnic minority groups with meeting facilities in NCH buildings

### Within our monitoring and assurance, we have

- Embedded EIA's into our strategic framework, policy & change processes
- Enhanced our ASB module providing improved hate crime reporting
- Published race related D&I metrics through the Insights platform
- Published our colleague and customer diversity data on an annual basis
- Monitored the diversity of our customers, colleagues & board members
- Monitored trends in data e.g. Rent Arrears and ASB in relation to race

## Insights

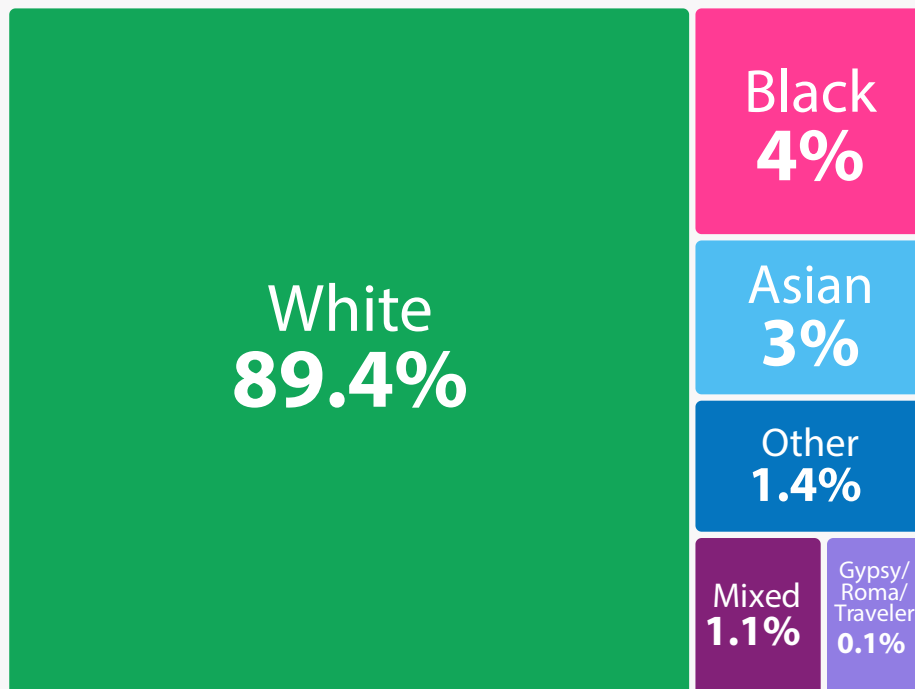


Of customers who have declared their ethnicity, **11.6%** of NCH Customers are classified as 'Ethnic Minorities'

This compares to **14.5%** of Newport's population in the 2021 census.



Of colleagues who have declared their ethnicity, **6.4%** identified as ethnic minorities.



**%** of customers who have declared their ethnicities.

# We will remove inequalities in our service

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We will develop our services and teams to bring us closer to the customer, understand their needs and review our processes, ensuring that they are free from bias. We will support customers and colleagues with different needs and develop simplified processes, increasing access to services for all.

## We have .....

### **In our policies, processes and procedures we have**

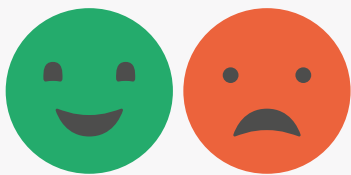
- Ensured our new homes are built to standards that are accessible
- Developed a 'complex case management approach' to support customers with complex needs
- Increased accessibility of services through extended hours
- Placed accessibility at the heart of our accommodation project
- Strengthened our Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) processes
- Incorporated D&I support into our policy review approach
- Introduced a mandatory D&I 1:1 for all corporate projects, ensuring D&I is considered in delivery

### **In our communications, education and engagement we have**

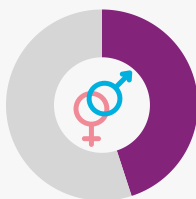
- Increased the accessibility of our social media communications (subtitling, alternative text descriptions, increased colour contrast etc.)
- Increased accessibility of videos by focusing on visual clues, slower panning & simpler messaging, to support disabilities & language barriers
- Upskilled colleagues knowledge of accessible communications
- Increased access via supporting customers with digital inclusion training
- Launched the NCH App to widen access to transactional services
- Engaged with customers with access needs to understand barriers
- Translated this engagement into training and action plans



# Insights

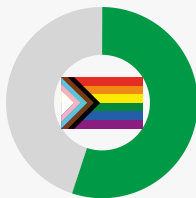


We correlate our D&I data with service data to understand different customer experiences.



**44%**

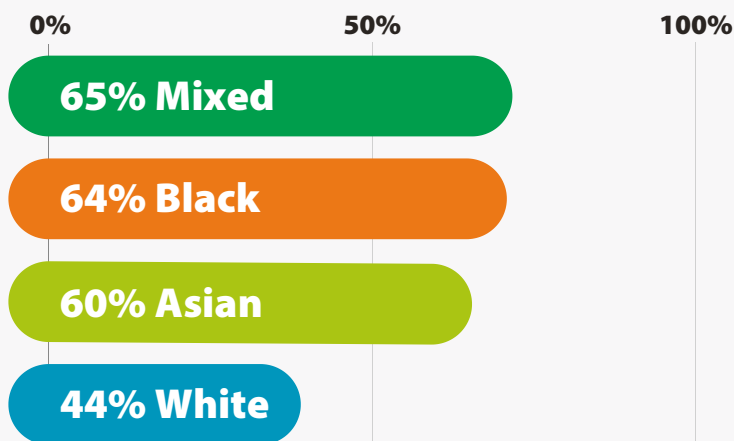
of tenants who identify as **“heterosexual”** are in arrears.



**55%**

of tenants who identify as **“LGBTQ+”** are in arrears.

Of customers who have declared their ethnicity, **%** of each ethnicity in arrears.



Analysis is in progress to understand the variation and to inform how the association will respond.

# We will educate and engage

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We know that we must talk more openly about equality, diversity, and inclusion to have the greatest impact. As an association, we will build knowledge and understanding of D&I to enable people to make informed decisions, increase their understanding and appreciation of difference, and be in the best position to provide support where it is needed.

## We have .....

### **To advance education and awareness we have:**

- Continued to include D&I within our mandatory training program
- Designed & delivered Inclusive behaviors & skills modules of the Management Development Programme, STRIVE
- Delivered bespoke D&I training to teams across the association
- Delivered D&I training to Scrutiny Partnership
- Delivered D&I Business Partnering with a focus on increasing capability
- Introduced inclusive 'lunch & learn' events
- Delivered a calendar of topical news, videos & resources
- Procured bespoke D&I training for our NCH Board
- Launched a Neurodiversity Toolkit to increase inclusion for neurodiverse customers & colleagues

### **To engage our customers, colleagues and communities we have**

- Facilitated colleague conversations on D&I & accessibility
- Delivered interactive D&I campaigns, including competitions & polls
- Hosted & attended community events discussing our D&I commitment
- Listened to the experiences of customers, communities & colleagues
- Worked with system partners to advance inclusion across Newport



# Insights



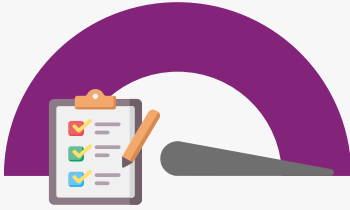
**74%**

74% of colleagues have completed D&I training, with training scheduled for all colleagues.



86% Managers that have completed the STRIVE Inclusion training module.

100% scheduled by 19 December 2023.



**100%**

100% of required equality impact assessments completed for policy reviews.



# We will build an inclusive culture

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We want everyone to feel they belong, whether they work for NCH, receive our services or partner with us. We believe that—at the heart of this—is the ability for people to have great conversations, be open about who they are and be respected for their differences. This means we must develop an approach where we can learn about each other, understand each other's point of view, provide support and have genuine empathy for each other. It is therefore a natural progression for any expansion from our traditional area of operation to focus on these areas as suitable opportunities are identified.

## We have .....

### **In our policies, processes and procedures we have**

- Designed & published our 'People Plan', furthering our commitment to building an inclusive culture
- Reduced barriers in recruitment, to create a more inclusive experience
- Established mechanisms to improve customer language data
- Begun to use internal and external language insights to inform service delivery & improvement actions
- Introduced a hoarding service, to support vulnerable customers
- Used colleague experiences and insights to inform decision making

### **In our communications, education and engagement we have**

- Introduced the colleague forum 'Our Values, Our Voice', providing a platform for colleagues to shape our DI journey
- Delivered training and campaigns that increase cultural awareness
- Recruited a Digital Communications Manager, to support our plans of increasing website & intranet accessibility

- Promoted our accessibility tool 'ReachDeck' to customers & colleagues
- Utilised our Accessibility Toolkit & provided accessible communications
- Facilitated community cohesion through collaboration & sponsorship
- Collaborated with partners to engage customers with vulnerabilities
- Delivered a wealth of inclusive initiatives such as 'Bettws Biscuit club', 55+ yoga, 'Pill Unity Community Allotment and Sensory Garden', Tredegar Park 'Accessible Picnic Bench' and more
- Increased our presence and accessibility within neighborhoods, through initiatives such as the 'Trailer Roadshow'

## Insights



**1.5%**

1.5% of Newport's population cannot speak English well.

**109**

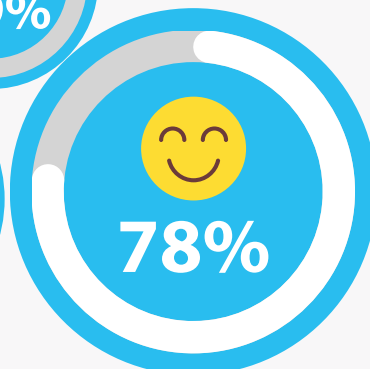
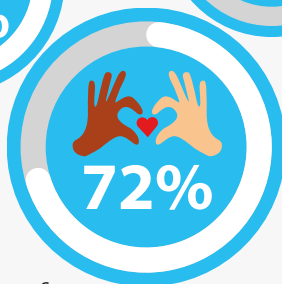
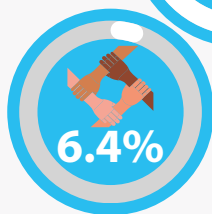


109 NCH Customers have declared that they need language support in communications.



The most common translation requests from NCH customers are **Polish, Czech, Urdu, Kurdish and Somali.**

68% of colleagues believe NCH is making positive progress to becoming a more inclusive association.



8.9% of colleagues declared they have a disability and an additional 3.3% of colleagues input disability related free text in their declarations.

6.4% of colleagues identify as ethnic minority. Over 50% of whom have been recruited in the last two years.

72% of colleagues believe Newport City Homes values diversity of our colleagues.

78% of colleagues believe they can be themselves at work.

# Conclusion

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D&I has always been of vital importance to the association, however, the approval of the strategic commitment and supporting action plan has increased the focus to deliver coordinated and targeted action.

The two years since the approval of the strategic commitment has seen progress, but we recognise that the change we want and need, is a longer-term project. Much of what we have achieved is necessary and foundational, and we have seen a step-change in the culture of the association, with diversity and inclusion now a central element in decision-making.

We have made significant enhancements in our data but using the insight it provides will remain a key area of focus to allow us to use the intelligence we have to make further improvements in our customer and colleague experiences. We aim to use the information we have to understand the causes of inequalities in the customer and colleague experience and to tackle the causes, we recognise that many may be societal issues, but we will act and influence what we can and seek support from partners to help us eliminate inequalities.

We will also seek to influence the local and national policy agenda that impacts on the customer and colleague experience. We recognise that there can be unintended bias in some policy and funding approaches, and we will use evidence to influence change in areas where it can have a positive impact on the delivery of our D&I ambition for the benefit of our customers, communities and colleagues.

Our strategic commitment has been effective in driving forward progress in both our journey to becoming a more representative association and in eliminating inequality in our service provision. However, the concept of providing equality of service to all, can perpetuate inequality by not offering equitable services. This in turn places an emphasis on process above the need for all colleagues to display judgement led working in ensuring the delivery of equitable service provision. One size does not fit all, and colleagues need to consider a breadth of data and intelligence in determining whether our established process offer equitable rather than equal service provision. The transition to a diversity & inclusion strategic commitment will enhance the understanding of our ambition.



## Focus and next steps

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- Continued focus on customer, community and colleague data to understand the barriers and opportunities to providing inclusive customer and colleague experiences.
- Use our enhanced business intelligence to shape service delivery and to influence regional and national policy.
- Review and implement updated equality impact assessment processes to ensure that our customers and colleague lived experiences inform policy and process design.
- Enhance business processes to utilise our customer language and accessible communications preferences data in all service delivery transactions.
- Continue to embed our diversity and inclusion culture through our enhanced business partnering approach, Our Values Our Voice group, colleague training and targeted campaigns.

