



# Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy 2026–30



# Our EDI vision

“We want Salvation Army Homes to continue to be a place where we are known for a culture of compassion, safety and belonging, where employees, residents and partners feel heard, respected and empowered to reach their full potential regardless of background, identity or circumstance”.

## The external environment

The social housing sector is operating in an increasingly complex environment where demand for housing and supported accommodation continues to rise. Residents often face multiple, overlapping challenges linked to poverty, trauma, mental health, disability, migration and social exclusion.

Social housing providers are seeing more people with complex needs, including those affected by homelessness, domestic abuse, substance misuse or the criminal justice system. These issues are shaped by structural inequalities, making equitable, trauma informed and inclusive services essential.

Regulators and government now expect housing providers to show how they address inequality and improve outcomes for diverse communities. New regulation places greater emphasis on understanding residents, listening to their experiences and ensuring fair, accessible services.

Communities are also becoming more diverse in ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, neurodiversity and disability. Providers must ensure their Board, The Leadership Team and the workforce reflect this diversity.

Data and insight are increasingly important for identifying inequalities and improving outcomes, while maintaining trust and confidentiality. Workforce challenges persist, and attracting and retaining a diverse workforce is crucial. Inclusive, psychologically safe workplaces support better service delivery.

In this context, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is not optional, it is central to delivering safe, effective, person-centred supported housing. Embedding EDI in culture, decision-making and service delivery strengthens Salvation Army Homes’ ability to meet regulatory expectations and improve outcomes for residents and communities.

# Our journey so far - some highlights

2023

## EDI Strategy

We introduced our first Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy, continuing the journey towards building a more diverse and inclusive organisation for employees and residents.

2023

## Mental Health First Aiders

Given the increase seen in employees experiencing poor mental health and some disabilities related to this, we introduced Mental Health First Aid England accredited trained first aiders to provide crisis support to staff and residents.

2024

## Braintree Pride

The first ever Braintree Pride was launched at Weavers Field, spearheaded by residents from our LGBTQ+ group

2024

## 30's and under group

Our 30's and under group brings together employees in their 30's and under to help bring innovation to the organisation for attracting and retaining a younger demographic in the workforce.

2025

## Increase in disability disclosure

We have also seen an increase in disability disclosure from employees to 13% (an increase of 6.5%), helping us better understand and support the needs of employees.

2025

## LGBTQ+ group created

Our LGBTQ+ group unites employees who identify as LGBTQ+ or are allies, aiming to raise awareness about LGBTQ+ issues in the workplace.

2026

## Increase in diversity

The diversity of our workforce has improved with employees from an ethnic minority background increasing to 25% (an increase of 12%).

2023

## Employee Voice group created

Employee Voice forum was created to provide employee representatives from across the whole organisation, a voice in how the organisation is run, with direct communication with the senior leadership team to raise questions and make suggestions

2023

## Brighton Pride

For the first time we took part in Brighton Pride with a float led by residents and local staff.

2024

## Investors in People

We were successfully awarded the Silver accreditation at our assessment in October 2024

2025

## Neuro diversity group created

Following employee feedback highlighting the appetite for an employee resource group around neurodiversity, this group was launched and has started to raise awareness of neurodiversity in the organisation, and suggest ways to make the workplace more inclusive as well as being a place for neurodiverse employees to support one another.

2025

## Accreditations

We were proud to receive several accreditations including HouseProud Pledge Pioneer, Menopause Friendly Employer, and Disability Confident Level 2

2025

## Men's mental health group (Man up & Open up)

We launched the Man up & open mental health group. Offering men around the organisation a safe space to discuss topics and coping strategies for positive mental health.

2026

## Awards

We are proud to have been shortlisted for a number of national awards too, including the Northern Housing Awards, Women in Housing, Housing innovations and the Housing Innovation Awards.

# Our journey so far

## Where we are now:

The diversity of our workforce has improved with employees from an ethnic minority background increasing to **25% (an increase of 12%)**. We have achieved an even gender balance across all levels of seniority whilst reducing our gender pay gap to zero. We have also seen an increase in disability disclosure to 13% (**an increase of 6.5%**), helping us better understand and support the needs of employees.

The employee voice within Salvation Army Homes has been strengthened through established resource groups including networks for LGBTQ+ employees, neurodiversity, men's mental health, under 30's and menopause. The Employee Voice employee forum has been embedded into the organisation as the recognised platform for employees across the organisation to be heard.

Our commitment to inclusion has been recognised through several external accreditations. We are a member of the **Housing Diversity Network, House Proud Pledge Pioneer, an accredited Menopause Friendly Employer with Disability Confident Level 2 and Investors in People Silver.**

We are proud to have been shortlisted for a number of national awards too, including the **Northern Housing Awards and the Housing Innovation Awards.**

We have increased our learning around EDI and strengthened awareness across the organisation, through our Inclusion Calendar, webinars, workshops, guest speakers, and e-learning. As part of the HouseProud pledge we developed the LGBTQ+ training for employees. This has helped employees build a better understanding of different cultures, backgrounds, abilities, religions and minority groups.

We have been particularly encouraged by residents who, following our own participation in Brighton Pride, have been empowered to deliver their own Pride Event for the community in Braintree, Essex.

We are proud of these achievements, and they provide a strong foundation for the next phase in our EDI journey. In this EDI Strategy 2026-2030, we have a greater ambition to deepen inclusion and drive meaningful, lasting change within Salvation Army Homes.

“  
The 30's and under group creates an important space for younger colleagues to bring fresh perspectives, challenge how we do things and offer unique views that help shape the organisation's future  
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## Where we want to be by 2030:

This strategy supports the delivery of our corporate strategy, Pathway to Excellence 2030 by outlining the steps we will take to deliver our EDI Vision within the framework of the corporate objectives, which are:

1. **Deliver excellent customer service**
2. **Invest in our existing homes**
3. **Deliver more homes to help residents achieve independent living**
4. **Be a great employer**
5. **Maintain our financial strength**

As we have gone through the last three years, we have become aware, through increasing our knowledge around EDI 'equity' is a more appropriate word to use in our strategy than 'equality'.

Equality means providing everyone with the same resources or opportunities ("same shoe for everyone"), while equity recognises individual differences and allocates resources based on needs to achieve equal outcomes ("a shoe that fits"). Equity focuses on fairness by adjusting for disadvantages, whereas equality treats everyone the same regardless of circumstances.

We will approach EDI in line with Our Mission and Values

- **Servant Leadership – we help people thrive**
- **Passion – we love our work**
- **Inclusion – this is a team effort**
- **Respect – we show respect**
- **Empowerment – we have trust**

The action plan which will enable delivery of this strategy is set out in a separate document.



1.

## Deliver Excellent Customer Service

We will ensure residents have opportunities for their voices to be heard, so they feel valued and can see where they have influenced decisions which affect their lives, resulting in increased satisfaction.

We will improve our data, enabling us to improve customer service by shaping services around the specific needs of residents.

We will continually seek to improve the way we work so we can learn from one another, both employees and residents

By recognising intersectionality, we will reduce barriers and ensure our services and workplace is more responsive, equitable and inclusive for everyone.

We will embed inclusion into service design and delivery, into shaping our strategies, and into developing our policies and business plans.

We will provide opportunities for residents to have a meaningful voice in our recruitment process, shaping the services they receive.

We will create environments for residents and employees which are psychologically safe, encouraging open feedback and constructive dialogue.



2.

## Invest in Our Existing Homes

We will be better able to design and maintain homes which are inclusive and fit for diverse needs, investing resources in the most effective way.

We will use the EDI data we hold about residents to identify trends and highlight areas for improvement, ensuring minority groups are not inadvertently disadvantaged when decisions are made over where to invest in existing homes.

We will ensure a diverse range of resident voices are involved in shaping improvements to existing services.

3.

## Deliver more homes to support independent living

By increasing our understanding of barriers and lived experience, we will ensure our services support equitable access to housing and independent living.

We will provide homes which enable independence for all residents, regardless of background or circumstance.

We will aim to recruit employees with a wide range of backgrounds, perspectives and lived experiences to strengthen our ability to provide inclusive, responsive, trauma-informed and person-centred services to residents to support independent living.



4.

## Be a Great Employer

We will have a strong and visible culture based on the principles of EDI in all we do, where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

We will have a strong employer brand which clearly communicates our identity, values and purpose, strengthening our reputation and supporting our ability to attract and retain talent and build strong partnerships.

We will have a culture of curiosity and openness which encourages employees to ask thoughtful questions and challenge assumptions.

We will provide opportunities for employees to expand their understanding of privilege, equity and fairness, helping to create shared awareness and empathy which strengthens relationships and enhances the quality and inclusivity of our services.

We will continue to support the development of strong and sustainable employee networks, recognising their important role in creating a sense of belonging and informing organisational learning.

We will ensure the way roles are designed at Board and Senior Management level, do not preclude any minority groups from applying.

We will identify barriers to employee progression and development and take steps to remove them.

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I'm really proud to chair Employee Voice. It's a safe space where colleagues can come together, have open and honest conversations, and make real change across the organisation, making sure everyone has the chance to be heard.

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# 5

## Maintain our financial strength



Through our increased understanding of the diverse needs of residents and employee, we will see improved resident outcomes and satisfaction, and a more stable and satisfied workforce, which will reduce long-term costs.

We will have a strong reputation for valuing EDI, strengthening our position when bidding for new services, increasing our opportunities to generate additional income.

We will use EDI data and insights to identify areas for improvement and monitor progress, performance and satisfaction across the organisation. This will ensure resources are targeted effectively and services deliver better outcomes.

We will ensure our policies and practices are inclusive and equitable, reducing our exposure to risk and financial penalties.