

# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

*Tenant Baseline and Service Provision Report*

April 2021-March 2022



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# 1. Introduction

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Connect's vision is for a sustainable and just society, where good homes, neighbourhoods and opportunities help people to enjoy happy, healthy lives. This report forms part of a wider assessment of how effectively we are including the whole community in this vision whilst meeting our legislative and regulatory responsibilities relating to equality, diversity and inclusion (see Appendix 1).

During 2021/22, Connect's EDI Strategy Action Plan (2022-23) was launched which outlines the following key priorities:

- Ensure organisational culture reflects our commitment to EDI
- Ensure customers have access to homes and services that help them live happy, healthy lives
- Have a governing body and workforce that is diverse and representative of the communities we serve
- Have comprehensive EDI data to better understand customer needs

Over the past year action has been taken to enhance the quality of data collected through review of Connect's Tenancy Commencement Form. Work to review the categories of data we hold to ensure it is proportionate to our needs has also been carried out. Work to further embed a culture that reflects our commitment to EDI has begun, with colleague views collated on how to create a more inclusive workplace at the recent staff conference. While this action should be celebrated, we recognise there is always more we can do to ensure equality of access and opportunity and promote diversity across Connect. As the cost of living crisis intensifies over the coming year, identifying shifting patterns of vulnerability, tailoring services to meet the needs of all customer groups and engaging effectively with people from across our community will be vital to our role as a community anchor.

This report aims to assess how representative our workforce, board and resident forums are of the communities we serve and explore any variation in satisfaction and access to services between customer groups with different protected characteristics. Limitations to the EDI data we hold on customers are explored and suggested actions to improve data coverage and investigate apparent disparities in representation, access to services and customer satisfaction are put forward. These should be viewed as a starting point, from which further consultation with managers and frontline staff will follow. The EDI Working Group will then be responsible for selecting priority actions and developing an action plan through which progress towards completion can be monitored.

## 2. Methodology

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The data presented and analysed in this report falls under 5 key sections:

- **Data Coverage:** Indicates how much data we hold on our systems for lead tenants and members of their household in relation to 6 key equality strands (age, ethnicity, gender, religion, disability and sexuality).

- **Profile of Connect's Customers:** Provides a breakdown of our population of tenants by equality strand.
- **Assessing Representation:** The profile of our customer base is compared with the EDI profile of Involved Tenants, staff and board membership to assess relative representativeness.
- **Access to Services:** Information relating to both general needs and supported housing services is examined using information from our housing management systems, separately held databases and public year end reports.
- **Customer Satisfaction:** Customer satisfaction data is assessed in relation to gender, age, ethnicity and disability.

In general, where data is unknown, this has been removed to enable clearer comparison. Throughout this report, 'lead tenant' refers to either the sole tenant of the property or, where it is a joint tenancy- to a single self-nominated tenant. Through self-selection, the EDI profile of this group may therefore be skewed compared to the wider tenant population.

A priority for future EDI reporting is to move beyond using BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) as a collective term for any ethnicity other than 'White-British'. At present, we are not in a position to provide a more detailed breakdown of ethnicity due to the quality of data we hold on customers. A priority for 2022/23 is to carry out a tenant census to enhance data coverage and accuracy. This will allow us to move 'beyond' using BAME as a collective term in EDI reporting and enable analysis of our customer base and access to services using a more specific ethnicity breakdown. This will allow any disparities between ethnic groups to be more easily identified and understanding of our customer profile to be enhanced.

Recommendations for actions or further research for both data-collection and specific service areas have been made based on the available data.

## 3. Results

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### A. Data Coverage

In line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, Connect collects data from lead tenants regarding the following protected characteristics.

- Sex
- Age
- Ethnicity
- Sexuality
- Religion
- Disability
- Specific mobility, language and communication needs

This information is held on our housing management system and is used to inform service delivery (i.e. communication and mobility needs). The data is anonymised and used as part of Connect's monitoring and reporting processes in order to better understand our customer

base, analyse access to services and ensure our workforce, board and customer forums are representative of the communities we work in.

This information is collected through periodic tenant censuses and at the point of tenancy commencement. Connect's last tenant census was carried out in 2012, meaning that for the past 10 years data relating to customer's protected characteristics has only been collected at the point of tenancy commencement. A priority for the coming year to carry out a full tenant census to ensure information held is up to date and to improve data coverage.

### Data Coverage: All Tenants, April 2022

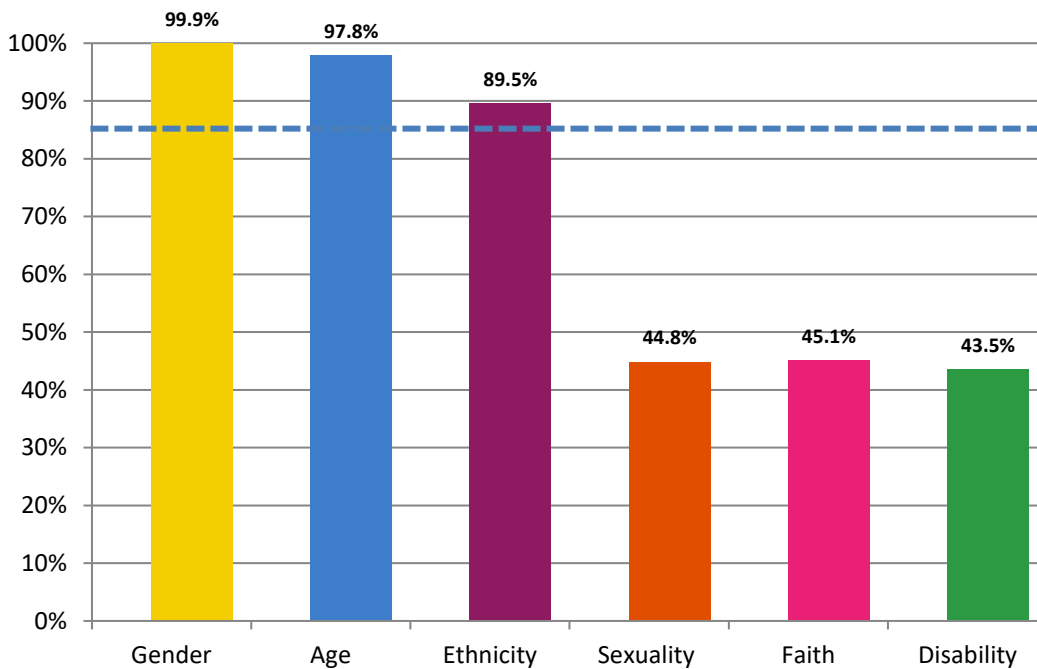


Figure 1: Percentage of tenants with data held on our systems, broken down by protected characteristic. This included both sole and joint tenants. Customers in general needs, supported housing, housing for older people, leasehold & shared ownership are included. The '% known' includes those who selected 'prefer not to answer'. The dotted line indicates sector target for organisations to hold a minimum of 85% profiling data.

Figure 1 illustrates the proportion of tenants who have supplied Connect with information relating to their protected characteristics. Levels of data coverage for each protected characteristic are shown by the coloured bars. HQN's Equality and Diversity Network state organisations should aim to hold a minimum of 85% profiling data. While we are exceeding this target for gender, age and ethnicity; levels of data coverage are low for sexuality, faith and disability.

Figure 2 shows that for lead tenants our data coverage for sexuality, faith and disability has increased in the past five years but had decreased for age and ethnicity. Compared to 2021, coverage in most areas has stayed relatively constant though has decreased more sizeably for disability. This suggests, over the past year, data on the protected characteristics of lead tenants has not always been collected at the point of tenancy commencement. Our tenancy turnover (excl. supported housing) for 2021/22 was 5.47%, indicating the potential to improve levels of data coverage through capturing accurate information at the point of tenancy

commencement. The way in which customers are asked for personal data relating to their protected characteristics at sign up should be reviewed to ensure it can be provided discreetly; without them having to verbally disclose the information to the staff member completing the sign up paperwork. Equipping staff and customers with information on how data relating to their protected characteristics will be used and its value for driving forward action around equality, diversity and inclusion is also identified as a priority.

Protected Characteristic	Change in data coverage (from April 2021 to April 2022)	Change in data coverage (from November 2017 to April 2022)
Gender	– 0%	– 0%
Age	↑ 0.5%	↓ 0.3%
Ethnicity	↑ 1.4%	↓ 0.8%
Sexuality	↓ 0.1%	↑ 6.4%
Faith	↓ 0.2%	↑ 7.3%
Disability	↓ 3.2%	↑ 3.2%

Figure 2: Change in percentage of lead tenants with data held on our systems, between 2021 and 2022 (middle column); between 2017 and 2022 (right column).

At present, EDI information collated in this report includes those in general needs, supported housing and shared ownership properties. Improvements to profiling data for customers in properties run by Managing Agents will be considered as part of an upcoming review into Managing Agents. In future, this data will be included as part of EDI analysis work to reflect the organisation as a whole.

Once our new MRI system is launched as part of Project Vault, an online portal will be available through which customers can update their personal information. This is expected to improve the coverage and accuracy of data held. In the meantime, carrying out a full tenant census is a Change Plan action for 2022/23. Reliable data that is up to date and representative of our customer base is essential to inform decision making in relation to service provision.

### **Actions: Data Coverage**

- **Carry out a tenant census to improve data coverage for existing tenants**
- **Improve data collection and analysis of equality and diversity data for customers in properties run by managing agents.**
- **Ensure fields on the tenancy commencement form relating to protected characteristics are completed by customers at sign up and uploaded onto our systems.**
- **Review collection methods to ensure information can be disclosed discreetly and the value of providing the data is communicated to customers and staff.**

## B. Profile of Connect's Customers

This section investigates the data we hold on our customers protected characteristics to develop a better understanding of the demographic profile of our residents.

**6.1%**  
of lead tenants have specific mobility needs

As of April 2022, 6.1% of our tenants have an additional mobility need; the most common of which include requirements for ground floor only accommodation (1.8%) and hand/grab rails (1.3%). Other requirements include wheelchair access, level access and stair lifts. These figures rely on customers contacting us if their circumstances change.

5.6% of tenants have additional communication needs (April 2022). The most common needs identified included English not being the customer's first language (3.3%) and interpretation and translation services (1.4%). Audiotapes, large print, coloured paper and mini-com were also needed by a small number of customers. Customers should inform us if their communication or mobility needs change. Updated information can also be gathered as part of the tenant census. Colleagues should also update customer information when made aware of mobility or communication needs through the course of their work (for example, when orders for aids and adaptations works are raised).

**5.6%**  
of tenants have specific communication needs

Figure 3 shows the distribution of Connect's tenants across the main equality indicators. Figure 4 shows the cross tabulation of White British and BAME tenants by gender, age and mobility need. The EDI profile of lead tenants is shown in Figure 7. Lead tenants includes sole tenants, plus in cases where there are joint tenants- a single self-nominated lead tenant. The profile of Connect's lead tenant and all tenant base is very similar. The profile of lead tenants has been used historically in previous editions of this report so is used for comparison to previous years and access to services.

Protected Characteristic	All Tenants
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>3834</b>
<b>Male</b>	37%
<b>Female</b>	63%
<b>16 - 24</b>	3%
<b>25 - 34</b>	13%
<b>35 - 44</b>	17%
<b>45 - 54</b>	19%
<b>55 - 64</b>	21%

<b>65+</b>	27%
<b>White British</b>	69%
<b>BAME</b>	31%
<b>Has a disability</b>	35%
<b>Heterosexual</b>	98%
<b>LGB</b>	2%
<b>Christian</b>	43%

Figure 3: Equality and Diversity Breakdown for All Tenants, April 2022. Customers in general needs, supported housing, housing for older people, leasehold & shared ownership are included. 'Unknowns' and those who selected 'prefer not to say' have been excluded from the percentages.

Protected Characteristic	All Tenants		
	All	White British	BAME
<b>Male</b>	37%	37%	37%
<b>Female</b>	63%	63%	63%
<b>16 - 24</b>	3%	3%	3%
<b>25 - 54</b>	49%	44%	62%
<b>55+</b>	48%	53%	35%
<b>Has a Disability</b>	35%	38%	27%
<b>Mobility Needs</b>	6%	8%	5%

Figure 4: Breakdown of Equality and Diversity data for all tenants cross tabulated by ethnicity, April 2022

Figure 4 indicates:

- A lower proportion of individuals from BAME backgrounds fall within the older tenant base (55+). 35% of BAME tenants are over 55, compared to 53% of White British tenants. This is reflective of the wider UK population; 2011 census figures show 31.8% of the White British population is over 55 years old, compared to 28.2% of the total population for England and Wales.
- A higher proportion of White British tenants have mobility needs, compared to BAME tenants. This is likely to be influenced by the older age profile of White British customers.

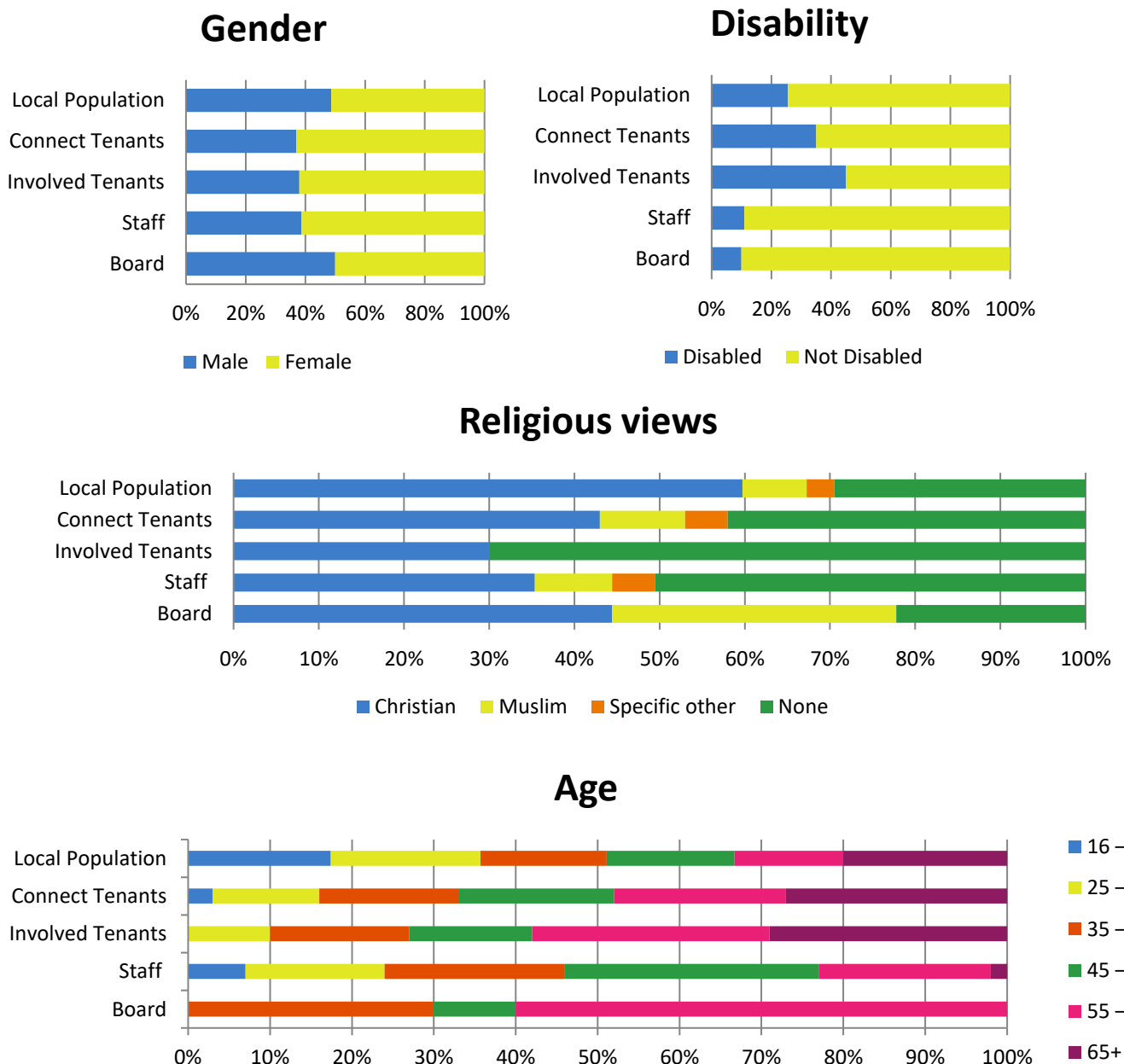
### Suggested Actions: Profile of Connect Customers

- Encourage customers to inform Connect if their communication or mobility needs change and ensure updated information is gathered as part of the tenant census.
- Continue to update customer information when colleagues are made aware of mobility or communication needs through the course of their work.



## C. Assessing Representation: Local Population, Workforce, Involved Tenants & Board

Figure 5 compares data for Connect tenants with the EDI profiles of our Board, Involved Tenant Base and workforce (as of 31 March 2022). Data for the local population is also illustrated for comparison. This data is drawn from the NHF's EDI Data Tool, which profiles the local population of the areas in which Connect operates based on a combination of census data (2011) and annual population surveys. The data displayed in Figure 5 is shown in full in Appendix 2.



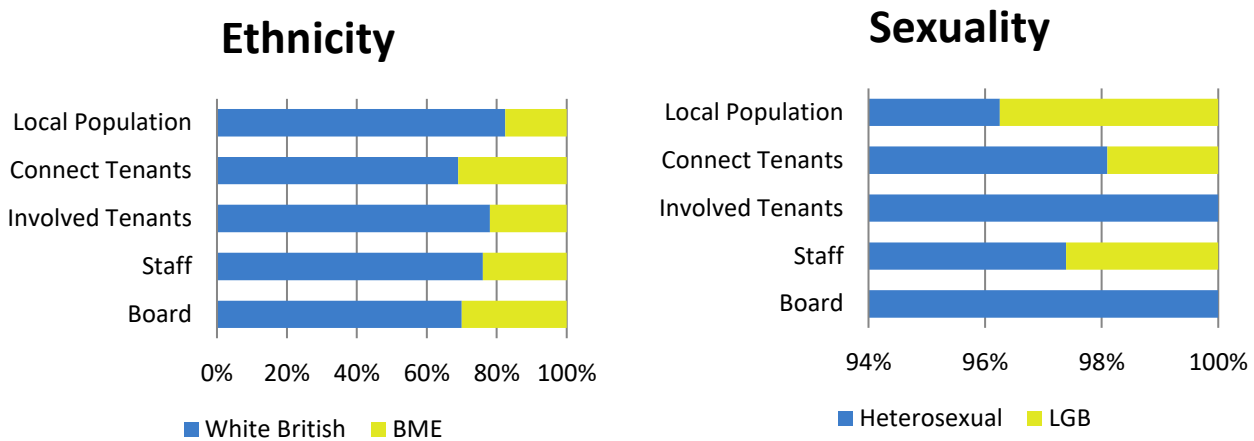


Figure 5: EDI profiles of Connect's tenant base, workforce, Involved Tenants and local population. All %s exclude unknown/prefer not to answer/refused. This gives greater clarity and an ability to compare data sets.

It should be noted the involved tenant group consists of both currently involved tenants and those who have expressed an interest in tenant engagement, either through participating in policy approval, joining the Service Improvement Forum (SIF), Scrutiny Panel or Board. This is because the sample size of currently involved tenants is small as work is currently in progress to establish new customer engagement channels.

The data shows:

### Customer Base

- Our tenant base has a higher proportion of people from BAME backgrounds (31% tenants) compared to the local population (18%). For the purpose of this analysis, BAME includes any category of ethnicity that is not White British. BAME therefore includes White Other and White Irish. There are a higher proportion of tenants who have a disability (35%) compared to the local population (25%). 63% of tenants are female, which is higher than in the local population (51%).
- People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual are underrepresented in our tenant base, with 2% of tenants identifying themselves as such, compared to 4% in the local population. Sexuality is unknown or recorded as 'prefer not to say' for a high proportion of tenants (66%). Conclusions should therefore be drawn tentatively and efforts should be focussed on improving data coverage.
- Those aged over 55 years old are disproportionately represented in our tenant base (48% tenants, compared to 33% local population). We do have a proportion of our homes specifically for over 55s. We also have an aging resident base; since 2015 the proportion of lead tenants aged over 55 has increased by 5%. It is important to acknowledge this trend to plan to meet future need including the provision of services such as aids and adaptations which are disproportionately accessed by older people. The age profile of Connect's tenant base should also be considered when assessing the impacts of the cost of living crisis.

### Involved Tenants

- Younger people and LGB residents are underrepresented amongst those who have expressed interest in tenant involvement, or who are currently involved. 58% of

involved tenants are aged over 55. In 2021, only 2% Involved Tenants were under 35. Now 10% of those who are either involved or have expressed interest are in this age group. A priority for the coming year is to harness this interest to ensure younger tenants have the opportunity to influence decision making at Connect.

- Sexuality is unknown or recorded as 'prefer not to say' for 69% Involved Tenants and disability for 50%. Religion is unknown or recorded as 'prefer not to say' for 79% Involved Tenants. Efforts should be made to improve coverage of EDI data for involved tenants.
- The proportion of BAME individuals in the current group of Involved Tenants (22%) has decreased from 2021, where 31% of members of the Connect Resident's Federation (CRF) were from BAME groups. The CRF disbanded in July 2021 and a more diverse menu of options for tenant involvement has been introduced. Targeted recruitment and exploring links with existing community groups should be explored, with the aim of ensuring the profile of involved tenants is representative of the wider tenant base.

### **Staff**

- The gender, sexuality and faith profile of our workforce is in line with that of our tenant base. The proportion of staff from BAME backgrounds is slightly lower than that of our tenant base. Work is underway to develop EDI reporting from across all stages of recruitment; enabling improved understanding of any barriers for particular groups. At senior levels women and BAME staff are less well represented. We need to review recruitment practices for higher level positions and monitor internal movement and career development from an equality and diversity standpoint.
- A low proportion of staff members have a disability (11%) compared to our tenant base (35%) and the wider local population (25%). It is expected the proportion of staff with disabilities is lower than that of the wider population given that some people with disabilities may be unable to work due to their disability. However, further investigation of any barriers to recruitment and retention of staff with disabilities should be explored.

### **Board**

- Our Board is broadly representative of the tenant base in terms of gender and ethnicity. The proportion of Board members from a BAME background has increased following work with the Housing Diversity Network as part of the recruitment process over the past year. Connect's board is overrepresented by those in the 55-64 age category (55%). An aspiring Board member is currently being trained through the HDN Board excellence programme to be considered for future board opportunities with us. Continuation of this programme has the opportunity to improve accessibility of Board membership to groups who are less likely to have prior experience of board membership, including young people.

### **Suggested Actions: Assessing Representation- Local Population, Workforce, CRF & Board**

- **Ensure the EDI profile of the tenant base is considered as part of business planning for service provision. Factors such as the high proportion of tenants aged over 55 should be considered.**

- **Improve coverage of EDI data for involved tenants and explore ways to ensure groups are representative of the wider tenant base in terms of sexuality and ethnicity.**
- **Review recruitment practices from an EDI perspective and monitor internal movement and career development in relation to protected characteristics**
- **Investigate whether there are any barriers to recruitment and retention of staff with disabilities.**

## **D. Access to the services we provide**

Figure 7 shows the use of services by equality strand. In summary, the data in these tables show:

- **Complaints:** A significant increase in the number of complaints, from 35 in 2020/21 to 96 in 2021/22 – a trend mirrored across the sector, thought in part to be influenced by a fall in complaints during the first year of the pandemic. A higher proportion of complaints were received from female tenants and tenants from BAME communities. These groups were also disproportionately represented as complainants in 2020/21.
- **Lettings:** A high proportion (22%) of Supported Housing lets were made to 16-24yr olds. Swan Lane and Hollinbank specifically support young people and have a high turnover given the short term nature of hostel accommodation. The proportion of lets to BAME individuals decreased from 2020/21 but remained high compared to the wider population and tenant base, perhaps illustrating elevated levels of housing need within this group at present.

Economic information gathered from new tenants in 2021/22 shows:

- 36% lead tenants were in full or part time work. A decrease from 2020/21 when 41% lead tenants were in full or part time work.
- The average net weekly income of new GN tenants in 2021/22 was £330.62, an increase from the 2020/21 average of £244.42 and 19/20 average of £294.48.
- 48% had a weekly income of more than £275, an increase from 43% in 2020/21 and the highest recorded proportion (records dating back to 2013/14)
- 49% received all their income from benefits, showing no change from the proportion reported in 2020/21.
- 15% of GN lets in 20/21 had a net weekly income of less than £200 compared with 13% in 20/21. All individuals in this group were out of work. This group is

likely to be particularly vulnerable over the coming year as the cost of living crisis is felt most severely.

- Average net weekly earnings for new GN tenants was very similar between those from a BAME background (£331.58) and those who identified as White British (£330.85).
- **Abandonments:** Male customers and those in the 16-24 age bracket are more likely to abandon their home. 3 out of the 9 cases of abandonment occurred in supported housing. The other cases were all in general needs. 2021/22 saw the lowest number of abandonments on record (going back to 2013/14), likely influenced by the impact of COVID-19.
- **Court Applications and Notices:** Due to the impact of the IT outage, reliable EDI data profile data relating to court applications and notices is not available for 2021/22.
- **Arrears >£500:** Tenants in the 25-54 age group and BAME tenants were overrepresented amongst those in arrears over £500. For 32 out of the 284 cases of arrears over £500 the ethnicity of the lead tenant was unknown.
- **Money Matters:** The profile of customers accessing our Money Matters Service is largely reflective of the tenant base. 83% of those in arrears over £500 were aged 25-54. Only 54% Money Matters clients were within this age group, indicating we may need to do more to engage with working age residents who are at greater risk of arrears. Figure 6 shows the income type customers accessing Money Matters in 2020/21.

### Money Matters Customers 21/22: Income Type

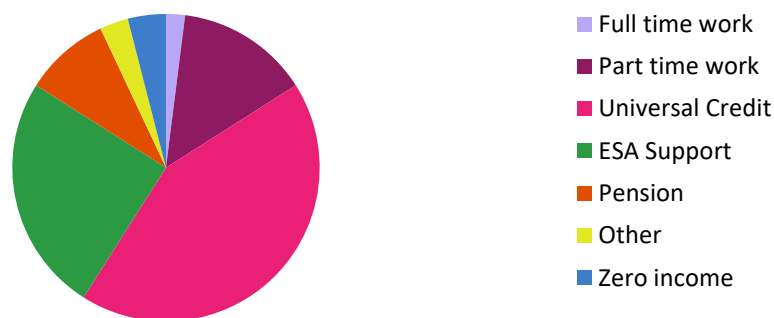


Figure 6: Breakdown by Income Type of Money Matters Customers 2021/22

40% of Money Matters customers in 2021/22 were disabled, compared to 34% of all lead tenants. Suggesting tenants within this group may be in particular need of assistance regarding economic inclusion despite the fact they are not shown as being at elevated risk of arrears.

- **Aids and Adaptations:** The Aids and Adaptations Service continues to be accessed by mainly those in the 55+ age category (77%). This trend is consistent with previous years. Compared to 2020/21 there was a significant increase in the proportion of men

accessing the service (increase from 23% to 36%) which is now more reflective of the wider tenant base.

- **Repairs Service:** Access to the repairs service was broadly representative of the wider tenant population, with slightly higher number of repairs requests made by BAME residents (42%) and female residents (70%) These trends are consistent with data gathered in previous year but were slightly more pronounced in 2021/22.

Figure 7: Service Access 2021/22

Lead Tenants		Complaints *4	Lettings (GN) *1	Lettings (SH) *2	Abandonments*3	Arrears >£500	Aids and Adaptations*5	Repairs*3	Money Matters*6
<b>Total</b>	<b>3171</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>6723</b>	<b>246</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>37%</b>	24%	35%	45%	44%	34%	36%	30%	33%
<b>Female</b>	<b>63%</b>	76%	65%	55%	56%	66%	64%	70%	67%
<b>Number of unknown (not included in %)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>16 - 24</b>	<b>4%</b>	2%	18%	38%	22%	10%	0%	3%	2%
<b>25 - 54</b>	<b>49%</b>	55%	68%	25%	67%	73%	30%	53%	52%
<b>&gt; 55</b>	<b>48%</b>	43%	14%	37%	11%	17%	70%	44%	46%
<b>Number of unknown (not included in %)</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>White British</b>	<b>68%</b>	54%	62%	68%	68%	56%	75%	58%	67%
<b>BAME</b>	<b>31%</b>	46%	38%	32%	33%	44%	25%	42%	33%
<b>Number of unknown (not included in %)</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>713</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Has a Disability</b>	<b>34%</b>	29%	N/A	N/A	25%	15%	68%	36%	40%
<b>Number of unknown (not included in %)</b>	<b>1742</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>3851</b>	<b>138</b>


\*1 Information taken from 20/21 GN CORE report (note figures do NOT include HOP or Affordable GN lettings).

\*2 Information taken from 20/21 SH CORE report – figures include Connect lettings to both HOP and SH without managing agent figures. Does not include Affordable SH lettings.

\*3 Day-to-day repairs but NOT including jobs done by the gas contractor.

\*4 Stage 1 complaints only

**Key:**

 = Overrepresented by ≥5%, using the breakdown by Lead Tenants as a baseline

 = Overrepresented by ≥10%, using the breakdown by Lead Tenants as a baseline

Figure 8 shows a breakdown of profiling data by equality strand for service users in each of Connect's support services. Data shown is for those referred and consequently accepted onto the service. Data in the tables show:

- **Engage:** Referrals are for Connect's provision of Engage Services in the East North East area of Leeds and the city-wide service supporting people with dementia. Given that only 17% of the population in Leeds are from BAME backgrounds (NHF EDI Data Tool), the fact BAME service users represent 36% of Engage referrals shows there has been strong engagement and potentially greater demand for support within these groups. Whilst data coverage within the service was strong for age and disability, there was a high proportion of clients with their gender and sexuality not recorded on the system.
- **Kirklees Better Outcomes Partnership (KBOP):** There is no useable data from KBOP for 2021/22 as the information has not been effectively collected. This is an issue across the partnership and has been identified as an issue we need to address in future alongside KBOP partners.
- **Single Homeless Service:** Referrals to the services were largely in the 16–24 age bracket, given the remit of the Swan Lane and Hollinbank Hostels is focussed on this age group. Only 21% service users were from a BAME background, lower than within Connect's lead tenant base (32%). This contrasts with national evidence which suggests people from BAME groups are disproportionately affected by homelessness. Further investigation is suggested to explore patterns of need within the local authority areas within which Connect operates.
- **North Kirklees Women's Refuge:** The refuge has only female referrals due to its refuge status for women fleeing abuse. BAME service users represent 81% those accessing the service, an increase from 46% in 2020/21 and higher than the proportion of BAME individuals within the local population and wider customer base. The number of individuals assessing the service reduced from 69 in 2020/21 to 29 in 2021/22. This is due to an increase in longer term stays from residents experiencing visa difficulties, awaiting the outcome of immigration status decisions. NKWR have staff members who speak community languages. Translation services for clients are also available through The BigWord, though staff note availability of translators is sometimes low. Consideration of alternative providers has been suggested by managers to improve availability.

Disability status was unknown for 22 of the 29 service users and is therefore not included in the analysis. Research by Women's Aid suggests disabled women are twice as likely to experience domestic abuse as non-disabled women and found that in 2014, 12% of women in refuge stated they had a disability. Improving data coverage on disability status of refuge service users is identified as a priority.



<b>Figure 8: Residential and Support Service Access 2021/22</b>			
<b>Connect Lead Tenants</b>		<b>Single Homeless Service</b>	<b>North Kirklees Women's Refuge</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3171</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Male</b>	37%	71%	0%
<b>Female</b>	63%	29%	100%
<b>16 - 24</b>	4%	100%	10%
<b>25 - 54</b>	49%	0%	90%
<b>&gt;55</b>	47%	0%	0%
<b>White British</b>	68%	79%	19%
<b>BAME</b>	31%	21%	81%

	<b>Engage</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>692</b>
<b>Male</b>	44%
<b>Female</b>	55%
<b>Other</b>	1%
<b>Unknown (not inc. in %)</b>	(158)
<b>18 - 24</b>	4%
<b>25-59</b>	74%
<b>60+</b>	23%
<b>Unknown (not inc. in %)</b>	0
<b>White British</b>	64%
<b>BAME</b>	36%
<b>Unknown (not inc. in %)</b>	(236)
<b>Disabled</b>	22%
<b>Unknown (not inc. in %)</b>	0
<b>Heterosexual</b>	97%
<b>LGB or other</b>	3%
<b>Unknown (not inc. in %)</b>	(328)

Figure 8: Access to Supported Housing Services 2021/22. Figures for Engage are for new referrals to the part of the service operated by Connect over the 21/22 financial year.

In 2020/21 Engage altered data collection practices, reducing the amount of detailed information taken at referral stage and instead collecting it at a later date once clients had established a relationship with staff. This has been a change for staff and led to reduced levels of data collection initially but has since improved as new processes for auditing were put in place. Opportunity has been identified to trial dual collection within Accommodation Services and other Connect Services, for example still asking EDI

questions at sign up but also again once they are established within the service. Over the past year Engage colleagues have undertaken LGBTQ+ awareness training, taken part in the #mynameis campaign and put in place autism 'champions' across the partnership. Over the coming year plans are in place to make links with Chinese, Jewish and Traveller communities to increase awareness of our service offer within these groups.

### **Suggested Actions: Access to the Services we provide**

- **Explore how our money matters and customer service teams can provide additional support to BAME residents disproportionately in arrears over £500 and represented as complainants.**
- **Explore how Money Matters can engage more fully with working age tenants, who are at greater risk of arrears**
- **Review provision of translation services provider to improve availability and ease of access to services**
- **Consider at what point support service clients should be asked to disclose personal data relating to their protected characteristics. Consider asking equality and diversity related questions once clients have a more established relationship with staff**
- **Work with Customers and Commissioners to improve reporting by equality strand across Wellbeing and Support, including within the KBOP partnership**

## **E. Customer Satisfaction**

Between January and March 2022, a general satisfaction survey for all customers was carried out. 514 responses were collected via email, SMS and telephone. Customer satisfaction scores broken down by equality strand are shown in Figure 9.

The figures show the proportion of customers in each category who rated their level of satisfaction as a 7,8,9 or 10 (out of 10). For all questions (across all equality strands) most customers reported that they were satisfied (score of 7 or above). In 2021/22, satisfaction scores decreased slightly compared to 2020/21 across all areas.

As in previous years, the highest levels of satisfaction can be seen amongst older customers. For all questions asked, the proportion of satisfied customers was greatest in the 65+ age category. The 16-24 age group had significantly lower rates of satisfaction

in relation to quality of home, repairs, Connect as a landlord and satisfaction that their views had been taken into account. However the sample size for this group was not statistically significant (<5 responses) highlighting the need to develop more informed understanding of satisfaction amongst younger customers.

BAME customers were less satisfied than White British customers across all survey questions. The difference was particularly pronounced in relation to Quality of Home. Further investigation should be carried out into any potential drivers of this disparity. Levels of satisfaction were broadly similar between male and female customers. Customers with a disability showed slightly lower levels of satisfaction with their neighbourhood and quality of home compared to the average.


Prior to this year, satisfaction surveys were undertaken through phone calls. It was anticipated that though introducing the capacity for surveys to also be carried out online or by text, the proportion of responses from younger tenants would increase. It appears enhanced levels of feedback from this group have not materialised. Developing more in-depth dialogue with under-represented groups and those reporting lower satisfaction scores should be explored. Obtaining survey responses from a representative sample of residents will be a requirement for the Tenant Satisfaction Measures which are due to be introduced over the coming year.

Figure 9: 2021/22 Proportion of Satisfied Customers

	Quality of Home	of Neighbourhood	Overall Repairs Service	Value for Money	Satisfaction with Connect	Views Taken into Account
Male	76%	79%	70%	76%	79%	66%
Female	75%	74%	68%	77%	73%	62%
16-24*	75%	25%	50%	25%	75%	50%
25-34	52%	57%	52%	57%	52%	43%
35-44	73%	77%	61%	77%	67%	62%
45-54	64%	73%	58%	70%	63%	55%
55-64	74%	79%	64%	75%	78%	63%
65+	83%	79%	79%	84%	82%	70%
White British	79%	76%	70%	80%	77%	65%
BAME	60%	75%	62%	69%	67%	58%
Has Disability	69%	69%	77%	84%	76%	61%
No Disability	76%	81%	68%	76%	74%	65%
<b>All</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>63%</b>

\*Sample size is fewer than 20 tenants- conclusions should therefore be drawn tentatively.

**Key**

 = Proportion of satisfied tenants is ≥10% lower than for all customers surveyed


 = Proportion of satisfied tenants is ≥5% lower than for all customers surveyed

Figure 10 shows average satisfaction scores for Engage clients, broken down by equality strand. Responses were collected via a combination of paper forms sent to clients and proactive telephone calls carried out by the Engage Team.

The data indicates levels of satisfaction for 2021/22 were generally high, and broadly similar across all equality strands. However, the need to gather feedback from a greater number of clients is highlighted given that only 120 clients were surveyed out of a total of 1177 clients supported in 2021/22. The sample size for clients aged 16-24 and for BAME clients was particularly small, highlighting the need to explore alternative methods of capturing customer feedback within the partnership.

<b>Figure 10: Engage Satisfaction Scores 2020/21</b>	
	Average Satisfaction Scores out of 10 (Sample Size)
<b>Total Returns</b>	<b>9.0 (120)</b>
Male	8.7 (50)
Female	9.2 (70)
16 – 24	9.7 (4)
25 – 54	8.7 (67)
>55	9.4 (49)
White British	9.1 (85)
BAME	9.1 (35)
Disabled	8.9 (56)

#### **Suggested Actions: Customer Satisfaction**

- **Enhance dialogue with groups which have lower satisfaction scores or with low response rates to better understand why this may be.**
- **Compare performance with other social landlords to assess our position against sector wide satisfaction trends in relation to Equality and Diversity.**
- **Work with Customers and Commissioners to improve data collection and reporting by equality strand in relation to satisfaction across Wellbeing and Support**

## **4. Conclusions and Suggested Actions**

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Over the coming year, we plan to publish our EDI strategy 2023-25 and overhaul data relating to equality and diversity to improve coverage and accuracy. Plans are also in place to introduce more regular reporting on Equality and Diversity KPIs to Board. As

the impacts of the cost of living crisis become apparent, this work will help ensure we are well placed to meet the changing needs of our customer base.

While it is important we maintain momentum to further enhance Equality, Diversity and Inclusion practices at Connect, this must be balanced with acknowledging resource limitations and ensuring existing EDI projects are completed to a high standard. Suggested actions based on the analysis in this report are listed below. EDI Working Group will be responsible for prioritising actions for completion over the coming year, working with managers to identify those actions which will deliver maximum benefit for our customers. It is the role of our EDI Working Group to identify these priority actions and develop an action plan through which progress can be monitored.

This report suggests the following actions should be considered as priorities to address for 2022/23. EDI working group will be responsible for monitoring progress against the actions to ensure timely completion.

**Table 11 – 2021/22 Equality and Diversity: Tenant Baseline and Service Provision Report**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Suggested Actions</b>
<b>Data Coverage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out a tenant census to improve data coverage for existing customers</li> <li>• Improve data collection and analysis of equality and diversity data for customers in properties run by managing agents</li> <li>• Ensure fields on the tenancy commencement form relating to protected characteristics are completed by customers at sign up. Review collection methods to ensure information can be disclosed discreetly and the value of providing the data is communicated to customers and staff.</li> </ul>
<b>Profile of Connect’s Customers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage customers to inform Connect if their communication or mobility needs change and ensure updated information is gathered as part of the tenant census</li> <li>• Update customer information when colleagues are made aware of changes (such as mobility or communication needs) through the course of their work.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessing Representation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the EDI profile of our customer base is considered as part of business planning for service provision. Factors such as the high proportion of customers age 55+ should be considered.</li> <li>• Improve coverage of EDI data for involved tenants.</li> <li>• Review recruitment practices from an EDI perspective and monitor internal movement and career development in relation to protected characteristics</li> <li>• Investigate any barriers to recruitment and retention of staff with disabilities.</li> </ul>
<b>Access to the Services we Provide</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore how our money matters and customer service teams can provide additional support to BAME residents disproportionately in arrears over £500 and represented as complainants</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore how our Money Matters service can engage more fully with working age tenants, who are at greater risk of arrears</li> <li>• Review provision of translation services to improve levels of availability and ease of access</li> <li>• Consider at what point support service clients should be asked to disclose personal data relating to their protected characteristics. Consider asking equality and diversity related questions once clients have a more established relationship with staff</li> <li>• Work with Customers and Commissioners to improve reporting by equality strand across Wellbeing and Support, including within the KBOP partnership.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Customer Satisfaction</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance dialogue with groups which have lower satisfaction scores or with low response rates to better understand why this may be.</li> <li>• Compare performance with other social landlords to assess Connect's position against sector wide satisfaction trends in relation to Equality and Diversity.</li> <li>• Work with Customers and Commissioners to improve data collection and reporting by equality strand in relation to satisfaction across Wellbeing and Support.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 1

### Legislative and Regulatory Requirements Relating to Equality and Inclusion

#### Legislation

Equality Act 2010 [www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance)

#### Regulation

##### **Regulator of Social Housing – Consumer Standards: Tenant Involvement and Empowerment**

Required outcomes (related to equality and inclusion):

- *Customer service and choice* – provide choices, information and communication that is appropriate to the diverse needs of their tenants in the delivery of all (*consumer*) standards
- *Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants* – treat all tenants with fairness and respect and demonstrate understanding of the different needs of tenants, including in relation to the equality strands and tenants with additional support needs.



## Appendix 2

Current Equality and Diversity Information: Customers, Staff, Board, CRF and Local Population- Data from charts shown in Figure 5. Numbers rounded to nearest percent.

	Board	Staff	Involved Tenants	Connect Tenants	Local Population
Gender					
Male	50%	39%	38%	37%	49%
Female	50%	61%	62%	63%	51%
Ethnicity					
White British	70%	76%	78%	69%	82%
BAME	30%	24%	22%	31%	18%
Disability					
Disability	10%	11%	45%	35%	25%
No disability	90%	89%	55%	65%	73%
Sexuality					
Heterosexual	100%	97%	100%	98%	96%
Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual	0%	3%	0%	2%	4%
Religion					
Christian	44%	35%	30%	43%	60%
Muslim	33%	9%	0%	10%	8%
Specific Other	0%	5%	0%	5%	3%
None	22%	50%	70%	42%	29%
Age					
16 - 24	0%	7%	0%	3%	17%
25 - 34	0%	17%	10%	13%	18%
35 - 44	30%	22%	17%	17%	15%
45 - 54	10%	31%	15%	19%	16%
55 - 64	60%	21%	29%	21%	13%
65+	0%	2%	29%	27%	20%