



promoting equality in housing
hybu cydraddoldeb ym maes tai



Deeds Not Words

Action Plan Progress

January 2023



www.linc-cymru.co.uk



Introduction

Linc is committed to being an inclusive business and our vision is 'creating the right environment for people to flourish.' We are committed to tackling injustice, and to be leaders in equality, diversity and inclusion.

In 2020, Tai Pawb launched 'Deeds Not Words', as a commitment to end racial inequality in the housing sector in Wales. At the time of the launch, the impacts of Covid-19 pandemic on Black, Asian and other Ethnic Minority groups had been profound, including people from minority ethnic communities up to two times more likely to die from the disease than others. In 2022, the cost of living crisis is now disproportionately affecting those people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Linc signed up the 'Deeds not Words' pledge from housing equalities charity Tai Pawb in 2020, which outlines our commitment to take action to:

- Mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff and communities.
- Improve the ethnic diversity of board and staff at all levels.
- Communicate and engage.
- Develop an inclusive culture

We remained committed to working with our customers, colleagues, Tai Pawb and other partners to tackle racial inequality in Wales.

This is our progress so far...

Mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on our Black, Asian and minority ethnic colleagues and communities

We pledged to:

Our Commitment	What we have been doing
<p>Adopt the All Wales Covid-19 Risk Assessment Tool.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This tool was adopted and is now complete. Linc continue to consider the Welsh Government guidance in relation to Covid-19.
<p>Commit to wellbeing/psychological and other support to Black, Asian and other minority ethnic staff who might feel affected or vulnerable right now.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Linc's Wellbeing Officer, situated in our HR team, has continued to lead a range of initiatives. This has included counselling, an employee assistance programme and occupational health support, 121 support, as well as signposting on other wellbeing issues such as financial management.
<p>Investigate reasons for overcrowding and worse housing conditions amongst some BAME groups. Start acting on findings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We have refreshed our data collection form to ensure it matches the ONS data set, and that is now in place for all new customers. We will be launching our customer portal in 2023/24 which will enable us to refresh the equality data we hold on existing customers.



Improve ethnic diversity of board and staff at all levels

We pledged to:

Our Commitment	What we have been doing
<p>Adopt the Rooney Rule to improve recruitment of people from different ethnic backgrounds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We adopted the Rooney Rule in 2021 and refreshed our recruitment and equality and diversity policy. All applicants from a minority ethnic background are now interviewed, where they meet the essential criteria.
<p>Report annually and act on findings for pay gap, recruitment, promotion and retention data for minority ethnic staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have developed our colleague profiling form to refresh the equality data we hold to ensure it matches up with the ONS data set. An all colleague profiling exercise is due to take place in February 2023.
<p>Invest in our recruitment channels to attract candidates of different ethnic minorities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are part of the 'Get into Housing' project, with 5 other housing associations. This project supports unemployed people from a minority ethnic background aged 25+ into work. We have offered 6 paid placements through this project, and in addition 1 voluntary placement. 1 of the placements has secured a full time job with Linc and 1 has secured a Board position with another RSL.
<p>Train all staff and board in Unconscious Bias and raise awareness of white privilege.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launched at the end of 2022, almost 200 of our Board and colleagues have now completed our mandatory 'Conscious Inclusion' training. Our senior leaders have attended and externally facilitated. 'Let's Talk About Race' session. .
<p>Ensure our recruitment panels are ethnically diverse.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are exploring how to broadening our panels to include trained recruitment staff members and external volunteers. .
<p>Invest resources in positive action initiatives aimed at improving BAME representation at levels showing gaps.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our 'Pathway to Board' project, in partnership with 4 other RSL's project was set up to specifically support people from minority ethnic communities into Board positions. Linc hosted 2 Board observers from the project, and 1 has been successful in gaining a Board place with another housing association.



Communicate and engage

We pledged to:

Our Commitment	What we have been doing
<p>Publicise your support for racial equality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have promoted the opportunities for both 'Get into Housing' and the 'Board Pathways' project. • We published our 2021 Deeds not Words update. • Our Business Plan launched in 2022, made specific reference to our commitment to race equality. • We have developed a new outcome focus EDI action plan, and this has been reported to our Board.
<p>Publish our commitment to take specific actions to tackle the challenges we identify, and report on progress annually.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our new EDI action plan links across to our Deeds not Words commitment. • We have specific actions within our Corporate Business Plan action plan relating to race equality.
<p>Disaggregate ethnicity data from customer satisfaction data to learn and improve the experiences of people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our new customer and colleague EDI profiling forms have been revised to reflect the ONS data set.
<p>Build more links and support for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic community groups to build their capacity to support local people and bring in community knowledge and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have developed a new Customer Involvement Strategy. This was approved by our Board in November 2022. The strategy places specific commitments on engaging with diverse customers, and ensuring their voices are heard.
<p>In asylum dispersal areas, commit to donating or leasing housing to refugee communities (where they exist).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are continuing to explore our temporary accommodation offer to support local authorities in meeting need, are committed with partners to find appropriate housing solutions.

Develop an inclusive culture

We pledged to:

Our Commitment	What we have been doing
<p>Our leadership team proactively champion and monitor our progress for tackling racial inequality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our Board has received updates on our work, including the Deeds not Words Pledge and our EDI action plan.• We achieved 'Investors in Diversity' reaccreditation in December 2021.
<p>Promote an inclusive culture where people are comfortable talking about race and can bring their whole self to work, and people we work with are comfortable to voice concerns related to race and are believed when this happens.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our Investors in Diversity report gave detailed colleague feedback which we used to form our action plan.• We are due to launch our pulse surveys in 2023, to test culture and gain regular feedback.
<p>Invest in reverse mentoring schemes to share experiences and improve opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will explore how we can use reverse mentoring to share experience and improve opportunities.



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