



SOUTHSIDE
housing association



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-2027

Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We are proud to present our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy to you. As we set out on a new Corporate Plan for the Association, where we are aiming to consolidate our strong foundation while shaping the future, and this Strategy is one of our key strategies which will support achievement of our Strategic Objectives and outputs.

Our communities contain a really diverse and different range of groups, and it's that diversity and rich tapestry of different backgrounds, experiences, cultures, and perspectives that help to make our neighbourhoods such vibrant and great places to live. We want to celebrate that diversity. Equality also isn't simply about treating everyone the same way, but it is in recognising and acknowledging differences and needs, and putting in place actions to address disadvantage or barriers where we find them.

As a registered social landlord in Scotland, we are regulated by the Scottish Housing Regulator, and Equalities and Human Rights commitments and obligations have a strong focus within the SHR's Regulatory Framework which we must meet. We also have obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the general duties of the Public Sector Equality Duty to advance equality, eliminate discrimination and harassment, and to promote good relations between Protected Characteristic groups. However, more importantly than simply meeting our obligations, we as a Governing Body and a Leadership Team recognise that from every perspective including a business perspective, advancing Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion through all of our activities as a social landlord is the right thing to do.

We are proud to make a difference in the communities that we serve, and to make our neighbourhoods great, vibrant, diverse and inclusive places to live and work, and we hope that our Strategy sets out our continued commitment to equality and fairness.

Alex Cameron
Chair

Paul McVey
Chief Executive Officer

Southside Housing Association – Who We Are and What We Do

We are a community-controlled housing association operating across a number of neighbourhoods throughout the south side of Glasgow. We employ approximately 70 largely office-based members of staff, and a further 30 staff members who work in our communities in concierge, housing support and direct labour roles.

Since we were established back in 1971, we have built up our current stock of housing homes through tenement rehabilitation, new build housing programmes and stock transfers. We now have around 2260 units for social rent, and just over 200 for mid-market rental in the areas where we operate. In addition, we provide property factoring services 880 privately owned properties.



22 Niddrie Road

Our main geographical areas which we operate in as a landlord are in Pollokshields (including parts of Kingston and Tradeston), Cardonald and Halfway. These areas account for 90% of our housing stock, while we also own housing in Shawlands, Strathbungo, Ibrox, Kinning Park, Langside and Mount Florida.

The Association delivers a comprehensive range of services, all focused on the needs of our customers and communities. These services include tenancy and neighbourhood management; repairs and property management; property development; asset management; housing support services; concierge; environmental works; income advice; and community development and support. We work closely with our subsidiary company, Southside Lettings (Scotland) Ltd which provides letting services for a significant portfolio of Mid-Market Rent housing.

Our Corporate Plan

We are setting out on our ambitious new Corporate Plan for the next five years. Our Corporate Plan aims to build upon our organisation’s strong foundations and getting it right in terms of our service delivery and good outcomes for our tenants and other customers. Our Corporate Plan also has a focus on the future, and how we can shape that future in terms of the needs of our tenants, other customers and wider communities, making sure our homes are fit to meet challenges like increased energy efficiency and net zero carbon emissions, and making the most of innovation and technology to work smarter and more efficiently in delivering value for money while bringing good outcomes for all.

Our Corporate Plan 2024-29 contains six strategic themes which set out our priority areas for the next five years



Our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy is one of the key organisational strategies which will underpin and support the achievement of our Corporate Plan objectives and our commitment to equality, diversity & inclusion inputs into all of our strategic themes.

We recognise that striving to deliver equality and fairness, valuing the diversity of our communities and looking to include everyone in what we do makes us better as an organisation. Hardwiring equality, diversity and inclusion into everything we do is the right thing to do not only from a moral and ethical perspective, but also from a business perspective in the way we provide our housing and other services to our tenants and other customers, and also where our people want to work and are proud to work for SHA.

Recognising and valuing the diversity within our neighbourhoods also helps us to promote positive changes in our local communities and to target our services where they will bring the most benefit and positive outcomes. We want our neighbourhoods to be places where people want to live and work, where they feel safe and secure and where they feel valued and included.

At SHA our people are a huge part of what makes SHA great. As an employer we want SHA to be a fair, inclusive, and diverse workforce where people are comfortable being their true selves, because we believe that is when people can work to their best. As an employer we also recognise that our people have different needs and circumstances, and we want SHA as a workplace to be modern and progressive and in tune with our people’s home and family





responsibilities and promoting a good work/life balance through flexibility where we can, and through providing support and assistance to our people who along with our tenants and other customers make SHA a great place to live and to work.

Our Vision and Values

As part of the development of our new Corporate Plan we undertook a review of our Vision and Values. Our Vision sets out what we hope to achieve by what we do.

Our Vision	
<i>Impacting and improving people's lives in a positive way</i>	

Our Values represent the ethics and principles that our people value most and which reflect SHA as an organisation. At SHA we want to live our values and incorporate them into everything that we do. Our Values one hundred percent are reflected in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion commitments.

Our Values	
 <p>Respect</p>	<i>We will put people first, prioritise relationships, be kind and helpful and treat others as we would want to be treated.</i>
 <p>Integrity</p>	<i>We will conduct ourselves with honesty and transparency.</i>
 <p>Positive</p>	<i>We will focus on positive outcomes and be solution focused.</i>
 <p>Responsible</p>	<i>We will be dependable professional, reliable and consistent.</i>

Local Context

The communities within which we operate are among the most diverse neighbourhoods in Scotland. The Pollokshields council ward area which contains a number of SHA neighbourhoods is one of the most ethnically diverse council ward areas in Scotland with approximately one-third of local residents being from a black or minority ethnic group, or in global terms a 'Global Majority' group.

To be able to identify where we can address the needs and shape our services to all of our tenants and other customers, we needed to know who they really are. That is why we carried out a large-scale survey of our tenants in 2023 to try to get to know more about the wide range of peoples lives in SHA homes. It provided us with some really valuable data:

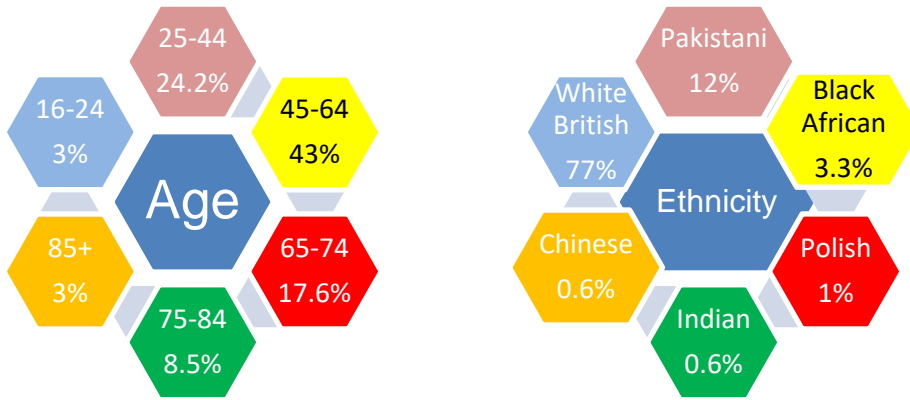


Figure 1- 84% of tenants have English as their first language.

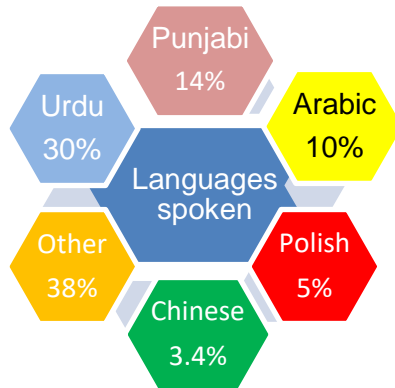
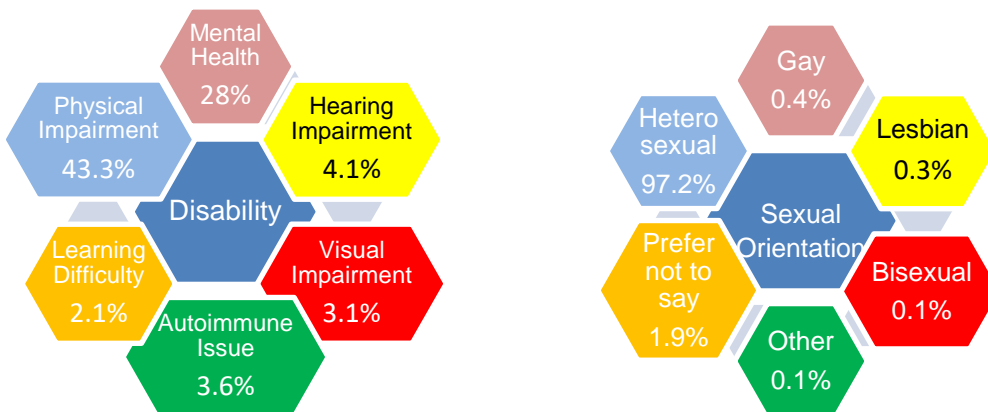


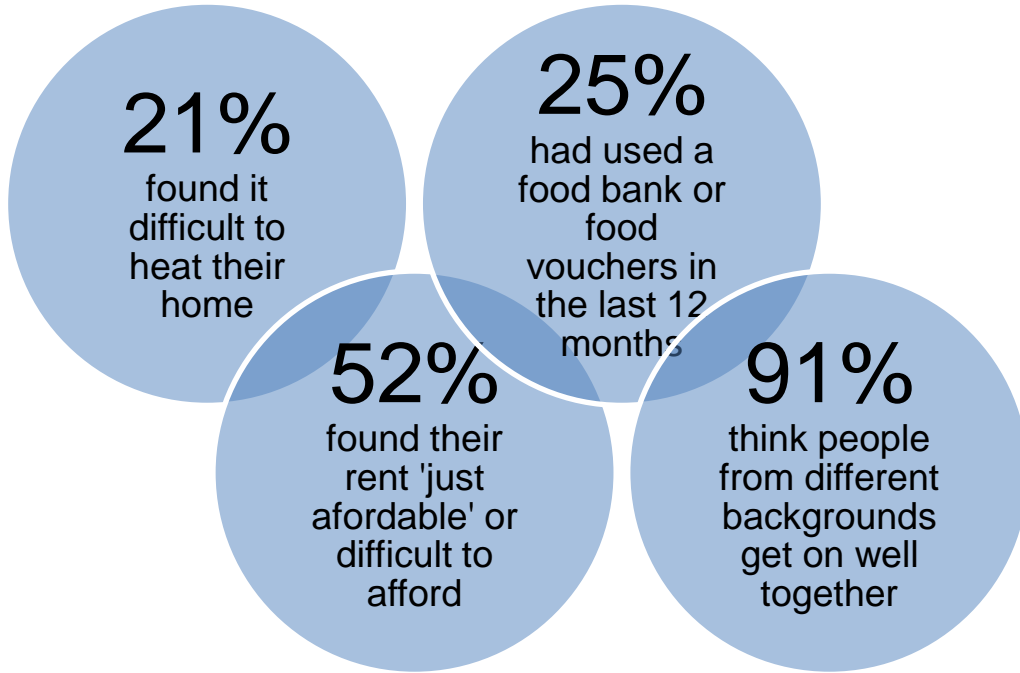
Figure 2 - of 41% of tenants who are disabled



Our housing stock predominately lies within two distinct areas of the south (Pollokshields/Southside Traditional) and south-west of Glasgow (Cardonald/Halfway), and while the basic requirements of a good quality, warm, energy efficient and affordable homes are universal, we can't simply take a 'one-size fits all' approach to the needs of our tenants and other customer. That's why our equalities profile data and socio-economic data that we have collected allows us to target our services based on local data and evidence.

What else do we know?

We know the last few years have been a real challenge for everyone in terms of a cost-of-living crisis, rising energy costs, inflation, and interest rates. Our tenant survey also provided us with some valuable socio-economic data about how our tenants and other customers are managing, and about our neighbourhoods more generally.



National data from the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation also shows the range of needs and socio-economic diversity of our communities. Our tenants and other customers in parts of Halfway and Pollokshields East neighbourhoods are among the 5% most deprived neighbourhoods in Scotland, conversely 19% of SHA housing lies within SIMD data zones which are higher than the Scottish national average.

Our challenges now and in the future

Our Strategy aims to use our local and national data to take an evidence-based approach to shaping existing services, and where appropriate, developing new ones to target specific needs or gaps across our neighbourhoods. These include:



Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Priorities

We have developed our equality, diversity and inclusion strategy priorities in collaboration with our SHA employee EDI working group, the SHA Leadership team and Management Committee. We wanted to ensure that our equality, diversity and inclusion priorities were aligned with our overall Corporate Plan, and some of our priorities directly support our Corporate Plan priorities. We want to set ourselves challenging but attainable objectives. Our Strategy can't eliminate all inequalities or unfairness or directly address wider societal structural issues, but we can look to advance equality and to do as much as we can to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to promote inclusion.



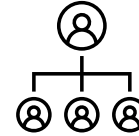


Knowing our Customers

We want to deliver great services which bring positive benefits and outcomes to the most people irrespective of their background. To do that we can't just work on assumptions or old information and data. We want people to enjoy their SHA tenancy and the neighbourhoods where they live, to allow us to provide tailored and targeted support, and to engage and communicate at the level people want to. A large part of getting that right is in how we collect and manage our tenant and other customer data, using technology and fit for purpose systems.

Effective knowledge and insight about our tenants and other customers will help us understand different and diverse needs, and to plan and deliver our services shaped by evidence and the input of our customers.

Where we want to be	How do we get there?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our service delivery is informed by our customer data and insight • Have effective mechanisms and processes in place to ensure our equalities data is updated and refreshed • Good data and customer insight is used to analyse and effectively target groups where the greatest benefit of our services will be felt • We have full equalities profile data in relation to applicants for SHA housing • SHA surveys incorporate equalities data collection • Our data is stored, processed and retained in line with legal and business requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By effectively using customer equality profile data collected from tenant and employee surveys • Developing and implementing our new customer management system to ensure data is stored securely and anonymously but allows data to be interrogated and analysed to improve our services. • Developing our secure on-line housing applications including anonymised data collection across all Protected Characteristics • We'll review how we obtain customer feedback



Leadership, Partnership and Organisational Commitment

If we are to deliver the aims of our strategy then clear messaging and a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion from our Management Committee and Leadership Team is key to the success of our strategy. It is the Management Committee who will ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded in our strategic business aims and plans, and our Leadership Team who will ensure our equality diversity and inclusion commitments are central in our operational service delivery. This means ensuring they are equipped with the right training and tools, and to effectively lead on and advance equality.

We also recognise that we can't achieve everything on our own, that is why it is important to maintain the connections and relationships with existing partners and stakeholders and to forge new ones.

Where we want to be	How do we get there?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our key services and policies are underpinned by consultation with and informed by expert advice and guidance • Hate crime, harassment and discrimination is effectively addressed within our neighbourhoods • Our financial power and decision making in relation to procurement advances equality • Community benefits are delivered according to what the community has told us is their priority • Our Governing Body have oversight and assurance that we are meeting all of our legal and regulatory obligations • Our equality, diversity and inclusion commitment is visible and is led by the strategic leadership of SHA • SHA culture reflects our Values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain links with key equality representatives, stakeholders and partners • Promote and widely publicise SHA as a Third-Party Hate Crime reporting facility • Evidence of a commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion and human rights from our prospective contractors and within our procurement processes. • Actively promote use of Community Benefits within our key contracts • We'll develop annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion reporting to our Management Committee • Identify training needs for our Management Committee and leadership team and develop and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training plan



Community Engagement

If we want to deliver excellent services which are tailored to our tenants and other customers needs, then it is important that we ask and take their views and perspectives into account when we are designing or delivering services. We already have a number of ways in which we engage with our communities from involvement in our governance processes to providing informal feedback. We also want to engage with tenants and other customers who may be under-represented, and to remove barriers to engagement whether they be physical, mental, communication based or any other type of barrier.

Where we want to be	How do we get there?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To respond positively to requests for information, or signpost to assistance quickly and effectively • Our customer-facing staff know how to identify and respond appropriately to customers whose primary language is not English • We have a consistent, effective and value for money approach to meeting our interpretation and translation commitments • Our corporate publications and website are more tenant and customer focused • Our website is completely accessible • Events are publicised and reflect the diversity of our neighbourhoods and our EDI commitments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We'll promote SHA as a welcoming, open and diverse organisation • We'll develop and organisational approach and process for interpretation and translation • We'll ensure that our communications reflect the diversity of our communities • We'll conduct an equalities-based review of the SHA website • We'll incorporate equality, diversity and inclusion considerations and impacts when we are planning our community events



Responsive Services and Customer Care

We want to ensure that when you contact us to provide a service or for advice or assistance that we deliver an excellent and responsive customer service. Responsive services mean taking account of our tenants and other customers needs and of what they tell us. It also means taking account of our customer data and insight and assessing the impact of our services to ensure they are fair.

Where we want to be	How do we get there?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our services and policies do not impact adversely upon equalities or and where they do we take action to mitigate. • We consider Human Rights in the development of our policies and the design of our services • Key cultural events are recognised and celebrated • Access to all of our housing is in line with our neighbourhood profiles • Our systems record where our tenants have told us their specific preferences • No physical or mental barriers to accessing our premises • We <i>proactively</i> address domestic violence and take steps to put policies and initiatives in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We'll review our Equality Impact Assessment process to take account of Human Rights impacts • We'll develop an Equality and Diversity key dates calendar and celebrate and promote dates which are important to our tenants and other customers via our publications, website and social media channels • We'll analyse and monitor our Allocations processes to ensure that no unnecessary barriers exist for any group in accessing housing • We'll audit our customer facing premises to ensure they meet legal and good practice requirement with regard to accessibility • We'll develop our organisational approach to addressing Domestic Violence and meeting new legal requirements set out by the Scottish Government



A Progressive and Diverse Workforce

Our staff are one of the most integral parts of delivering on our strategy, they are the public interface with our tenants, other customer and stakeholders. We want our staff to live our SHA values in their everyday work and how they interact with our customers. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is also a key consideration for us as an employer to ensure that SHA is a safe, inclusive and supportive place to work, and where we recognise the need for flexibility and a good home and work life balance. Respect is a core SHA Value, and every SHA staff member has a right to be treated with respect and dignity.

Where we want to be	How do we get there?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least two equalities-based training sessions are delivered to SHA staff over the next two years • Equalities training needs of staff have been assessed and identified • Employee satisfaction is increased • Our Management Committee and workforce are broadly reflective of the profile of our communities • Unnecessary barriers to recruitment, selection and retention are identified, removed or mitigated • Our workforce has an increased awareness of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We'll develop and deliver an equalities training programme for SHA staff • We'll take forward actions identified from our recent employee engagement survey • We'll use our data to review the equalities composition of our Management Committee and workforce • We'll review our Recruitment and Retention policy and processes • We'll raise awareness and have an organisational focus upon specific Protect Characteristic initiatives e.g. Black History Month • We'll review our Workplace Menopause policy • We'll review our organisational approach to addressing period poverty and period dignity.

Our Local Partners – Who we work with to deliver our equality, diversity and inclusion priorities

We can't deliver everything we want to do on our own, that is why the relationships we have with our partners, key stakeholders, third sector groups and charities who have shared aims with us are key to delivering our objectives.

We have good relations with our local Community Councils and Glasgow City Council Area Partnership Committees in Cardonald and Pollokshields. We also work closely with Glasgow City Council in delivering new build housing and regeneration across our neighbourhoods and with Glasgow Health and Social Care Partnership in alleviating and addressing homelessness.

There are a wide range of partner organisations who we work with in delivering our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion objectives.

Pollokshields

In Pollokshields the Association has vital working relationships with:

- Pollokshields Community Food Point (Pollokshields Mutual Aid)
- Glendale Women's Café
- Pollokshields Heritage in protecting the rich built heritage.
- Local schools

Faith groups are an important part of civil society in Pollokshields and we have good working relations with the Christian churches, Mosques and Madrassas and the local Gurdwaras.

We also work with environmental charities such as South Seeds and the Toryglen based charity Urban Roots. In response to the Covid-19 crisis, we worked closely with Pollokshields Mutual Aid in providing emergency food or households in crisis, and this partnership has grown and continues.

Cardonald

In Cardonald the Association works closely with:

- Govan Community Project
- Hillington Park Church to deliver a range of support services
- Southwest Food Bank
- Cardonald Larder

We also work closely with The Well Community Centre near Victoria Road and our advice workers provide services to users of The Well on a weekly basis. Our welfare rights, money and debt advice services, (soon to include fuel advisor service) also provides services to a number of housing associations in the south of Glasgow, and will soon extend to the Dixon Community for services to carers in the south of the city.

We also manage the Glasgow Care and Repair service on behalf of Glasgow Health and Social Care Partnership which delivers the handyperson small repairs services and advice and information on larger repairs and adaptations for people aged 65+ or who are disabled. Glasgow Care and Repair also manages the Home & Hospital service for people aged 65+ to prepare them for discharge from hospital care.

Monitoring our Progress

Our Strategy has set out our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion priorities which we want to achieve over the next three years. We have also developed an Action Plan to complement our Strategy. Our Action Plan is essentially our roadmap to how we will deliver where we want to be in terms of each of our priorities, and it sets out staff responsibilities, and target timescales for driving achievement of each action.

Our EDI Working Group will have oversight of operationally managing progress of our Action Plan and putting in place what is required to get us to where we want to be. Our Leadership Team is represented on the EDI working group by our Director of Housing and Communities who reports on progress to the wider Leadership Team.

Ultimately, our Management Committee has strategic responsibility and oversight for ensuring that our objectives remain on track. Progress is reported to our Management Committee through exception reporting against the Action Plan, and an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion report will be presented annually to the Management Committee





EQUALITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY

JUNE 2024