Readers may note that some information within these documents have been omitted / redacted.

Some information has been omitted / redacted as disclosure may prejudice the commercial interests of Irvine Housing Association trading as Riverside Scotland.

We recognise that the commercial sensitivity of information may decline over time and the harm arising from disclosure may be outweighed by the public interest in openness and transparency. We commit to review the redaction of any such information from time to time.

Some information has been redacted as it contains personal data which identifies an individual. Disclosure of this information would place Irvine Housing Association t/a Riverside Scotland in breach of the Data Protection Act 2018.

257th Board Meeting of Irvine Housing Association Ltd:
Wednesday 29 November 2023 at 5.30 p.m.
At 44-46 Bank Street, Irvine, KA12 0LP and via MS Teams

AGENDA

		Data Class
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Declarations of Interest	
3.	Previous Minutes – Minutes of the Special Board Meetings held on Wednesday 20 September and Saturday 28 October 2023.	Public
4.	Matters Arising	
5.	Substantive Business	
5.1	Financial Plan	Confidential
5.2	Disabled Adaptations Position	Confidential
5.3	Policy Framework	Public
5.4	Membership Register	Public
5.5	OSCR Return	Public
5.6	Complaints Performance (February – October 2023)	Confidential
5.7	Riverside Group Policies	Public
5.8	Quarterly Performance Report – Q2 2023	Public
5.9	Financial Performance Report	Confidential
5.10	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy 2023-26	Public
5.11	MD Report	Confidential
6.	Minutes/Updates: a) Unconfirmed Group Customer Experience Committee Minutes – 21 September 2023 b) Group Board Core Brief – 4 September and 12 October 2023	Confidential Confidential
7.	Any Other Business	
8.	Date of Next Meeting - Thursday 1 February 2023 at 5.30 p.m. – 258th Board Meeting at 44-46 Bank Street, Irvine and via MS Teams	

DMcL / db
16/11/2023

5.3. Policy Framework

Title: Policy Framework	Date: 29 November 2023
Author: Paul Dillon	Sponsor: Morag Hutchinson
Action: To Note	Confidential: No
Appendices: Appendix 1 – Riverside Scotland Policy Data	Convene Document Library: N/A
Reg. Standard 5:	ORP ref:
Strategic Risk ref: R6 - Governance & Regulation	
Consultation: This report was written in consultation with stakeholders across TRG	

Purpose and Action:

This paper provides an update to the Policy Framework & process which was presented in August 2023, to ensure the timely and accurate review of all policies in relation to Riverside Scotland, with the aim that wherever possible, Riverside Scotland can adopt Group policies. Where not possible, the intention is that any separate policies Riverside Scotland require (due to legislative or regulatory requirements) utilise the same framework as the Riverside Group to ensure visibility and standardisation of process.

The update for the policy review and the ongoing actions are detailed below.

Board are asked to note the contents of this update.

---

1   Background

1.1   The Project & Planning team identified 26 Riverside Scotland (RS) policies which are stored locally and investigated further to determine their current status in regard to review dates, policy authors and owners, and their links to equivalent Riverside Group (TRG) policies.

         The results of this were;

- 8 standalone polices with no equivalent in TRG (e.g., Association Membership Policy, Freedom of Information Policy, Property Factoring Policy),
- 15 policies with varying degrees of similarity to TRG policies, where the wording is broadly similar and only the legislative references are different,
- 3 Common Allocation policies (for the local authority areas where we are in a pooled allocation process), unique to Riverside Scotland.

1.2   The Riverside Scotland requirements for policy review are as follows;

- Group wide policies/strategies which are developed by Group and cover all subsidiaries, and which do not need to be changed or amended for Riverside Scotland, should be taken to RS Board for discussion and noting. Relevant Riverside Scotland employees, customers where required, and our Board should essentially be consultees to the development of Group wide policy - ideally before the policy goes to Group Board for approval. We can have our own action plans or operational processes which sit beneath the policy; however these don't need to be approved by our Board – but we can take them for information and discussion as part of the consultation process.
- Group wide policies which need to be amended specifically for Riverside Scotland (Scottish versions) should be approved by Group Board and the Riverside Scotland Board, i.e., where Scottish legislation or Regulatory Guidance is different (we should be aligning to Group policy as far as possible unless there is specific Scottish legislation or Regulatory Guidance preventing us from doing so).

- All People and IT policies are signed off and agreed by SMT and do not need to go to RS Board.
  - *HR policies relating to staff terms and conditions, salaries and redundancy should, however, be brought to the RS Board for approval.*
- Policies that we develop completely on our own, separately from Riverside Group (e.g., Tree Maintenance and Management, Aids and Adaptations policy) would be developed by SMT/SMEs and go to RS Board for approval.

1.3   The Policy Management System is the centralised place for all policies and is published on the RIC (Riverside Information Centre) SharePoint site and is available for anyone within the Company to access ▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬ All policies are listed alongside key information such as Policy Owners and Sponsors, Functional Area, Approval Level and Last and Next Review Dates.

2   Action Plan

2.1   The Riverside Scotland policy information has been shared with the Riverside Strategy & Planning Team and the Riverside Scotland policies will be uploaded to the Policy Management System by the end of December 2023 – this will ensure that the information is available across the business and the review cycle managed effectively.

2.2   At the point of a TRG policy review, the stakeholders will link in with the relevant subject matter experts from Riverside Scotland and they will determine whether the Group policy can accurately and adequately incorporate RS policy legislatively, or whether the differences are too great and a Scotland-only policy will still be required. It is anticipated that the majority of policies will be able to be incorporated, whether by use of Scotland-specific appendices or action plans or operational processes which sit beneath the policies.

2.3   The 7 identified standalone Riverside Scotland policies will have the review cycles managed as per all other policies on the system and be subject to the same guidelines for consultation, equality impact assessment, approval, etc.

2.4   The 3 Common Allocation policies will be out of scope for uploading to the Policy Management System as we do not own them or the review cycle. They will continue to be managed by our Head of Service Delivery in association with the relevant local authorities, and for full transparency will remain published on our Freedom Of Information pages on the Riverside Scotland website.

2.5   To keep an overview of the system and to advise the RS team locally when policy reviews are approaching, the Project & Planning Analysts will continue to attend the quarterly Policy Forum. This will ensure that the Riverside Scotland consultation part of the process is being followed and that we have an input to any future updates or process changes.

The minutes from the latest Policy Review Forum in August 2023, confirm that in the September ED report;
  - Note to EDs will state policies cannot be signed off unless Scotland have been properly consulted with to ensure we have comprehensive policies (a separate Scotland/ England policy will be the exception rather than the rule).
  - Regulatory/ legislative differences in Scotland need to be considered when writing/ reviewing ALL policies.
  - ET noted policy publishing rules in Scotland (under FOIA) – we need to be mindful of language used in policies.

2.6   This approach will mean that all policies will be immediately managed within the central Policy Management System, however it should be noted that complete integration will not be achieved until the scheduled reviews of group policies go through a complete cycle.

3   POLICY SCHEDULE UPDATE

3.1   An update to the Policy Data presented at August Board can be found at Appendix 1. On further investigation we have found the following;

- 6 TRG policies are due a Riverside Scotland Board review for adoption – these have been submitted to November Board under a separate paper.
- 1 TRG People Policy is due a Riverside Scotland review for adoption – this has been submitted to November SMT
- 3 TRG Policies are overdue for review. These are being managed by the Riverside Strategy & Planning Team who manage the review cycle.
- 7 Riverside Scotland-specific policies are overdue for review. Of these, 4 will potentially be integrated into the TRG Policy at the next review cycle. The remaining 3 are RS standalone policies. The details have been submitted to SMT to decide a course of action.

5.4. Membership Register

Title: Membership Register	Date: 29 November 2023
Author: Donna Boyle ██████████	Sponsor: Diana MacLean
Action: Decision	Confidential: No
Appendices: Appendix 1 – Potential Member Removals	Reading Room:
Reg. Standard: Tenant Involvement and Empowerment	ORP ref: People at our heart
Strategic Risk ref: R7 Customer Experience	
Consultation: This report is not subject to consultation	

Purpose and Action:
It is recommended that the Board pass a resolution that:

"The member(s) identified at Appendix 1 shall be deemed to have withdrawn from membership of the Association and his / her ordinary share shall be cancelled and the amount paid thereon shall become the property of the Association".

Executive Summary:
The Association aims to maintain a Register of Members who are interested in the affairs of the Association.

The Association's Rules provide that the Board can pass a resolution that deems membership to have been withdrawn and an ordinary share cancelled in certain circumstances, such as failing to attend or submit apologies for five consecutive AGMs.

An analysis of attendance at the 2023 AGM has identified that 2 members had failed to attend or submit apologies for five consecutive AGMs.

---

1. Introduction

1.1   The Association currently has 46 members on its Register of Members.

1.2   In line with the Association's Membership Policy, we aim to attract interested people into Membership of the Association.

1.3   Rule 15(a) states:

"Where the Board is satisfied that:

(ii) an ordinary member has failed to either attend or submit apologies for five consecutive annual general meetings;

that member shall be deemed to have withdrawn from membership of the Association and his / her ordinary share shall be cancelled and the amount paid thereon shall become the property of the Association with effect from the passing of a resolution by the Board to that effect."

1.4   An analysis of attendees at the 2023 AGM has identified 2 members who had failed to attend or submit apologies for five consecutive AGMs. Details of this analysis are attached at Appendix 1.

2. Discussion

2.1 It is recommended that Board consider the removal of the members identified in Appendix 1 from the Register of Members in accordance with Rule 15(a) and all associated records updated accordingly.

2.2 This will ensure that the Association has a Register of Members who remain interested in its affairs and the Association's records remain current.

2.3 One member from the attached list has, however, recently re-engaged with the Association and has been active on both the Scrutiny Group and Customer Panel. Following discussion with the Customer and Community Engagement Officer, the member in question has confirmed that they wished to continue their membership of the Association and had been unable to attend AGM's in recent years due to personal circumstances.

3. Risk

3.1 If the Association maintains a Membership Register which is not up to date and current it could waste resources communicating with those who no longer wished to participate as a member.

3.2 By removing members who no longer engage with the Association, we ensure that we maintain an active Membership Register.

4. Next Steps

4.1 It is intended that, subject to Board approval, the member(s) to be removed will be advised in writing of their removal from the Membership Register.

5.5. OSCR Return

Title: OSCR Return	Date: 29 November 2023
Author: Paul Dillon	Sponsor: Diana MacLean
Action: Decision	Confidential: No
Appendices: Appendix 1 - OSCR Return	Reading Room:
Reg. Standard: Standard 1 The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.	ORP ref: People at our heart
Strategic Risk ref: R6 Governance and Regulation	
Consultation: This report is not subject to consultation	

Purpose and Action:
The Board is asked to approve the submission of the on-line Annual Return to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

Executive Summary:
The Association is a Scottish charitable organisation and is required to submit an Annual Return to OSCR. The attached Annual Return has been prepared and is presented for approval in order to submit the on-line Annual Return to OSCR within the deadline.

---

1. **Introduction**

1.1 The Association is a Scottish charitable organisation registered with OSCR. By reporting to OSCR and meeting legal requirements, the Association demonstrates to the public that its assets are properly accounted for and that it's being run properly.

2. **Discussion**

2.1 It is a requirement of OSCR that the Association submits an Annual Return within 9 months of the financial year end. The Association's Annual Return has been prepared and is attached at Appendix 1 for information.

2.2 Subject to approval, the Annual Return will be submitted via OSCR's on-line portal prior to the 31 December 2023 deadline.

3. **Risk**

3.1 If the Return is not completed on time, or were to contain incorrect information, adverse attention may be focused on the Association from OSCR and the public.

3.2 The Return has been prepared by the Projects & Planning Analyst and has been checked by the Managing Director. Subject to Board approval, the Return will be submitted to OSCR on 1 December 2023.

4. **Next Steps**

4.1 Following Board approval, the Annual Return will be submitted to OSCR via the on-line portal.

Appendix 1 – OSCR Return 2023

12. Country

Scotland

13. Telephone Number

████████

14. Mobile Number

--

15. Fax Number

--

16. Email

██████████

17. Principal Office Or Trustee Address

principal

18. Website Address

www.riversidescotland.org.uk

19. Alternative Contact Email

██████████

SECTION A

1. Accounting Reference Date ⓘ

31/03/2023

2. Gross Income * ⊕ ⓘ

£ 12055000

3. Gross Expenditure * ⊕ ⓘ

£ 9334000

4a. Does your charity publish its annual reports and accounts on its website? * ⊕ ⊕

● Yes ○ No

4b. Copy & paste the link to your published accounts here * ⊕ ⓘ

URLs must start with https:// or http:// or www

https://www.riversidescotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Accounts_290_2023_REDACTED.pdf

5. Total Number Of Charity Trustees * ⓘ

11

6. Total Number Of Paid Staff * ⓘ

33

7.a Does your charity have children and/or vulnerable adults as beneficiaries? * ⓘ

● Yes ○ No

7.b If yes, can you confirm that your charity has appropriate policies in place to protect these vulnerable individuals ? *

● Yes ○ No

Page 1   SAVE AND NEXT

ANNUAL RETURN (SC042251.2023.1)

If you would like further guidance on an individual question, please click on the corresponding ⓘ button. Full guidance on completing an online annual return can be found here.

DECLARATION INFORMATION

☐ I certify that the information entered in this form is correct to the best of my knowledge *

☐ I confirm the information entered has been approved by the charity trustees and I am authorised to submit this information *

Name of person submitting *

Paul Dillon

Role of person submitting *

Projects & Planning Analyst

Declaration Date *

01/12/2023 📅

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5.7. Riverside Group Policies

Title: Riverside Group Policies	Date: 29 November 2023
Authors: Paul Dillon	Sponsor: Morag Hutchinson
Action: Adoption	Confidential: No
Appendices: Appendix 1: Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy Appendix 2: CCTV and Surveillance Policy Appendix 3: Data Protection and Privacy Policy Appendix 4: Health Safety and Environment Policy Appendix 5: Procurement Policy Appendix 6: Treasury Policy	Reading Room:
Reg. Requirement: AN3: Each landlord must have assurance and evidence that it is meeting all its legal obligations associated with housing and homelessness services, equality and human rights, and tenant and resident safety.	ORP ref: People at our heart
Strategic Risk ref:	
Consultation: N/A	

Purpose and Action:

The purpose of this paper is to request that Board adopts the following Riverside Group Policies, attached as appendices 1-6 to this report:

Appendix 1: Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy
Appendix 2: CCTV and Surveillance Policy
Appendix 3: Data Protection and Privacy Policy
Appendix 4: Health Safety and Environment Policy
Appendix 5: Procurement Policy
Appendix 6: Treasury Policy

Executive Summary:

The Riverside Scotland Board is asked to adopt Riverside Group Policies, attached as appendices 1-6 to this report.

---

1. **Background**

   As part of the Policy Framework Update being undertaken by the Projects and Planning Team, the attached policies have been identified as requiring adoption by Riverside Scotland Board.

2. **Context**

   Group wide policies/strategies which are developed by Group and cover all subsidiaries, and which do not need to be changed or amended for Riverside Scotland, should be taken to RS Board for discussion and noting. Relevant Riverside Scotland employees, customers where required, and our Board should essentially be consultees to the

development of Group wide policy - ideally before the policy goes to Group Board for approval.

3. Risk

Adoption of Riverside policies will help to mitigate the following Riverside Scotland strategic risk:

- **Risk 1: Safety First:** The Association has no appetite for a risk of harm to customers, colleagues, or others coming from the provision of its services, and no appetite for a breach of health and safety legislation and regulation in its role as a landlord and employer.
- **Risk 2: Customer Experience:** There are many factors which affect our customers' experience of the services we provide and where these are within our control we will not tolerate the risks which they pose and will react quickly to put in place plans and interventions to improve the service.   Where a negative experience for our customers is out with our immediate control we will work with partners to find solutions to mitigate any negative impact.

4. Next Steps

Future policy reviews will include Riverside Scotland at consultation stage with the intention that Board approval will be gained prior to publication.

To keep an overview of the system and to advise the RS team locally when policy reviews are approaching, the Project & Planning Analysts will continue to attend the quarterly Policy Forum. This will ensure that the Riverside Scotland consultation part of the process is being followed and that we have an input to any future updates or process changes.

5.8. Quarterly Performance Report - Q2 2023

Title: Quarterly Performance Report – Q2 2023	Date: 9/11/2023
Author: Jonathan Hulme Jonathan.Hulme@riverside.org.uk	Sponsor: Diana MacLean
Action: Note	Confidential: No
Appendices: Appendix 1: Riverside Scotland Board KPIS Q2 2023/24 Appendix 2: Customer Satisfaction and Asset Performance as at October 23	Reading Room:
Reg. Standard: Standard 4.2 The governing body challenges and holds the senior officer to account for their performance in achieving the RSL's purpose and objectives	ORP ref: Our Riverside Way: Value - Managing our resources effectively, so that we can build more homes and deliver better services
Strategic Risk ref: R6 Governance and Regulation	
Consultation: This report is not subject to consultation	

Purpose and Action:

The purpose of this report is to provide Board with an opportunity to review the Association's operational key performance indicators (KPIs) covering quarter two of 2023/24.   The data is set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to this report.

Executive Summary:

The Board reviews the operational KPIs on a quarterly basis. To ensure that performance is being managed effectively. The attached report at Appendix one covers performance for the period 1st July to 30th September 2023. Appendix 2 sets out our performance position as at the end of October indicators we review monthly. It is recommended that Board discuss and note the contents of the Quarterly Performance Report.

---

1. **Introduction**

    Progress against our operational key performance indicators (KPIs) is reported to Board on a quarterly basis.   Appendix 1 to this report sets out our performance position against each of our KPIs including distance from target, and direction of travel as at the end of September 2023. This quarterly update was delayed due to the Riverside Scotland Special Board meeting which took place in October. Therefore, operational performance dashboards for Customer Satisfaction and Asset Services as at the end of October 2023 have been included as Appendix 2, to provide Board with an update on the current position.

2. **Key Points**

    The key points to note from the performance analysis are:

    •   There has been much improvement found this quarter, especially amongst our satisfaction indicators. Firstly, our overall satisfaction has increased from last quarter. In Q2, our overall satisfaction is sitting at 73.9% which is an increase of 9.5% from Quarter 1 (64.4%). We have also seen an increased improvement of 3.3% when comparing to the same quarter last year which was sitting at 70.6%. The figure this quarter is importantly above our target of 70% for this year. As shown on Appendix 2, at the end of October our satisfaction remained above target at 72%.

- Satisfaction with repairs and maintenance (Indicator 12) has increased significantly from 55.5% in Q1 to 74.3% in Q2. Although this is below our target of 80%, we are heading in the right direction. Again, improvements have been made from the same quarter last year. Last year at Q2 our figure was 57% which further emphasises the improvements we have made so far this year. Satisfaction with the management of neighbourhoods tenants live in (Indicator 13) has also increased. We were sitting at 52.1% in Q1 and have increased that figure to 69.9% in Q2. We are closing in on our target of 75%.

- We have seen great progress in two areas specifically. These are keeping tenants informed (Indicator 2) and satisfaction with quality of home (Indicator 7). Last quarter saw a percentage of 65.1% for keeping tenants informed. We have increased this quarter by 15.8% to 80.9% which is considerably above our target of 70%. The monthly newsletter has helped greatly. The satisfaction with quality of home this quarter has reached 87.5% which is a large increase of 17.6% from Q1 (69.9%) and ahead of our target of 73%. There has been lots of focus on repairs improving and estate tidy ups.

- **The improvement in performance has been due largely to the following actions:**

  ➢ Fully embedding our new operating model which places Tenant Partners as the key point of contact with customers, and smaller patch sizes to enable them time to develop relationships with tenants.
  ➢ A more proactive approach to community engagement which is being implemented by our new Community Engagement Officer – addressing local issues which matter most to tenants.
  ➢ Further work to develop a positive and constructive relationship with our external contractors and placing customer satisfaction at the heart of our contractor performance management framework.
  ➢ Increasing our communication with customers by introducing monthly service updates and increased presence on social media.
  ➢ Work we have done to review our complaints handling processes and complaint handling training we have rolled out to all colleagues, included an increased focus on lessons learned and reflective practice.
  ➢ Progress made against our property investment programmes – new kitchen, window, and internal wall insulation programme in Dumfries, and Irvine and Kilwinning.

3. Next Steps

Board is asked to note the content of the operational performance position as at Q2 2023.

Major difference/decline (over 10% or relative measure)	(red)
Minimal difference/decline (within 5% or relative measure)	(amber)
Represents better performance/improvement	(green)

Sub Area	Indicator Ref	Indicator Description	Owner	2022/23 Result	2023/24 Target	Frequency	Quarter Performance Q1 2023/24	Quarter Performance Q2 2023/24	Quarter Performance Q3 2023/24	Quarter Performance Q4 2023/24	Measured Against Last Quarter (RAG see key above)	Measured Against Same Quarter from Last Year	Target ON TRACK NEARING (10%) OFF (<10%)
Organisational	Org	Stock numbers		2443	2496	Quarterly	2496	2497					2496
People	C1	Staff numbers (FTE) Staff turnover		Staff Number = 33.11 Turnover = 6.04%	No target	Quarterly	Staff Number = 36.3 Turnover = 0.00%	Staff Number = 38.4 Turnover = 0.00%			(green)	(green)	
Satisfaction	1	Percentage of tenants satisfied with the overall service provided by their landlord.		66.8%	70%	Quarterly	64.4%	73.9%			(green)	(green)	70%
Communication	2	Percentage of tenants who feel their landlord is good at keeping them informed about their services and decisions		73.6%	70%	Quarterly	65.1%	80.9%			(green)	(green)	70%
Participation	5	Percentage of tenants satisfied with the opportunities given to them to participate in their landlord's decision making processes		60.6%	70%	Quarterly	58.9%	72.8%			(green)	(green)	70%
Quality of Housing	7	Percentage of existing tenants satisfied with the quality of their home.		73.4%	73%	Quarterly	69.9%	87.50%			(green)	(green)	73%
Repairs, Maintenance and Improvement	8	Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs.		4.65 hours	4 hours (H&S) 12 hours emergency	Quarterly	04:19	05:34			(amber)	(green)	4 hours (H&S) 12 hours emergency
	9	Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs		13.02 days	Urgent 5 days Routine 15 days	Quarterly	13.2	7.5			(green)		Urgent 5 days Routine 15 days
	Local	% of repairs appointments kept		78.0%	80%	Quarterly	69.1%	55.10%			(red)	(red)	80%
	10	Percentage of reactive repairs carried out in the last year completed right first time.		80.2%	80%	Quarterly	70.9%	68.6%			(amber)	(red)	80%
	11	The number of times in the reporting year that you did not meet your statutory obligation to complete a gas safety check within 12 months of a gas appliance being fitted or its last check		99.9%	0 (100%)	Quarterly	99.79%	100%			(green)		0 (100%)
	Local	Safe Electrical Systems - Percentage of properties with valid EICR (Electrical Installation Condition Report) certificates		89.5%	100%	Quarterly	88.74%	94.35%			(green)		100%
	Local	The percentage of Fire Risk Assessments in communal areas that are in place		100.0%	100%	Quarterly	100.00%	100%			(green)		100%
	Local	The number of overdue Fire Risk Assessment Actions		0	0	Quarterly	23	15			(green)		0
	Local	The percentage of up to date communal asbestos surveys		100%	100%	Quarterly	100%	100%			(green)		100%
	Local	The percentage of up to date Legionella Risk Assessments in place		100%	100%	Quarterly	Stats unavailable	Stats unavailable					100%
	12	Percentage of tenants who have had repairs or maintenance carried out in last 12 months satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service.		64.4%	80%	Quarterly	55.5%	74.3%			(green)	(green)	80%
Estate Management and ASB	3 & 4	The % of all complaints responded to in full at Stage 1 and the % of all complaints responded to in full at Stage 2. The average time in working days for a full response at Stage 1 and the average time in working days for a full response at Stage 2.		96% at Stage 1 4% at Stage 2 14 days at Stage 1 20 days at Stage 2	100% at Stage 1 100% at Stage 2 5 days at Stage 1 20 days at Stage 2	Quarterly	97% at Stage 1 100% at Stage 2 7 days at Stage 1 11 days at Stage 2	89% at Stage 1 11% at Stage 2 10 days at Stage 1 9 days at Stage 2			(amber)	(amber)	100% at each stage; 5 days for Stage 1 20 days for Stage 2
	13	Percentage of tenants satisfied with the management of neighbourhood they live in		74.8%	75%	Quarterly	52.1%	69.90%			(green)		75%
Housing Options	19	Number of households currently waiting for adaptations to home.		52	No target	Annual							

Category	No.	Description		Value	Target	Frequency	Q1	Q2					
	20	Total cost of adaptations completed in the year (£) by source of funding		£202,989	No target	Annual							
	21	The average time to complete adaptations.		57.2 days	91 days	Annual							
	23	Homelessness (RSLs only) – the percentage of referrals under Section 5 that result in an offer, and the percentage of those offers that result in a let		36.99% 100%	No target	Quarterly	50% 100%	54.5% 100%					
	30	Average length of time taken to re-let properties in the last year		37.2 days	25 days	Quarterly	31.9 Days	32.6 Days					25 Days
Tenancy Sustainment	16	Percentage of new tenancies sustained for more than a year (by source of let measured annually)		87.5%	90%	Quarterly	90.0%	90.7%					90%
Rents & Service Charges	C5	Rent Increase.		5%	No target	Annual							
	C7	Amount and percentage of former tenant rent arrears written off at the year end.		33.43%	No target	Annual							
	18	Percentage of rent due lost through properties being empty during the quarter		0.76%	0.70%	Quarterly	0.81%	0.61%					0.70%
	26	The total amount of rent collected in the reporting year to date as a percentage of the total amount of rent due to be collected in the reporting year to date (1st April 2023 to date)		98.49%	No target	Quarterly	99.50%	110.70%					
	27	Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as a percentage of rent due in the last year (12 month rolling)		5.99%	5.70%	Quarterly	5.90%	6.38%					5.70%
Value For Money	25	Percentage of tenants who feel that the rent for their property represents good value for money		63.2%	75%	Quarterly	55.5%	75.00%					75%
	29	Percentage of factored owners satisfied with the factoring service they receive.		50.0%	60% at next survey	Three Yearly	*Survey last undertaken 2020/21 - Satisfaction 50%	*Survey last undertaken 2020/21 - Satisfaction 50% Next survey will commence December 2023					60% at next survey
Health & Safety	Local	RIDDOR incidents (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences)		0	No target	Quarterly	0	0					

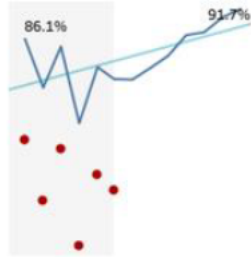# Asset Executive Dashboard... **Contractor – Bell Group**

Region/Area: **Scotland** Contractors: **All** | **October 2023** ≡

Data subject to change before 5th working day of the month, please use caution with data. Hover over headline figure for latest refresh time.

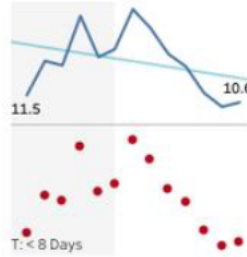**Responsive Repairs Completed on Time**
91.7%
▲ 1.5%
86.1%   91.7%
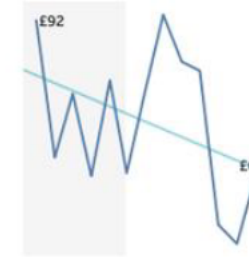
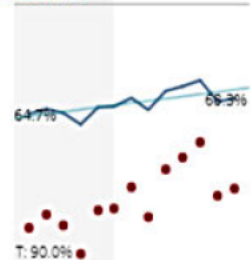**Responsive Repairs Avg. Days to Complete**
● 10.6
▲ 0.5
11.5   10.6
T: < 8 Days

Responsive Repairs Average Spend
£65
▲ £11
£92   £65

Repairs Fixed First Time (R3M)
87.7%
▲ 1.1%
87.7%
73.2%
SH
87.7%
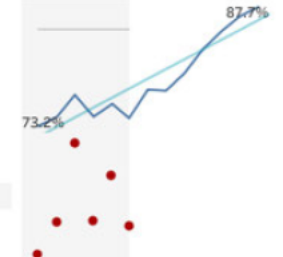
Asset Executive Dashboard... **Contractor – James Frew**

Region/Area: **Scotland** Contractors: **All** | **October 2023** ≡

Data subject to change before 5th working day of the month, please use caution with data. Hover over headline figure for latest refresh time.

Satisfaction with Improvement Works (T)
Data from Tableau Asset Executive Dashboard
● 68.3%
▲ 0.6%
Contractor Filter not active for 'Satisfaction with Improvement Works' - data will show Group %
64.7%   68.3%
T: 90.0%

Latest Repair (T)
Data from Tableau Asset Executive Dashboard
● 79.2%
▲ 2.2%
Filtered to Scotland level - not able to filter to Contractor level
72.7%   79.2%
T: 82.7%
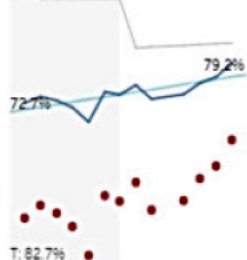
Repairs Fixed First Time (YTD)
● 72.2%
Current period data
▲ 5.3%
% Change from previous period
Target: 85%
72.7% 77.1% 77.2% 72.2%
75.3% 69.3% 67.0%
Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct

Appointments Made and Kept
● 99.0%
Current period data
▼ -1.0%
% Change from previous period
99.4% 100.0% 99.0%
Target: 98%
89.5% 89.3%
87.7%
Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct

JOBS RAISED WITH CONTRACTOR
Contracted Works - Gas & EICR services, Surveys, 57
Responsive Repairs, 273
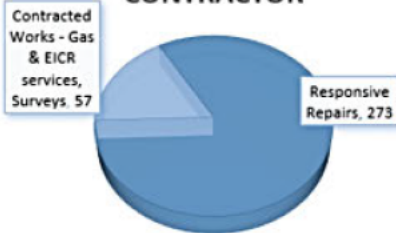
Responsive Repairs Completed on Time
● 90.9%
Current period data
▼ -3.7%
% Change from previous period
Target: 95.5% 95.8% 95.6% 94.6%
89.9% 94.3% 90.9%
54.2%
Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct

Responsive Repairs Avg. Days to Complete
● 2.3
Current period data
▼ 0.1
% Change from previous period
Target: 8
2.7 2.3 3.2 3.0 2.2 2.3
Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct

Responsive Repairs Average Spend
Data from Tableau Asset Executive Dashboard
£18
▲ £8
Filtered to Scotland and Contractor level
£23   £18

Social Housing Customer Satisfaction Performance Review

Currently Showing: Scotland

Rolling 3 Month Measures

Overall Satisfaction

72.0%

Responses: 132

Target: 70.8%

Listening to Views
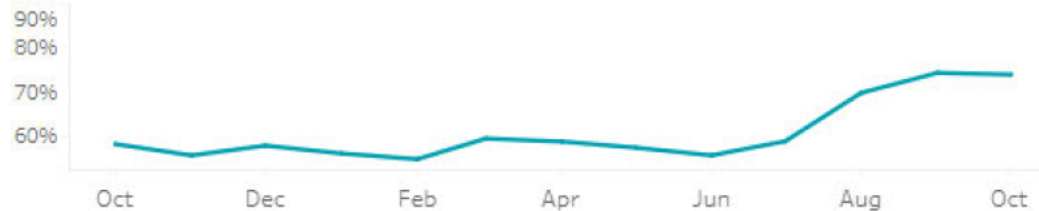
72.5%

Responses: 120

Target: 58.9%

Repairs

73.9%

Responses: 134

Latest Repair

79.2%

Responses: 197

Complaints Handling

35.7%

Responses: 14
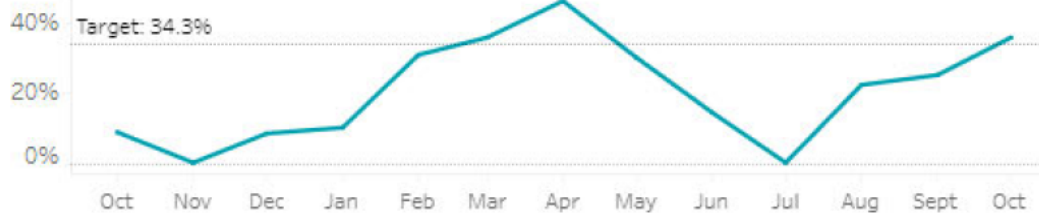
Caution: Low survey response volumes

Target: 34.3%

GENERAL - EXTERNAL

5.10. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy 2023-26

Title: Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy 2023-26	**Date:** 29 November 2023
Author: Paul Dillon	**Sponsor:** Morag Hutchinson
Action: To Note/Approve	**Confidential:** No
Appendices: Appendix 1 - Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2023-26 Appendix 2 – Plan on a Page EDI Strategy 2023-26	**Convene Document Library:** N/A
Reg. Standard 5: The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity	**ORP ref:** People at our heart
Strategic Risk ref: R1: Customer Experience & R6 Governance and Regulation	
Consultation: This report was written in consultation with action plan activity owners	

Purpose and Action:

This paper provides an introduction to the Riverside Group Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2023-26 and the Riverside Scotland supplementary action plan.

Recommendation:

The Board is asked to note the contents of the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2023-26 and the Riverside Scotland supplementary action plan, and approve the suggested approach.

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1   Background

1.1   In September 2023, The Riverside Group published the new Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy, one of the strategies that underpins the delivery of the Corporate Plan for 2023-26. This document sets out specific objectives and measurable actions (with targets) which will drive the Group approach to ED&I over the next three years.

This strategy can be found at appendix 1, alongside a 'Plan on a Page' summary document at appendix 2.

1.2   In its *Regulation of Social Housing in Scotland, Our Regulatory Framework*, the SHR has underlined the importance it places on equalities and human rights, by introducing a requirement for social landlords to:

- *Have assurance and evidence that it considers equality and human rights issues properly when making all of its decisions, in the design and review of internal and external policies, and in its day-to-day service delivery.*

2   Action Plan

2.1   The proposal is that Riverside Scotland follow the Riverside Group strategy action plan, and report progress to Board on a 6 monthly basis.

2.2   The Riverside Scotland E,D & I Champion will attend the steering group and have input into, and updates of, all actions being undertaken, with involvement in any tasks being undertaken, e.g., steering groups, colleague surveys, etc.

2.3   Further to this, any Riverside Scotland-specific actions suggested by SMT or Board will be logged and updated on a supplementary action plan, this is currently being developed and will be reported to Board at a future date.

2.4   This will ensure we remain aligned with any Riverside Group improvements and also have the ability to implement any local measures.

3   Risk

3.1   Failing to implement the EDI Policy could result in a number of significant risks arising including:
- reputational damage caused by not providing services equally to all parts of the community;
- exposure to legal claims for unfair treatment;
- not providing the right support to those who need it; and
- not harnessing the skills of employees and the governance community.

![Riverside logo]

FORWARD TOGETHER

Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2023-26

1. Introduction

1.1 This strategy sets out the steps Riverside will take over the next three years to further embed our long-term commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I). This commitment is driven by our Board and reflected in our organisational values, which have been refreshed following our merger with One Housing.

1.2 Following on from a comprehensive engagement process with our colleagues to refresh the combined values, we have adopted three values, 'we care' 'we are inclusive and 'we are trusted'. We have made ED&I more explicit through adopting the value: *'We are inclusive', we respect and value the diversity of our customers and colleagues, welcoming and appreciating the contribution of others.*

1.3 In this document, we set out specific objectives and measurable actions (with targets) which will drive our approach to ED&I over the next three years. We have made much progress already, but acknowledge we are on a journey as we continue to build a diverse and inclusive organisation which is reflective of the customers and communities we serve.

1.4 The strategy has been developed in consultation with stakeholders including our   business leads, colleague networks, ED&I Champions, trade union, executive team, governance community and our involved customers. A small steering group comprising an Executive Sponsor, colleagues from Riverside and OHG and one of our customers has overseen its production.

1.5 Its delivery will be monitored by the Riverside Executive Team and Group Board through regular reporting. However, given the pace of change in our operating environment, the actions set out will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis, to ensure we are flexible and can respond to emerging issues.

1.6 After introductory sections which set out our current position and the nature of   our operating environment, the strategy is developed around five specific themes:

— **Customer services:** how we will improve access to services across our diverse customer base, treat our customers fairly and with respect and provide further opportunities for engagement to a wider range of customers.

1

— **Homes and places:** how we will better plan our new homes to reflect the needs of local communities and ensure that our existing homes can be flexibly adapted to meet the changing needs of customers throughout their life and encounter issues with health and disability.

— **Governance:** how we will ensure the composition of our governance community and leadership team better reflects the diversity of the communities we serve, and how decision making can be better informed to improve equalities outcomes.

— **Supporting our colleagues to deliver great service:** how we will ensure that all colleagues have the tools and knowledge they require to deliver services which are tailored to diverse needs and feel supported in a work environment free from discrimination, where they can be their authentic selves.

— **The collection and use of data:** how we will ensure we develop a better understanding of the characteristics and experiences of our customers, communities, and colleagues by collecting, analysing, and reporting data, using it to improve our services, recruitment and colleague experience.

2. Strategic alignment

2.1 The ED&I Strategy is one of nine supporting Corporate Strategies which will help us deliver the objectives set out in our 2023-26 Corporate Plan where it is identified as one of four cross-cutting themes.

2.2 This Strategy is the third in a suite of documents which underlines our commitment to ED&I. The other two are:

— Our **ED&I Policy**, adopted by Group Board in May 2022 and reviewed every three years. This sets out the principles which guide our overall approach to ED&I and the business practices we adopt to achieve them

— Our **ED&I Annual Report**: a new document first published in September 2022, setting out our key achievements of the past year. We will update this every year, publicly reporting the delivery of this strategy

2.3 Together these three documents provide a comprehensive picture of ED&I at Riverside.

2.4 Improving outcomes for customers and the workplace for our colleagues is at the heart of this strategy. However, we recognise that to achieve this we also need to focus on our governance, leadership, and our ways of working. We recognise that structural inequalities exist within society and within our workplace too.

2.5 As a landlord, a service provider, and an employer, we want to drive change and achieve greater equity for those people who face greater disadvantage and barriers. We wish to create a diverse and inclusive culture where all people can achieve their true potential, offering opportunities for inclusion. While the 'legal case' and the 'moral case' for ED&I are typically accepted, the potential 'business case' - the benefits that prioritising ED&I can bring to a housing association, its colleagues and customers - is of increasing importance in the current policy climate. This comes at a time when social housing is high on the political agenda, with housing providers facing increased pressure to respond to rising demand against a backdrop of challenging social housing and welfare reforms.

2.6 Our values are:

We care: We put our customers first every time, going the extra mile to make sure we deliver great homes and services that they need and want **#care**

We are inclusive: We respect and value the diversity of our customers and colleagues, welcoming and appreciating the contribution of others **#inclusive**

We are trusted: We have high standards and work hard to meet them, taking ownership and performing at our best **#trusted**

What is equality, diversity and inclusion?

Equality is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents, believing that no one should have poorer life chances because of where or when they were born or their inherent characteristics. Promoting equality is about behaving in a way that removes barriers that stand in the way of some groups of people, aiming to ensure that all customers, service users and colleagues are treated fairly, and do not experience discrimination.

Diversity is about recognising that everyone is different and creating an environment that values each customer and colleague, ensuring that services are delivered that suit all sections of the community and are fully accessible. Everyone has unique characteristics that make them who they are and promoting diversity is about recognising the value of these differences and celebrating them, treating everyone with dignity and respect.

Inclusion is about positively striving to meet the needs of different people and taking deliberate action to create environments where everyone feels respected, valued, and able to achieve their full potential.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out nine 'protected characteristics': race, religion or belief, sex, age, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity.

Equal Opportunities within the Scotland Act 1998 refers to the elimination, regulation, and prevention of discrimination across the areas of sex, marital status, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, language, social origin, or other personal attributes, including beliefs or opinions, such as religious beliefs or political opinions.

3. **Our priorities**

3.1 We have focused our attention on addressing the issues that both our consultation and our data has shown are the greatest priorities for Riverside's customers and colleagues and these have also been developed in partnership with One Housing's customers and colleagues. However, we will strive to ensure that any emerging ED&I issues and other priorities are captured and included in refreshed versions of both the strategy and the action plan, where we feel it is appropriate to include. We aim to

be agile, quick to respond and proactive, always considering how we can best respond to issues that affect our customers and colleagues.

3.2 We are aiming to be more ambitious and challenging over the next three years and accelerate our ED&I work. Following on from our consultation and data review, priorities have been identified under five themes, with supporting objectives:

⸺ Customer services
⸺ Homes and places
⸺ Governance
⸺ Supporting our colleagues to deliver great service
⸺ Collection and use of data

3.3 Whilst we have placed a particular emphasis on our customers throughout this strategy, we remain equally committed to ensuring our workplace is fair and provides equality of opportunities for all of our colleagues, building on the great work we have done over the past few years. Much of this is thoroughly embedded in our approach as an employer and so is not explicitly called out in this document, which focuses on the major changes we want to make over the next three years.

4. Context

4.1 The operating context for Riverside, and social housing in general, has become increasingly challenging and unstable. In developing this strategy, we have undertaken a comprehensive analysis of the operating environment, identifying the key issues for us. This has helped us to understand the challenges and opportunities and shape our priorities.

4.2 The UK has been experiencing a housing crisis for a long time. However, the last few years have seen a range of new and unprecedented economic, political and health challenges emerge. In 2020, the pandemic changed every aspect of life and starkly exposed how existing inequalities and the interconnections between them such as race, gender or geography are associated with ill-health.

4.3 More recently the ongoing cost-of-living crisis is having a profound impact on families across the UK, but for poorer households, the impact is even more significant. This is because energy and food costs - the major driver of recent inflation - make up a greater proportion of household budgets for low-income households. A briefing paper published in May 2021 by the Race Equality Foundation found that more than 20% of Black African, Bangladeshi, and Pakistani households, and more than 15% of Black Caribbean households, were behind with fuel bill payments. This compared with less than 5% of White British households.

4.4 During the pandemic, issues of inequalities and race were amplified by the murder of George Floyd. The Black Lives Matter movement and the discussion that followed was equally challenging and positive. The pace of change was huge, and a powerful response has been required across the sector to ensure that people at risk of experiencing racial discrimination feel that they are valued and that the issues are being treated seriously.

4.5 It is clear that housing providers can play an important role in supporting people from diverse backgrounds, including customers from ethnic minorities, the LGBTQIA+ community and those who have disabilities or impairments.   Inclusive environments can help to reduce the challenges faced by our customers, such as discrimination and harassment leading to anti-social behaviour.

4.6 There has also been a profound re-evaluation in the relationship between tenants and landlords in the social housing sector. Initially this followed the Grenfell Tower disaster but has been amplified by a succession of high-profile media reports about unacceptable housing conditions. This was recently highlighted by the tragic death of Awaab Ishak, where the coroner's report stated that his death was due to prolonged exposure to toxic black mould. The response from Government specifically called out the social landlord's attempt to attribute the existence of mould to the actions of Ishak's parents. His parents said they had "no doubt at all" that they were treated poorly "because we are not from the country and are less aware of how the systems in the UK work".

4.7 The Government has responded and whilst previous administrations have put the focus on achieving housebuilding targets, the need for a renewed focus on building safety and housing quality has become the central political priority, driving a recognition that tenants need to have a stronger voice. Government is legislating to reform social housing regulation through introducing measures to give tenants greater powers, improve access to swift and fair redress and enhance the powers of the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) to deal with consumer matters. As part of this, Government is creating a set of Tenant Satisfaction Measures to allow tenants to see how their landlord compares to others, whilst emphasising the need for landlords to understand the diversity of their customer base and the service experience across the diversity strands.

4.8 This strategy comes at a time of key change for the sector and provides the opportunity to provide a decisive response to many of these issues. However, it is difficult to look ahead with any certainty and we have learnt to expect more change to come. This means we will need to be flexible in responding to events as they unfold.

5. Where are we now?

5.1 In devising our new strategy, we have reflected on the current position in both Riverside and One Housing. Last year we published our first ED&I Annual Report, which you can read here which set out our overall approach, bringing together information showing the progress we have made so far, as we seek to tackle inequality and promote diversity and inclusion. We also identified areas where we have more to do.

5.2 In May 2022, the Board agreed a new Group-wide ED&I Policy (available on our website), which sets out our main objectives and the principles which underpin our approach. The policy covers all parts of the Group, and we are working closely with our OHG colleagues to integrate our approach to ED&I.

5.3 We use a range of activities to deliver our objectives. While the approach we take is an embedded one - with all colleagues taking responsibility for ED&I in the way they interact with customers and colleagues in delivering services - the Group's approach is facilitated by a dedicated ED&I Manager, servicing a Best Practice Group drawn from across the organisation and we have Executive Director sponsors for each of our colleague diversity networks (for race, disability, women and LGBTQIA+ colleagues). We are in the process of merging with our colleague networks at One Housing to offer support to all colleagues across both organisations.

5

5.4   To further embed ED&I, we have an extensive network of ED&I Champions across the organisation and all colleagues are required to complete mandatory ED&I eLearning every 12 months.

5.5   We also work in very close partnership with other housing sector experts, such as the Housing Diversity Network (HDN), where we are active participants in both ED&I masterclasses and the colleague mentoring programme, which gives six colleagues each year access to mentoring opportunities. We work closely with the National Housing Federation (NHF) and its National Network for ED&I professionals, contributing to discussion at national level and sharing best practice. As members of the G15 (the group of London's largest housing associations and the collective voice of some of the leading organisations in the sector), we are also active members of its networking group for ED&I leads.

5.6   To achieve our aims, it is important that we understand the diversity of our leadership and governance community, our wider workforce, and our customers by the key protected characteristics, comparing this data with the profile of the population living in the communities we serve. We currently have this data, along with insight into satisfaction rates of customers and our colleagues by protected characteristic, as well as data on our gender and ethnicity pay gaps.

5.7   We consider it to be of huge importance that our approach continues to be data driven and our current conclusions below are all areas that will be addressed in this strategy:

  — although our Board and committees have become more diverse, there is still some way to go with the composition of our leadership team and management roles if it is to truly reflect the profile of the communities where we work

  — the makeup of our customers varies hugely by locality, with some groups of people under-represented in some regions. Understanding diversity at a local level is essential as national averages can be misleading

  — some of our customers with protected characteristics are less satisfied, and there can be a perception of unequal treatment - we need to know more to ensure that our services are accessible to all, and our outcomes are equal

  — although slowly narrowing, we still have pay gaps for gender and ethnicity with ethnically diverse colleagues and women still under-represented at senior levels.

  — there are still gaps in our data - both for colleagues and customers - and for the data we do have, we need to use it more effectively.

Our themes

5.8   The following five themes and underpinning objectives have been identified as the main areas in which we will focus our efforts over the period of this strategy and beyond. For each theme we have identified one or two key performance indicators (KPIs) which will enable us to monitor our progress over the next three years. As the action plan will be subject to a full review at the end of 2023/24, the primary focus is on Year 1 outcomes.

5.9   It should be noted that the objectives and activities identified do not cover all our activities as they relate to ED&I. Many of these are already embedded in our working practices, such as our work to

support our colleague networks, ED&I champions, and external networks. We would consider them to be 'business as usual'.

Customer services

Our priorities for customer services are to ensure that as well as knowing and understanding our customers, we can tailor the services we provide to meet their individual needs, so they are as fully accessible as possible, and we do not knowingly exclude anyone.

During the first years of delivering our strategy, we will be integrating our customer facing service delivery model with One Housing, providing a great opportunity to ensure that what we do ensures equality of access across all protected characteristics.

Our services can range from simple transactional requirements through to more complex interactions. We want to improve accessibility of services for those customers who can self-serve, but equally as important to us, is providing support to those customers who need extra assistance. Collaborating with our customers can help us to develop new solutions and it is extremely important that we ensure the customer voice is heard across our diverse customer base, which is addressed in our customer involvement and resident engagement strategies. Our customers will be assisting us by scrutinising our customer-facing services to assess whether they are accessible and inclusive.

Substantial changes are being made to the approach to consumer regulation and the associated standards and we expect to see a greater focus on the involvement of customers. We have trialled specialist groups for LGBTQIA+ and ethnically diverse customers, with mixed results and are keen to continue to make further progress with promoting additional involvement opportunities for customers with protected characteristics.

We want every customer to feel that they have been treated fairly and with respect at all times, and across all touchpoints.

Over the period to 2026 we will take action to achieve the following priorities:

Objective	Actions	Year
Review our digital services, customer communications and customer service delivery model to ensure full accessibility for all customers	Undertake a scrutiny exercise by involved customers to assess access to services and reduce barriers faced by customers with protected characteristics.	1
	Co-design our customer service approach, ensuring ED&I considerations are embedded throughout, enabling customers to be able to interact according to their needs and introducing processes and systems for our colleagues to follow.

Ensure these service areas are fully accessible for all customers, putting actions in place where any inaccessibility has been identified by the completion of equality impact assessments. | 1-2 |
| | Review how we tailor our approach to service delivery, including language and terminology | 1 |

	used about our processes, ensuring a consistent approach is delivered across the organisation, recording, and using customers' contact preferences and having appropriate procedures in place for colleagues to use, considering customers' protected characteristics.	
	Proactively identify customers where there is likely to be a language barrier, addressing this in advance of any home visits/surveys.	1
	Deliver training to ensure our assets colleagues have practical advice on how to assist customers in dealing with damp and mould, equipping colleagues to counter any cultural stereotypes.	1
Diversify the profile of involved customers so that it represents the diversity of the customer base	Using our customer insight, support the customer and resident engagement teams to implement a recruitment campaign to achieve a genuinely diverse and inclusive Customer Voice, covering all business streams, tenures, property-types, and regions.	1-3
	Target engagement for customers from all protected characteristics, including ethnically diverse groups, LGBTQIA+ and those with a disability or a long-term health condition, to create customer groups to ensure we understand and act on any barriers to services for these communities.	2

Outcomes

Year 1 (2023-24)
— The diverse needs of customers are built into the review of our Customer Experience Strategy and operational delivery model to ensure that their requirements are embedded into our thinking and our plans.
— Our approach to tailoring our services has been tested to ensure it is consistent and robust for customers.
— Equality impact assessments (EIAs) have highlighted any inaccessible services and remedial actions have been put into place.

2026 target
— The proportion of customers who are satisfied that 'my landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect' increases from 67% to 75%.
— Profile of involved customers reflects overall customer profile - relevant to the locality (future work is required to record the protected characteristics of our involved customers to establish a baseline).

Homes and places

Riverside has a Growth and Regeneration Strategy which sets out why and how it wishes to grow the organisation in terms of more business, services, and homes. The Growth Team facilitate this strategy by working with our regional teams on stock transfers, PFI's and other projects.

Part of our Growth Strategy is a strong commitment to build more affordable homes and our Development Team works closely with regional colleagues to find opportunities and target new development to meet local requirements, including those customers who have protected characteristics and diverse needs.

Our London regeneration programme has a key focus on redeveloping and revitalising our neighbourhoods, creating a community where everyone can be proud to call it home and improving customer satisfaction. The way we plan our development and regeneration programmes is crucial, and we need to ensure our processes take full account of the needs of the diverse communities we serve.

But we also need to focus on our existing homes ensuring that we have a consistent approach to our aids and adaptations service. This will assist customers by ensuring our existing homes are made suitable wherever possible, to meet their changing needs, or identifying where a move would be an alternative option.

We are also able to exert influence through our supply chain where we require all contractors and suppliers to have effective ED&I policies and practices.

Over the period to 2026 we will take action to achieve the following priorities:

Objective	Actions	Year
Aids and adaptations	Review Riverside and One Housing's approaches to aids and adaptations, ensuring that our policy, processes, and funding are aligned and consistent for all customers[1].	1
	Implement new policy and procedures, with appropriate budgets established.	2
Use of diversity data and equality impact assessments	Review the way we use diversity data to influence new development at project definition stage, ensuring development colleagues have access to appropriate data to inform decisions (where we have control) on the mix, type, and design of new homes.	1
	Undertake equality impact assessments at the start of all large-scale regeneration projects, using available diversity data to inform key decisions on mix, type, and design.	1-3
Review our schemes	With customers, trial the evaluation of large-scale schemes we have developed, using the lived experience of customers to understand what worked well and if it did not, put changes in place to remedy in future schemes.	3

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[1] An appropriate measure will be considered once policies and processes have been reviewed

Outcomes

Year 1 (2023-24)
— Diversity data is being used by development colleagues to inform our new developments, with evidence of change.

2026 target
— No significant differences between satisfaction levels in the quality of our new homes across protected characteristics (where sample sizes allow).

Governance

ED&I is a major priority for Riverside. It is strongly associated with all our values and is fundamental to complying with our legal and regulatory obligations, particularly the Equality Act 2010. However, for ED&I to flourish and become fully embedded at Riverside it needs to be led by the Board, Committees, and senior executives. Not only do they need to set the overall direction, but they must also lead by example, demonstrating our values in their decision making and behaviours.

We are committed to the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance which helps housing associations to **achieve the highest standards of governance and board excellence.** There is a requirement for the board to take an active lead in committing to equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion in all of the organisation's activities as well as in its own composition.

Part of this involves continuing to diversify our leadership and governance community to ensure their composition reflects the customers and neighbourhoods we serve. This is a long-term aim, and this strategy will support our ambitions.

As one of the country's largest associations, sector leadership matters too. Our Group Chair has committed Riverside to the Chairs' Challenge, the National Housing Federation's new ED&I commitment for boards, which can be found here. This is a highly visible commitment to showing leadership in ED&I and will better enable us to take practical steps to improve the diversity of our Board and committees, both in composition and thought.

Over the period to 2026 we will take action to achieve the following priorities:

Objective	Actions	Year
Leadership	Commit to the National Housing Federation's Chairs' Challenge providing visible leadership at Board level.	1
Improve understanding of appropriate Governance profile	Establish appropriate benchmarks for Board and Committee composition, using these to influence our recruitment processes.	1
	Publish data of Board and Committee composition in our Financial Statements and annual ED&I report.	1-3
Learning for governance community	Every Board and Committee member undertakes ED&I e-learning.	1
Recruitment of Board and Committee members	Using our current data, review and improve our advertisement and recruitment processes to attract more diverse candidates for Board and Committee vacancies.	1-3

12

Support for potential new Board or Committee members	Evaluate options and scope a programme to develop and upskill 'board ready' candidates (from diverse backgrounds) for future vacancies that arise in our governance structures, such as board mentoring or apprenticeship programmes.	1
	Implement preferred option.	2
	Review the impact of the above opportunities and where necessary, explore the use of a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for applicants from currently under-represented communities.	3
Decision making	Update the standard governance report template to evidence equality impact assessments (EIAs) have taken place in relation to policy reviews and major change proposals, and clearly demonstrate what has changed as a result.	1
Improved EIAs	Review approach to EIAs, drafting guidance which clarifies the requirement for an EIA in different circumstances, and reviewing templates used.	1
Share customer improvements	Share two ED&I related customer stories a year.	1-3

Outcomes

Year 1 (2023-24)
— Riverside is a visible leader on ED&I issues.
— We are attracting a more diverse field of candidates for Board and Committee vacancies.
— ED&I considerations are embedded within our governance reporting framework and are an integral part of better decision making.
— Board and Committee members have a better understanding of ED&I issues.

2026 target
— Measurable increase in number of Board/Committee applicants with protected characteristics (baseline to be established).
— Increase in diversity score in our Board members' self-assessment (baseline to be established following outcomes of self-assessments in July 2023).

Supporting our colleagues to deliver great service

We currently have seven separate colleague groups operating across Riverside and One Housing who offer support and advice for our colleagues across the areas of race, disability, LGBTQI+ and women.

We provide these self-organised colleague groups with support, and each has an executive sponsor. We are currently helping them to come together, to create a single network comprising four groups with clearly agreed priorities. Whilst the first three are well established networks, the women's network is a newer group and has recently formulated its future action plan, which includes a review of current policies relating to women's health and safety in the workplace, with a particular focus on travel and accommodation. We are very proud of our what our colleague groups have achieved and will continue to offer our support over the period of this strategy.

Promoting and supporting employee wellbeing is at the heart of our organisation and we have a Wellbeing and People Experience Advisor who works in partnership with key stakeholders to provide and prioritise interventions that align to our colleagues' needs, considering the five key elements of wellbeing - career, social, financial, physical and community wellbeing. We also have a network of Wellbeing Champions, who support colleagues in need.

Supporting our colleagues to deliver services that are both customer-focussed and inclusive is of paramount importance to us. We want to ensure that Riverside is a great place to work, where colleagues can be their authentic selves, in an environment free from discrimination, where diversity is valued, and all colleagues feel included.

All colleagues are required to complete mandatory ED&I eLearning every 12 months to ensure they understand our commitment to achieving equality of opportunity, providing opportunities that offer greater inclusion and respecting and understanding the diversity of their colleagues and our customers. Unconscious bias is included within our elearning module, so our colleagues understand the importance of taking this into account when making decisions and the associated risks of not understanding the implications of biases.

We are also involved in wider sector initiatives including:

— Participating in the Housing Diversity Network's mentoring programme, which each year provides six colleagues with the opportunity to be personally mentored by experienced, senior professionals from across the housing sector and to build networks and relationships with colleagues from different housing organisations, leading to increased confidence, self-awareness, and resilience to embrace further learning opportunities.
— Commitment to delivering the **G15 Ethnic Diversity Pledge**, and to ensuring we better reflect the communities in which we work at all levels of our organisations. G15 Accelerate is a high calibre Chartered Management Institute (CMI) leadership development programme open to ethnically diverse managers who want to accelerate their career trajectory. The programme helps to equip these colleagues with the skills, confidence, and connections to help accelerate their career.
— Supporting the Leadership 2025 charity with our gold membership commitment, contributing to their work to help make the housing sector leadership more diverse, by dismantling structural inequality across the housing sector, making its leadership ethnically diverse.

We wish to further support our colleagues and managers to strengthen their understanding of the different requirements and support needs that customers have. This is particularly important as we bring together our operations following the merger and design a new, consistent approach to the delivery of our services. Equipping colleagues with the knowledge and tools to be able to perform their roles is a priority of this strategy.

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In addition, we must ensure our managers are equipped to handle more complex issues, for instance ensuring mental health support is available within Riverside, hidden disabilities such as neurodiversity are understood, and there is real insight into religious and cultural needs of both colleagues and customers.

Over the period to 2026 we will take action to achieve the following priorities:

Objective	Actions	Year
Customer facing colleagues to have the right support and systems to deliver great customer service	Following the review of our service delivery model, devise learning solutions for colleagues to enable them to deliver their role efficiently and effectively in an inclusive way, ensuring they can deliver customer focussed services, tailoring delivery where required to suit the diverse needs of customers.	1-2
People managers to be equipped to provide support to their team	Implement solutions identified in Year 1.	2
Customer facing colleagues are aware of disabilities and the religious and cultural needs of our customers	Review our learning offer and devise a mandatory programme to enable our people managers to provide support on mental health, neurodiverse conditions, and other hidden disabilities.	2
	Using customer insight and local knowledge, managers of customer facing colleagues, with their ED&I Champions, introduce disability awareness and cultural awareness to their teams, via their ED&I action plans.	1-3
	Awareness is tailored to the communities we serve, including targeted briefings and materials and collaborating with local community partners to deliver awareness raising sessions with 2-3 sessions per year.	
Support colleague networks to merge	Merge seven colleague networks into four, with an executive sponsor for each and agreed terms of reference and future workplans.	1
Provide mental health support to colleagues	Review the Wellbeing Champion model in line with the development of a Wellbeing Strategy, to cover both Riverside and One Housing colleagues.	1-2
Continue to take positive action to ensure the representation of people from ethnically diverse backgrounds and females within our senior roles reflects the diversity of the communities we serve	Continue to participate in the G15 Accelerate programme and the Housing Diversity Network's mentoring programme.

Align Riverside's Ethnically Diverse Guaranteed Interview Scheme with the One Housing scheme and consider extending | 1 |

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		Riverside's Guaranteed Interview scheme to include female candidates, aligning with One Housing's scheme.	

Outcomes

Years 1-2 (2023-25)
— Implement solutions to further raise awareness of ED&I issues to support the delivery of an inclusive customer-focused service. — Colleague networks merge successfully with shared committee roles and aligned workplans. — Colleagues have access to a network of Wellbeing Champions. — Enhanced opportunities for ethnically diverse and female applicants to be considered for senior roles via guaranteed interview schemes.

2026 target
— % of colleagues who identify as ethnically diverse paid in the upper quartile of our pay distribution remains above 25%[2].

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[2] based on 2021 census figures for the LA areas where we work, weighted by stock we own

Collection and use of data

We will develop a better understanding of the characteristics and experiences of our customers, communities, and colleagues by collecting, analysing and reporting data, using it to improve our services.

The capture and use of data relating to the diversity of our customers, communities and colleagues is fundamental in enabling us to understand the extent to which our customer services and employment practices deliver equal outcomes. In turn this enables us to plan our activities to tackle inequalities and promote inclusion, tailor our services to better meet the diverse needs of customers and colleagues and measure the impact of what we do through establishing performance indicators.

We already report a series of ED&I measures to Group Board, as well as publishing data about the composition of our governance community and colleagues through our financial statements and ED&I Annual Report. We also publish our gender and ethnicity pay gap information, which can be found in the above report and on our website. For our colleagues, we use their data to monitor job applications, promotions, take up of training opportunities and reasons for leaving the organisation, reporting this through a dashboard which is reviewed quarterly by our ED&I Best Practice Group.

However, there is scope to do more. Not only is having an evidenced based approach the right thing to do, but it is also clear that the Regulator will expect providers to have a deeper understanding of the experiences of customers with protected characteristics as they roll out a new approach to consumer regulation. From an employment perspective, the foundation of good data is also essential in protecting the organisation from litigation.

We want to improve our approach and so in this section we identify specific actions to improve our data collection, analysis, and publication as a foundation to our broader ED&I work. However, our approach can only be as good as the information we hold, and we recognise that we still have gaps in our data relating to the protected characteristics of our customers and colleagues. Whilst we have been narrowing these through actively promoting online self-completion on the part of customers and colleagues, emphasising the benefits of disclosure, we have some way to go.

We do not consider this to be a 'tick box exercise' - whilst it is important that we understand the diversity profile of our customers and colleagues in comparison to our communities, we want to go further. It is only by better understanding the differences in customer and colleague sentiment and experience, that we will ensure we take the right action to tackle any inequalities we find.

Over the period to 2026 we will take action to achieve the following priorities:

Objective	Actions	Year
Close the gaps in our knowledge about customers and colleagues.	Run six monthly campaigns to encourage customers to complete information on their protected characteristics through our customer apps.	1-3
	Identify and implement a mechanism for continuously improving the collection of diversity data for existing customers who are not digitally engaged.	1
	Run six monthly internal communications campaigns to encourage colleagues to complete information on their protected characteristics through People Hub.	1-3

Improve our understanding about the composition of our communities to assist in neighbourhood planning	Develop neighbourhood diversity dashboards showing the composition of our customers and additionally our lettings (at neighbourhood level) by key protected characteristics, enabling a comparison with the wider local population.	1
Customer satisfaction reporting by protected characteristics	Create additional filters to enable key Tenant Satisfaction Measures (up to 6) to be analysed by protected characteristics (where survey numbers enable statistical confidence), incorporating this in Board reporting.	1
Colleague wellbeing and engagement	Analyse the results of our colleague survey by protected characteristic, to allow us to gain insight that demonstrates we have created a working environment and culture where every individual feels safe, a sense of belonging and is empowered to achieve their full potential. Share the results with our colleague groups.	1-3
Inequality, deprivation, and stock condition and location	Scope and deliver a research project that seeks to understand the relationship between ethnicity and disability, deprivation, and housing stock condition and location.	2-3
Measure the delivery of our strategic objectives	Create a dashboard of performance indicators to measure the outcomes delivered by this strategy - including a six-monthly dashboard for Board and a quarterly employment dashboard for ED&I Best Practice Group.	1

Outcomes

Year 1 (2023-24)
— PIs created and being used to measure success of strategy's action plan. — Diversity data is readily available in a format that supports our colleagues to provide effective and accessible services to our customers and plan future services.

2026 target
— Reduce the non-disclosure rate of diversity data for our customers and colleagues by 50% for each protected characteristic.

6. Governance and delivery of the strategy

6.1 Activity included within this strategy's action plan under each of the five themes is deliberately set at a high level and we will measure our progress in delivery through an annual report to Group Board, covering the activity under each of the objectives, and our performance against the strategic performance indicators included. The Riverside Customer Voice Executive and OHG representative customer bodies will also be updated.

6.2 A dedicated steering group has been established to oversee progress in delivering the strategy, chaired by the Director of Strategy and Public Affairs, with wider membership comprising the Equality and Diversity Manager and senior representation from Strategy & Planning, People Services, Business Information and Insight, Asset Strategy, Customer Services and Governance. The plan will be monitored by the steering group and revisited bi-annually to ensure it remains valid and will be flexible enough to be able to respond to changes beyond our control within our operating environment.

6.3 The Equality and Diversity Best Practice Group will have a monitoring role in reviewing delivery updates at quarterly intervals. Customers are involved in both the steering group and the Best Practice Group.

6.4 Delivering the strategy will involve communicating with and engaging colleagues and we will continue to raise awareness and embed ED&I as a fundamental priority across the organisation. This will include making clear our plans and priorities as part of this strategy, but also ensuring that our colleagues are able to shape plans and influence their delivery over the longer-term.

To keep it 'alive' we will communicate it across the organisation, sharing key messages and working to incorporate it into everyday work of colleagues.

6.5 Primary responsibility for having oversight of the delivery of the strategy will rest with the Equality and Diversity Manager, who will monitor performance and achievement of objectives by the key organisational leads. Progress will be reported bi-annually to Executive Directors and annually to Group Board.

![R Riverside]

FORWARD TOGETHER
2023-26
Objectives and key strategies

This strategy sets out the steps we will take over the next three years to further embed our long-standing commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I).

Improving outcomes for customers and the workplace for our colleagues is at the heart of this strategy. We'll also focus on our governance, leadership and ways of working while recognising the inequalities that can exist within society and in the workplace too.

Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

As a landlord, a service provider and an employer, we want to drive change and achieve greater equity for those people who face disadvantage and barriers. We want to create a diverse and inclusive culture where all people can achieve their true potential, offering opportunities for inclusion.

This strategy has been created in consultation with customers, colleagues and key stakeholders. It seeks to address the issues that our stakeholders have told us about and our data has identified.

We will strive to keep the strategy alive and ensure that any emerging ED&I issues and other priorities are captured and included in refreshed versions of both the strategy and the action plan.

You can read the full version of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy here.

Our objectives	By 2026
Customer Services We'll tailor our services to meet the individual needs of our diverse customer base and promote the involvement opportunities for all. This will ensure services are as fully accessible as possible and we do not knowingly exclude anyone, always treating everyone fairly and with respect across all touchpoints.	— The proportion of customers who are satisfied that 'my landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect' will increase from 67% to 75%. — The profile of our involved customers reflects our overall customer profile, relevant to the locality.
Homes and places We'll better plan our new homes to reflect the needs of local communities and ensure that our existing homes can be flexibly adapted to meet the changing needs of customers throughout their lives.	— There will be no significant differences between satisfaction levels in the quality of our new homes across protected characteristics.
Governance We'll ensure the composition of our governance community and leadership team better reflects the diversity of the communities we serve, and ensure decision making is better informed to improve equalities outcomes.	— There'll be a measurable increase in number of Board and Committee applicants with protected characteristics. — The diversity score in our Board members' self-assessment will have increased.
Supporting our colleagues to deliver great service We'll equip all colleagues with the tools and knowledge they require to deliver services which are tailored to diverse needs, and ensure they feel supported in a work environment free from discrimination, where they can be their authentic selves.	— % of colleagues who identify as ethnically diverse paid in the upper quartile of our pay distribution remains above 25%.
The collection and use of data We'll develop a better understanding of the characteristics and experiences of our customers, communities and colleagues by collecting, analysing and reporting data, using it to improve our services, recruitment and colleague experience.	— The non-disclosure rate of diversity data for our customers and colleagues will have reduced by 50% for each protected characteristic.