

Vico Homes 

















Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Annual Report
2024 - 2025

Better futures,
vibrant communities



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Welcome

Equality, Diversity and inclusion have been a key business priority since our inception as a Social Housing Provider in 2005, when we chose 'inclusion' to form part of our core values. As part of our rebrand to Vico Homes in April 2025 inclusion remains at the heart of our new values and behaviours. Being an inclusive employer is not just the right thing to do but also is shown to improve an organisation's innovation, problem solving, customer focus and productivity so also makes sense from a business and customer experience perspective. Our aim, each year, and particularly in line with our ambitious new vision and goals as Vico Homes is to continually build on this. This report will outline some of the ways we have achieved this over the last financial year.

We believe that we can only prosper as an organisation and as a community if everyone is given a fair chance, which is why we stand against inequality, disadvantage and discrimination. Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. However we are conscious that equality is not in itself sufficient to ensure fairness and inclusion. We need to go beyond this to also ensure equity through acknowledging that people have different circumstances and providing tailored support to achieve equal outcomes. Our report demonstrates how we have done this. We have therefore added the word 'Equity' to our report so that it is a Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EEDI) Annual Report.

At Vico Homes, we put people first, because everyone matters, every single customer and every single colleague matters. We believe that diversity within our communities is a strength. It is imperative that as the diversity of our community grows, so should the diversity of our colleagues. A company can only meet its customer's needs if the profile of their colleagues reflects the customers that it serves. Our goal for 2025-2026 is to build up knowledge of the diversity of our colleagues so we can check how it compares against our customer base and take positive action where required.

It is important that we welcome all, and we create a workplace where people feel that they belong. Everyone should feel respected and feel that they can be themselves at work. Nobody should be made to feel excluded because of who they are. We want Vico Homes to be a great place for every team member to be and grow.

As part of our commitment to EEDI we publish this report, which details our current performance, our aspirations and actions for the future.

I am proud of what we have achieved so far. However, our aim is always to strive for further improvement and we are keen to hear how we can be better. Therefore, if you have any ideas, suggestions, or would like to find out more about EEDI, please email us at: diversityandinclusion@vicohomes.co.uk

Martyn

Martyn Shaw, Chief Executive

Legislation

The Equality Act (2010) is a law which protects people from discrimination. People are protected under the Equality Act if they have one or more of the nine protected characteristics, which are:

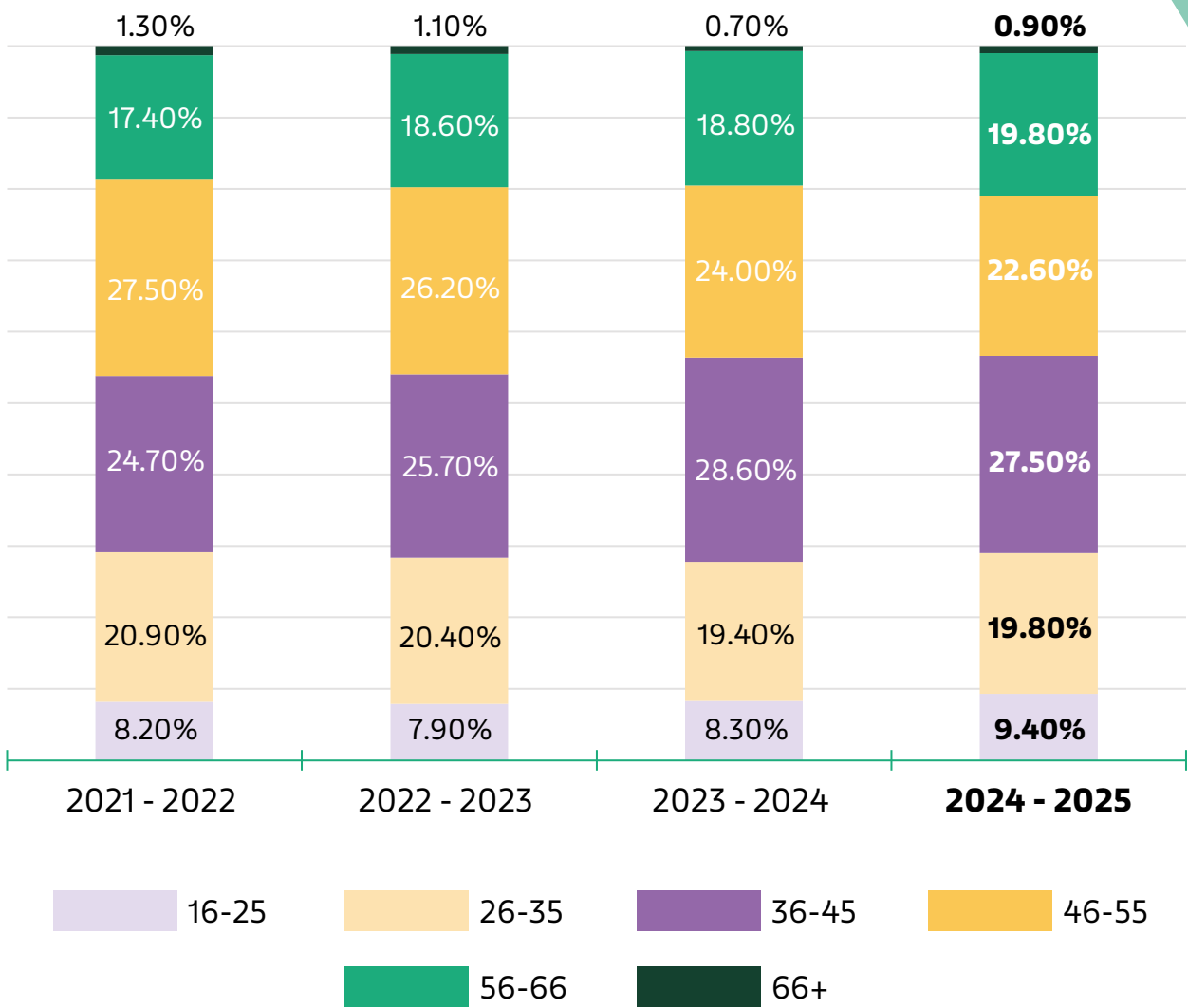
- Age
- Sex
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Race
- Gender reassignment
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity

Everyone has at least one of these characteristics which means we are all protected under the Equality Act.

Our report presents data on the nine protected characteristics of our colleagues and customers. We analyse this data to identify the under-represented groups, outline how we support them and identify what more needs to be done.

Our Protected Characteristics targets were outlined in our last Annual Report for 2023 / 2024. We would expect progress to be steadily made towards these targets and we have monitored trends on key protected characteristics over the last 4 years. The report highlights the trends.

Age Colleagues



9.4% of our colleagues are aged 16 to 25, indicating that for the first time we have exceeded our target of 9% of young people in line with the Wakefield District.

Apprenticeships

Our Apprenticeship Scheme is well established and has been running for over 20 years. Apprenticeships give people of all ages the opportunity to train for a particular profession. Apprentices work alongside highly experienced colleagues and mentors and receive on the job training. They split their time between working with us and attending a college or training provider where they study for a nationally recognised qualification.

Apprentices at Vico Homes are supported by a wider team, including our Apprentice Team Leaders, Learning and Development Business Partners and Learning and Development Advisors, who make sure that they have everything they need on their journey.

“When Vico Homes initially came to my school to talk to us about the apprenticeships they made it clear how accepting they were of others and their backgrounds. I applied for this role when I was 16 and started the role at 17. I felt that starting an apprenticeship at such a young age would give me more opportunities and a better start at life rather than staying in school . My biggest challenge has been keeping up with others on the course as I had no prior knowledge of gas engineering. However, I feel I’ve overcome this with time and more on-the-job practice. I now feel more confident with the tasks I’m asked to do. I would recommend an apprenticeship at Vico as they really focus on helping you develop for a future career.”

Trade apprentice

“From the moment I got the job Vico Homes have been really supportive and have been so accommodating. I have been supplied with the relevant equipment needed in order to carry out my job to the best of my ability, I have been given work devices in order for myself to achieve my potential while at work. I would highly recommend anybody to apply for an apprenticeship role as this certainly opens up a variety of doors for career progression. I am certainly glad I’ve chosen to take up this amazing opportunity. I was nervous when I started here but I’ve been made to feel very comfortable, accepted, and equal to everyone else.”

Office based apprentice

In 2024 we recruited 12 new trades apprentices and for the first time appointed 10 new office-based apprentices in areas across Vico Homes. This has helped us exceed our target of 9% of our colleagues are aged 16-25 to represent our customers.

Each year, we take our new apprentices on a weeklong residential trip to the Outward Bound Centre in the Lake District.

Apprentices take part in a range of activities specially designed to build resilience, confidence, team working along with problem-solving skills. Apprentices take part in rock climbing, abseiling, gorge walking, scrambling and open water activities.

Graduate and undergraduate schemes

In August 2022, we launched the Graduate Scheme which offers university students a range of opportunities to gain relevant work experience, whilst expanding their industry knowledge and skills.

For undergraduates

Our Graduate Placement Scheme gives undergraduates currently undertaking a sandwich degree or wanting to start their career in a specific area often linked to their degree, the opportunity to complete a one-year placement with Vico Homes. We have offered a range of placement options for undergraduates to choose from including placements in:

- HR working with our Rewards and analytics team, Payroll and Pensions.
- Finance working developing skills and experience across the Finance Team.
- Legal Services Team supporting the team with a range of casework including litigation, possession, injunctions and disrepair as well as contract law.
- Care and Health Team, working across Wellbeing, Adaptations and with our Independent Living Team.

Some of our Graduate placements have gone on to secure full-time roles with us and others have made such a good impression they have had their placements extended by a year.

For graduates

Our Graduate Trainee Scheme is a two year training programme for graduates to work across the business on a variety of projects.

We have recruited two Graduate Trainees each year since 2022. All of our 2022 and 2023 Graduates Trainees have secured permanent roles with us. The 2024 graduate trainees are working across the business delivering projects around improved efficiency and customer service which is providing great results for the business.

“When I first heard about the graduate scheme at Vico Homes, I wasn’t actively looking for a career in housing. Like many people, I had a limited understanding of what the sector involved. But from the day I joined, it became clear that this was a place where I could grow, belong, and contribute meaningfully to the community that I reside in.

Since joining, I’ve been surprised by how people-focused and impactful my work really is. I’ve gained skills, confidence, and a sense of purpose I never initially expected to achieve. It’s not just about policies or procedures - it’s about people’s lives. I’ve seen first-hand how housing plays a vital role in shaping communities and supporting those who need it most.

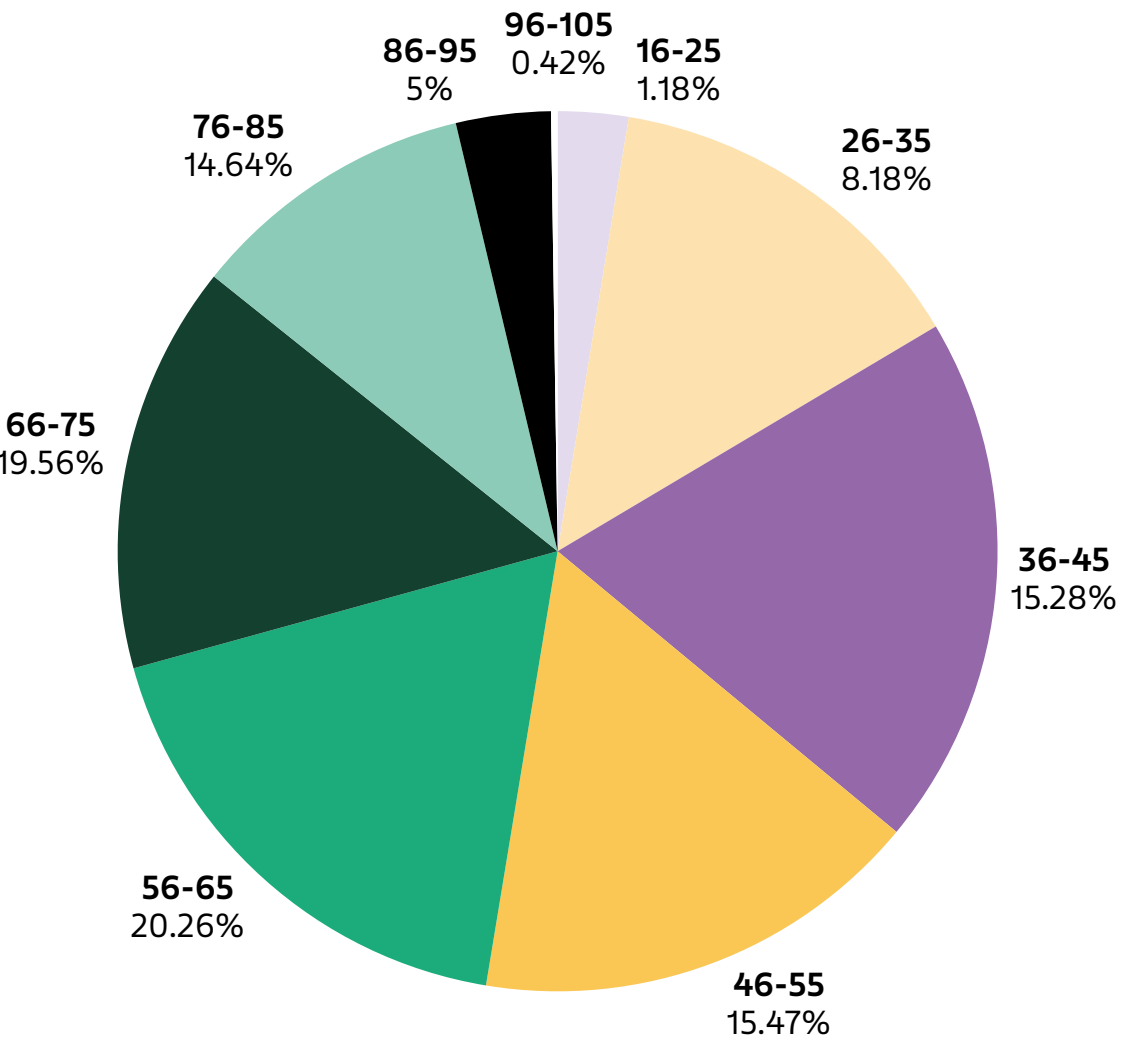
Most importantly, I’ve felt included and supported every step of the way. I’ve been struck by how welcoming and supportive the environment is. As someone coming in with little knowledge of the sector, I never once felt out of place.

Vico Homes has created space for my learning, growth, and openness - and I’m proud to be part of a team where everyone is respected, supported, and given the opportunity to thrive”.

Joel Foster, Graduate Trainee



Age Customers



Supporting older people

We provide a range of services to support our older customers to live independently and have recently introduced a retirement home to complement the current Independent Living portfolio.

Independent living schemes

Some of our older customers are unable to, or choose not to, live in their own home. Instead, they live in one of our independent living schemes (ILS), Independent Living Extra Care or retirement home which are located throughout the Wakefield district. Schemes within the Independent Living portfolio are a group of self-contained homes which are designed for older or vulnerable people. Each scheme has a Community Support Worker (CSW), Extra Care Scheme Manager (ECSM) or Retirement Living Coordinator, who is on hand to provide support. We have recently introduced an Engagement Coordinator who assists residents to arrange a variety of social activities to encourage social inclusion.

Extra care schemes offer the same facilities as our traditional ILS. However, extra care provides customers with additional support, such as a daily hot meal and domestic assistants who carry out light cleaning. It offers an alternative to residential care, encouraging residents to remain independent. There are 24 Schemes within the Independent Living portfolio across the district, 31 independent living schemes, two extra care schemes and one retirement living property. Our ILS are home to 1,566 residents, with 162,752 welfare visits completed in 2024 / 2025.

Lifelong learning

We have been focusing on the wellbeing and social inclusion of our residents in ILS. We have always recognised the importance of social activities in our ILS and this year, we coordinated a whopping 322 social activities across our ILS, with 32,493 attendances recorded.

Events for older people:

To ensure consistency across all 34 schemes and in response to the customer feedback we have created and introduced the Engagement Coordinator role.

The Engagement Coordinator role was created to embed and promote the feeling of community within our schemes and generate excitement around social activities and community competitions. To date, our Engagement Coordinator has been successful in achieving her short term goals for the role, meeting with customers on a face to face basis to ensure a bespoke customer led approach in each scheme, offering Customer Voice and engagement sessions and consulting with customers on their greener spaces. She has successfully networked with other providers including colleagues in health and social care to give our customers greater choice in activities and has created the opportunity to join online yoga and pilates sessions. The ILS team were also successful in obtaining an award from Creative Minds which has enabled us to offer free, and match funded armchair exercises across schemes.



Working in partnership with local schools

We have worked with a range of local schools and colleges to help pupils understand the world of work and to also highlight Vico Homes as a great employer.

We offer our young people a range of opportunities to develop their skills and employability.

Over the year we have engaged with with 1,764 young people. This was through a range of engagement activities with school and colleges such as mock interviews, career events, aspirations talks, social action days and community projects such as Branching Out. Branching Out is about raising aspirations of potential young people who are not in education, employment or training and those at risk of offending. We run this in partnership with Early Intervention and Prevention Team from the Council. The programme is aimed at 11-17 year olds living in our communities.

We have also offered the following for young people in the Wakefield district:

49 students from local schools and colleges completed a placement with different teams across the business. The most popular areas were construction and legal. Out of the 29 evaluation forms received back 100% said that the work experience was beneficial and 100% said they would recommend the organisation to others

31 industry placements. We supported Heart of Yorkshire with their T Level and BTEC courses in construction where the students need to complete a set number of hours on an industry placement to complete their qualification. 11 students completed a T Level qualification in business, 8 students completed a BTEC qualification in business, and 12 students completed a BTEC qualification in construction.

Young customers

Using data collected as part of our On Your Street project, we continue to target younger customers to invite them to participate in activities which are part of our menu of opportunities.

Older people

We regularly attend and support Age UK's Silver Sunday events, where partner agencies come together to promote services for older people and signpost those in need of support.

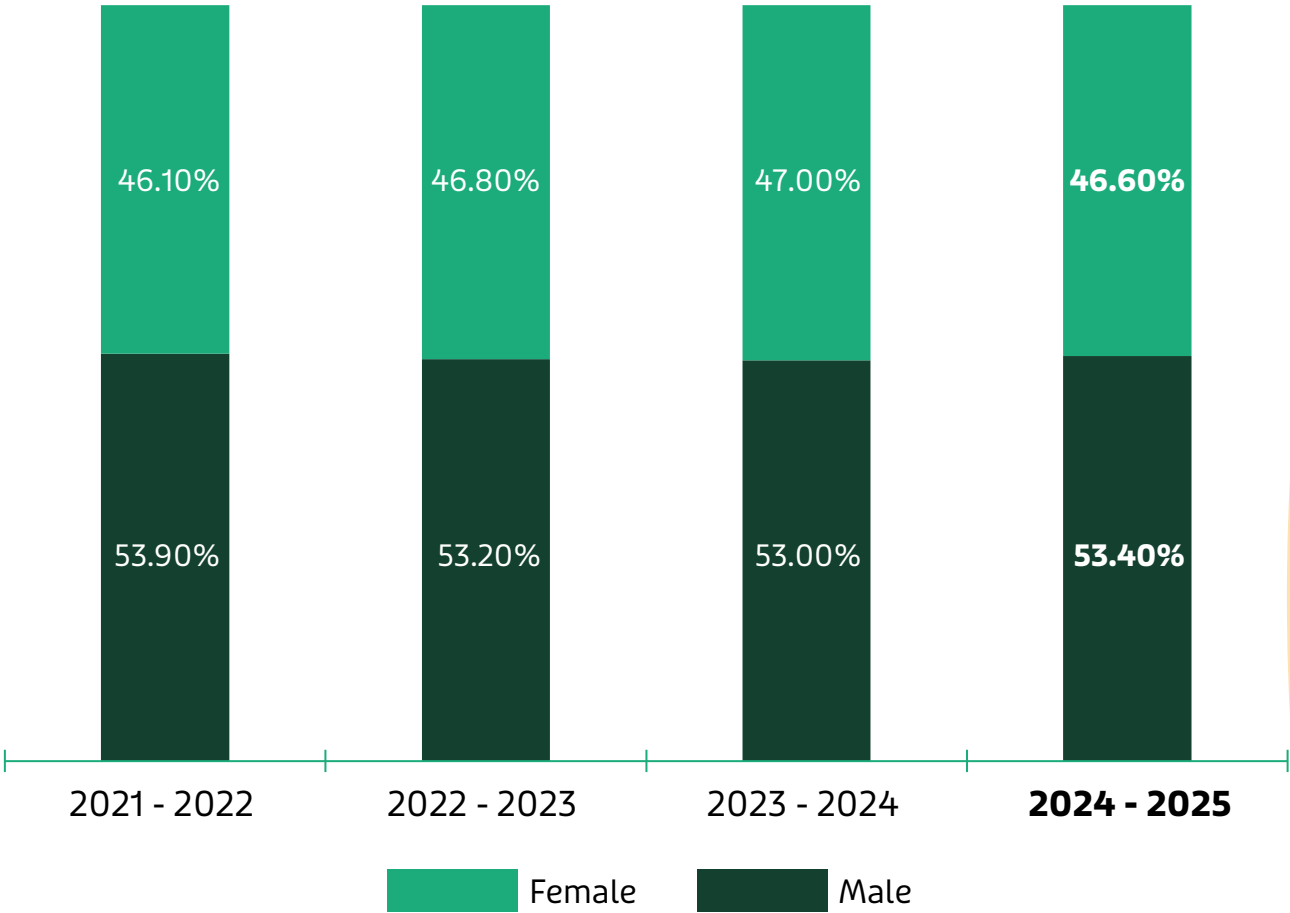
We support groups including Simply Leisure, Senior Citizens Support Group, and The Community Choir Wakefield with events and activities.

We organise inter-generational activities with schools, including inviting local schools to perform for our independent living scheme residents at Christmas, and bulb planting during spring. We supported Friends of the Hut, Airedale, to hold a consultation for over 50s to discover the services they would like to see made available locally.

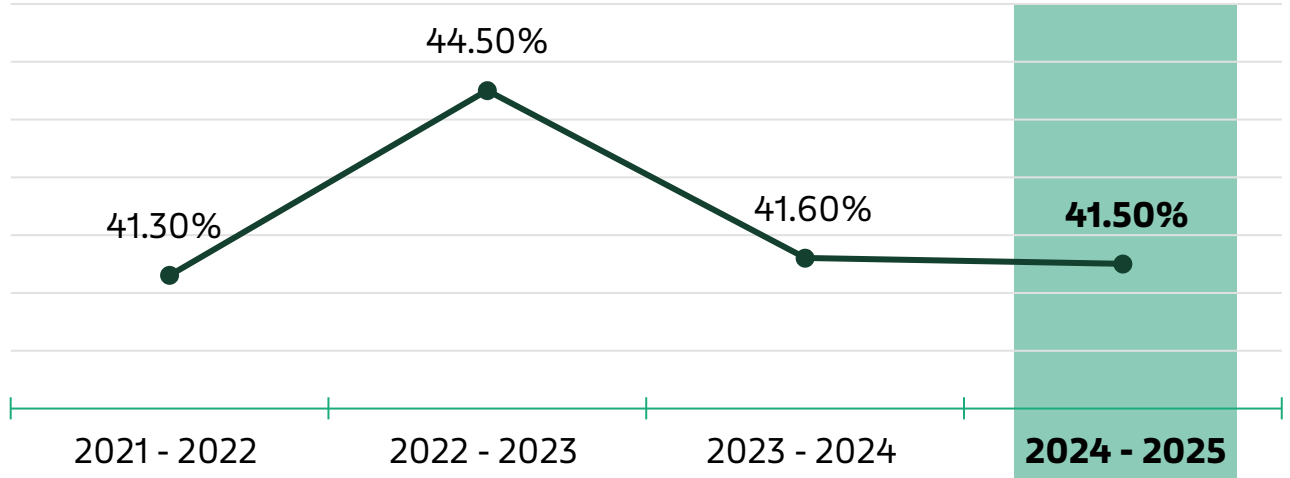
Next Steps

- Continue to provide a range of opportunities for young people through work experience, apprenticeships and graduate schemes.
- To increase our understanding, support and leadership of Generation Z, those born between 1997 and 2012.
- To hold a dragon's den for young people so we encourage innovation and ideas from our younger workforce.
- To continue to focus on the wellbeing and inclusion of our customers across all ages.

Sex Colleagues



Female business leaders



Equality and diversity in all areas of our organisation is really important to us and we have a robust and equitable pay and grading structure to ensure fairness.

This is the eighth year of reporting our gender pay gap and, whilst we are pleased to see that our mean and median gender pay gap have reduced slightly, we recognise there is still some work to do.

Our mean gender pay gap has decreased from 13.4% to 12.3%, and our median pay gap has reduced from 14.6% to 13.9%. We know that change takes time, and we also understand that the gender pay gap is a complex and multifaceted problem faced by organisations across the UK.

Taking a data driven approach has given us a deeper insight into some of the factors which contribute to our gap. We use this as the foundation for developing our annual gender pay gap action plan which is monitored by our gender pay gap working group.

We believe the gender pay gap action plan, which contains specific, measurable actions to drive us forward as an organisation, will help us continue to reduce our gap in future years and ensure equal representation at all levels of our organisation.

The 2024 action plan focused on three key areas:

1. Increase representation of males in Grades 1-7. Male representation in this group has fallen from 27% to 25% between 2022 and 2024.
2. Increase representation of females in Grades 8-11. Female representation in this group has increased from 39% to 40% between 2022 and 2024.
3. Increase the gender balance in roles at Heads of Services level and above. Female representation in this group has increased from 34% to 36% between 2022 and 2024.

It was agreed to continue to focus on these areas in 2025-2026 to see if more progress can be made.

Women in Leadership Programme

We have continued to work in partnership with the founder of No More Hiding Ltd, Gemma Stow, to help drive women into leadership. In April 2024 we started the fifth cohort delivered by Gemma for our aspiring women leaders. The programme is called RISE and includes six workshops tailored to women. The workshops look at how to own expertise to self promote and get recognition; being more visible so that women are not only role models for others but also increase their own opportunities for career progression; and building confidence when it comes to using self promotion and personal branding strategies for visible leadership. The feedback from this cohort has been very positive and one of the participants has since gained promotion at Vico Homes.

Fair recruitment

We believe in fair recruitment; everyone should be given a fair chance to join and progress within our organisation. We have implemented a range of recruitment practices to ensure that our recruitment process is fair and does not disadvantage women:

- we always have gender balanced recruitment panels, ensuring that both men and women sit on every interview panel.
- we use a gender decoder to scan our job adverts, person specifications and job descriptions to ensure that we use gender neutral language.
- we deliver recruitment and selection coaching in addition to unconscious bias training to ensure effective recruitment. This works to prevent gender bias and ensures that the best person for the job is selected.

Increasing diversity within our Technical Services team

We recognise that we need to increase the level of diversity within our Technical Services Team, specifically within our Trades Team, which includes roles such as Plumbers, Gas Engineers and Electricians. Data analysis shows that we have an underrepresentation of women working in trades roles. We are committed to building a more inclusive and diverse workforce within our Technical Services team. As part of this, we continue to implement targeted strategies to attract candidates from underrepresented groups, including women. We were proud to welcome a female Gas Apprentice in 2024, however we recognise that more needs to be done and are committed to encouraging and supporting more women to pursue careers in these fields.

International Men's Health Day

International Men's Health Day (November 2024) - Prostate Cancer UK and Andy's Man Club delivered awareness presentations to colleagues. Darren Portman also shared his personal experience of prostate cancer on the Colleague Hub to raise awareness of the disease.

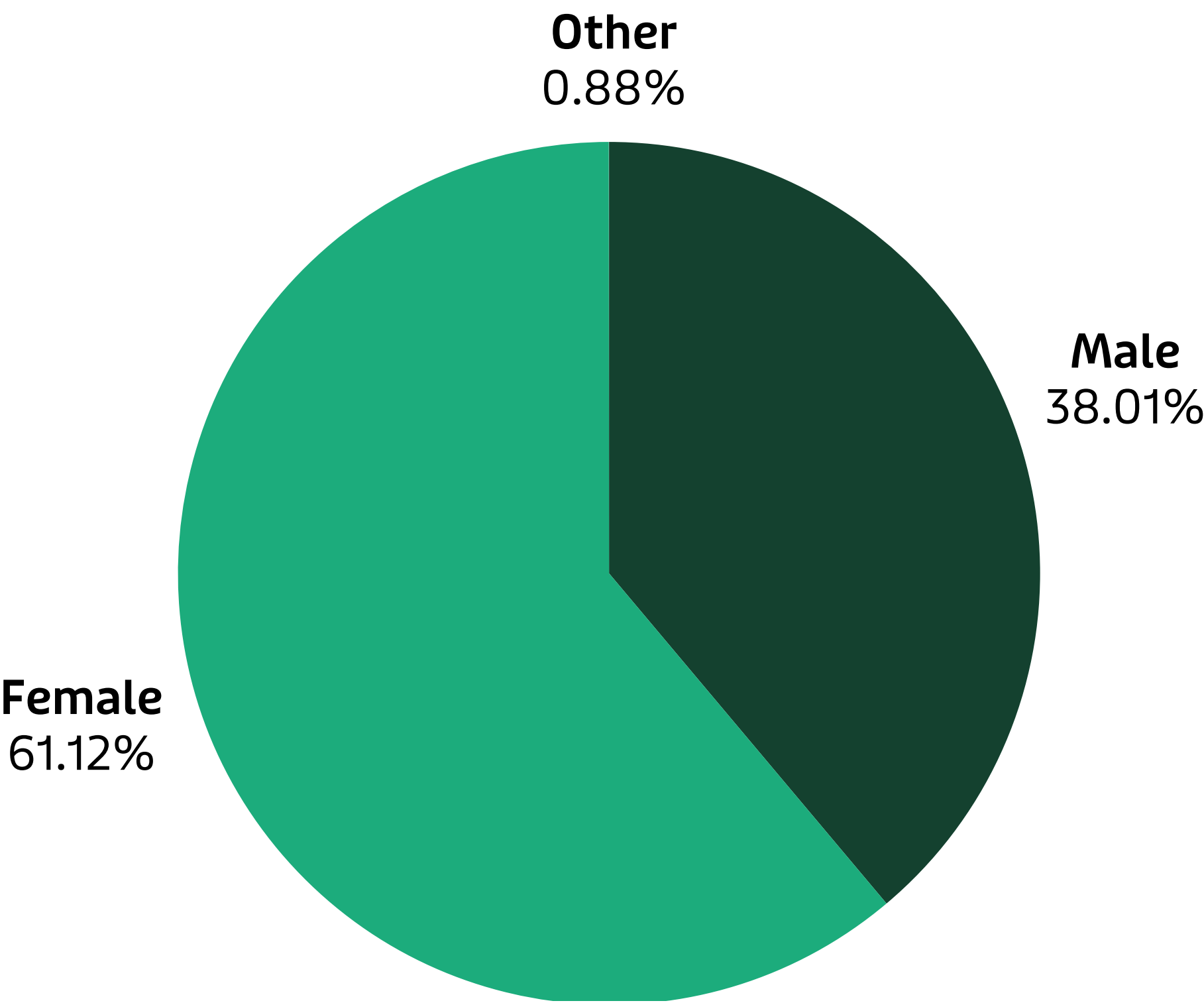
International Women's Day

This year our colleague led network group EmpowHER organised an event in acknowledgement of International Women's Day. See more under our diversity and inclusion section on page 27.



Sex

Customers



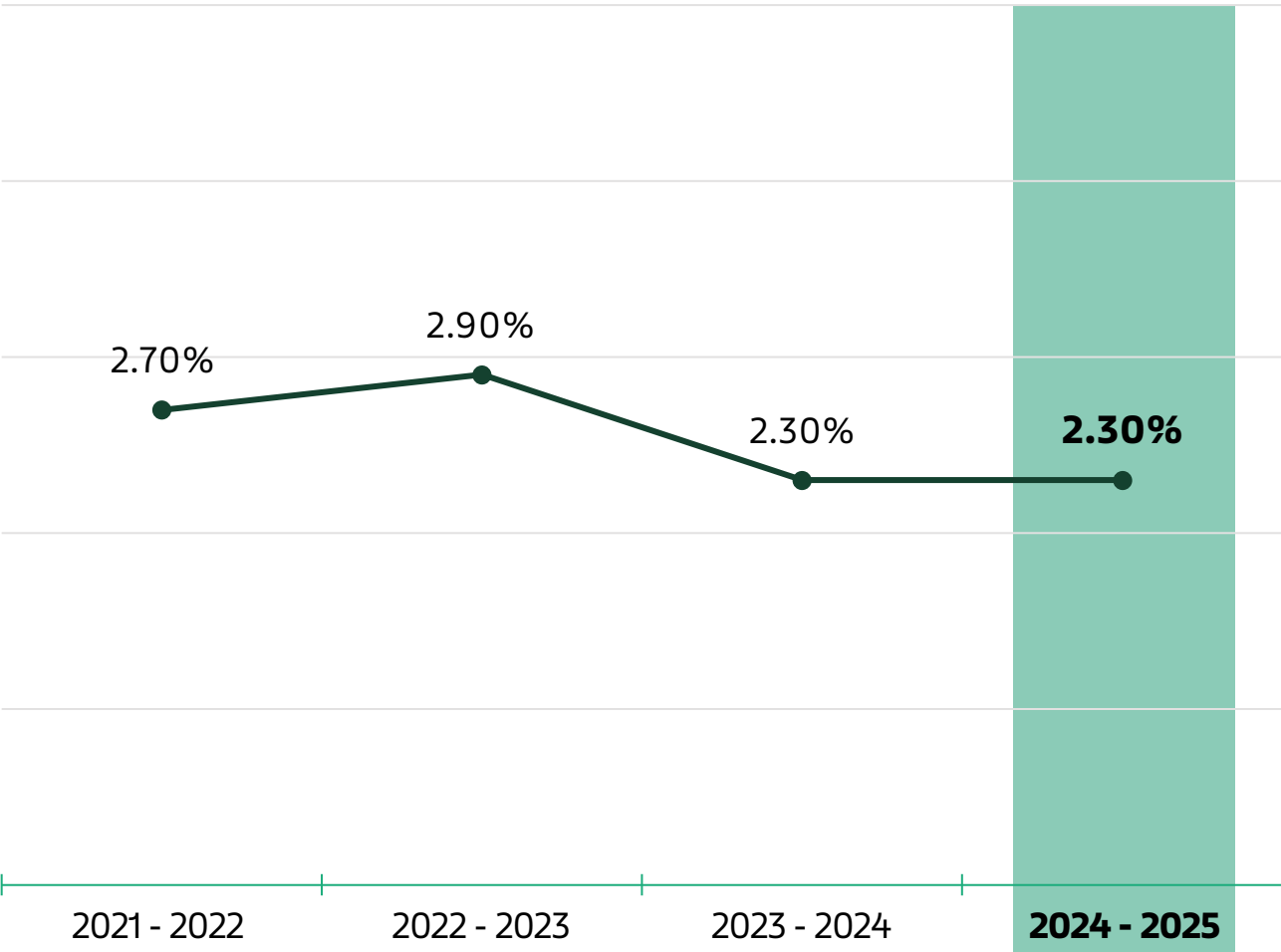
Next steps

- We are partnering with InSTEP Training to give 5 women an opportunity in the business to complete a WOMEN+ in Leadership Level 3 or 5 apprenticeship qualification
- We will continue to take action to close the gender pay gap through targeted actions driven by a gender pay gap working group.

Disability and wellbeing

Colleagues

Colleagues with disabilities



The percentage of colleagues that we identify as having a disability or are neurodiverse remains at 2.3%. This is because our colleague records have not been updated since last year rather than an accurate reflection of disabilities and neurodiversity at Vico Homes. We will be addressing this lack of data in 2025 / 2026 (see Diversity and Inclusion section).

Mindful Employer Pledge

We are pleased to share that our commitment to the Mindful Employer pledge is not wavering! This is a national initiative that encourages organisations to take a positive and proactive approach to mental health at work.

This pledge reflects our belief that mental wellbeing is fundamental to a healthy, productive, and inclusive workforce. It also reinforces our dedication to reducing stigma, encouraging open conversations, and ensuring that all colleagues feel safe and supported in seeking help when needed.

As a Disability Confident Employer we:

- have an Employee Assistance Programme which is a confidential support service delivered by a third party, providing 24 hour counselling access for colleagues and their immediate family members.
- provide a range of training courses to help our colleagues maintain good mental health and wellbeing and provide additional support for colleagues through volunteer Mental Health First Aiders.
- deliver colleague wellbeing and other events throughout the year.

- provide access to an external Occupational Health Unit and to physiotherapy referrals.
- provide cycle storage, shower and locker facilities to enable colleagues to cycle to work and participate in activities such as running, before or after work and during lunch breaks.

Accessibility and wellbeing

To drive meaningful action in this area, we have tasked our Accessibility and Wellbeing Colleague-led network group with leading the development and implementation of initiatives that support mental health across the organisation in partnership with our HR team. This includes raising awareness through events and publications, improving access to resources, and equipping managers with the tools to support their teams effectively.

Through this collaborative approach, we aim to embed mental health awareness into our culture and ensure that wellbeing remains a core part of our EEDI approach (see more under our Diversity and Inclusion section, page 27).

Definitions: Neurodiversity refers to the concept that neurological differences are a natural part of human variation, encompassing a wide range of cognitive and behavioral traits. Disability, on the other hand, is often defined as an impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, which may or may not be related to neurodiversity. Some neurodivergent conditions, like autism or ADHD, can also be considered disabilities if they cause significant limitations.



Supporting our colleagues with disabilities and health conditions

We provide support to employees who have disabilities and health conditions by:

- having accessible buildings - all of our buildings are wheelchair accessible and have hearing loops.
- working with trained occupational therapists, which helps us to better understand the individual needs of our employees.
- providing 14 new electric riser desks in our offices.
- using clear English in our internal communication, writing clearly and concisely so that people reading the information can understand it easily.
- offering complimentary physiotherapy to staff, including: short-term 'physio on the pitch' referrals for six free physiotherapy sessions and discounted physiotherapy treatments.
- providing 'Access to Work' support to colleagues who are neurodiverse and require additional support to not be disadvantaged, achieving equity in the workplace.
- providing discounted health club membership. All employees receive discounted membership at Aspire gyms.

Recruiting people with disabilities and health conditions

We ensure that the recruitment process is inclusive and accessible by:

- promoting our Disability Confident status in our recruitment campaigns so that potential candidates know we are committed to recruiting people with disabilities.
- guaranteeing interviews to candidates who declare that they have a disability if they meet the minimum job criteria.
- accepting job applications that are completed in different formats (written and online).
- asking all job applicants if they need adjustments making to the interview process and implementing all reasonable adjustments.
- carrying out medical questionnaires and pre-employment checks to ensure we're aware of any conditions they may have and implementing appropriate adjustments to support within their employment.

Wellbeing Team joins Suicide Prevention Day Walk

Our Wellbeing Team works with customers, families and organisations throughout the district to promote wellbeing.

To mark Suicide Prevention Day which was themed 'change the narrative' our Wellbeing Team joined Touchstone Yorkshire-based mental health charity for a poignant walk in Thornes Park Wakefield. Together we want to help change the narrative on suicide by raising awareness, encouraging conversation, and showing people that they are not alone. On the walk, the group stopped at waypoints to discuss suicide and suicide prevention. Joining this walk was an important part of showing that our collaborative work can support people when it really counts.

Supporting our colleagues with hidden disabilities

We are dedicated to fostering an inclusive and supportive workplace and as such we continue to promote our sunflower lanyard. The sunflower lanyard is a discreet and voluntary way for individuals with hidden disabilities to indicate that they may require additional support, understanding, or patience in the workplace. We recognise various hidden disabilities such as autism, chronic pain, mental health conditions etc, are not immediately visible but can significantly impact a person's daily life. We are proud to give our colleagues the opportunity to wear the sunflower lanyard, including for allyship, as we aim to create a more empathetic and accessible environment where all colleagues feel seen, respected, and empowered to be themselves.



Wellbeing Champions

We recognise that mental health is just as important as physical health, affecting one in four people so we shouldn't be afraid to discuss it.

We have over 25 Wellbeing Champions that are across every area of the business to support colleagues and minimise the impact on work and life. They have had training through Mental Health First Aid England (MHFAE) to teach them to spot the symptoms of mental health issues, offer initial help and guide people towards the most appropriate support. They are there to listen, reassure and respond, even in a crisis.

Below are some events the Wellbeing Champions have promoted or supported:

- Quarterly Wellbeing Champion meetings to discuss feedback, new wellbeing and support initiatives, and areas of improvement.
- Turning Point assessment days (April 2024): Turning Point counsellors attended on-site to assess any self-referrals from colleagues and refer for further treatment or offer advice.

- Mental Health Awareness Week (May 2024): Raffle, coffee mornings at Merefield House and Trident Park, walk and talk, and stall event in Pavilion at Merefield House with external support agencies on-site to offer support and guidance to colleagues (Andy's Man Club and Well Women).
- International Men's Health Day (November 2024): Prostate Cancer UK and Andy's Man Club attended Trident Park to deliver awareness presentations to colleagues.
- Financial Support and Awareness (January 2025): Leeds Credit Union on-site event.
- World Cancer Day (February 2025): Awareness article and support links available on the Colleague Hub.
- Prostate Cancer Awareness (March 2025): Prostate Cancer UK presentation and Vico Homes colleagues shared their personal experiences with the disease to raise awareness.
- Free flu jabs
- Occupational health
- Physiotherapy and physio on the pitch
- EAP and counselling
- Wellbeing feedback colleague survey
- GP Online

Most events were well attended and well received by colleagues. We received feedback that some colleagues didn't feel the events were inclusive regarding geographical location which we will consider when planning future events. Events with external charities and support agencies on-site are always better received than digital events such as Colleague Hub takeovers.

We have had extremely positive feedback following the launch of GP Online and colleagues have found the service very thorough, helpful and efficient not only for themselves but their family members too.

We regularly release colleague surveys specifically aimed at feedback for wellbeing initiatives and events. The most recent feedback suggested the following: mandatory mental health training for all colleagues, particularly managers; more 'back to the floor' days so management can understand the pressures on their teams; private health insurance and an increased number of minimum counselling sessions available through the EAP. Not all suggestions are able to be implemented or are feasible, however we do feedback what we can and cannot implement and why.

Podcasts and videos that promote disability

Our previous podcasts and videos remain available for our colleagues new and old to relive. For instance, our podcasts featured our Senior Facilities Management Officer, and her experience of dealing with disability when she was told that one of her identical twin sons had been diagnosed with cerebral palsy and the journey they have undertaken so far. Another podcast discusses the support and policies in place at Vico Homes for colleagues with disabilities or those supporting a person with a disability. Our videos include:

- Living with ADHD – Our Estate Support Officer had a chat with us about her story of living with ADHD
- Living with Tourette syndrome - Our Support Team Supervisor chatted to us about what is like living with Tourette syndrome.
- Working Carers – The West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership has produced this video, which shows what a day in the life of a working carer is like.
- 100 Basic Signs in British Sign Language.

Menopause Champions

Our Menopause Champions are trained in Menopause awareness and supported by Henpicked to support our colleagues.

- Menopause awareness launch event: We launched this in April 2024. It was an on-site event including a myth buster game, expert internal and external advice and catering.
- Menopause Champions (male and female): Volunteers from our workforce who are fully trained in menopause awareness and supported by HenPicked. They meet on a regular basis to discuss on-going support, colleague feedback and new initiatives. For example, we're now looking at support for Andropause, PCOS, Endometriosis and PMDD so we have a wide range of support available for menstrual health.
- Support documentation: Manager's guidance, colleague guidance, symptom tracker, menopause journal, menopause policy, flyers, and QR codes.
- Menopause survey (pre-initiative): Before the project began we circulated a colleague survey via the Hub and email communication to gather feedback about what we already offer, what colleagues want to see and what they would benefit from. The information from this survey fed into building the menopause initiatives we have in place now and that we are continuously developing.
- Menopause survey (post-launch): Following the official launch of our menopause champions and the launch event, we circulated a colleague survey for additional feedback and used the results from the survey to improve our support offer.
- Menopause support groups: Each year we have quarterly on-site champion led support groups for both men and women. This is an opportunity for colleagues to share experiences, offer one another advice and support and is facilitated by a menopause champion who is on hand to offer support and guidance where appropriate. It's a safe space for colleagues to share their struggles and comfort one another where necessary. The schedule is highlighted on numerous Hub articles and the main Hub page, as well as circulated to head of departments and directors to share with their teams.
- Menopause awareness events: We have released podcasts, hosted male and female menopause awareness sessions delivered by the UK Government's Menopause Champion. We have also hosted colleague workshops facilitated by Turning Point. We have aired documentaries and also focused on and promoted physical health and self-care by welcoming a complimentary therapist on-site and organising discounted therapies for colleagues.
- Podcasts: There were two podcasts. One from a Senior Leader and the other a colleague who was going through Cancer treatment at the same time as the menopause. These podcasts were really well received and colleagues appreciated hearing the different experiences and the contrast between the two. We've taken this feedback on board and we're working on recording more podcasts covering other topics, such as male colleague allies and their personal experiences, endometriosis, surgical menopause.

Case Study: Sensory nook, from the Accessibility and Wellbeing Forum

In 2024 the Accessibility and Wellbeing Group approached the Facilities Team to see if it was possible to obtain a Sensory Nook. After reviewing the offices and following a visit to the 2024 Workplace Event at Birmingham a suitable sensory nook was identified. Through consultation we chose this model which included adjustable sensory lighting, Bluetooth sound system and a retractable screen to offer additional privacy for users. This is now available to all colleagues on a walk-in basis and located in a designated 'quiet area' of the offices.

A sensory nook is a dedicated quiet space designed to provide a calming environment for anyone who may need a break from sensory stimulation or just a peaceful moment during the workday. By installing the sensory nooks, it enables us to increase our support to colleagues that have neurodiversity traits as it:

- Reduces external sensory overload.
- Provides a supportive safe space for colleagues.
- Helps self-regulate and cope with everyday situations and improves colleague well-being.

We are proud to promote this as a physical sign which enforces our commitment to implementing reasonable adjustment in the workplace. This use of facilities to support wellbeing, through a sensory nook, has been put forward for a 'Workplace and facilities management EDI Impact Award'

Disability and wellbeing

Customers



Vico Homes provides housing for customers which includes some with a range of disabilities. We keep a record of these disabilities to enable us to provide appropriate support and reasonable adjustments to help with well-being and independence. The main disabilities our customers have are in three areas: mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression; physical disabilities, such as mobility issues and a range of progressive illnesses. Some of the key ways we support our customers in relation to disability are detailed opposite.



Supporting physical needs

Our Adaptations Team provides assessments for minor adaptations in customer's homes. These adaptations make it safer for these customers to move around their home and carry out everyday tasks, whilst supporting them to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible. The service promotes independence, and the benefits delivered to our customers are often felt for years. In 2024 / 2025, our Adaptations Team processed 1056 adaptation referrals and received 166 health and medical rehousing requests. We also have many accessible homes, including wheelchair accessible homes.

Care Link

Care Link is our telecare and response service. Through personal alarms, home sensors and other monitored devices, Care Link customers can get help 24 hours a day, every day. During 2024 / 2025 the Care Link team received and handled over 323,397 alarm calls with 4,470 calls requiring further support via the Care Link responder Service. The responder service continues to save Yorkshire Ambulance Service significant costs with an estimated potential saving of £717,579,000 for the financial year.

Disability ILS support

Our ILS customers continue to show an interest in starting Tenants and Residents Associations (TARAs) We continue to offer a range of resources, including funding. This funding has helped to facilitate several community events which help residents with social isolation and age and health related issues. Some groups have reached out to residents unable to leave their homes, delivering afternoon teas.

This year we welcomed Farfield and Hillside Court Friends Together, from South Elmsall.

Supporting mental health and wellbeing

Our Wellbeing Team supports customers to address barriers that are preventing them from living a healthy and sustainable lifestyle. Customers receive support to address the barriers, whilst also learning the skills to manage their own health and wellbeing. In 2024 / 2025, we accepted over 1,026 wellbeing referrals into the service.

Supporting hospital discharge

We have hospital Housing Co-ordinators who work at Fieldhead and Pinderfields Hospitals to support inpatients who are experiencing housing related barriers to discharge. The Housing Co-ordinators will help to address these barriers, helping the patient have a timely discharge from hospital. Pinderfields and Fieldhead Housing Co-ordinators received 154 new referrals into the service in 2024 / 2025.

In 2023 we expanded this offer and introduced a Housing Co-ordinator to support those with learning disabilities and autism, operating across the Leeds, Bradford and Wakefield districts. The co-ordinator has been in post since December 2023 and received 87 referrals to date.



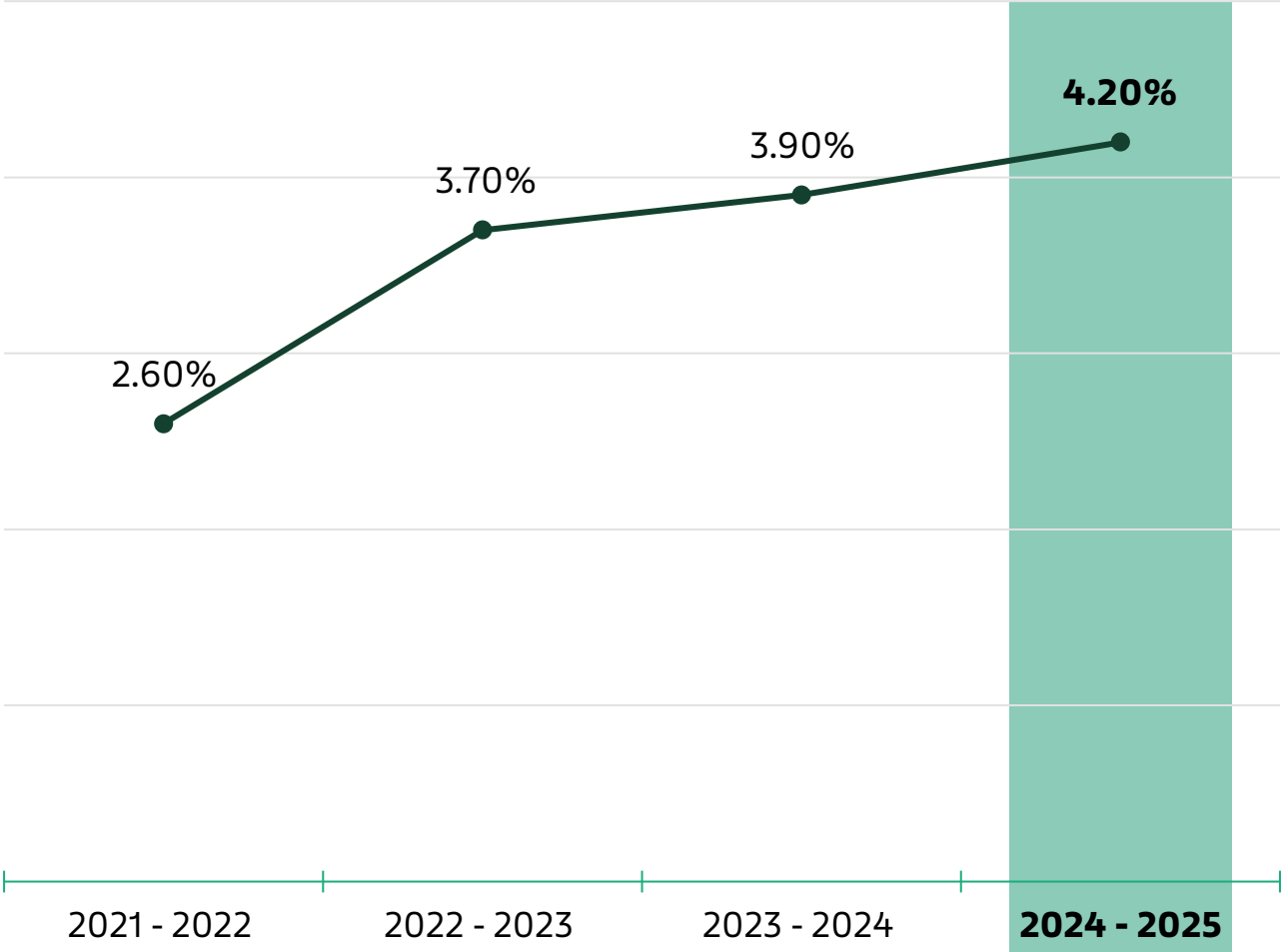
Next steps

- Reviewing our support for Andropause, PCOS, Endometriosis and PMDD so we have a wide range of support available for menstrual health.
- Continuing to increase awareness of mental health and wellbeing through an annual wellbeing event calendar.
- Reviewing our understanding and support of colleagues who are neurodiverse.
- Increasing our data on colleagues and customers disabilities, including neurodiversity, to help us provide appropriate support
- We will continue to support the wellbeing and mental health of our customers through tailored services.

Race

Colleagues

Ethnic minority colleagues



Our ethnic minority employees make up 4.2% of our colleagues. This is increasing year on year but is still below our target of 7%.

Ethnicity pay gap

Our Mean Ethnicity Pay gap is 0.9% in 2024, up from 0.2% in 2023. The mean White British hourly pay was £19.52 per hour, whilst the mean Non-White British hourly pay was £19.34, which is the equivalent to £347 difference per year for a full-time worker. Our median ethnicity pay gap is 4.7% in 2024, up from 1.4% in 2023. The median White British employee earned £18.76 per hour, whilst the median Non-White British employee earned £17.87 per hour, which is the equivalent of £1717 difference per year for a full-time worker.

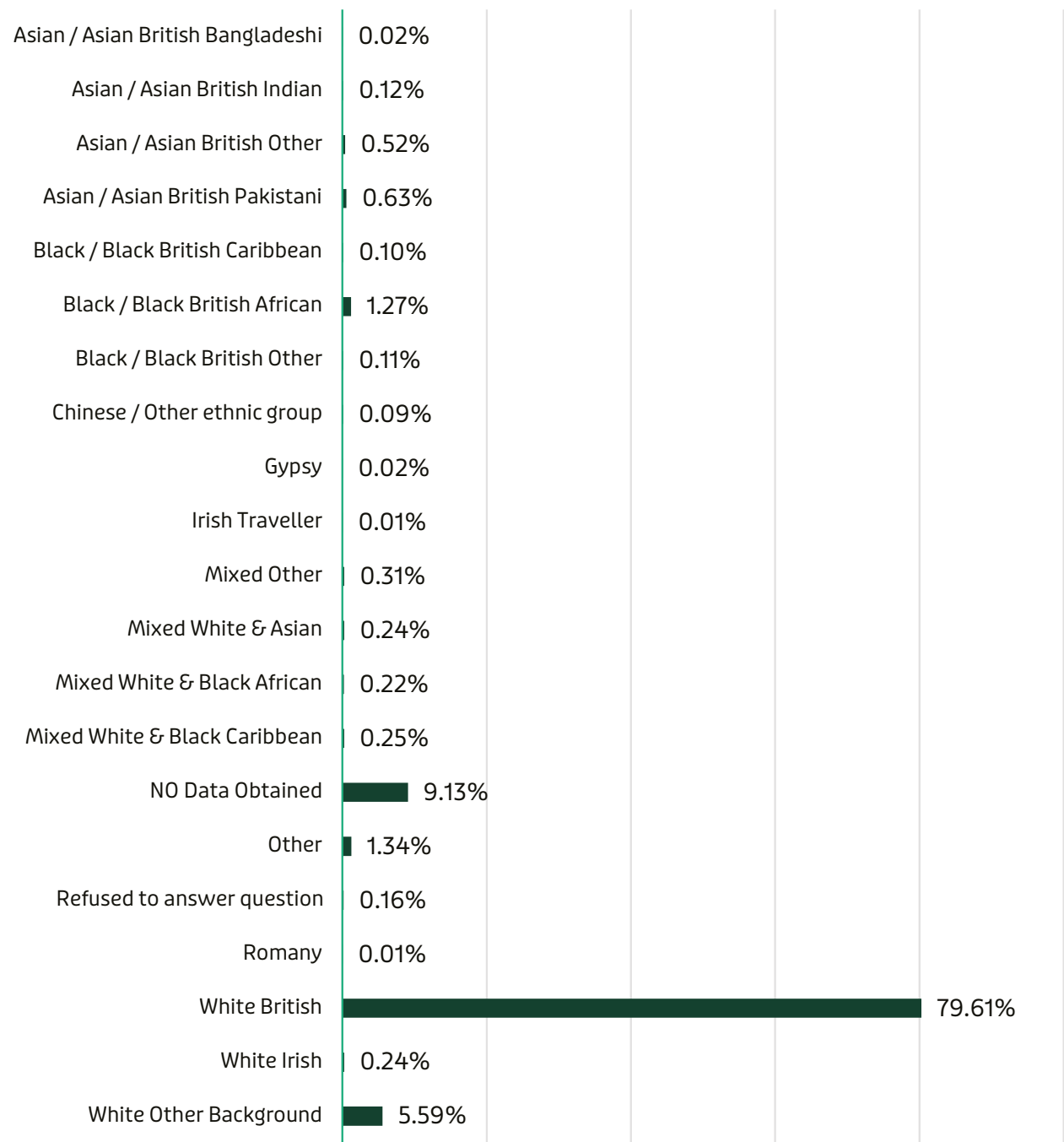
At the moment our ethnicity pay gap is not significant and our priority is increasing the percentage of ethnically diverse colleagues in Vico Homes.

We are committed to achieving racial equality

We know that our workforce is not representative of our customers with only 4.2% of colleagues from an ethnically diverse background, compared to 7% in the Wakefield district (Wakefield Census 7%). To help us bridge this gap we have committed to working with Oke Eleazu, Director of Elevate Colour, to increase inclusivity and representation in our workplace through the Enlightened Leadership Programme. To kickstart our partnership, we were treated to a motivational presentation, in October 2024, on the need for greater diversity in business and in leadership roles. Oke outlined the important role all of us play, as leaders, in ‘elevating’ diverse groups, particularly ethnically diverse groups, to ‘arrive, survive and thrive’ in our organisation. Oke then launched the Enlightened Leadership Programme in January 2025 for all heads of service, managers, service directors and Executive Directors. The programme focuses leaders on the capabilities that are required of them in a truly inclusive environment. For ethnically diverse leaders to thrive it’s important to create the right environment. To achieve this all leaders must understand their role in creating this environment for change.

Race

Customers



Root Out Racism

We are deeply committed to racial equality and to fostering a workplace and community where everyone is treated with dignity, respect, and fairness. We have a zero tolerance approach to racism which is why we continue to align ourselves with the Root Out Racism movement, reaffirming our pledge to actively challenge racism in all its forms. Our EmbRACE colleague-led network plays a crucial role in advancing our commitment to identifying and dismantling racial inequities. Comprised of colleagues from a wide range of ethnically diverse backgrounds, the group brings invaluable lived experience and collective insight that help shape our approach to racial equity. Their contributions ensure our services are more culturally responsive and better aligned with the needs of our diverse customer base.

Through open dialogue, education, and allyship, we continue to foster a more inclusive environment which is why we are working in partnership with West Yorkshire Police to explore how we can improve the ways in which our colleagues and customers safely report hate crime. This collaboration aims to strengthen trust, enhance reporting mechanisms, and ensure that all individuals feel protected and supported.

Interpreters

Our customers speak a variety of languages, so we use Language Line to enable our colleagues to communicate with everyone. Language Line is a 24-hour phone interpreting service, which provides immediate access to qualified interpreters.

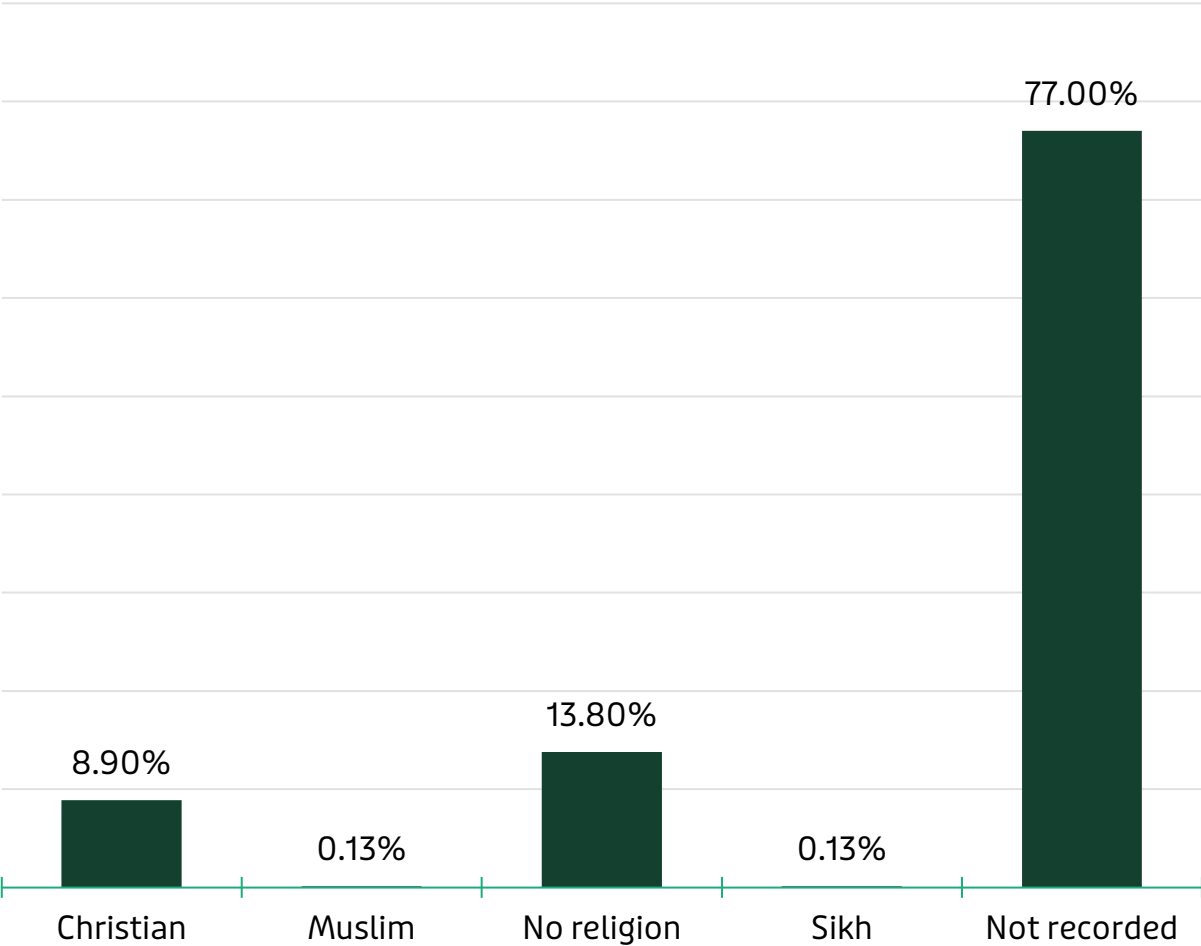
We met with representatives of Wakefield Councils Resettlement Team to discuss attending and supporting the work they do with refugees. We will attend future drop-in sessions to promote services we offer to enable people to sustain their tenancies. It is hoped we will be able to recruit attendees to take part in one of the many customer influence opportunities Vico Homes offers.

Next steps

- The Enlightened Leadership Programme will be delivered to all line managers in 2025-2026 to help create a more inclusive environment for diverse colleagues.
- The EmbRACE group will continue to promote awareness and understanding of ethnic diversity.
- We will increase our data on ethnic diversity for customers and colleagues.

Religion

Colleagues



Our data shows that 13.8% of our employees have 'no religion', 8.9% of our employees are Christian, 0.13% are Muslim, and 0.13% are Sikh. The number of colleagues who we hold no data has reduced, as this data is now collected as part of the onboarding process.

Cultural Diversity

At Vico Homes, cultural diversity is more than a reflection of our global society and it is a powerful asset that drives innovation, creativity, and resilience within our organisation. By embracing a workforce rich in different backgrounds, perspectives, and lived experiences, we unlock new ways of thinking and problem solving. This diversity enhances our ability to connect with a broader range of clients and communities, fosters inclusive decision-making, and strengthens our reputation as an employer of choice.

In 2024, we continued to champion cultural diversity as our Colleague-led network group EmBRACE led on World Culture Day celebrations. We partnered with external businesses from ethnic backgrounds who provided Jamaican and African cuisine. We engaged with our colleagues by displaying a large world map and them to put a pin in the countries which they have visited where English may not be their first language. This sparked great discussions about their experiences. We didn't stop there.

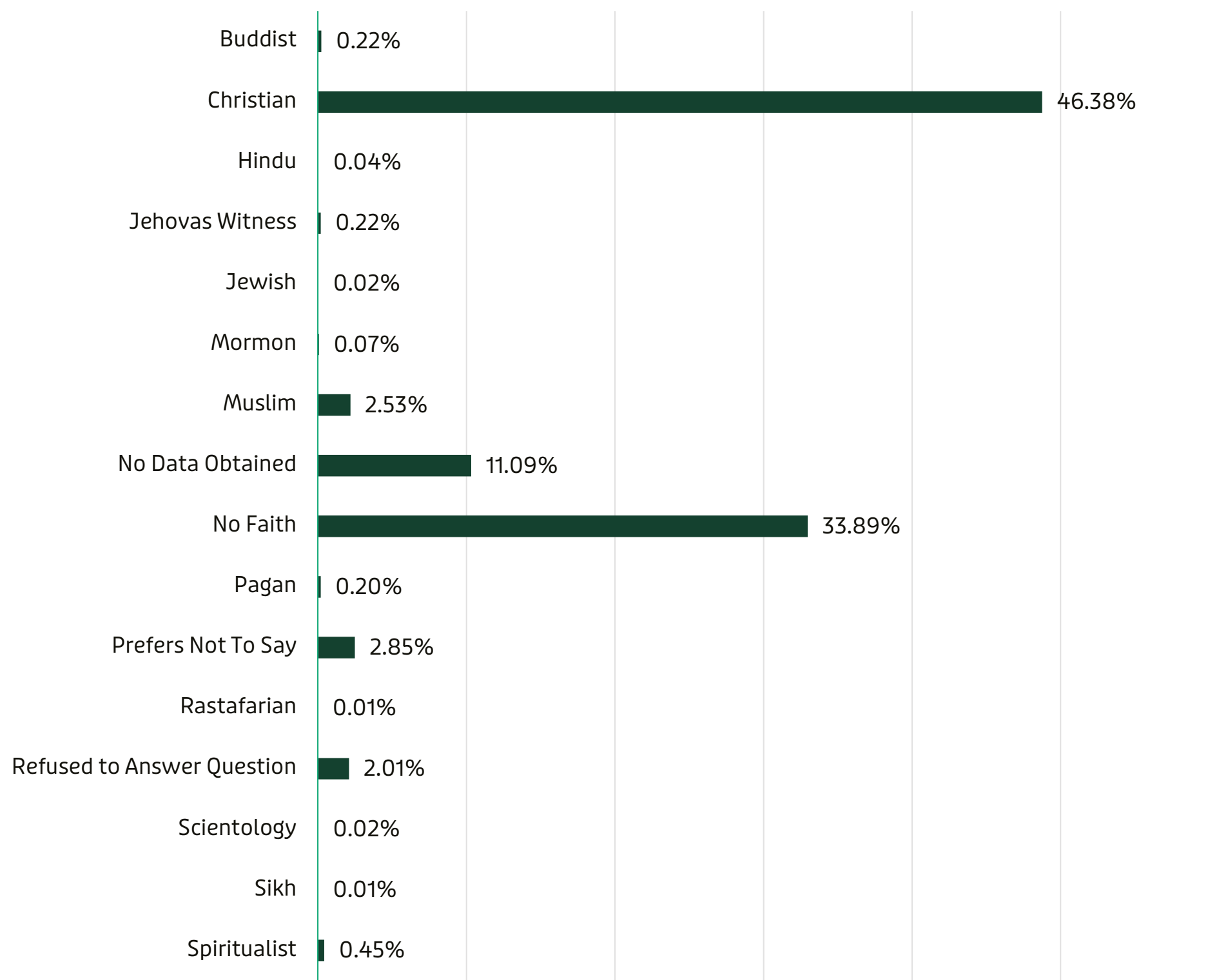
We also

- displayed cultural artefacts from Jamaica, Barbados, Kenya, Japan and more which our colleagues brought in as part of their heritage.
- Colleagues wore their cultural traditional wear.
- Listen to music from around the world.
- Invited colleagues to get involved in our confidently curious campaign where they were encouraged to write down questions about different cultures without judgement, which were later put into a question and answer.

View our diversity and inclusion page to read more about what our colleague-led network groups have done to promote inclusivity and awareness.

Religion

Customers



Celebrating and raising awareness

Our customers have a range of religious beliefs. It is important that everyone’s religion is valued and respected. We use our social media pages to raise awareness of and celebrate the different religions of our customers.

Shared calendars

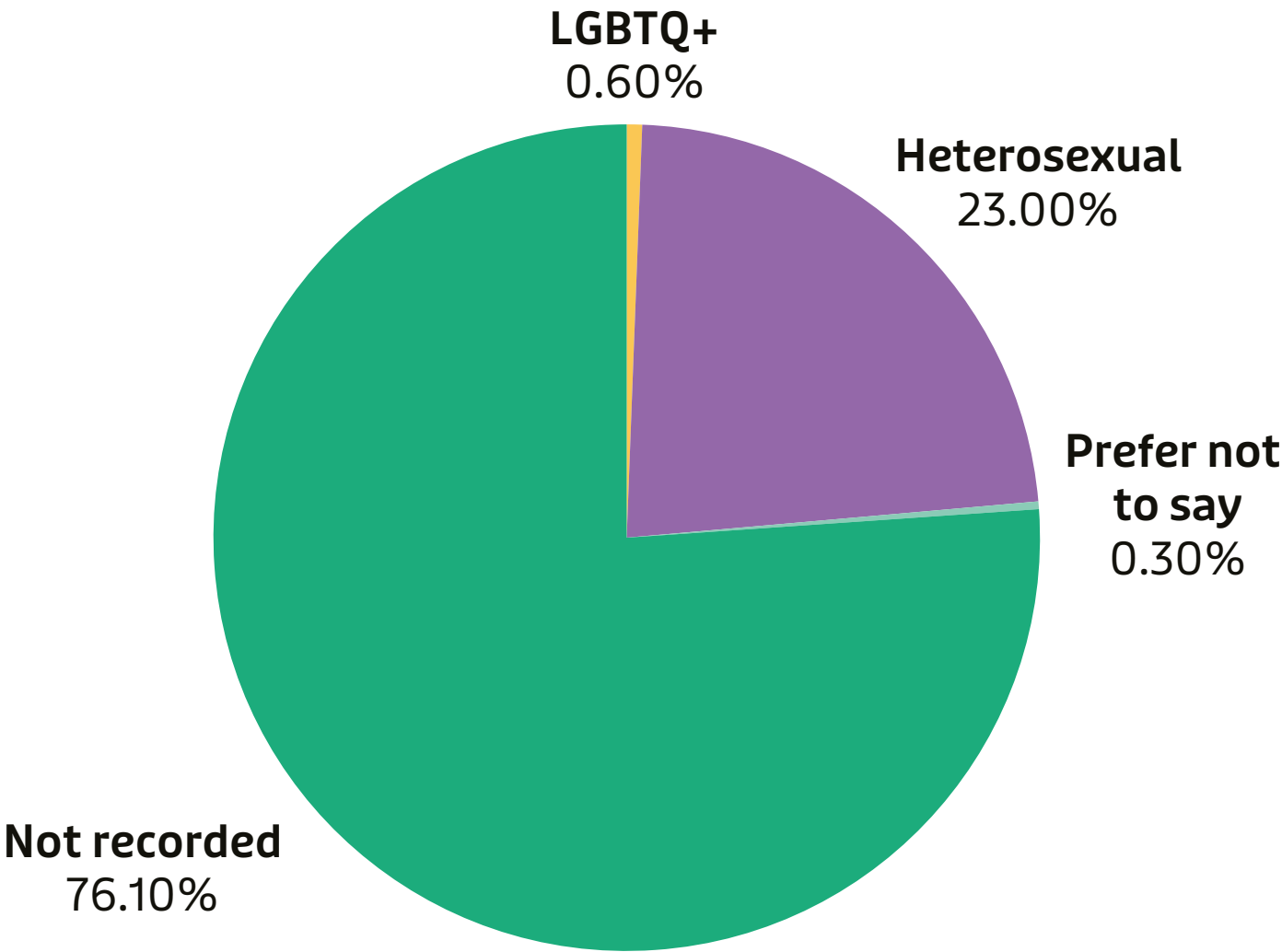
We consider all religious festivals when planning our resident involvement activities to make sure our residents’ faiths do not become a barrier to participating in our activities. We have a shared calendar which is populated with religious festivals.

Next Steps

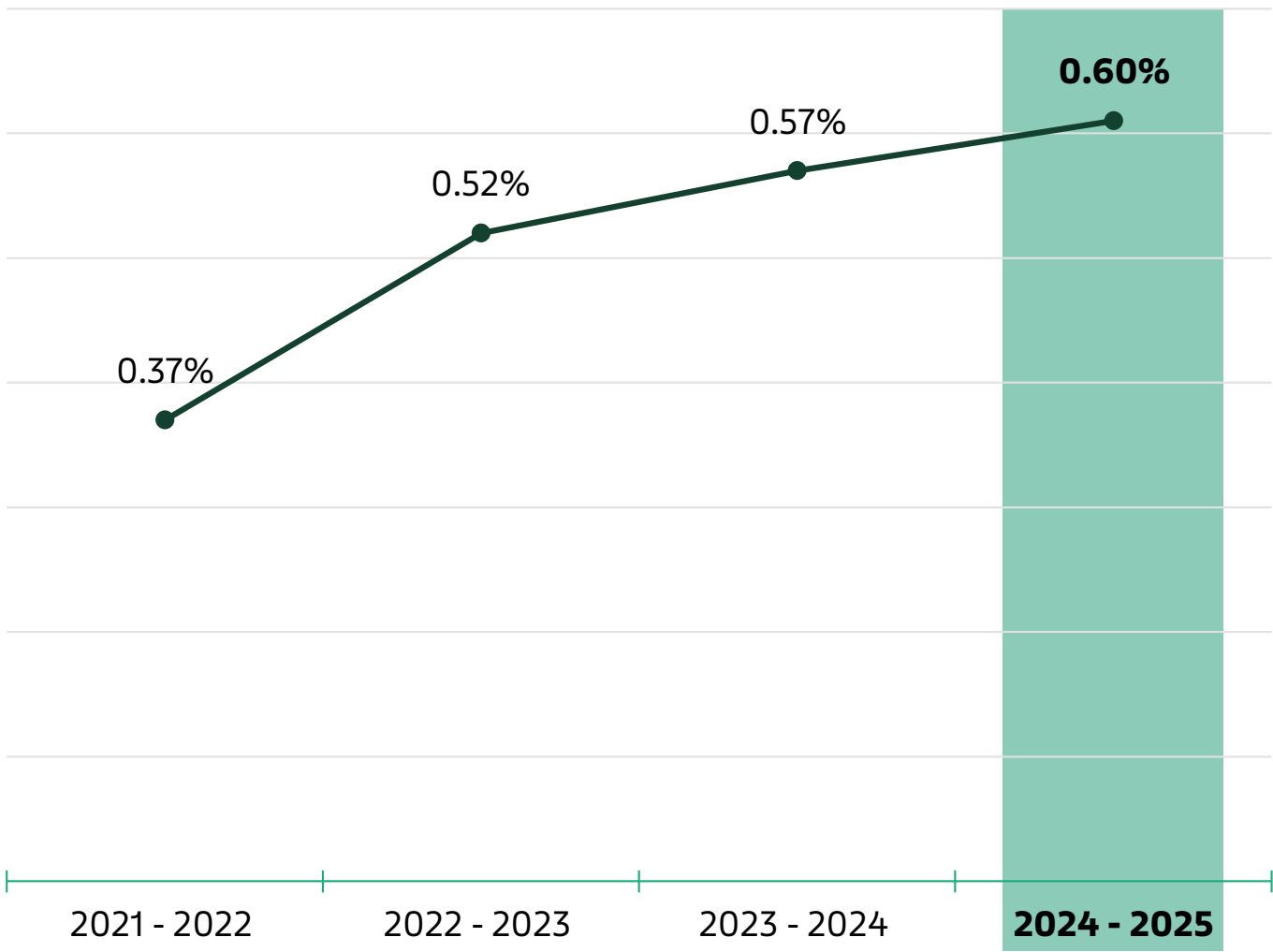
- We will increase our data on religions for customers and colleagues.
- We will continue to increase knowledge, awareness and understanding of different religions through awareness events and communications.

Sexual orientation

Colleagues



LGBTQ+ colleagues



The data we hold shows that 23% of employees have told us they are Heterosexual, and 0.62% of employees have told us they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or other. This demonstrates the need to gather data on the sexual orientation of our colleagues as there is a large gap in terms of data (see Diversity and inclusion section).

Increasing LGBTQ+ awareness

We continue to increase LGBTQ+ awareness across our organisation through education, visibility, and meaningful engagement such as Pride celebrations and the visibility of our rainbow lanyard and rainbow coloured laces. Over 200 of our colleagues have changed their corporate lanyards to a rainbow lanyard which is a recognised symbol of allyship to the LGBTQ+ community. Some of our trade colleagues have also been wearing rainbow-coloured laces. With many colleagues now wearing rainbow colours when visiting our customers' homes and working in our communities, this further shows our commitment to being an inclusive organisation and our solidarity and support for the LGBTQ+ community.

Our Pride Network group has led on celebrations for Pride Month and Wakefield Pride (see our Diversity and Inclusion section for more details).

Working with LGBTQ+ specialist organisations

We are pleased to share that we have become a Stonewall Champion by partnering with Stonewall to gain advice and support to develop policies and practices in line with LGBTQ+ best practice.

We have signed up to the HouseProud pledge. The LGBTQ+ Housing Pledge, created by HouseProud and delivered by Stonewall Housing, is a scheme which all social housing providers can sign up to, to demonstrate their commitment to LGBTQ+ resident equality and support. This means that we will commit to several pledges in the next 12 months, including working alongside customers as well as colleagues, looking at our policies and procedures, working with support from senior leaders, increasing evidence of visibility, and providing training opportunities. This pledge will be impactful not only to colleagues but to customers too so they can visibly understand its purpose and our commitment to understanding the challenges LGBTQ+ residents face and being as inclusive as possible.

The Chair of our Pride group, Jonathan Hill, said:

“Work is already ongoing to put our commitments to this pledge into practice, and we will keep updating our progress. By taking these steps, we aim to achieve Pledge Pioneer status. I’m proud we are investing so much into making a safe space for our LGBTQ+ colleagues, customers, partners and stakeholders and taking in consideration issues faced by the LGBTQ+ community when it comes to shaping and improving our services. We celebrate diversity and continue to create a workforce and service where everyone feels free to be who they are.”

Our Chief Executive and Pride group sponsor, Martyn Shaw, added:

“When I was given the opportunity to sign the pledge it was a very easy choice for me to make. Our Pride group has made waves this past year since forming, and working towards this pledge shows our commitment to making our community as diverse, inclusive and visible as possible.

“We want to make sure we have the best possible foundations to support our LGBTQ+ colleagues and customers. Both a workplace and a home should be a safe place where people can be their true selves without fear or discrimination. I am certainly very proud to sponsor the group, and I look forward to seeing the further excellent work and progress that will come from taking the pledge.”

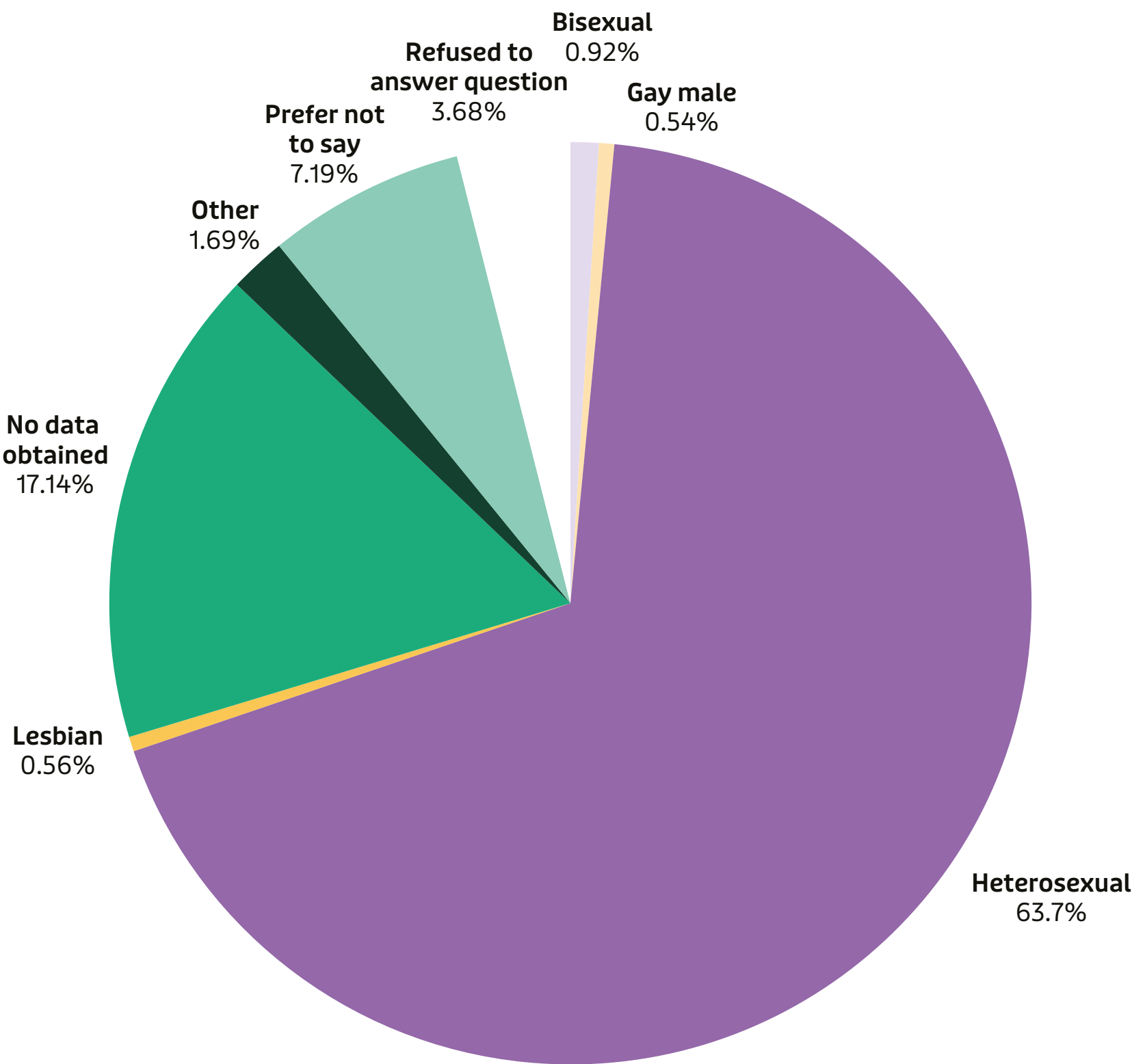
Dave Thorpe, our Service Director for Technical Services said:

“As Service Director sponsor of the Pride CLN I am really proud of this significant step, making our pledge and signing up to HouseProud. It is important that we do this as we do some amazing things already in our organisation to support EEDI and this pledge really unites us with other providers in the housing sector.

“Making a level playing field for the people who work here and live in our homes and communities is important to me and this is another step that really demonstrates our unwavering support, allegiance and commitment to the LGBTQ+ community.”

Sexual orientation

Customers



Celebrating Pride

At Vico Homes inclusivity underpins our core values. We believe an inclusive work environment benefits everyone, as inclusion fosters belonging, purpose, and wellbeing. Each of us holds individual responsibility for cultivating an inclusive culture within our community and for practicing allyship. An ally is someone who actively supports and promotes inclusivity, regardless of their own identity, making allyship a vital force in advancing our inclusive culture.

As usual we were excited to attend Wakefield Pride on Sunday 11 August. Our Pride colleague-led network proudly took control leading the celebrations at Wakefield Pride, setting up an engaging and informative stall that connected with residents, shared resources, gadgets and other goodies to showcase our commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion. The event provided a platform for meaningful conversations, strengthened community ties, and visibly demonstrated our support for diverse identities. Participation from colleagues across departments reflected our collective dedication to allyship and helped raise awareness of the importance of inclusive practices both inside and outside the workplace.

Nest steps

- Continue to raise awareness and understanding of LGBTQ+ community through internal and external events.
- To work towards Pledge Pioneer Status for HouseProud.
- To increase our data on LGBTQ+ colleagues.

Marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity

Colleagues

WorkSmart and flexible working

WorkSmart working is where flexibility becomes the norm rather than the exception. It gives colleagues working at any level within Vico Homes more choice of where and when they work, subject to their job role and business considerations. We offer colleagues a range of WorkSmart options which supports them in managing their work life balance. Sometimes, this can mean working at home, in an office or for some, out in the community supporting customers. WorkSmart is an informal arrangement for working in a flexible way which is agreed on an ad-hoc basis in line with operational and customer needs. However it provides an opportunity for a great work life balance.

Our premises are designed to support a more hybrid approach, such as hot desking, meeting rooms equipped with virtual technology and our colleagues have access to the equipment they need to work remotely.

To ensure a healthy work-life balance, we offer:

- 26 days holiday (rising to 31 after five years' service) (Annual leave is pro-rata for part-time employees).
- An extra day off on your birthday, plus bank holidays and an annual leave purchase scheme.

For formal, agreed flexible working arrangements we have a flexible working policy.

This was relaunched in 2022 to all colleagues, particularly promoting compressed hours. Since then, over 20% of have moved onto this work pattern and an additional 10% of colleagues have a flexible working pattern such as part-time working. By offering a better work-life balance whilst meeting business needs ensures we attract and keep the best colleagues. Colleagues have the right to request a range of flexible working options including part-time, term-time and compressed hours from day one of joining us.

Supporting families through shared parental leave

Vico Homes is dedicated to supporting families of all types and promoting gender equality in the workplace which is why we are proud to offer Shared Parental Leave (SPL). Eligible colleagues can access SPL and statutory shared parental pay if they are expecting a baby or adopting a child. This policy provides parents with greater flexibility in how they share time off following the birth or adoption of a child. This approach helps promote a more balanced division of caregiving responsibilities ensuring parents feel equally valued both at home and at work. SPL becomes available when a partner chooses to end their maternity or adoption leave or pay early. The remaining leave can then be shared between both parents, with statutory shared parental pay available for the remaining eligible weeks. SPL can be taken in up to three separate blocks, offering flexibility to suit each family's needs. Both parents can decide how to divide the leave, provided they meet the eligibility criteria.

Maternity package

Vico Homes have extensive maternity provisions which offer above the statutory requirements. We are committed to supporting all colleagues who wish to take maternity leave, and also offer the SPL which may enhance colleagues Worklife balance opportunities.

Gifts for new babies

We are committed to being a caring, compassionate, and family-friendly employer who values our colleagues not only as professionals but also as individuals with personal lives. Welcoming a new baby into the world is a wonderful, milestone occasion worth celebrating and so we plan to do just that. To celebrate the arrival of our colleagues' new babies, we are delighted to be working in partnership with LITTLE MOUSE, a small independent business that offers high quality, sustainable and ethically sourced clothing and gifts, to provide new baby gift boxes for all new arrivals.

Marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, and socioeconomic factors

Customers

Cash Wise: Healthier Wealthier Wakefield Families

Through our Healthier Wealthier Wakefield Families (HWWF) partnership with Public Health, we are supporting young families across the district to make improvements in their household finances and, in turn, influence more positive health and wellbeing outcomes.

Delivered by our Cash Wise team, the HWWF project received 766 referrals during 2024 / 2025 and secured just under £1,082,823. of financial help for young families.

Through the HWWF project, we also engage with other support agencies and professionals across the district, providing training that highlights financial issues mutual customers may be facing, how to spot signs of financial difficulty and how to broach this conversation with customers and refer on to appropriate services. We delivered 146 events / training sessions throughout 2024:

- Evaluation data. After Cash Wise support improvement in wellbeing in clients: 100%
- Improvement in financial capability: 99%

Through this partnership we are helping to strengthen the wider financial support offer within Wakefield during a time of great financial strain.

Charitable donations

Our colleagues donated Easter eggs which were delivered to Airedale Foodbank to distribute to those in need throughout the district.

Each year we organise a Christmas charity appeal to gather donations of children's toys and food.

In 2023, we raised £7,500 from colleagues' contributions and to help charities including:

- The Clothing Bank Brotherton
- Tiny Hands Baby Bank, South Elmsall
- Coppafeel! Breast cancer charity
- Andy's Man Club (specified to be invested in West Yorkshire)
- Chickenley Community Centre
- Airedale Foodbank
- Airedale Baby Bank
- Wakefield Community Choir

In addition, colleagues also supported our Christmas appeal for Tiny Hands by supporting families across West Yorkshire to ensure many children and vulnerable adults received presents to open on Christmas morning. Employees supported by donating gifts and by buying raffle tickets which raised over £850.

We also turned a meeting room into a wrapping station and some colleagues used their volunteering day to come along and support by wrapping gifts for the appeal. We wrapped 80 bags of gifts, which in total was 1,200 presents!

Ready for tenancy course

We delivered this course to 74 colleagues on a one-to-one basis to help them to gain the skills needed to manage their home. The course covers money management, prioritising bills and understanding the tenancy agreement.

Finding employment

We have a team of Community Employment Advisors who support customers to look for work, find a better job or a training opportunity. We help with CVs, job searches, completing application forms and interview techniques. In addition, we have a specialist advisor for self-employment, supporting customers who want to start their own business or grow their existing business.

Managing income

Our Cash Wise Financial Inclusion Team has been supporting our customers and Wakefield residents with their finances and providing help to maximise income for over a decade.

We deliver a range of support over the phone and online as well as face-to-face support within community locations, our Hubs and within our customers' homes. We know that financial issues can be difficult to discuss and so we provide support where and how our customers feel most comfortable, in a private and confidential manner.

Over the last year we have:

- received over 12,628 referrals for financial support.
- helped customers secure over £5m of financial help from successful benefit and grant awards and utility savings.
- helped households access over £65,000 of food support from local foodbanks to relieve acute food poverty during the cost of living crisis, whilst supporting local foodbanks through our Foodbank Fund.



Training for Employment

The Training for Employment Programme helps unemployed customers gain employability skills through a paid role for up to 12 months. The programme provides training, work experience, support and mentoring. At the end of the programme our customers are in a better position when applying for further employment. 86% of placements moved onto further employment or training over a 12 month period to the end of March 2025.

Targeted engagement

Our Community Employment Advisors have engaged with 500 people, provided 131 employment outcomes, 195 training outcomes and 9 new businesses have commenced trading.

Helping homeless people

We work in partnership with Wakefield Council to help to reduce the number of people who are homeless in our community. Our Tenancy Ready Team supports homeless people to find a home. Last year, we engaged with 314 homeless applicants, completing early assessments to identify barriers to housing and provide support to overcome those barriers at an earlier stage.

Discrimination, harassment and victimisation are not tolerated in our neighbourhoods

We are committed to tackling all forms of discrimination, harassment or victimisation that are motivated by prejudice or intolerance towards others. We adopt a victim-centred approach to provide support for those who suffer hate behaviour. Support is offered within 48 hours by our dedicated Community Safety Team. We ensure that appropriate enforcement action is taken, and we work with a range of partners who help us achieve this, including Wakefield Council, West Yorkshire Police, and Victim Support.

Next steps

- To continue to provide flexible options to colleagues to ensure we are attractive as an employer, whilst meeting customers needs.
- To continue to provide holistic support to families in need, including financial support.

Diversity and inclusion

We are committed to fostering a workplace where every individual feels valued, respected, and empowered to be their authentic self. To help us understand how we are achieving this for different groups we need to both increase the data we have on our customers and ensure we have colleague-led networks (CLNs) that support the needs of different marginalised groups. CLNs is the new name for Employee-Resource Groups and has been changed in line with our culture and branding.

Our commitment to inclusion and the importance of diversity data

We recognise that to be representative of the communities we serve, we must understand the diversity of our workforce. Currently, we have only partial data, which limits our ability to measure the diverse makeup of our colleagues and, just as importantly, to take meaningful action to improve. To address this, we will be encouraging all colleagues to complete a voluntary diversity questionnaire. This will help us build a clearer picture of our workforce and ensure that Vico Homes continues to grow as an inclusive and welcoming place for everyone.

Understanding our diversity profile is essential for several reasons:

- Pay equity: It enables us to identify and explain any pay gaps between demographic groups. Where gaps cannot be explained by role or experience, this may highlight unconscious bias or gaps in development and promotion opportunities, issues we are committed to addressing.
- Fair processes: It allows us to analyse hiring, promotion, grievance, and exit data by demographic group, helping us understand patterns and take action where needed.
- Access to benefits: It helps us see which groups are accessing benefits and support, and where more targeted communication or resources may be needed.

Collecting and using this data responsibly and transparently is a key step in our journey toward a more inclusive and equitable workplace.

All our CLNs are sponsored by a member of Vico Executive Team. Each group has a significant voice in shaping our business objectives and performance so we can become an employer of choice for future generations.

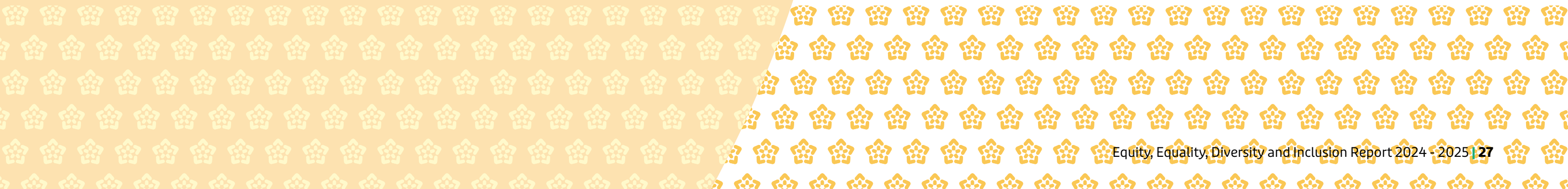
Here's a look at what our CLNs have accomplished throughout 2024:

Pride Network

Sponsored by Martyn Shaw, Chief Executive

For members of the LGBTQ+ community and allies, working to identify strategies to support visibility and representation. Other achievements include:

- As mentioned, we have Partnered with Stonewall and signed to LGBTQ+ Housing pledge.
- Led on Pride Month where colleagues met our network group, enjoyed our music list, information stands, decorations, free giveaways and an interactive quiz all of which provided meaningful information about LGBTQ+ community.
- Wakefield Pride where we celebrated in the community with hundreds of others to recognise Pride is not just colours, parades and inspiring celebrations, it's about showing solidarity in the face of discrimination, demanding equality, being accepted and respected, feeling safe in your choices, and feeling free to love yourself. A sentiment we stand by as an inclusive community and an ally. Not just for a month but always.





EmbRACE Network

Sponsored by Sarah Roxby, Executive Director of Customers and Communities

Working together to foster a workplace culture that celebrates racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity within Vico Homes and the community. Achievements include:

- As mentioned, we celebrated World Culture Day in style showcased by our talented ethnic colleagues.
- We proudly led our Black History Month celebrations, coming together to recognise and honour the outstanding contributions and achievements of Black individuals throughout history and in our communities today. This year's theme, reclaiming narratives, focused on challenging the historical marginalisation of Black voices and instead spotlighted stories of resilience, success, and empowerment. As part of the month's activities, several of our Black colleagues shared personal reflections on what the theme meant to them by offering powerful insights that deepened understanding and connection across our organisation. These stories served as a reminder of the importance of representation and the value of lived experience in shaping inclusive narratives.
- We committed to working with Oke Eleazu, Director of Elevate Colour with support from our EmbRACE to increase inclusivity and representation of black and ethnic minorities in our workplace through the Elevate Programme.
- We are collaborating with West Yorkshire Police to better understand how we can improve the way our colleagues can report hate crime.

The Future Workforce

Sponsored by Tracy Tallant, Strategic Director of People and Culture

Providing support to our younger colleagues (aged 16-25) with career development, health and wellbeing support and preparation for their financial future. The group led on events and supported initiatives which ensure that our young colleagues are heard and feel valued. Achievements include:

- Successfully supported the business to increase the number of young colleagues into the business.
- Pitched the idea of a dragon's den initiative to senior leadership which would give young colleagues, apprentices, T Level students and graduates, a new opportunity to pitch bold, meaningful ideas that could shape the future of our organisation and the communities we serve. This initiative was so well received we will be launching Vico Homes: Dragon's Den – Young Innovators late 2025. Two of our existing graduates were promoted into first level leadership roles, which confirms that we appoint individuals not only for their potential but also for their capability to grow and lead within our organisation.
- Supported an apprenticeship open evening event, providing prospective applicants, particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds with the opportunity to engage directly with current colleagues in apprenticeship roles and those that are in teams where a new vacancy will be upcoming, which help with fostering transparency, inclusivity, and informed career decision making.
- Influenced the business to increase the diversity of dietary selections adding oat milk as a regular selection of milk choice
- Delivered interview skills workshops to support and empower other young colleagues, helping them to build their confidence, enhance employability, and promote equitable access to career development opportunities.

EmpowHER

Sponsored by Sue Young, Executive Director of Homes and Growth

Supporting women to achieve success within Vico Homes and the housing sector.

International Women’s Day celebration is always a great way for us to focus on women initiatives. This year theme was accelerate action and following the success from last year’s event, we celebrated by hosting a talk and networking lunch where we heard from Christiana Durodola, our Financial Information Manager, about her journey so far and how she accelerated action to drive her own career forward. The session was chaired by Cash Wise Team Leader and EmpowHER Chair, Keely Duggan.

After the talk, colleagues were able to network over lunch along with the opportunity to speak to Women in Social Housing (WISH), our Wellbeing Champions, Menopause Champions, Well Women and RiSE participants.

Accessibility and Wellbeing Network

Sponsored by Neil Warren, Executive Director of Resources

Supporting colleagues who are impacted one way or another by a disability, the group led on Neurodivergence Celebration Week by inviting our colleagues to attend a series of interactive and informative webinars that aimed to provide valuable insights for both neurodivergent colleagues and neurotypical allies. Session included topics such as:

- Celebrating different minds - An Introduction to neurodiversity
- Neurodivergence and LGBTQIA+
- A conversation on identity, intersectionality and empowerment
- Empowering neurodiversity in the workplace and much more.

These enabled colleagues to learn more about neurodiversity and contribute to building a more inclusive workplace culture by:

- Learning more about practical strategies for inclusive leadership.
- Understand intersectionality and its importance.
- Network with colleagues and share experiences.

A Message from our Chair of Accessibility and Wellbeing Colleague Network:

“The impact of inclusion is very close to my heart. Just before joining Vico Homes, I was put under assessment for autism and ADHD by psychologists at the age of 27 years. Understanding and accepting that in my personal and professional life felt entirely impossible and had me questioning a lot of things

“If I had known sooner, would I have gained the support I so desperately needed? Would I feel less like I’m failing in comparison to those around me? Would I have achieved better? Been more successful? The idea that I had gone through almost 3 decades of my life struggling and that there’s a reason it can’t be fixed, no matter how hard I try, was difficult to comprehend.

“It’s been over a year of being on waiting lists, filling in assessments galore, coming to accept it all has been supported by people at WDH who probably didn’t even realise that their encouragement would help me so much.

“Running Autism Awareness events and training, establishing an Employee Resource Group and getting neuroinclusive Sensory Nook spaces approved on-site have been huge wins. Connecting with others and seeing how inclusion initiatives have helped them has helped me to understand that everyone has challenges and to accept my own.

“If in a year, feeling included, accepted and understood can do all of that for me, just one person, imagine the impact it can have on everyone, especially those who have experienced marginalisation all their lives.”



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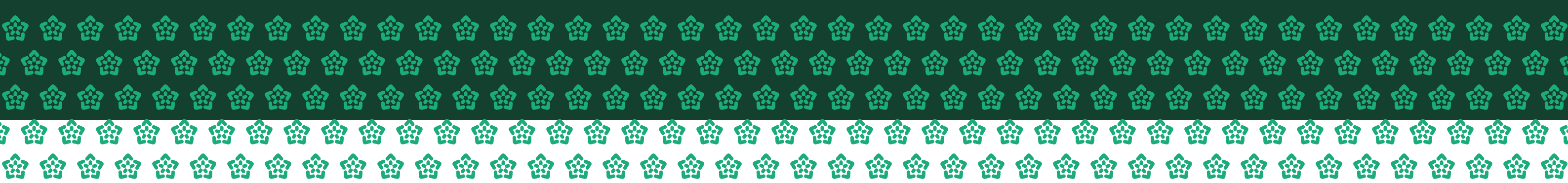
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Vico Homes Limited

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They reflect Vico Homes current view and no assurance can be given that they will prove to be correct.