Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Plan

2022-2025

Introduction

SJMT is a group of six charities, the oldest of which is over 370 years old.   Four of our charities are Almshouse Charities, some of which have a strict defined beneficiary group, these being older people 'in need'. Whilst Sir Josiah Mason's first Almshouse was an intergenerational community we have plans to return to the delivery of support to young people, since the 1960's, we have predominantly served the older population.

There have been significant changes to society since our charities were first founded, but sadly, poverty remains and the need for secure, quality, affordable housing and for positive opportunities in order to thrive are still a vital way of addressing inequalities within our communities. Our Trust exists to serves the people in our communities and it is essential that our Trustee's, our staff and our residents are reflective of our community in order that we can best understand and meet their needs.

We recognise the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and are committed to embedding these core principles in everything we do. For us, equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are about recognising and valuing difference across our organisation. It is also about fairness in its broadest sense; stretching beyond areas already covered by legislation.

Our EDI Plan sets our approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and outlines the commitments we are making over the next three years. It is a 'living' document that can be adapted in line with the changing needs of our residents, colleagues and partners, as well as the external environment.

1. SJMT Today

SJMT has a footprint spread across the West Midlands, however 76% of our units of housing and care are based in Solihull* and almost 99% of our staff are based from our main site in Solihull. Therefore, we have used data from Solihull in order to benchmark ourselves. Where possible, we have also tried to look at data from across the region.

*19% of our accommodation is in Erdington (Birmingham), 2.5% in Wolverhampton and 2.5% in Kidderminster.
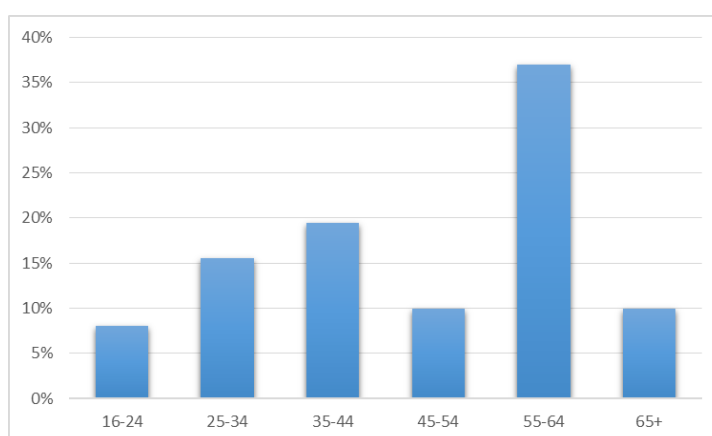
Age

The age of SJMT workforce is fairly diverse with 57% being over the age of 45 and 43% being 44 years or under. Almost half of our staff (47%) are over the age of 55. This is somewhat higher that the adult social

care sector and workforce in England average which is 27% over the age of 55, however our average age has been decreasing over the past three years.

Our current Housing & Care Services are only available to people over the age of 55 and therefore, 100% of residents were over 55 years of age. Within Housing, those aged 55-64 were a smaller group representing 9% of total residents. Those over the age of 65 represented 90.5% of our resident population. Within Care Services, not surprisingly, those over 65 were even higher at 96% with those under being 4%.

Gender

Over two thirds of SJMT's workforce are employed within our care services. UK government statistics show that 84% of social care works in England are women, and just 16% are men and state that there is a significant shortage of male carers in the sector. Interestingly, 84.5% of our workforce are women with 15.5% being men.

84.50% Women

15.50% Men

At a Trustee level, 58% of current Trustees are male and 42% female.

Within Housing Services, the gender split is surprisingly balanced with 50% of residents being Female and 49% being Male (1% preferred not to say).

This balance is reversed within our Care services where 74% of residents are women and 24% are male (2% preferred not to say). This seems to reflect National trends with regards to gender with a 2012 British Geriatric Society Report estimating women to represent 75% of those living in care homes in England and other studies showing that women are far more likely to be admitted to residential care than men.
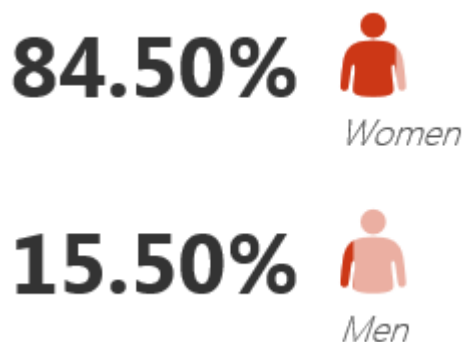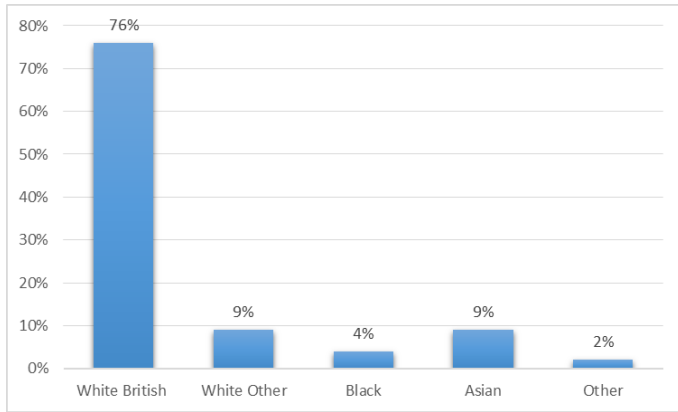
Ethnicity

The 2011 Census found that Solihull's residents described their ethnic group as 85.8% White British compared with the England average of 79.8% and the West Midlands average of 79.2% and10.9% Black or Asian Minority Ethnic group

Solihull's Black or Asian Minority Ethnic population is at the lower end of the spectrum compared with neighbouring Local Authorities for Birmingham and Coventry where Black or Asian Minority Ethnic populations were 42% and 26% respectively in 2011.

Age group analysis suggests that in 2019 Black or Asian Minority Ethnic residents account for **15% of the Solihull population**, with the proportion rising to 20% in 2029 and 23% in 2034. This is a continuation of the trend between 2001 and 2011.
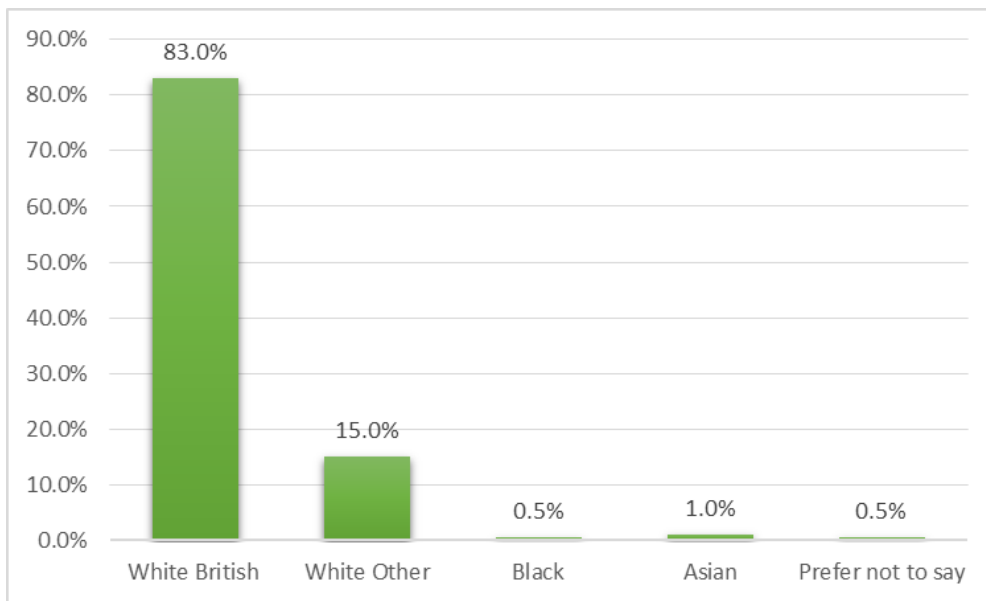
Staff

76% of our current workforce are White British, 9% White Other and 15% Black or Asian Minority Ethnic. This is more diverse than the wider population of Solihull in the 2011 Census but matches age group analysis undertaken in Solihull in 2019. We are 5.8% below the West Midlands average of the population who identified as Black or Asian Minority ethnic in 2011 and this gap is likely to have increased significantly

Chart (White British ethnicity):

80% | 76%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10% | 9% | 4% | 9% | 2%
0%
White British | White Other | Black | Asian | Other

in the 2021 Census. However, this reflects the whole population including people of non-working age and this age group is recognised to be far more diverse as well as other towns and cities that have greater levels of diversity. Representation at a management level does not reflect our local communities with only 10% of the leadership team identifying as Black or Asian Minority Ethnic.

83.5% of Trustees considered themselves to be White and 16.5% Black or Asian Minority Ethnic.
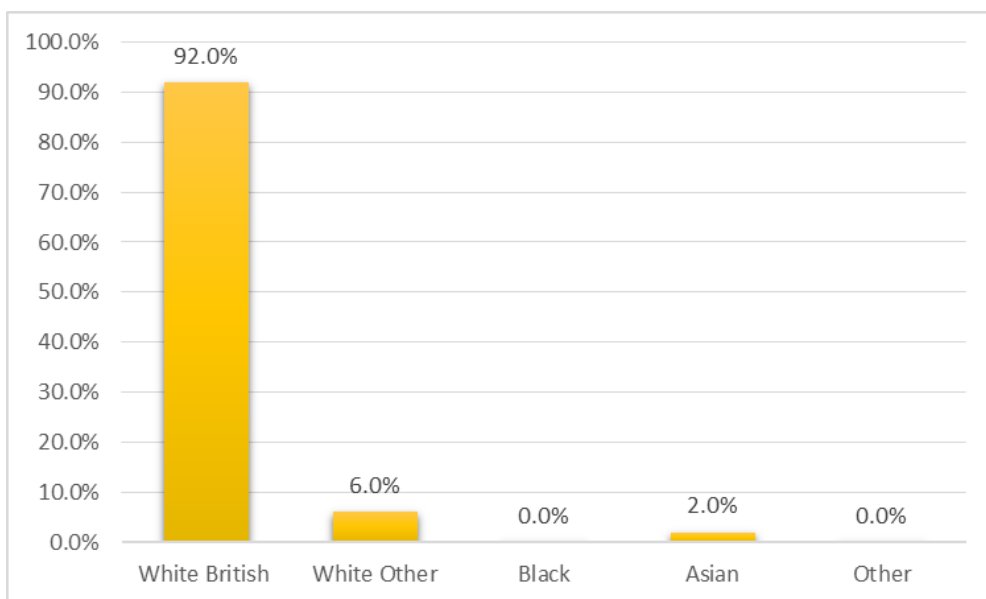
Residents – Housing

Chart:

90.0%
80.0% | 83.0%
70.0%
60.0%
50.0%
40.0%
30.0%
20.0% | 15.0%
10.0% | 0.5% | 1.0% | 0.5%
0.0%
White British | White Other | Black | Asian | Prefer not to say

98% of our resident population is White with only 2% from a Black or Asian Minority Ethnic group.

Residents Care Services

Care services includes residents at Alexandra House and Alexandra Court.

Chart:

100.0%
90.0% | 92.0%
80.0%
70.0%
60.0%
50.0%
40.0%
30.0%
20.0%
10.0% | 6.0% | 0.0% | 2.0% | 0.0%
0.0%
White British | White Other | Black | Asian | Other

The ethnic composition of residents in care services reflected those of residents in Housing Services with 98% being White and only 2% from a Black or Asian Minority Ethnic group.

Residents across Housing and Care services clearly do not reflect the diversity within our region or localities. We are aware that all of our sites are located in what have larger White communities and that our type of accommodation is nationally more popular with people from a White background. When benchmarking ourselves against the diversity in our community, we also have to be aware that those under the age of 30 are far more diverse than older adults. In Solihull, only 5% of the population of those over 65 are from a Black or Asian Minority Ethnic group and this decreases to only 2% of those over 75. We have seen that 90.5% of our residents are over the age of 75 so whilst these results do identify a challenge for us as an organisation, it may actually be more reflective of the community we currently serve.

Sexuality

Staff

8% of our workforce identify as LGBTQ+. This is higher than the UK average which was estimated to be 2.2% in UK and 2.3% in the West Midlands (2018).

The percentage of **residents** who preferred not to comment on their sexuality or for who we did not have this data for was extremely high (69%). When looking at those who provided a response, it would appear that 97% identify as Heterosexual or straight and 3% LGBTQ+. Again, this is higher than the UK and West Midlands average, but these figures could be affected by those preferring not to disclose their sexuality and therefore, their reliability is questionable.

90%
Heterosexual/Straight

8%
LGBTQ+

2%
Prefer not to say
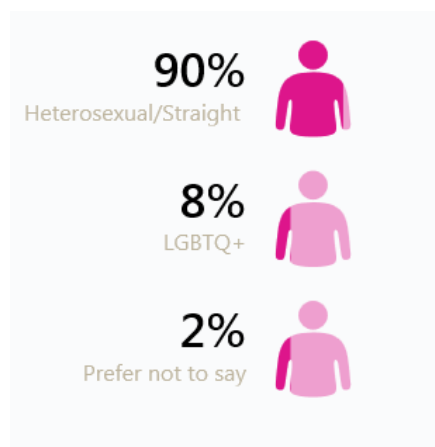
Disability

Census records indicates that 8.2% of the population of Solihull have a disability that limits their day-to-day activities a lot compared to 8.3% for England and 9.1% for Birmingham. When you look at activities that limited a little, the figure for Birmingham is the same as for England at 9.3% and Solihull are higher at 9.7%.

Only 4% of our **workforce** reported that they consider themselves to have a disability. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this may be higher and that it is possibly peoples' understanding of the term disability is not consistent.

Across our Housing and Care Services, 41% of **residents** considered themselves to have a disability and 26% did not consider themselves to have a disability. This is significantly higher than the local and national average, but is perhaps not surprising given the age group of the majority of our residents, many of whom live with long term conditions. However, 33% of residents preferred not to say which is a third of residents which could affect the overall findings.
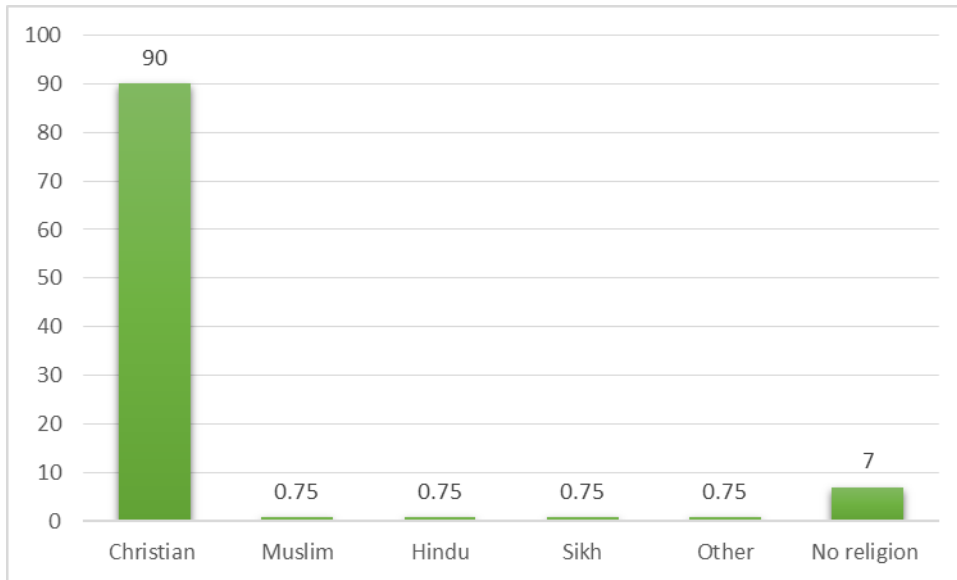
Religion

Staff
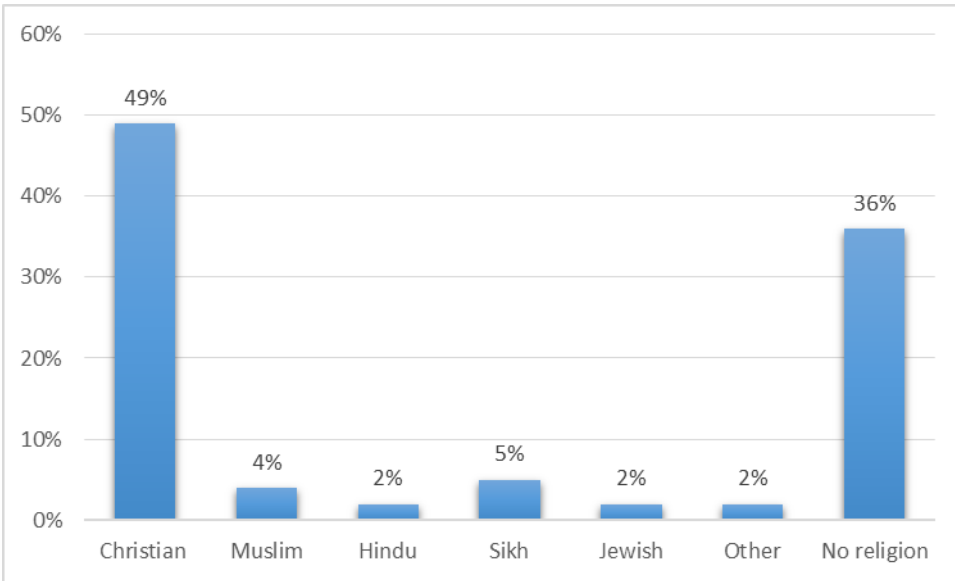
The majority of staff (49%) identified as Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations) with 36% identifying as having no religion. Staff following the Sikh and Muslim faith were the next largest groups at 5% and 4% respectively.

Compared with national and regional averages, Solihull has a relatively large Christian and Hindu population, but a smaller Muslim population. 70% of the Solihull population are Christian, 2.7% are Muslim, 1.9% Hindu and 1.8% Sikh. SJMT has a much smaller number of employees identifying as Christian and a larger percentage identifying as Sikh or Muslim. It also has a far greater number of staff following no religion compared to the Solihull average of 20%.

Trustees identified either as being Christian (43%) or of no religion (57%).

Residents

We do not have data about the religious beliefs for 42% of **residents**. This is either because they have chosen not to disclose this or we have previously not asked this question. Of those that have shared information about their religion, 90% identified as Christian and 7% had no religion.

Carers

Of our **workforce**, 13.5% consider themselves to have caring responsibilities; this includes childcare. One **trustee** also reported that they are a carer as did 4% of our **residents**.

2. Our achievements to date

Whilst we have never had a dedicated Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy before, we have been actively bringing about improvements and change in this area. We acknowledge that there is still much more we can do to make a lasting difference, some of our achievements so far include:

Training

We currently require all staff to complete an online EDI training course during induction and an annual refresher thereafter. Our training was reviewed in 2020 and a new provider commissioned who is endorsed by Skills for Care. We also introduced an online LGBTQ+ awareness training course in 2021. In 2021 we also introduced mental health awareness training for all staff.

Disability Confident Scheme

In 2019, SJMT successfully signed up to the Government's Disability Confident scheme, which supports employers to think differently about disability, and improve how they attract, recruit and retain disabled workers. This was renewed in 2021.

Mindful Employer

In 2019, we signed the Mindful Employer Charter for 'Employers Positive about Mental Health'. The charter demonstrates your organisation's commitment to better mental health at work

HouseProud Pledge

SJMT values the contribution LGBTQ+ people make to our organisation and our history and in 2019 we became a House proud Pledge pioneer, a scheme established to ensure that LGBTQ+ people can enjoy their homes without fear of discrimination!

3. Our EDI Commitments and Objectives

Over the next three years, we will work hard to achieve our three main EDI commitments which are:

1. **Creating an inclusive and informed workforce & culture**

    We will cultivate and promote an inclusive culture that maximises the talent, skills and diversity within our workforce.

2. **Building a diverse workforce**

    We will identify, attract and retain diverse candidates with a wealth of experience and talent.

3. **Reducing barriers to accessing services**

    We will anticipate the needs of people who use our services, ensuring that our services are accessible and individual to people's requirements.

We will achieve these commitments through the following objectives:

1. Creating an inclusive and informed workforce and culture

1.1 Cultivate a supportive, welcoming, inclusive and fair work environment that maximises the talent, skills and diversity within our workforce.	a. re-launch the SJMT Values training for all new staff and volunteers in order to promote understanding of the values and expected behaviours of the organisation b. run refresher courses for all staff every 3 years. c. Introduce EDI as a standard agenda item at the Staff Forum
1.2 Increase the awareness and understanding of diversity and inclusion in the workplace	a. Review current training offer b. ensure that all staff attend diversity and inclusion training within induction period c. develop a yearly inclusivity calendar focussing on 5-6 events during the year that will be promoted to all staff
1.3 Become a "mentally healthier" workplace, reducing the stigma attached to talking about mental health.	a. Appoint Mental Health Champions in the workplace to promote mental health b. Incorporate relevant disability awareness training in the Equality and Diversity courses run for all staff c. Deliver enhanced training and information about managing mental health in the workplace d. Ensure that all staff involved in recruitment and selection are briefed on mental health conditions and the Equality Act 2010 and given appropriate interview skills

1.4 Develop inclusive working behaviours throughout management levels.	a. Develop a behaviours framework that has equality at its core, enabling all employees to feel comfortable and be themselves in the workplace and in turn perform at their best. b. Deliver a behaviours framework, and publicise this to all employees c. Deliver training incorporating inclusive leadership behaviours to leadership team. d. Incorporate 360º feedback for everyone at manager level and above as part of our Appraisal Process and to be considered as part of their professional development plan.
1.5 Review our internal policies	a. Review the recruitment, equality and diversity, dignity at work, policies. reasonable adjustment, flexible working, bullying and harassment and grievance policies in line with our organisational behaviours and values and with input from the Staff Forum

2. Building a diverse workforce

2.1 Evaluate diversity and inclusion data to understand where there are gaps in the representation of diversity within the organisation or adverse reasons for existing employees leaving. Where needed, we will create strategies to resolve and improve representation.	a. Review and analyse current workforce demographics, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age and length of service. In conjunction with best practice guidance provided by the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion, identify: areas for underrepresentation and issues in reasons for leaving if any. b. Develop a plan of action that focusses on increasing representation in areas identified as underrepresented and resolves issues in reasons for leaving if there are any.
2.2 Evaluate and review current recruitment process.	a. Evaluate and review current job adverts/role specifications using equality impact analysis and consideration of unconscious bias where needed to create standardised role templates (using language that is equal, diverse, inclusive, devoid of bias and stating we are a culturally diverse employer) for future use. b. Evaluate and review our current process for considering applications and interviewing applicants, identifying areas for development and training to ensure it is competency based and includes awareness raising of unconscious bias for interviewers.
2.3 Target diverse populations promoting work experience placements, apprenticeships and employment opportunities.	a. Take positive action when recruiting at Board and Leadership level, with a targeted focus on increasing the representation of diverse ethnic communities. b. Be more visible in our commitment to the Disability Confident Scheme, encouraging applications from people with disabilities.

	c. Conduct outreach and recruitment at job fairs and other events hosted by various organisations supportive of diverse communities, including disability advocacy groups. d. Evaluate opportunities for increased work experience placements and apprenticeship roles across the organisation, targeting diverse populations, for example parental leave returners, veterans, social mobility e. Advertise roles broadly, displaying our commitment to the Disability Confident Scheme, HouseProud and Mindful Employer to ensure we are encouraging applications from a diverse pool of candidates. f. Increase the EDI focus on our website and social media channels, promoting our inclusive culture and raising awareness of the inequalities faced by our diverse communities.
2.4 Ensure all qualified internal candidates have an opportunity to compete for open positions and apply for developmental opportunities.	a. Ensure all employees are aware of open positions, including those on long term leave away from the office and that they have equal access to apply. b. Develop and implement a process for ensuring those on long term leave are aware of developmental opportunities.
2.5 To ensure that we seek and listen to the views of our staff from diverse communities	a. To expand the role of LGBTQ+ Champion for residents to encompass staff b. To create a Black or Asian Minority Ethnic Champion to ensure that: - The views of Black or Asian Minority Ethnic people are heard and considered at a strategic level. - Review our training offer to ensure that staff training improves understanding of Black or Asian Minority Ethnic lives. - To have an input into any consultation with Black or Asian Minority Ethnic staff or residents - To be available to hear any concerns or comments from Black or Asian Minority Ethnic staff/residents in confidence

3. Reducing barriers to accessing services

3.1 Broaden access to our service and remove barriers (real or perceived).	a. Ensure we have an understanding of: the diversity demographics of people who use our service and the experience of people using our service through annual surveys. b. Publish information about our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and activities at least annually (include in Impact Report) c. Carry out a full review of the assistive technologies we offer and address gaps if/where they exist. d. Ensure that the delivery of the service is person orientated, displaying empathy and building rapport, considering factors such as age and language while maintaining professionalism. e. Promote our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion on our website and social media. f. To undertake a review of our premises, identifying things that could affect people's first impressions and opportunities to improve this

	g. *To review our online and offline marketing and communications to ensure it reflects the diversity of our community*
	h. *Increase the EDI focus on our website and social media channels, promoting our inclusive culture and raising awareness of the inequalities faced by our diverse communities.*
3.2 To ensure that we seek and listen to the views of residents from diverse communities	a. Target diverse customer individual's/groups and provide a range of options to engage with us to ensure they can have their say and be actively involved in our decision making processes (e.g. LGBTQ+ Champion)
	b. To review current resident engagement and involvement Strategy ensuring it is in line with our EDI Strategy
3.2 Review our operational policies.	a. When writing or reviewing operational policies, ensure this is done with an equality, diversity and inclusion lens.

How will we know we have made a difference in 2025?

- ✓ Over 90% of staff report that SJMT is a supportive, welcoming, inclusive and fair employer
- ✓ Over 20% of our workforce are from Black or Asian Minority Ethnic groups
- ✓ Over 9% of our workforce consider themselves to have a disability
- ✓ 55% of our workforce are under the age of 44
- ✓ Over 5% of our residents are from Black or Asian Minority Ethnic groups