

 Uncha

Where everyone belongs

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Strategy 2026 - 2031



Our ambition: **Equality, diversity and inclusion**



We want every colleague to feel valued. We'll create an environment where people's unique perspectives are recognised, embraced and strengthened by our culture. We'll build teams that reflect the communities we serve, ensuring everyone has the opportunity to contribute, grow and thrive.



Our people are the beating heart of NCHA. Our vision is to develop a workforce that represents the diversity of our communities at every level of the organisation, establishing a place for everyone.

We are committed to building an inclusive organisation that values the unique lived experiences of our colleagues and the contribution each person makes to our culture, performance and services. By creating a workforce where everyone feels a genuine sense of belonging and is supported to reach their full potential, working life becomes more rewarding for our people. In turn, our customers benefit from better services, helping to strengthen NCHA as a great place to work.

To support this ambition and enable delivery across our corporate priorities, we're committed to developing both internal and external talent. Through apprenticeships, positive action programmes, access to coaching, and enhanced support with applications and interview skills, we aim to widen opportunity and build the skills and diversity needed to serve our customers better.

These approaches help ensure we have the right people, perspectives and leadership capability to deliver high-quality services, make inclusive decisions, and build a resilient organisation for the future. The introduction of a dedicated ED&I Adviser role strengthens this commitment, providing focused expertise to ensure our ED&I strategy is effectively implemented and aligned with our wider corporate objectives.

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set out a series of actions and measures that will support delivery of this strategy and contribute to the success of our wider corporate priorities.

Mya Robinson
ED&I Advisor

A photograph of four diverse professionals (three women and one man) walking outdoors on a paved path. They are all smiling and engaged in conversation. They are wearing lanyards with ID badges. The background shows greenery and a white van.

Our guiding principles for

equality, diversity and inclusion

What matters most to us is making a meaningful difference for people and the planet. We're committed to protecting the environment, using our resources wisely, and creating positive change in the communities we serve. Our Group Corporate Plan, Our Ambitions, and our core strategies all contribute to these priorities.

Throughout our Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy you'll see how we're putting these three principles, environmental sustainability, value for money, and social impact, into practice.



Environmental Sustainability

Environmental sustainability relies on colleagues who are empowered, informed and confident to shape better ways of working. An inclusive culture ensures diverse perspectives influence how we use resources, design processes and make environmentally responsible decisions. When everyone feels able to contribute ideas and challenge assumptions, we strengthen our ability to deliver sustainable solutions that support both organisational priorities and long term community wellbeing.



Value for Money

When colleagues feel respected and able to progress in their role, performance strengthens and inefficiencies linked to behaviours are reduced and we'll achieve better value for money. Inclusive decision making leads to better use of resources, ensuring our investment in people and services delivers maximum benefit and aligns with the needs of the communities we serve.



Social Impact

A fair and inclusive workplace is central to achieving meaningful social impact. By supporting all colleagues to thrive, we build a workforce that reflects the diversity of our communities and understands their experiences. This strengthens our ability to design and deliver services that improve wellbeing, reduce inequality and contribute to stronger, more resilient neighbourhoods, while modelling the positive societal change we aim to promote.



Where are we now?

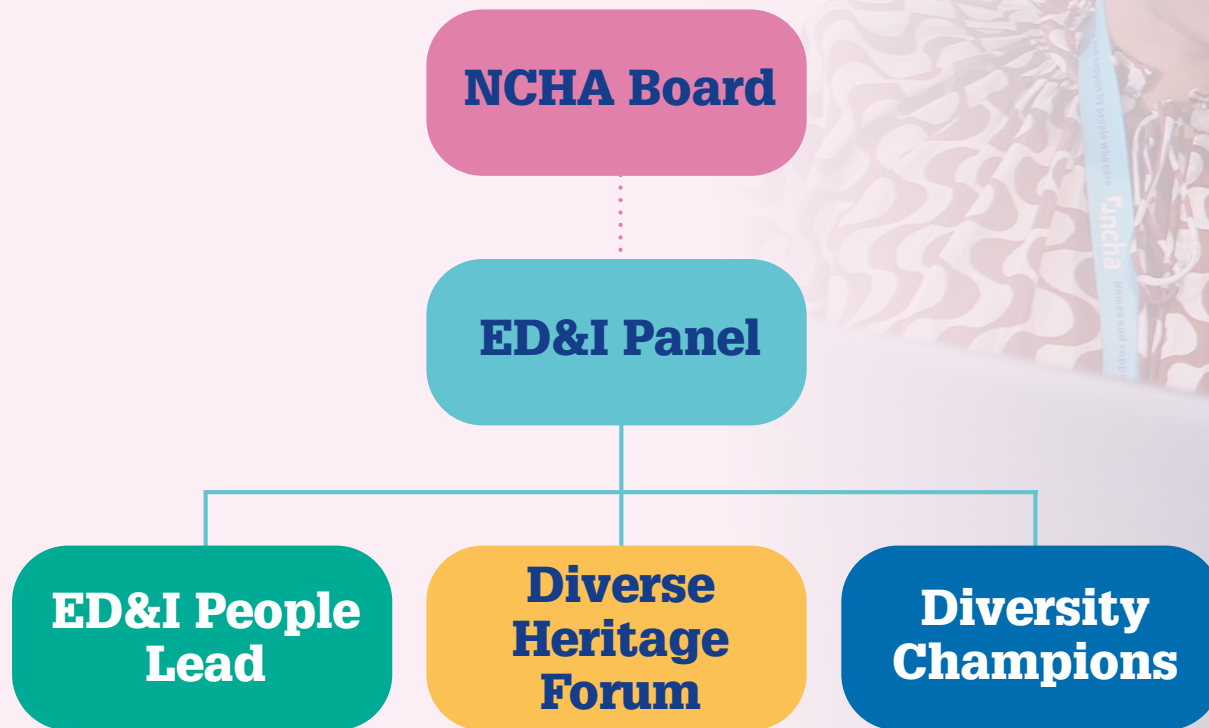
We have reinforced our zero tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination and strengthened key policies to ensure colleagues feel respected, protected and supported at work. Our investment in peer support networks continues to grow, with active groups including our Diverse Heritage Colleague Forum, Diversity Champions, and support groups for menopause, neurodiversity, chronic illness and carers; all providing opportunities for colleagues with shared experiences to connect and be heard.

We are deepening our focus on understanding and meeting the needs of neurodivergent colleagues, and further work is planned to enhance inclusive practice, guidance and adjustments as part of this strategy.

While we have a proportionately low level of disciplinary cases for an organisation of our size, we have identified an overrepresentation of diverse heritage colleagues within formal disciplinary procedures. Although allegations are not typically linked to protected characteristics, this remains a significant priority and an area we continue to monitor and address to ensure fairness and equity.

To strengthen our culture of allyship and confidence, we are developing an Anti Racism Allies programme and undertaking a full review of our ED&I training offer to close any gaps and ensure colleagues understand inclusive behaviours and expectations. These steps reflect our ongoing commitment to becoming a more inclusive, supportive and equitable organisation for everyone.

Here's how it all fits together:



1

Apprenticeships

We'll widen access to apprenticeships, creating fair and inclusive entry routes that attract diverse talent and support people to begin and/or develop their careers at NCHA.



Gabriella John
Apprentice Support Assistant

Action	Delivery date	Measurement	ES	VFM	SI
1a. Increase the percentage of delegates on apprenticeships from a diverse heritage background	2029	Increase from 19% to 22% by 2029 (apprenticeship cohort composition)			
1b. Ensure we have accurate and up-to-date information on protected characteristics for apprenticeship participants	2029	Reduce undeclared protected characteristics from 10% to 5% by 2027, and to 0% by 2029 (self-declaration rate)			



Apprenticeships give people a genuine way into work and a chance to grow, especially where these opportunities might otherwise feel out of reach. As part of our ED&I strategy, they help us break down barriers and open doors, making sure people who may feel marginalised are welcomed, supported and able to build a future with us.



Talent Management

We'll ensure progression pathways are transparent and inclusive, giving colleagues from all backgrounds equal opportunities to grow, build skills and move into senior or people manager roles.



Action	Delivery date	Measurement	ES	VFM	SI
2a. Increase the percentage of colleagues selected for any aspiring managers programme from diverse heritage backgrounds	2029	20% of delegates selected for office-based programmes are of diverse heritage and 30% of Care and Support based programmes by 2029			
2b. Measure the number of delegates from diverse heritage backgrounds who secure a management position within 12 months of completing an aspiring manager's programme	2029	Track and evidence progression, achieving 25% of diverse heritage delegates to secure a management position			
2c. Develop a robust reporting process to measure internal promotions against protected characteristics	2027 - 2029	Reporting framework established and fully implemented by 2029			
2d. Consider the findings from the evaluation of the pilot Diverse Heritage Development programme to shape and develop further cohorts	2027 - 2029	Standardised delivery model established, building on the 2025 pilot			
2e. Increase representation across roles and pay levels. Specifically, the proportion of diverse heritage and female managers in the upper pay quartile and improve representation of men in Care and Support and women in Property Services	2029	13% of managers in the upper pay quartile should be of Diverse Heritage and 66% of managers in the upper pay quartile should be female to reflect the wider management composition Increase the representation of men in Care and Support roles in line with their proportion in the overall workforce. Increase the representation of women in Property Services roles in line with their proportion in the overall workforce			

Inclusive Culture

We'll build a culture where everyone feels respected, valued and able to contribute. It will support clear expectations for inclusive behaviour and strengthen confidence to challenge discrimination.



Action	Delivery date	Measurement	ES	VFM	SI
3a. Continue providing ED&I focussed lunch and learn events to increase engagement	2029	Achieve 25% EDI focused sessions and increase colleague attendance by 40% compared to 2025 levels.			
3b. Review current EDI training offer	2027	Deliver a revised training programme with 100% completion for new starters and 80% completion for current colleagues by 2029.			
3c. Develop and implement an Anti Racist Allies Scheme	2029	Fully implemented scheme with 20% of workforce signed up and 90% of members completing their eLearning within three months of joining			
3d. Create external links and partnerships through the ED&I Advisor role	2028	At least two active partnerships with external networks, forums or sector groups to support ED&I development.			
3e. Continue the utilisation of Executive Sponsors for the Diverse Heritage Forum and Diversity Champions Group	Ongoing to 2029	100% attendance at meetings and annual review of progress with visible leadership advocacy			

4

Support for colleagues

We'll improve our support for colleagues, ensuring policies, adjustments and wellbeing resources meet diverse needs and enable everyone to thrive at work.



Adam Umney
Diversity Champions Chair

Action	Delivery date	Measurement	ES	VFM	SI
4a. Monitor and address any disproportionate impact on diverse heritage colleagues in formal disciplinary and grievance procedures	2029	Move from the 2025 discovery paper to a full reporting process and annual analysis, for diverse heritage colleagues by 2029			
4b. Continue using peer support groups for colleagues	2029	Maintain peer support groups, increasing participation and expanding to additional topics based on colleague need			
4c. Complete a neurodiversity audit of NCHA processes and culture, with recommendations actioned	2027 - 2029	Audit completed; at least 75% of recommendations implemented by 2029			



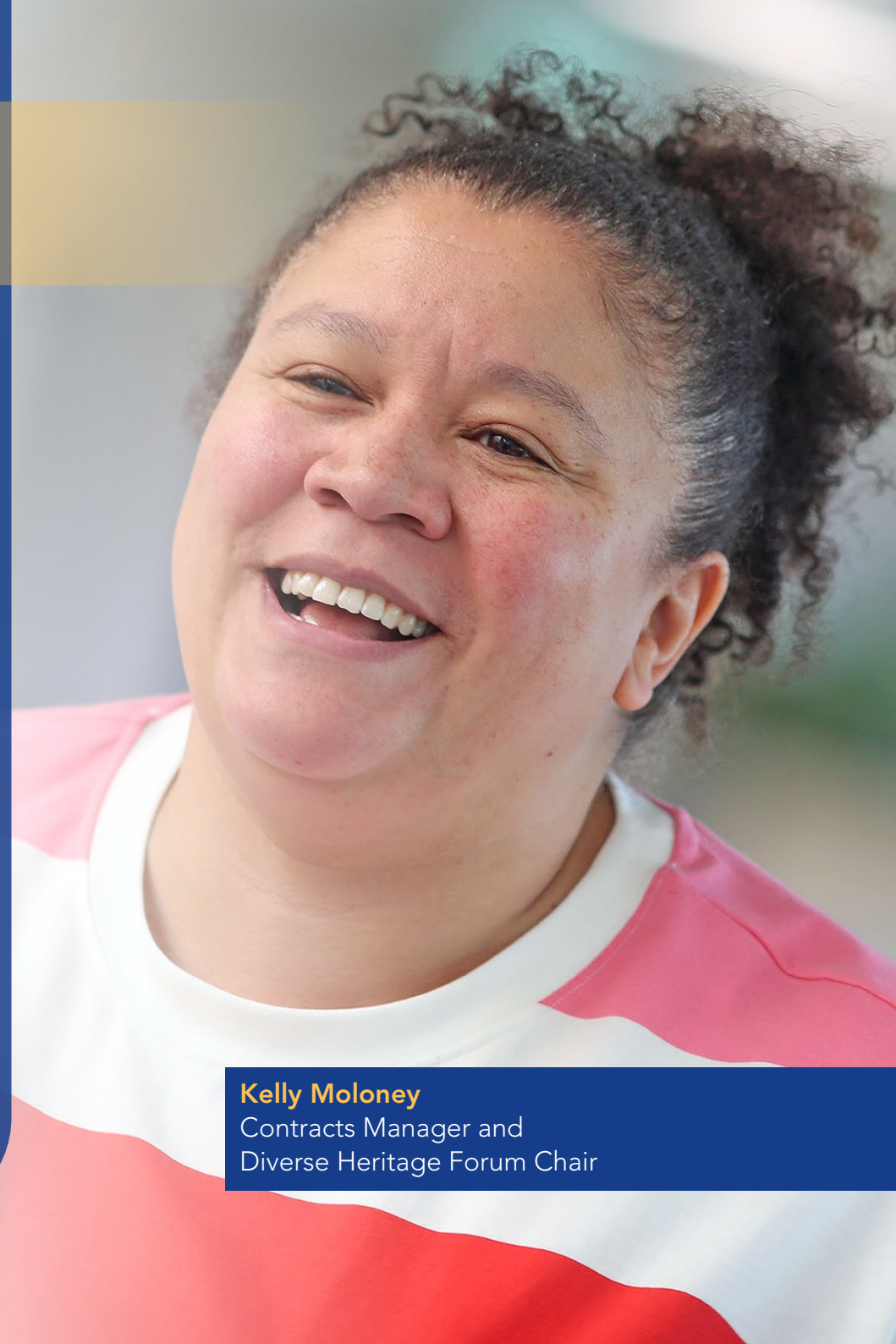
As Diversity Champions, we know that one size doesn't fit all. We're working to make sure we're listening, learning, and making sure our policies, reasonable adjustments and wellbeing support genuinely reflect the different needs of our colleagues. When people feel understood and supported they can be their whole-self at work – and that's when everyone truly thrives.



5

Colleague Engagement and Satisfaction

We'll listen to and act on colleague feedback, helping us understand people's experiences, strengthen trust and build a workplace where people feel motivated and included.



Kelly Moloney

Contracts Manager and
Diverse Heritage Forum Chair

Action	Delivery date	Measurement	ES	VFM	SI
5a. Create a toolkit that enables diverse heritage colleagues to feel psychologically safe at work, informed by Diverse Heritage Colleague Forum, external consultants and colleague feedback	2027	Toolkit produced, rolled out to managers leading to an increase in colleague satisfaction for Diverse Heritage colleagues .			
5b. Undertake analysis of survey results to identify patterns and disparities across protected characteristics, and produce clear recommendations to inform targeted action.	2029	Maintain or improve the current 77% Great Place to Work score, ensuring similar positive scores across all protected characteristics, with no significant disparities by 2029.			



As managers, we need to make sure everyone feels safe and comfortable being themselves at work. This toolkit, shaped by the experiences of colleagues from diverse backgrounds and expert advice, is an important step in achieving that. By looking closely at our survey results, we can move from good intentions to taking informed, targeted action that addresses the real issues and differences our colleagues experience.



Belonging starts here - our inclusive future

Building a diverse workforce

To build a truly diverse workforce, we need to do more than bring people in. We need to actively support, develop and retain colleagues from every background, with a clear focus on helping colleagues of diverse heritage progress into senior and management roles. We will create a culture where inclusive behaviours are understood, expected and consistently shown. This means involving colleagues in spotting, challenging and addressing inequality, bias and discrimination whenever they appear.

Our principles

Our work will be guided by clear principles that keep us transparent and aligned with best practice. We will build EDI into every major decision we make. This includes using strong Equality Impact Assessments to identify risks, question assumptions and make sure our decisions lead to fair and inclusive outcomes.



Targeted action for the biggest impact

We will strengthen the way we collect and use data so we can understand the real impact of our policies and practices. This evidence will help us take targeted action, uphold our zero-tolerance approach to discrimination and share learning that supports wider improvements across the housing sector.

Keep learning

As a learning organisation, we will stay connected to local and national networks so our approach reflects new legislation, emerging best practice and innovation across the sector. Through all of this, we aim to build a culture where inclusion is part of everyday practice and where our workforce genuinely reflects the communities we serve.

- www.ncha.org.uk
- 0800 013 8555
- info@ncha.org.uk

An electronic version of this report can be found on our website, www.ncha.org.uk.

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