



Lewisham Homes

Equality and Diversity Strategy

2010-2013



Lewisham
Homes

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1 **Executive summary**

Our equality and diversity strategy was first launched in 2008. We have reviewed this to ensure we have an up to date approach to equality and diversity that reflects current and proposed legislation and regulation and to take account of the changes within our organisation since 2008. This document outlines our approach to equality and diversity and also sets out the context in which Lewisham Homes works, our achievements and roles and responsibilities of the Board and staff.

We have based our strategy on current legislation, good practice and equality frameworks:

- The Equality and Human Rights Commission's (formerly the Commission for Racial Equality) code of practice for rented housing;
- The Social Housing Equality Framework ;
- The Audit Commission's Key Lines of Enquiry (KLoE);
- The Tenant Services Authority's (TSA) equality and diversity requirements.

We have also been mindful of recent equalities legislation in particular the Equality Act 2010, the six diversity strands – race, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation and religion or belief also influences the development of the strategy. We have consulted with stakeholders about equality issues and incorporated their views in our plans and approach.

Over the next three years, our key objectives are to:

- Fulfil our statutory and regulatory responsibilities and attain the 'excellent' level of the Social Housing Equality Framework by 2012;
- Ensure effective engagement with all groups of residents and increase satisfaction;
- Provide accessible services that are responsive to residents' needs, particularly those who are vulnerable;
- Ensure that equality and diversity issues are addressed by partners and contractors providing services on behalf of and in conjunction with us;
- Maintain a progressive and diverse workforce and Board that reflects our client groups at all levels;
- Enhance awareness amongst staff on the importance of equality and diversity so that they put into practice our approach in the delivery of services.

To deliver the strategy we have an action plan (see section 11). Progress will be reported regularly to our Board and senior management team. Our overall approach to equality and diversity includes:

- Improving the quality of information about our residents, by equality strand as well as information about communication needs. This will help ensure our services meet the needs of all customers;
- Ensuring that we capture the needs of vulnerable residents and that we are sensitive to their needs, including referral or signposting to support services;
- Engaging with seldom heard and young people through our community involvement activities;
- Making services accessible, for example by providing information in the main community languages and formats and having reception areas that are compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA);
- Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments to identify whether a policy, strategy or recommendations from a service review are likely to have an adverse impact on any group and taking action to address these;
- Ensuring our staff, Board members and involved residents are well informed about equalities – we have a programme of training and briefing;
- Operating a staff Equality and Diversity Challenge Group and an Equality and Diversity Resident Forum. These give a structure to discussing and challenging equalities issues and finding solutions for an improved approach;
- A nominated Board Champion to take the lead on diversity;
- Making sure equality and diversity underpins our recruitment and employment practices;
- Ensuring that our contractors and suppliers have processes that support our equality and diversity strategy.

We have received accreditation in a number of key areas, which include equality criteria. These are: Customer Service Excellence, Stonewall's Diversity Champions programme, Investors in People and the two ticks scheme (which demonstrates we are a positive about employing disabled people).

We will monitor the strategy and action plan, which links with our other strategies. There will also be evaluation of the strategy from a variety of sources to make sure there are positive outcomes.

1.1 Our commitment to equality and diversity

We will work to actively combat discrimination in all forms and ensure that prospective or present employees and those who use our services, are not treated less favourably on the grounds of:

- Gender;
- Gender re-assignment;
- Race, colour, ethnic or national origin;
- Religion or belief;
- Age;
- Disability;
- Sexual orientation;
- Marital status;
- Employment status;
- Income;
- Responsibility for children or dependants.

We will ensure that everyone has equal access to our services and that these are responsive and relevant to our customers' needs.

2. The context and area in which Lewisham Homes works

2.1 The borough of Lewisham

Lewisham is an inner city borough located in south east London and covers 13.4 square miles. It has a population of 261,000, of which 52% are female and 48% are male.

Lewisham is the 15th most ethnically diverse local authority in England. It is a diverse borough with Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) residents comprising 38% of the population and there are over 130 languages spoken. The profile of faith groups is - 61% Christian, 5% Muslim, 2% Hindu, 1% Buddhist, 0.3% Jewish, 0.2% Sikh. 20% say they have no religion and 10% have not stated their religion.

The Office of National Statistics (ONS) census 2001 showed that Lewisham had a younger age structure than the rest of the country with an average age of 35 years, compared to a national average of 39 years - 21% of the population is under 16 and 15% are over 60.

The Government ranks Lewisham as the 39th most deprived Local Authority in England based on their 2007 indicators. In January 2010, 5.2% of the working age population in Lewisham were claiming Job Seekers Allowance, compared with 4.4% for London and 4.3% for England. Two-thirds of social housing tenants are in receipt of Housing Benefit. Just over 30% of households rent social housing, with 7% of households renting from a Housing Association compared to 23% from the Council.

2.2 Lewisham Homes

We currently manage 13,500 social housing tenancies and 5,000 leasehold properties within the borough, as well as 3,400 additional properties which we are managing on an interim basis. This interim arrangement is in place while other proposed investment options are being decided by residents.

The profile of tenants is as follows:

- 59% of residents are non-white;
- The largest ethnic groups are:
 - White British, Irish or White other
 - Black Caribbean
 - Black African;
- 57% of residents are Christian;
- 43% of residents are non Christian;
- 29% of residents have a disability or long term illness;

- 16% are age over 65 and 6% under 25 years;
- 55% are female;
- 21% of our tenants do not have English as their first language.

We have analysed data to assess whether there are any significant differences between groups of tenants in terms of satisfaction with our services. The main findings from this are as follows:

- Residents from BME backgrounds are less satisfied than White residents with the overall service. The STATUS telephone survey carried out in 2009-10 showed satisfaction as 1% lower for BME tenants at 68% than non-BME tenants at 69%. However there has been an increase in satisfaction from the 2008-9 STATUS survey for both groups. This showed satisfaction levels of 62% for BME and 60% for non BME tenants.
- Older tenants are more satisfied with services than younger ones.
- Female tenants are generally less satisfied than male tenants. For overall satisfaction with services, the STATUS telephone survey carried out in 2009-10 showed 65% of female respondents were satisfied compared with 74% of male respondents. However there has been an increase in satisfaction from the 2008-9 STATUS survey for both groups. This showed satisfaction levels of 57% for female tenants and 67% for male tenants.
- Overall satisfaction of wheelchair users was 76% in the STATUS telephone survey carried out in 2009-10. This is an increase from 51% compared when previous the STATUS survey carried out in 2008-9.
- Analysis has been undertaken to assess differences within the diversity strands in the delivery of key services. This highlighted the following:
 - Repairs are less likely to be reported by White British tenants and more likely to be reported by both Black African and Caribbean tenants, based on a comparison with their profile in the tenant population.
 - Chinese and Irish tenants are least likely to report repairs, having more than a 10% difference compared with their profile.
 - White British and Black African tenants are proportionately less likely to be evicted or have a Notice of Seeking Possession served on them, whereas Black Caribbean and 'other' category tenants are more likely.
 - Younger tenants aged under 45 are more likely to be evicted or be served with a Notice of Seeking Possession (NOSP). Tenants aged under 25 comprise 18% of evictions but they comprise only 5% of the tenant population. However the most likely age group to be served with a NOSP is the 35-44 years age group.
 - Tenants with disabilities are the least likely to be evicted or served with a

NOSP. They are equally likely to order repairs compared to tenants without a disability.

- In response to these findings, we are supporting tenants in our income service with the follows:
 - High risk groups including younger, Black Caribbean tenants are identified at sign up and referred to our Welfare Benefits Officer, who can ensure benefits are claimed and financial advice given.
 - The pilot with the Credit Union, which began in July 2009, has targeted this group.
 - We are increasingly using texting, as this has been a useful tool in communicating with younger people.

Through our customer profiling project, we are working to increase the quality and amount of information we collect on our residents in accordance with the six diversity strands. **Appendix 1** shows our resident profiling in accordance with four of the six diversity strands:

In the 2009 staff survey, equality and diversity was considered to be important to staff. 74% of those who responded stated that Lewisham Homes is very effective or effective in considering equality and diversity in service provision.

3. Achievements and outcomes from our 2008 equality and diversity strategy

In **appendix 2** we have set out in detail progress against the action plan for the equality and diversity strategy 2008. In addition, the Audit Commission carried out a voluntary inspection in November 2008. The report contained a number of key recommendations which we have also addressed.

Since 2008 we have achieved the following:

- Greater awareness of equality and diversity throughout the organisation. We have a programme of equality and diversity training which is compulsory for all staff. We have established an Equality and Diversity Challenge Group and a staff forum, the terms of reference for which includes encouraging staff membership from the six equality strands. Training has also been provided for our Board members.
- We are more aware of the needs of our customers. The quantity and quality of data has been improved through data cleansing, importing of data from other reliable sources and customer surveys. We have made some progress in analysing data and using it to deliver improved and tailored services to specific groups.
- We have made our services more accessible. All our offices have been assessed for DDA compliance and improvements made as a result. We have provided specialist advice to residents who are hard of hearing as a result of a number of staff being trained in sign language.
- We have made information easier for residents to understand. We now provide DVDs for all new tenants, which includes key information in community languages, sub-titles for those with a hearing impairment and is a useful means of communication for those with low literacy skills. We have revised our handbook and leaflets and our residents' reading group has helped us ensure these are easier to understand. Our website now has Browsealoud and has a range of viewing options including the use of Google Translate.
- Provided further support to victims of hate crime and domestic violence, including dedicated resources for this within the ASB Team and working with partners who can provide support. We have worked with our partner agencies to improve third party reporting arrangements for harassment and domestic violence. There has been an increase in the number of domestic violence and hate crime cases reported since we appointed specialist officers to deal with these issues and publicised their work.

- Improved our approach to providing services for vulnerable residents. We have consulted with vulnerable and seldom heard groups and revised our policy and procedures in response to this. We are actively working with partners, including LB Lewisham to ensure arrangements work well, including the development of protocols and referral arrangements. We introduced a minor works aids and adaptations service for works that do not require an Occupational Therapist assessment, to ensure a faster service.
- Worked with involved residents to enhance their knowledge about equality and diversity issues. We have rolled out training for tenants and residents associations (TRAs) on equalities and diversity and 22 of the 31 TRAs have attended this in the last year. There is now more robust equalities criteria in the standard constitution for Area Panels and TRAs. We formed an Equality and Diversity Resident Forum in February 2010, comprising of a diverse range of residents, which meets every three months.
- We have reached out to our wider community through a number of effective and high profile community development events. For example, 'Honor Oak's Got Talent and 'Ten Dates Ten Events' over the summer in 2008 and our 'Welcome Home' event in June 2009. Our annual Open Day 2009 focused on building relationships with our partners who support residents from different communities. We have promoted English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses.
- There are more opportunities for staff to progress to senior roles. We have commissioned a training programme that aims to give middle managers the foundation for their formal development into more senior management roles.
- We are more aware of the profile of our staff. Data to enable equalities monitoring is now captured for new staff for all six equality strands, including temporary staff and for all staff through the staff survey;
- We have completed 37 Equality Impact Assessments, the outcomes of which have been incorporated into our Business Plan.
- We have developed equality and diversity targets and report performance.

However we recognise there are areas where we need to improve our approach to equality and diversity. This includes:

- Increasing the diversity profile within the six strands and making sure we continue to tailor our service to residents' needs;

- Making sure plans emanating from satisfaction surveys have a material benefit to residents;
- Further embedding the approach to Equality Impact Assessments and ensuring these have outcomes that benefit residents;
- Increasing the number of BME and female members of staff in senior positions;
- Further engaging with residents through our surgeries with Vietnamese, Turkish and Somalian groups, and through our hard to reach plan.

4. Equality and diversity – strategic objectives

Equality and diversity will be at the centre of our activities so that we focus on the needs of all groups and reduce barriers to them accessing our services. Over the next two years, our key strategic objectives are to:

1. Fulfil our statutory and regulatory responsibilities and achieve the excellence level of the Social Housing Equality Framework by 2012;
2. Ensure effective engagement with all groups of residents and increase satisfaction;
3. Provide accessible services that are responsive to residents' needs, particularly those who are vulnerable;
4. Ensure that equality and diversity issues are addressed by partners and contractors providing services on behalf of and in conjunction with us;
5. Maintain a progressive and diverse workforce and Board that reflects our client groups at all levels;
6. Enhance awareness amongst staff on the importance of equality and diversity so that they put into practice our approach in the delivery of services.

4.1 Fulfil our statutory and regulatory responsibilities and achieve the excellence level of the Social Housing Equality Framework by 2012

We will make sure the provisions in the Equality Act 2010, that received the Royal Assent in April 2010, are incorporated into our delivery of services. The Act seeks to outlaw discrimination on the basis of a person's 'protected characteristics.'

The duty to promote equality has been widened to cover age, faith and belief, sexual orientation and gender reassignment as well as disability, gender and race.

Also socio-economic factors which lead to discrimination or unfavourable treatment are taken into account for the first time. Organisations should carry out equal pay reviews and publish annual progress reports on promoting equality.

Public bodies such as Lewisham Homes will be required to consider needs, by reference to these characteristics, when designing and delivering public services.

The other key legislation supporting our service delivery in respect of the six diversity strands is as follows:

- **Race:** The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (RRAA);
- **Age:** The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006;
- **Disability:** The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA 2005);

- **Gender:** The Equality Act 2006 amended the Sex Discrimination Act 1975;
- **Sexual orientation:** The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003;
- **Religion or belief:** The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003.

For further details of our approach and what we do in respect of the six diversity strands see **appendix 3**.

As well as complying with the above legislation we are aiming to:

- Attain the 'excellent' level of the Equality Framework for Social Housing by 2012 through a peer assessment review. We are also aiming to reach the 'achieving' level by the end of 2010 and are awaiting the launch of peer review arrangements;
- Demonstrate we comply with the Equality and Human Rights Commission's (formerly the Commission for Racial Equality) code of practice for rented housing. We have already completed a gap analysis of this and actions to meet gaps are contained within our plans;
- Demonstrate we are an excellent performing organisation in accordance with the Audit Commission Key Lines of Enquiry for diversity;
- Make sure we take equality and diversity into account in our approach to the Tenant Services Authority's six national standards.

Our approach to the above is further outlined in section 8– 8.2 to 8.5.

4.2 Ensure effective engagement with all groups of residents and increase satisfaction

We are committed to effectively consulting with all sections of the communities we serve. We also recognise our housing services have a key role to play in achieving community cohesion and that this extends to issues of race, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation and religion or belief.

We will continue to proactively engage with residents, in particular individuals and groups that have been identified as being excluded or marginalised (the seldom heard). This is to ensure there are opportunities and support for such groups and that services are accessed by those who have been less likely to do so in the past.

We will continue to do this by:

- Collecting data on our residents' profile so that we can effectively plan and deliver services that meet all needs, particularly communication requirements;
- Regularly reviewing the Resident Compact and ensuring that opportunities for involvement suit our range of customers;
- Ensuring that tenant and resident organisations are set up in a way that encourages inclusive membership and that involved tenants are aware of equalities issues. Training has already been provided to a number of involved residents and that will continue. We are also monitoring membership of groups by equality profile;
- Making sure the Equality and Diversity Resident Forum is shaped to reflect the resident profile;
- Developing surgeries for 'seldom heard' groups – these are already set up for communities identified as most needing this – Vietnamese, Turkish and Somalian;
- Using more imaginative ways to work with young residents, and to develop a young people's section on the website.

4.3 Provide accessible services that are responsive to residents' needs, particularly those who are vulnerable

We know that our customers want services that are easy to access and available in a variety of ways at a time that best suits their needs. We will make sure we provide appropriate services that are tailored to individuals' needs and are able to direct them to the relevant care, support and advice services.

We will continue to do this by:

- Improving the quality and increasing the proportion of information held on residents by each diversity strand, as well as information about vulnerability and communication needs;
- Using resident profile information to ensure good communications and access to services;
- Using customer feedback to plan and deliver accessible services;
- Ensuring reception areas continue to be compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) - carrying out an annual audit and arranging for work to be completed;
- Continuing to provide and promote services to support victims of hate crime and domestic violence;
- Facilitating installation of aids and adaptations through the Council's occupational therapy service and providing basic adaptations.
- Delivering our Communications Strategy 2009-11 and literacy action plan, so that we provide residents with accessible information;

- Working flexibly so that we are be able to respond and adjust to our customers' needs when necessary;
- Providing interpretation services and written and electronic information in a range of formats such as large print, Braille and DVD for sign up;
- Ensuring effective support arrangements for vulnerable tenants; for example:
 - when bidding for properties, through Homesearch
 - at eviction panel
 - by providing referral arrangements to externally provided support services
 - by regular liaison with support agencies;
- Working with external agencies such as Lewisham Reach, Age Concern, Action for Refugees in Lewisham (AFRIL) and Lewisham Disability Coalition to support vulnerable tenants;
- Monitoring new tenants using CORE (COntinuous REcording) data and information received from Lewisham Council.
- Working with Lewisham Council to make sure transfer applications and allocations are dealt with fairly.

4.4 Ensure that equality and diversity issues are addressed by partners and contractors providing services on behalf of and in conjunction with us

We will continue to require all contractors to demonstrate their commitment to diversity. We will make sure there is a balanced and consistent approach to equality and diversity in our procurement and management of capital works contracts. We will also ensure that the needs of minority groups are taken into account in the delivery of capital works.

We will continue to do this by:

- Ensuring our procurement procedures include equality and diversity considerations;
- Working with small and medium sized contractors;
- Including equalities policy and monitoring requirements in our standard contracts and regularly monitoring these;
- Requiring contractors to operate local employment initiatives including apprenticeship schemes.

4.5 Maintain a progressive and diverse workforce and Board that reflects our client groups at all levels

We aim to ensure that the people that work for and govern us reflect the communities we serve. Our processes will make sure there is an open, fair and consistent approach to recruitment and promotion and this is done in accordance

with our commitment to equality and diversity. We also ensure that we provide extensive opportunities for training in accordance with staff requirements and needs of the organisation.

We will maintain a progressive and diverse workforce by:

- Continuing to use recruitment policies and procedures that encourage a wide range of applicants, including:
 - schemes that attract female employees through flexible working arrangements
 - work experience for young people;
- Providing training for junior managers to assist them in progressing to more senior roles;
- Reviewing our approach to Single Status. This aims to remove any unfairness in the pay and reward arrangements;
- Recording and analysing equalities information on staff leaving the organisation. This is so that we can monitor any areas of concern and if necessary take action;
- Regularly reporting the results of our equality employment monitoring. This includes quarterly reports to the Senior Management Team and Board;
- Updating our staff profile information to include the six diversity strands.

Policies and procedures are in place for the selection and monitoring of our Board members. We have a succession planning policy for Board members that ensures the potential to draw candidates from the six equality strands, to help it reflect the community we serve and bring a broad range of skills and experience. Board members have received diversity training and we have a nominated Board 'champion' for E&D.

4.6 Enhance awareness amongst staff on the importance of equality and diversity so that they put into practice our approach in the delivery of services

We expect all our staff to respect differences in our customers and their colleagues and will not tolerate any form of discrimination relating to race, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief.

We will continue to do this by:

- Making sure all staff receive diversity training which is meaningful and relevant to their work. We will continue to deliver our training programme which is mandatory and ensure all new staff receive such training within a reasonable time of them starting work with us;

- Implementing management standards that incorporate equality and diversity. These will be included in our revised people strategy;
- Providing guidance to staff on equality and diversity issues; for example:
 - information on different religious or cultural norms and behaviours
 - a quick reference equality and diversity guide;
- Providing staff with regular updates on equalities through the Equality and Diversity Challenge Group and standard staff communication channels; for example, producing a staff information leaflet on the Single Equalities Bill/Act;
- Providing fold up translation cards for front line staff to use in the most frequently used community languages;
- Ensuring staff are aware of support agencies and referral arrangements.

5. Delivery of the strategy

5.1 The action plan

The action plan has been compiled following a gap analysis of the Audit Commission's Diversity KLoE; the Equality and Human Rights Commission Code of Practice on racial equality in housing and the Social Housing Equality Framework (see section 8). The action plan is in section 11 of this strategy.

Actions are incorporated into the Business Plan 2010-13, which is monitored by the Board. Updates will be provided to the staff Equality and Diversity Challenge Group and the Equality and Diversity Resident Forum.

5.2 Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)

We are required to carry out EIAs, as we are defined as a public body under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. This involves identifying any significant adverse (or positive) outcomes from our approach and changes to policies or delivery of service. The process looks at impacts on both residents and staff and assesses whether there is any adverse impact for any particular group. In carrying out EIAs, we take account of the following which comprise the six equality strands:

- Race;
- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender;
- Sexual orientation;
- Religion or belief.

We also take account of issues of vulnerability to identify any gaps in our services, unmet needs or potentially discriminatory outcomes. Actions from EIAs are prioritised within our Business Plan and deliver benefits to residents. We will also ensure the main outcomes of the EIAs are publicised to residents. A toolkit for carrying out EIAs has been developed and staff training on this delivered, to ensure a robust and consistent approach.

The results of EIAs and action taken are reported annually to our Board. However we will ensure that EIAs continue to benefit residents and are used as a tool to produce tangible outcomes.

5.3 Equality and Diversity Challenge Group

This comprises staff from each department within the organisation. The Group meets regularly and looks at ways we can continue to improve our approach to equality and diversity. It also hears presentations from external agencies such as Lewisham Council's youth services, Stonewall, the borough Domestic Violence Co-ordinator and Victim Support.

Some positive outcomes from the Challenge Group meetings include:

- Joining Stonewall's Diversity Champions programme (see 8.7);
- Refresher training for all staff on accessing translation and interpretation services;
- Wider use of translation cards;
- Greater understanding of EIAs, how they are used and outcomes;
- Widespread consultation with staff on the equality and diversity strategy.

5.4 Evolution of the strategy

The strategy will continue to evolve for staff and customers by:

- Making sure all customers have fair and equal access to Lewisham Homes' services;
- Building customers' confidence in Lewisham Homes' ability to deliver to all communities
- Enhanced community and social cohesion;
- Equality and diversity being relevant to the everyday work of all staff and they put this into practice for the benefit for the benefit of all residents;
- Having tangible outcomes for staff and customers;
- Improving the organisation's performance to the benefit of staff and customers.

6. Developing the equality and diversity strategy

In developing the equality and diversity strategy, we have consulted with the following:

- Partners we work with such as Lewisham Council, Lewisham Disability Coalition and Age Concern;
- Staff through the Equality and Diversity Challenge Group (see 5.3), the intranet and through meetings with the lead officers responsible for delivering the strategy;
- Residents via the Equality and Diversity Resident Forum and through Area Panels. The Resident Equality and Diversity Resident Forum were consulted on the strategy and made suggestions for changes and amendments.

We set up the Equality and Diversity Resident Forum in February 2010. This acts as a consultative body representing all the six diversity strands - on behalf of all Lewisham Homes' residents. The Forum comprises residents who wish to contribute to making sure Lewisham Homes' services are fair, equal and accessible to all. The main functions include the following:

- Monitoring our approach to equality and diversity;
- Making suggestions about areas we need to cover in our approach to equality and diversity;
- Obtaining feedback from external agencies about our services and we can improve. For example, a guest speaker from a Vietnamese community support group has provided practical information about how to deliver repairs and engage with Vietnamese tenants;
- Reviewing the equality and diversity strategy and action plan and monitoring the achievement of tasks within timescales;
- Reviewing existing and draft policies, procedures, processes, action plans and publications, where these are relevant to equality and diversity;
- Reviewing EIAs.

The strategy review involved benchmarking with other social housing providers, HouseMark, Housing Quality Network and the Improvement and Development Agency (I&DeA). In addition we have considered the following legislative and good practice requirements:

- Current equalities legislation, including the six diversity strands.
- Meeting the requirements of:
 - The Social Housing Equality Framework (see 8.2)
 - The relevant codes of practice published by the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) (and now managed by the Equality and Human Rights Commission) (see 8.3);

- Changes to the national direction of equality and diversity as a result of the implementation of the 2010 Equality Act (see 4.1);
- The Audit Commission Key Lines of Enquiry for diversity (see 8.4);
- The Tenant Services Authority's equality and diversity requirements (see 8.5).

We have also analysed customer feedback and results of research into the needs of our vulnerable residents.

7. Roles and responsibilities for equality and diversity

7.1 The Board

We have a Board comprising of fifteen members. The Board comprises of five tenants, two leaseholders, three Councillors and five independent people with professional skills. The Board sets our strategic direction and is responsible for ensuring that the strategy will deliver on promoting equality and diversity for the organisation and our customers.

The Board approves the strategy and monitors progress and performance against targets. A Board Champion for equality and diversity has been appointed and will carry out the following in respect of the strategy:

- Consider with the relevant Service Director or Head whether the strategy is “fit for purpose” before presentation to the Board;
- Consider resourcing issues relating to the proposed action plan;
- Monitor the strategy action plan on a quarterly basis with the Service Director or Head;
- Consider with the Service Director or Head any major in-year changes of direction being proposed to the strategy.

At the time of publication of this document, the diversity profile of the Board is as follows:

- Gender - 7 female and 8 male members;
- Ethnicity - 8 White British, 1 Mixed other, 2 Caribbean, 2 Black African, 2 White Other;
- Disability - 3 with disabilities, 12 without.

7.2 Staff

7.2.1 Chief Executive and Senior Management Team

The Chief Executive is responsible for delivery of the equality and diversity strategy and ensuring progress is reported to the Board. The Chief Executive also attends the Equality and Diversity Challenge Group meetings.

Members of the Senior Management Team are responsible for delivering tasks within the Business Plan which includes the strategy and action plan. They are also responsible for the following:

- Taking every opportunity to promote equality and show our commitment to valuing diversity;
- Understanding how discrimination and disadvantage affects our customers and communities and playing an active role in addressing this;
- Making sure all staff have undertaken equalities training and understand what they need to do to combat discrimination and ensure equal access to all services;
- Ensuring an effective approach to delivering equality and diversity within their service.

7.2.2 Managers

Managers are also responsible for delivering tasks within the Business Plan which includes the strategy and action plan. In addition they must ensure they are not discriminatory in their dealings with staff and support their teams in promoting equality and diversity in service delivery. They need to be aware of legal requirements, for example in the DDA to provide reasonable support for any staff with disabilities.

7.2.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for complying with and actively promoting our approach to equality and diversity, as well as identifying and tackling discrimination both within and outside the work place. This is included in the job descriptions for all staff. Understanding equality issues is a key component of the induction process for all new staff.

Appendix 4 shows our staff profiling in accordance with four of the six diversity strands:

This shows the current profile of our staff as follows:

- 67% are male and 33% are female;
- 41% are from Black and Minority Ethnic groups;
- 51% are over 45, 78% are over 35 and 3% are under 25 years old.
- 8% are disabled.

8. Legislation, frameworks and accreditation for equality and diversity

8.1 Operation of the relevant legislation, codes of practice and good practice standards

In developing the strategy, we have acknowledged the relevant legislation relating to each of the six diversity strands. As a 'public authority,' we are **required** to comply with all legislation outlined in **appendix 3**.

8.2 Social Housing Equality Framework (SHEF)

The Improvement and Development Agency (I&DeA) has developed a new equality framework for social housing organisations which is strongly linked to the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG). The standard provides a framework through which social landlords can understand diversity within their communities and can tackle inequality. This will help us to ensure the delivery of excellent services and drive improvement.

The SHEF uses the same three levels as the EFLG and is similarly outcome focused. The three levels are:

- Developing – understanding the importance of equality;
- Achieving – developing better outcomes;
- Excellent – making a difference.

Performance against each level of the standard is measured by progress against five specific themes identified as:

- Knowing your customers and equality mapping;
- Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment;
- Customer engagement and satisfaction;
- Responsive services, access and customer care;
- A progressive and diverse workforce.

To measure our achievements, we will use the diversity peer challenge process, developed by the I&DeA. We are aiming to attain the 'developing' and 'achieving' levels of the Social Housing Equality Framework in 2010 through a peer assessment review. We are aiming to achieve the 'excellent' level by March 2012.

8.3 The Equality and Human Rights Commission's (formerly the Commission for Racial Equality(CRE)) code of practice for rented housing

The code of practice applies to all housing organisations and is a statutory code which means it has been approved by the Secretary of State and parliament. It was issued by the CRE in September 2006. The main aims of the code are to:

- Set standards for achieving racial equality;
- Raise awareness of an organisation's duties, rights and responsibilities and people's different culture and backgrounds;
- Make sure people seeking housing are treated fairly and equally, irrespective of race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins;
- Follow good practice;
- Eliminate racial harassment;
- Reduce persistent inequalities in the type and quality of housing available to people from different racial groups;
- Strengthen the organisation's reputation as a fair provider of housing and related services for all.

8.4 Audit Commission Key Lines of Enquiry (KLoE 31 – diversity)

This is cross cutting and requires us to demonstrate how we meet the requirements for diversity. The key areas are corporate culture and governance, access and customer care, service user involvement, partnerships and harassment and domestic violence. This has been incorporated in our approach to equality and diversity.

8.5 The Tenant Services Authority's equality and diversity requirements

The Tenant Services Authority (TSA) has included equality and diversity within the tenant empowerment standard rather than introducing a separate equality and diversity standard. The TSA expects housing providers to take equality and diversity into account in their approach to the six national standards (tenant involvement, home, tenancy, neighbourhood and community, value for money and governance and viability).

The TSA has said it will not be issuing any codes of practice for equality and diversity. However, it has indicated it will expect housing providers to have a good knowledge of their customers, evidence of improved satisfaction, carry out Equality Impact Assessments, develop a diverse workforce, and help develop cohesive communities. This overlaps requirements of other frameworks, and therefore has already been taken account in our strategy review.

8.6 Customer Service Excellence

We were awarded Customer Service Excellence in November 2009. This includes equalities criteria, for example developing customer insight about our customer groups to better understand their needs and preferences. Also having a strategy for engaging and involving customers using a range of methods appropriate to the needs of identified customer groups.

The assessment included feedback that the organisation fully understands the needs and preferences of the vast majority of our customers. Our assessment showed we had identified seldom heard groups and have mechanisms in place to help to engage with them. The assessor also found evidence that we aim to maximise resident profiling data to help identify and meet specific needs.

8.7 Stonewall's Diversity Champions programme

We joined Stonewall's Diversity Champions programme in February 2010. This is a good practice forum for Lesbian Gay and Bi-sexual equality issues in the workplace which brings together top employers to promote supportive work environments for gay people.

This enables us to benchmark our performance and approach in respect of Lesbian, Gay and Bi-sexual staff with other organisations.

8.8 Investors in People

We achieved Investors in People accreditation in December 2009 and fully met the standard. This recognises there is equality of opportunity for development and support and that we have created a diverse talented workforce.

8.9 Two Ticks – positive about disabled people employer

This recognises our positive approach to disabled people and enables us to display our commitment when recruiting new staff.

We promote our Customer Service Excellence and Investors in People accreditation, as well as our membership of Stonewall's Diversity Champions programme and Two Ticks on recruitment material. This demonstrates our commitment to equality and diversity and to recruiting and maintaining a diverse workforce.

9. Monitoring the equality and diversity strategy

9.1 Monitoring the strategy and action plan

This will take place on a number of levels:

- Each year our Board will receive update reports on the outcomes of Equality Impact Assessments and progress with the equality and diversity strategy;
- We will publish this report on our internal and external website to make it available for all sections of our community and staff;
- Every three months, the senior management team will receive equality performance reports;
- The Equality and Diversity Challenge Group and Equality and Diversity Resident Forum will also receive update reports on progress in meeting the strategy and action plan targets;
- Each year we will produce an end of year report assessing our performance against this strategy and action plan.

We will also continue to:

- Consult residents and seek feedback on their experience of our services and use this to continue to improve and meet their needs and expectations;
- Gather information to test the quality and fairness of our services; for example, performance data, spot checks and quality audits;
- Peer review our progress to achieve the three levels within the Equality Framework for Social Housing;
- Use the outcomes of the Equality Impact Assessments to gauge the success of the strategy.

10. Evaluation and review of the strategy

10.1 Review of the strategy

The strategy will next be reviewed in 2013. This is to make sure it continues to drive improvements in our service delivery and that we have an up to date approach to equality and diversity.

10.2 Evaluation of the strategy

We will know the equality and diversity strategy is making a difference if:

- We achieve the 'developing' and 'achieving' levels of the Social Housing Equality Framework by 2010 and the 'excellent' level by 2012;
- Satisfaction with our services meets targets and is the same for all groups of residents, by equality strand;
- Staff satisfaction is meeting targets and is the same for all groups of staff;
- We meet equalities targets for resident involvement;
- Equality Impact Assessments deliver positive outcomes for residents;
- We obtain a two star rating from the Audit Commission for diversity and continue to improve this to a three star level of service delivery by 2012;
- Other organisations are working with us in delivering equality of opportunity and access to services by all residents.

11. Equality and diversity action plan

Note: where items are already within the Business Plan task list, this is indicated, referenced with the task number

Key to staff

SDTL = Service Development Team Leader

H of C & I = Head of Communications and Involvement

AI Manager = Asset Investment Manager

L & D Manager = Learning and Development Manager

SSC = Single Status Consultant

HR Manager = Human Resources Manager

SHR Adviser = Senior Human Resources Adviser

H of R = Head of Repairs

11.1 Fulfil our statutory and regulatory responsibilities, and achieve the excellence level of the Social Housing Equality Framework by 2012;

Action	Deadline	Officers	Outcome
1. Achieve level 3 (Excellence) level for the Social Housing Equality Framework. [BP 206]	March 12	SDTL	Meet best practice, legislative and regulatory requirements
2. Review equality and diversity strategy [BP204]	March 13	SDTL	

11.2 Ensure effective engagement with all groups of residents and increase satisfaction

Action	Deadline	Officers	Outcome
1. Meet targets to increase data on residents' profile.	March 11	SDTL	1. Knowing our customers 2. Achieve the following targets for tenant profiling by March 2011: Gender 100%; Ethnicity 95%; Age 98%; Long term disability: 65%; Religion 55%; Sexuality 40%.
2. Ensure membership of the Equality and Diversity Resident Forum reflects the resident profile.	March 11	H of C & I	Involved residents' profile reflects the overall tenant profile.
3. Develop a programme of surgeries within the community for Vietnamese and Somali residents as identified by the Hard to Reach Plan. [BP 375]	May 10	H of C & I	Greater engagement with residents who do not speak English well.
4. Work with young residents to develop a young people's section on the website. [BP376]	April 11	H of C & I	Greater engagement with young residents.
5. Investigate the need for a Sheltered Housing Forum	September 2010	H of C & I	Greater engagement with older residents.

6. Review the Resident Compact and ensure that opportunities for involvement suit our range of customers. [BP 316]	July 10	H of C & I	Effective engagement with all groups of residents.
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11.3 Provide accessible services that are responsive to residents' needs, particularly those who are vulnerable

Action	Deadline	Officers	Outcome
1. Deliver actions arising from the analysis of satisfaction surveys and services delivered by equality strand.	March 2011	SDTL	Increase satisfaction of all tenants by 4% in 2010-11; Increase satisfaction of BME tenants by 4% in 2010-11.
2. Carry out an annual audit and arrange for works to make sure all offices continue to be compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).	March 2011	SDTL	Offices continue to be accessible to all residents.

11.4 Ensure that equality and diversity issues are addressed by partners and contractors providing services on behalf of and in conjunction with us

Action	Deadline	Officers	Outcome
1. Amend procurement procedures to include the requirement for a satisfactory equality and diversity policy within the selection criteria when selecting contractors. [BP 263]	September 2010	AI Manager	Major works meets the needs of all residents particularly those with vulnerabilities.
2. Update procedures to ensure disabled and elderly residents are identified before contract let from a mixture of tenancy profiling and follow up visits carried out in pre-contract work. [BP 274]	May 2010	AI Manager	Major works meets the needs of all residents particularly those with vulnerabilities.
3. Organise a conference to introduce small businesses from the local area to the main contractors that are selected for the Capital Works Programme.	September 2010	AI Manager	Minimise exclusion of smaller businesses that are more representative of the local community.
4. Ensure that contractors operate targeted employment and training initiatives aimed at the unemployed, including apprenticeship schemes. This to be restricted to the Major Works Programme.	February 2011	AI Manager	Opportunities for unemployed people, (particularly the young) to increase their skills.
5. Reach agreement with contractors about the equality requirements to be met by sub-contractors and suppliers.	February 2011	AI Manager	Repairs service meets the needs of all residents.

6. Consider diversity training for contractors in conjunction with our own operatives' training.	May 2010	H of R	Contractors aware of the needs of minority and vulnerable tenants in the delivery of repairs services.
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11.5 Maintain a progressive and diverse workforce and Board that is representative of our client groups at all levels

Action	Deadline	Officers	Outcome
1. Review location for Board meetings or provision of assistance for those with physical disabilities. [BP 270]	September 2010	Governance Manager	People with disabilities can attend Board meetings.
2. Evaluate traineeships and apprenticeships that attract females through flexible working	March 2011	L & D Manager	Increased proportion of females in the workforce.
3. Review the organisation's approach to Single Status. [BP 156]	September 2010	SSC	Equality of pay, term and conditions for all staff.
4. Record and analyse equalities information on leavers to monitor any areas of concern. [BP 334]	June 2010	Head of HR	Indirect discrimination minimised.

5. Update our staff profile information to include the six diversity strands.	May 2010	Head of HR	Awareness of staffing profile.
6. Complete a questionnaire for Stonewall's Equality Index to benchmark Lewisham Homes' performance and approach in respect of lesbian, gay and bi-sexual staff [BP 159]	September 2010	Head of HR	Indirect discrimination minimised and there is sufficient support for LGB staff.

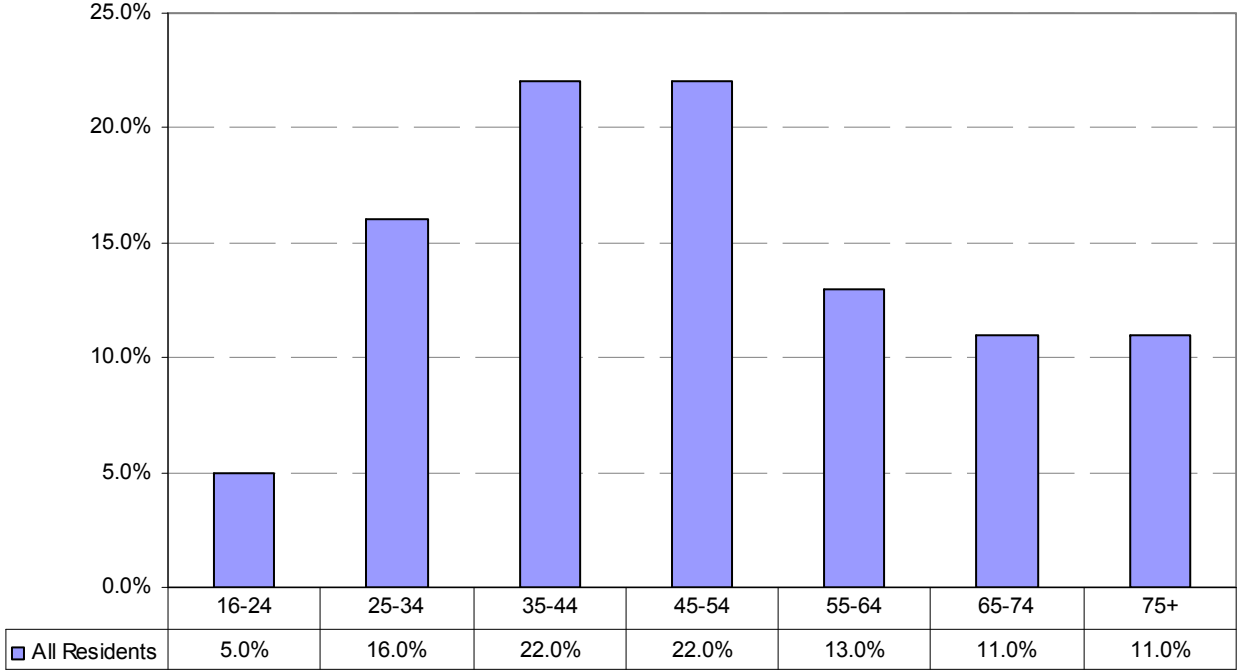
11.6 Enhance awareness amongst staff on the importance of equality and diversity so that they put into practice our approach in the delivery of services

Action	Deadline	Officers	Outcome
1. Roll out and evaluate diversity training for Senior Management Team, managers and staff. [BP 304]	May 2010	L&D Manager	Increase satisfaction of BME tenants by 4% in 2010-11.
2. Carry out diversity training for all new staff on an annual basis.	May 2011	L&D Manager	Increase satisfaction of BME tenants by 4% in 2010-11.
3. Provide guidance to staff on different religious or cultural norms and behaviours	April 2010	SDTL	Increase satisfaction of BME tenants by 4% in 2010-11.
4. Compile a quick reference equality and diversity guide for all staff to use.	June 2010	SDTL	Increase satisfaction of BME tenants by 4% in 2010-11.

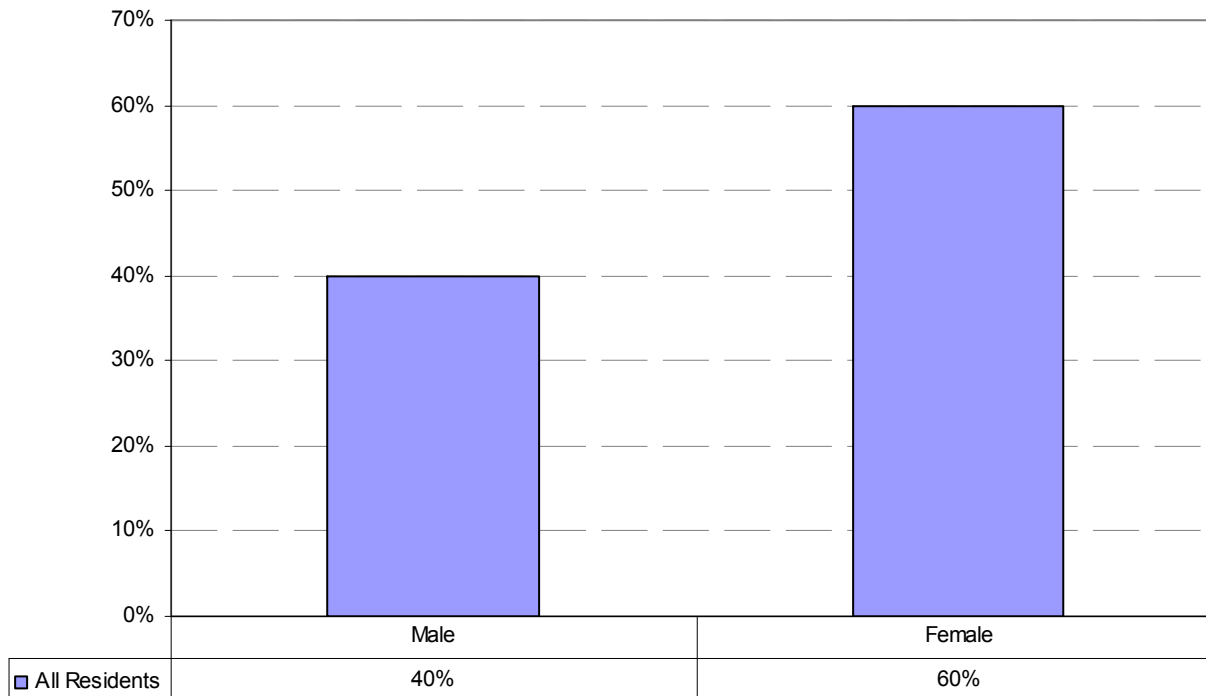
5. Produce a staff information leaflet on the Equality Act 2010	June 2010	SDTL	Staff aware of recent equalities legislation.
6. Review and update the corporate induction programme. Include cross cutting themes of customer care, VFM and equality & diversity. In managers induction include responsibilities for managers under equalities legislation. [BP 303]	Sept 10	Head of HR	Managers aware of their role and that of their team in promoting equality and diversity and preventing discrimination within and outside the workplace.

Appendix 1 – Tenant profiling

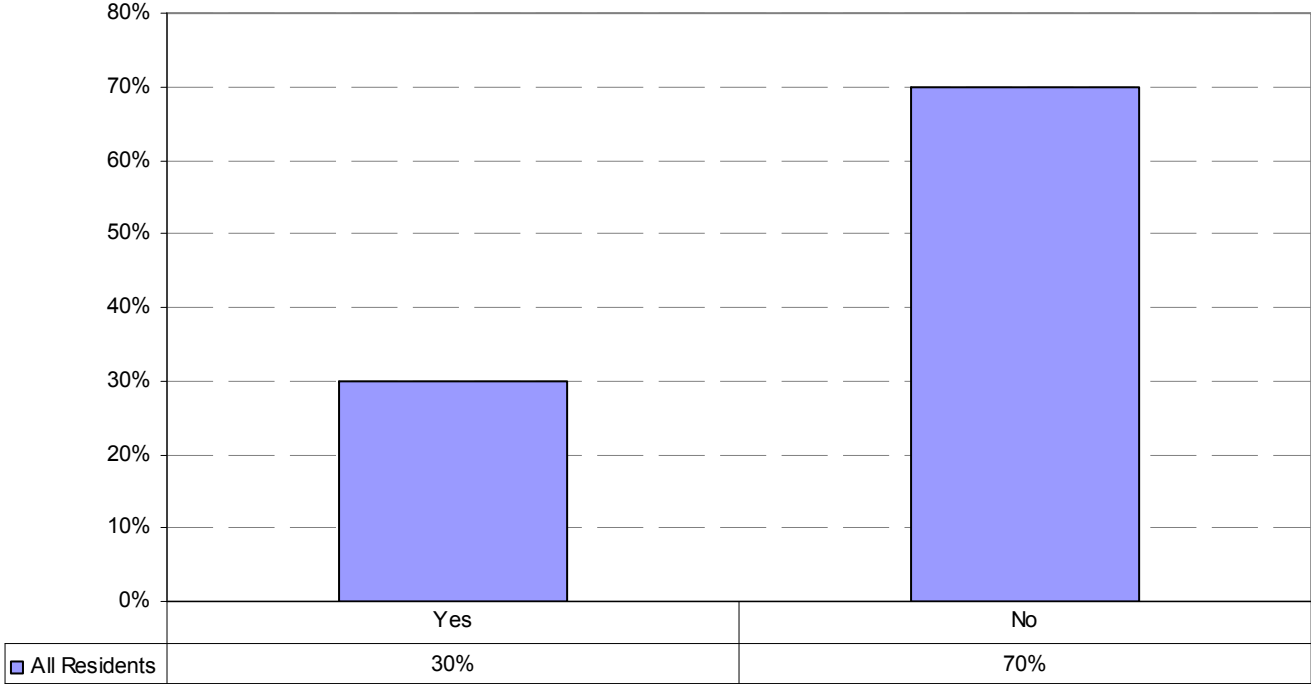
Resident Profiling by Age Band - Core Stock



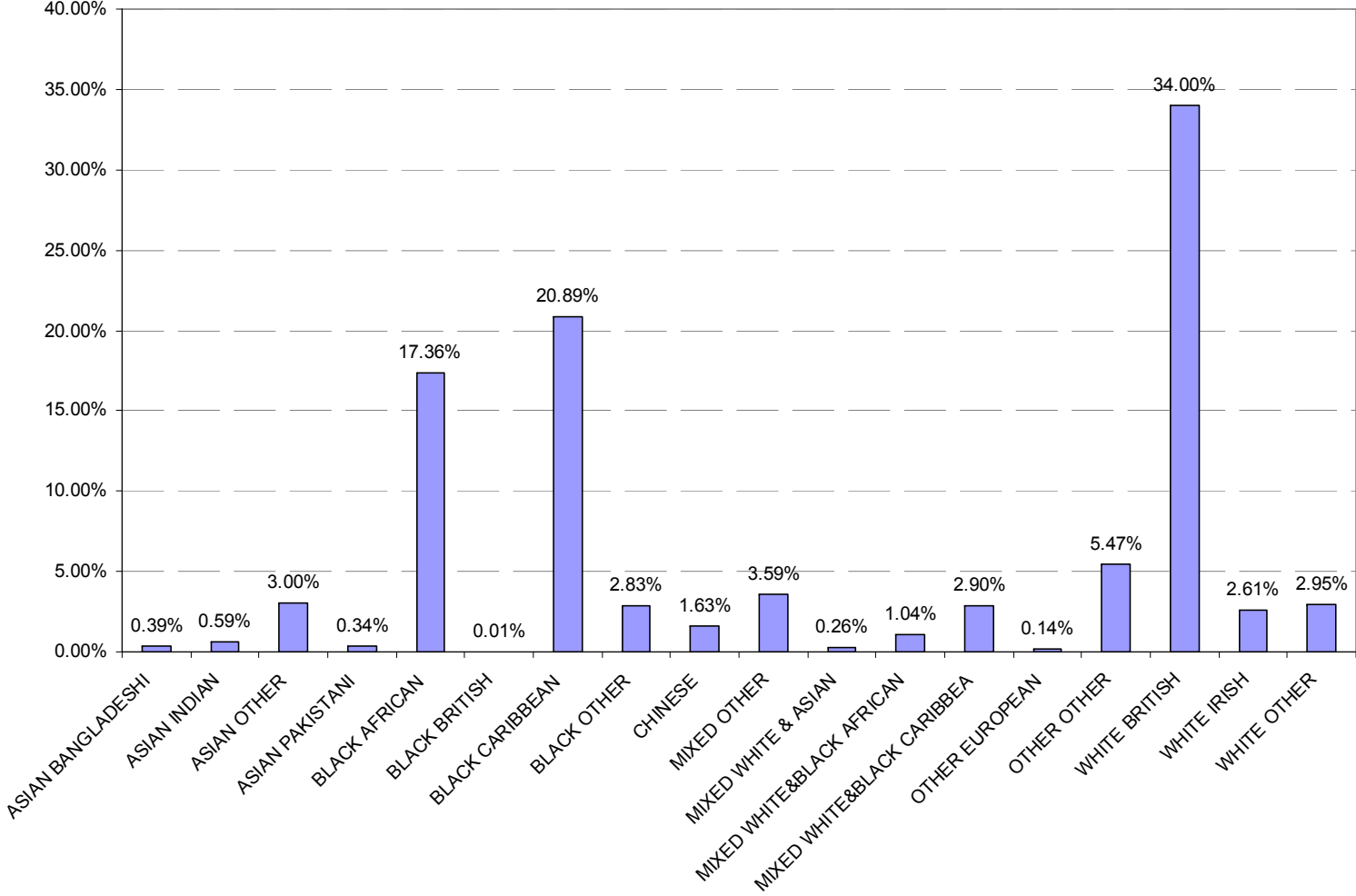
Resident Profiling by Gender - Core Stock



Resident Profiling by Disability - Core Stock



Resident Profiling by Ethnicity - Core Stock



Appendix 2: updates from the Equality and Diversity Strategy action plan 2008-9

The plan set out Lewisham Homes' equality and diversity actions for 2008-9 which were also included in our Business Plan. The main activity was completing a programme of Equality Impact Assessments of main services.

Updates from the action plan are shown below:

Corporate, culture and governance			
Action	Update 2010	Original target	When completed
Set target to achieve Equality Standard for Local Government Level 3. (BP 2008-11 task ref.133)	<p>Achieve Equality Standard for Local Government Level 3.</p> <p>Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New framework for local government announced in 2008 for 2009/10 – we commenced work on that • Workshops held to challenge LH approach to diversity against the criteria for EFLG – summer 2009 • It was announced in Autumn 2009 that there would be an Equality Framework for ALMOs. Decided in consultation with LBL that this would be more appropriate than the EFLG – this subsequently was developed into the Social Housing Equality Framework (SHEF). • This was due to be launched in May 2010 by I&DeA (Improvement and Development Agency). June 2010 – have been informed that this will be launched on 21/10/10 – but are still awaiting guidance on peer review process. 	September 2008	Not completed – aim to complete by December 2010, following launch of framework

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In advance of the launch of SHEF we have carried out an evidence and gap analysis of the criteria so that we can have a peer assessment review shortly after the launch. • Homes for Islington has agreed to carry out the peer review. 		
Develop an equalities action plan (BP2008-11 task ref 516).	Action plan developed following the Equality Impact Assessments carried out in 2008-9. These were incorporated into the Business Plan 2009-10.	September 2008	Oct 2008
Develop a systematic approach to EIAs (Equality Impact Assessments) across all functions. (BP 2008-11 task ref. 511)	<p>An EIA toolkit was developed based on the one used by LBL – this was used for the 19 EIAs carried out for key services in 2008. Managers were trained on this in May 2008.</p> <p>The EIA toolkit was revised in September 2009 and briefing took place in January 2010. An EIA programme was developed for 2009-11 and support given by the Service Development team in carrying out EIAs.</p>		<p>May 2008</p> <p>Revised Sept 2009</p>
SMT to hold equalities and diversity scrutiny panel meeting	<p>SMT considered the EIAs carried out in 2008, in October 2008.</p> <p>This panel has been superseded by Equality and Diversity Challenge Group which has been meeting regularly since June 2009. This Group looks at ways we can continue to improve our approach to equality and diversity. It has also heard presentations from Stonewall, Lewisham Council's Domestic Violence Co-ordinator, Victim Support a Youth Co-ordinator from Lewisham Council, FORVIL (Federation of Refugees from</p>	October 2008	October 2008

	Vietnam in Lewisham) and LDC (Lewisham Disability Coalition).		
Identify priority actions agreed by SMT/Board	Equality monitoring Reports have been provided to the Board in: i) January 2009; ii) January 2010.	March 2009	January 2009
Improve publicity and strategic partnership working to deliver improved services. (BP 2008-11 task ref 517)	We have an extensive database of community groups in the borough and include them in our magazine 'Involver' and Community Forum. We also have an awareness of the needs and issues of minority groups through consultation we have undertaken with partner agencies and resident groups. We have protocols with the a number of agencies who support minority groups including: Action for Refugees in Lewisham (AFRIL), Disability Coalition Lewisham and Age Concern.	May 2009	May 2009

Monitoring and evaluation			
Action	Update 2010	Original target	When completed
Carry out annual resident satisfaction survey (BP 2008-11 task ref. 398)	Satisfaction survey carried out and the results publicised to residents in February 2009 and also to staff on the intranet. Further telephone satisfaction survey carried out in 2009-10. This shows satisfaction levels of 68% for BME tenants (up from 62% in 2008-9) and 69% for non BME tenants (up from 60% in 2008-9).	June 2008	October 2008
Complete the tenant profile. (BP 2008-9 task ref. 127)	Progress was limited because data was held on a separate database and this did not enable analysis. Plans to transfer	March 2009	May 2010

<p>Complete the leaseholder profile</p>	<p>the data to Academy were carried out in Summer 2009. At this time the profiling questionnaire was also revised to include faith and sexuality.</p> <p>Following that a project was set up to improve the quality and quantity of profiling data. Between February and June 2010 a project manager was employed to ensure this was delivered. It involved transferring data from other sources, e.g. the Housing Benefit records, and a telephone survey of residents for whom we held no or little data.</p> <p>We set targets for all six strands for 2009/10 and 2010/11 for tenants and leaseholders. At June 2010, we have exceeded the HouseMark ALMO club (2009-10 quarter 3) median quartile performance for all six diversity strands and are in the upper quartile for gender, ethnicity, disability and religion.</p>		
<p>Analyse satisfaction data from customer surveys. (BP 2008-11 task ref. 399)</p>	<p>Data was originally analysed for the EIAs carried out in 2008 but the quality of this was not of a sufficiently high standard. Data has been subsequently analysed to assess whether there are any significant differences between groups of tenants in terms of satisfaction with our services. This was shown in a report to Board for their meeting in January 2010. Further analysis will be completed now that the quantity of data has improved.</p>	<p>November 2008</p>	<p>Jan 2009</p>
<p>Review tenancy profiling categories in line with new Census guidelines</p>	<p>This was done in 2008/09. However, the form has since been further revised as stated above.</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>March 2010</p>

Consultations and partnerships			
Action	Update 2010	Original target	When completed
Organise BME and SME contractor Conference (BP 2008-9 task ref. 512)	<p>This has been delayed due to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delays in the transfer of the Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) to Lewisham Homes; 2. The Audit Commission inspection being carried out in June and July 2010; 3. Delays on Government funding. <p>We will be organising a small and medium sized contractor conference for contractors to be responsible for the Stock Improvement Programme. This will be carried out by September 2010.</p>	September 2008	September 2010
Join 'positive about disabled people' Scheme	We have been members of the 'positive about disabled people' Scheme since June 2008.	July 2008	June 2008
Develop and strengthen links with community based organisations	<p>Our Community Involvement team established links with a number of community groups in 2009.</p> <p>This has continued and there has been additional work during 2009/10 with the Income Team developing links with agencies and groups. For example – this is shown in the EIA on corporate debt management policy carried out in December 2009.</p>	Review by March 2009	March 2009

Customer services and communications			
Action	Update 2010	Original target	When completed
Improve communications and access for disadvantaged groups	<p>Through the work carried out to compile our Communications Strategy 2009-11, (approved by the Board in February 2009), we found evidence to suggest that that we need to ensure those with low reading ages have access to our information and services. We therefore produced a literacy action plan that addresses this issue.</p> <p>We have also publicised classes for adults who wish to learn English, in our residents' magazine Home in September 2009.</p> <p>Letters were sent out April 2010 to all residents on Community Involvement database promoting ESOL.</p> <p>We provide a DVD at sign up and kiosk in the Pepys and Holbeach offices that provides details of our services to those who have problems with vision, literacy or where English is not their first language.</p>	December 2008	February 2009
Arrange for an independent audit of reception areas to ensure they are accessible to customers. (BP 2008-11 task ref. 510)	<p>We carried out an audit of the disabled access and facilities at all our housing offices in 2008 and undertaken works as a result of this.</p> <p>A further audit was carried out in February 2010 and any additional works required have been completed. All customer interfacing parts of our offices are DDA compliant.</p>	May 2008	July 2008
Introduce a formal process for learning from complaints to be embedded in the organisation. (BP 2008-11 task ref. 536).	An initial process was set up. Further work was carried out in 2009-10 to enhance and embed this process	July 2008	Sept 2008

Policy and procedures			
Action	Update 2010	Original target	When completed
Implement recommendations from the Aids & Adaptations review. (BP 2008-11 task ref.130)	An aids and adaptations policy was developed. We recognised that certain types of aids and adaptations do not require an Occupational Therapist assessment and introduced a minor works aids and adaptations service in late 2008. We have a budget of £50,000, which is aimed at ensuring basic requests such as grab rails can be carried out quickly.	June 2008	Nov 2008
Implement actions from the revised Domestic Violence Policy (March 2008) (BP 2008-9 task ref. 236)	The DV policy was reviewed between January and March 2008 and finalised in May 2008. It was updated in March 2010. We have two specialist DV Officers within the ASB team and they attend all DV forums/meetings in the borough. The DV Co-ordinator and a representative from Victim Support carried out a presentation at the Equality and Diversity Challenge Group meeting in February 2010. There were also briefings of staff undertaken by the specialist DV officers in April 2010.	March 2008	May 2008
Implement actions from the revised vulnerable tenants policy and procedure (March 2008)	The vulnerable residents policy and procedure was reviewed between January and March 2008 and finalised in May 2008. It was updated in March 2010. This was following the consultation with hard to reach groups in 2009 by Community Consultants. We have also compiled an action plan following the consultation of vulnerable tenants by an external consultant in 2009.	July 2008	May 2008
Review ASB and hate crime policy and procedure. (BP 2008-11 task ref. 72).	The ASB and policy and procedure was reviewed between January and March 2008 and finalised in May 2008. The hate crime policy and procedure was reviewed and finalised in October 2009.	June 2008	May 2008
Review approach to handling reports of	This has been carried out and the outcomes incorporated into the	March 2009	March

hate crimes. (BP 2008-11 task ref 515)	draft ASB strategy 2009 and Business Plan 2009-10.		2009
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Learning and development			
Action	Evidence of achievement and update	Original target	When completed
Carry out equality impact training for staff carrying out EIAs	Update: This has taken place in 2008 and was repeated in January 2010. There have also been briefings for staff at the Equality and Diversity Challenge Group meetings in February and April 2010.	October 2007	May 2008
Carry out equalities training for all LH staff, TRA and Board members	<p>Update: A decision was taken to incorporate equalities into customer care training, rather than have equalities training in isolation. This was commissioned and rolled out from November 2008.</p> <p>In November 2008, the Audit Commission recommended that that should be additional equality and diversity training.</p> <p>Training for Board members took place in October 2009. Training for residents was carried out in March 2010. Training for staff was completed in May 2010.</p> <p>There were 15 staff, out of a total of 450 who were unable to attend the training sessions, due to sickness etc. This also included training aimed specifically at managers.</p> <p>All those staff who were unable to attend the recent sessions will be required to attend the training sessions for new staff which will take place later in 2010-11.</p>	September 2008	May 2010

Appendix 3:

The six diversity strands: The legislation, our approach, what we do and areas where service improvements may be required

We have public equality duties covering disability, gender and race. This means we must:

- Promote equal opportunities;
- Eliminate harassment and unlawful discrimination;
- Promote positive attitudes to disabled people;
- Promote good relations between people from different racial groups;
- Encourage the participation of disabled people;
- Take positive action in respect of disability.

In addition to our legal duties, we need to address the needs of groups that face potential discrimination because of their age, religion or faith or sexual identification.

In bringing together all equality strands, we need to incorporate the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Within this legislation, the duty to promote equality has been widened to cover age, faith and belief, sexual orientation and gender reassignment as well as disability, gender and race.

This document sets out how we will meet our legal responsibilities in respect of the six diversity strands. It also sets our approach and what we currently do, as well as actions for the future.

i) Race

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (RRAA) requires all public institutions to take action to promote race equality. The Act imposes a general duty on institutions to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination;
- Promote equality of opportunity;
- Promote good race relations between persons of different racial groups.

Our approach:

We offer housing that meets the needs of the whole community. We also challenge racist behaviour and encourage positive attitudes towards diversity in our community. In addition we provide translated information and interpreters when required.

We aim to ensure the composition of our staff and Board members reflects the diverse needs of the community we serve.

What we do:

- Make sure residents from all racial backgrounds have the same quality of housing and access to services;
- Make sure staff from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities have equal access to employment and career development opportunities;
- Monitor the proportion of BME staff in senior positions.

Areas where service improvements may be required:

- Increase the information we hold on race/ethnicity for staff and residents (tenants and leaseholders);
- Increase the racial/ethnic composition within residents' groups;
- Increase the proportion of BME staff occupying senior positions;
- Increase repairs reporting by certain groups – in particular by Chinese and Irish tenants;
- Continue to increase BME resident satisfaction.

ii) Age

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 makes it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of age (including all ages).

Our approach:

We listen to old and young residents and treat all age groups equally. We allocate resources to services for older and younger people to provide them the housing, support and opportunities they may need. We also involve young people in deciding how we deliver our services and ensure we do not discriminate in employment on the basis of age.

What we do:

- Have targeted publicity campaigns to reach young people through the Brighter Futures project;
- Carry out extensive engagement and consultation with young people. This follows the consultation undertaken of hard to reach groups by external consultants as part of the review of the vulnerable tenants policy and procedure;
- Provide work experience for young people;
- Attend on the same day to rectify when an elderly or vulnerable tenant has no heating;
- Have a working protocol with Age Concern.

Areas where service improvements may be required:

- Increase the information we hold on age for staff and residents (tenants and leaseholders);
- Increase the composition of young people within residents' groups;
- Improve the way we communicate with young people;
- Identify opportunities for young people;
- Provide training and development sessions for young people;
- Formalise our approach to dealing with residents of sheltered schemes. We will progress this by investigating the setting up a Sheltered Housing Forum.

iii) Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA 2005) amends or extends existing provisions in the DDA 1995, including:

- Making it easier for disabled people to rent property and for tenants to make disability-related adaptations;
- Ensuring that discrimination law covers all the activities of the public sector;
- Requiring public bodies to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

Our approach:

We are committed to eliminating disability discrimination and help people have control over how they live their lives. We will continue to build effective working relationships with groups representing disabled people within Lewisham. We will also review our activities and premises on an on-going basis to make sure we continue to meet and where possible, exceed required standards.

Our commitment to being positive about employing disabled people has been endorsed by being awarded the Two Ticks national accreditation. Our Health and Safety team works closely with team members and their managers to ensure reasonable adjustments are made for disabled employees and that the appropriate equipment is provided.

What we do:

- Carry out regular monitoring of our offices to make sure these are accessible for all our customers;
- Record void properties on our IT system and advise Lewisham Council's Occupational Therapist Team;
- Complete adaptations as part of our major works and Decent Homes programme;

- Provide a budget that is aimed at ensuring basic requests such as grab rails can be installed without delay;
- Monitor the proportion of staff that have a disability;
- Promote two ticks accreditation on recruitment material.

Areas where service improvements may be required:

- Increase the information we hold on disability for staff and residents (tenants and leaseholders);
- Increase the composition of disabled people within residents' groups;
- Continue to identify all adaptations in our properties and increase the recycling of aids and adaptations;
- External monitoring of the accessibility of our offices.

iv) Gender

The Equality Act 2006 amended the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and introduced an Equality Duty on public authorities when carrying out their functions to ensure services, practices and policies are developed with the different needs of men and women in mind.

Our approach:

We make sure that the services we offer are open to all and they meet everyone's needs. We also make sure that people have the same access to job opportunities at the same rate of pay, relative to experience and qualifications and that we do not discriminate in any way because a person is a carer or parent.

We believe everyone should have the opportunity to follow a career and have a family/home life. We make sure that people can take up senior positions regardless of gender.

What we do:

- Evaluate schemes that attract females through flexible working arrangements;
- Monitor the proportion of female staff in senior positions;
- Provide flexible working arrangements that can adapt to both genders.

Areas where service improvements may be required:

- Increase the information we hold on gender for staff and residents (tenants and leaseholders);
- Increase the proportion of female staff occupying senior positions.

v) Sexual orientation

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 make it unlawful to discriminate on grounds of sexual orientation. This includes 'orientation' towards someone of the same sex (lesbian or gay men), opposite sex (heterosexual) or both sexes (bisexual).

Our approach:

We make sure that lesbian, gay and bisexual people feel comfortable accessing our services and being involved. We also offer support so that they are able to live free from fear of harassment.

We encourage positive attitudes to different sexual identification amongst our workforce and make sure that there is no form of discrimination that could affect employment or career progression.

We monitor incidents of hate crime, provide appropriate support to victims and refer people to relevant agencies. Hate crime and harassment is not tolerated and can result in the eviction of perpetrators. We also take action to ensure all tenants are free from discrimination and harassment.

What we do:

- Have clear procedures to deal with hate crime and widely promote reporting procedures;
- Are members of Stonewall's Diversity Champions programme;
- Participate in Lewisham Council's Lesbian Gay and Bisexual staff forum;
- Take part in Stonewall's annual Corporate Equality Index.

Areas where service improvements may be required

- Increase the information we hold on sexual orientation for staff and residents (tenants and leaseholders);
- Increase the composition of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender) people within residents' groups;
- Increase monitoring and comparison of satisfaction and take up of service when compared with our base customer profile;
- Succession and assignment policy and procedures to be compliant with the law on sexual orientation.

vi) Religion or belief

The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 make it unlawful for public and private sector employers to discriminate against employees on grounds of religion or belief in employment and vocational training.

Our approach:

We work with individuals and communities of different religions and faiths to make sure that they have access to services and opportunities to be involved.

We make sure that we do not discriminate against staff members or applicants for jobs on the grounds of their religion or faith and that everyone has the opportunity to practice their religion and beliefs at work.

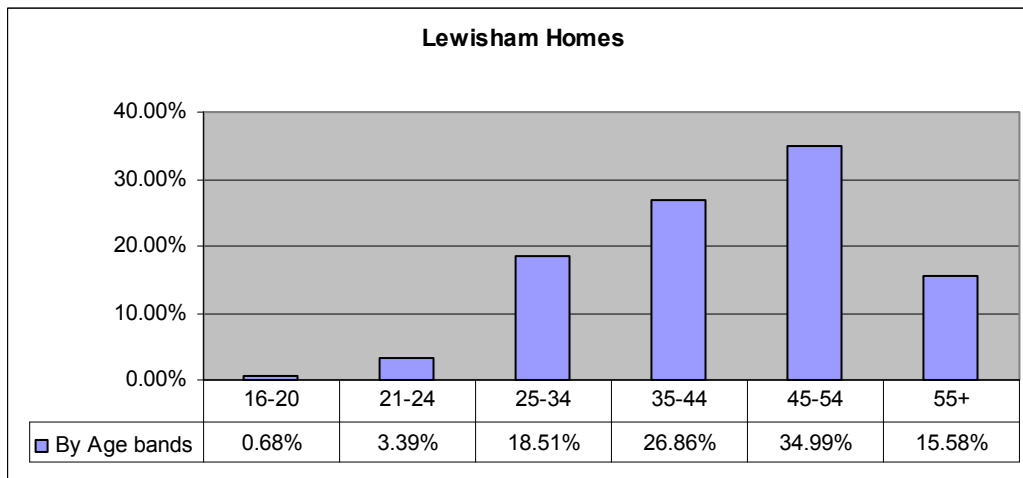
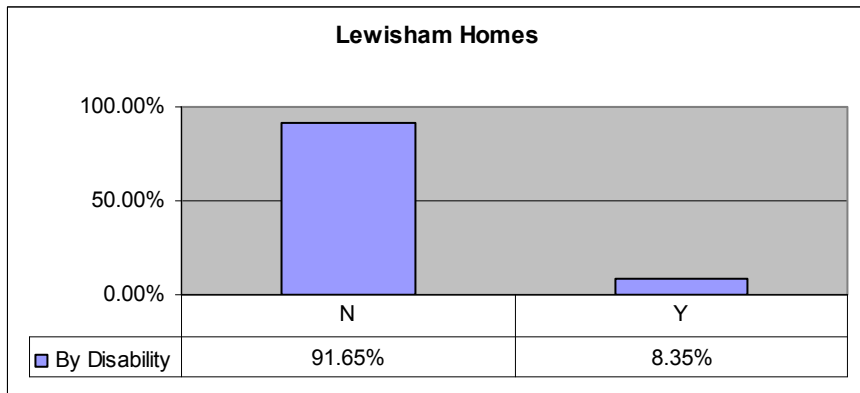
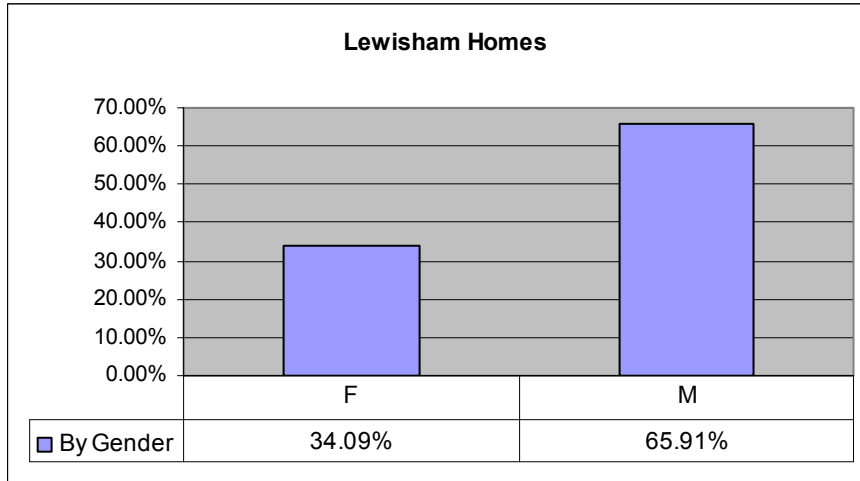
What we do:

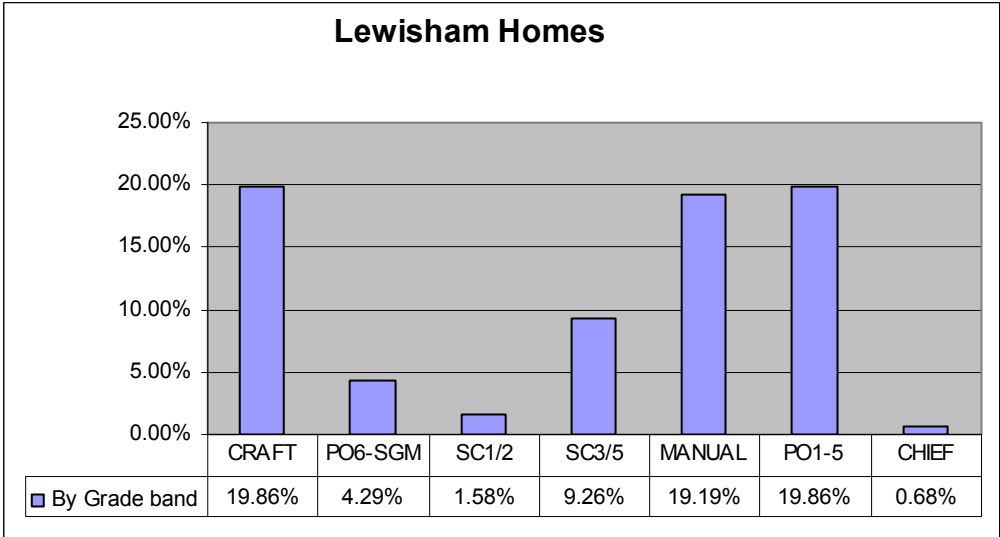
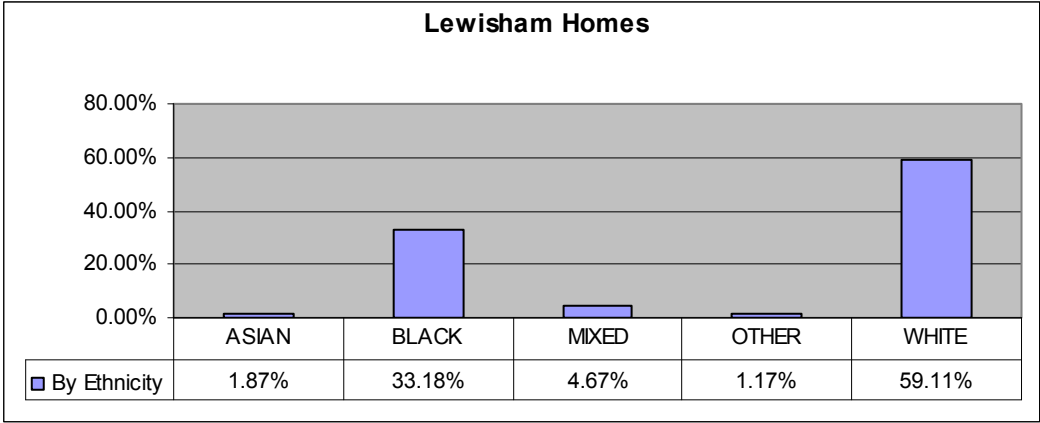
- Collect monitoring information from staff and residents on religion/faith;
- Have an extensive data base of community groups in the borough that includes faith and religious groups that is publicised in our residents' magazine and Community Forum;
- Consult with faith groups in the borough.

Areas where service improvements may be required:

- Increase the information we hold on religion/belief for staff and residents (tenants and leaseholders);
- Increase the composition of different religions within residents' groups;
- Develop better links with other stakeholders such as Lewisham Council to increase our consultation with faith groups;
- Greater and ongoing awareness of different religions or cultures for staff;
- Increase monitoring and comparison of satisfaction and take up of service when compared with our base customer profile;
- Raise staff awareness of key religious events/festivals throughout the year.

Appendix 4 – staffing profile – May 2010





Note: Manual = Caretakers Craft = Repairs Operatives