



Old Oak and Park Royal  
Development Corporation

# Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2022-2023

---

**MAYOR OF LONDON**

# Contents

3	<b>Introduction</b>
5	<b>Key Highlights</b>
6	<b>Internal Focus: What we have done so far?</b>
15	<b>External focus: What we have done so far?</b>
25	<b>Testimonials</b>

# 1. Introduction

*“Last year we published our first Equity, Diversity and Inclusion strategy. This set out a five-year plan for how we will deliver our pledge to embed EDI in everything we do – as a workplace and employer and, most importantly, in our work with local communities and partners to create a truly equitable, accessible and inclusive urban district in Old Oak and Park Royal. This update sets out the progress we have made over the last 12 months, and how we will build on this to entrench EDI more thoroughly in all that we do.”*

**David Lunts,**  
Chief Executive Officer



**David Lunts**  
Chief Executive Officer





We are fortunate to work with some of the most diverse and lively communities in the UK, and our project won't succeed unless we listen carefully and respectfully to their many voices, and reflect their experiences, challenges and hopes for the future as we develop our plans, programmes and projects. Over the last year we have worked hard to deliver on this commitment, not least in the deep community engagement exercise to develop ideas for Old Oak West, our work with local small businesses, and ongoing EDI training, volunteering and lived experience sessions for colleagues at OPDC.

We will continue to challenge ourselves to become a truly equitable and inclusive organisation that seeks the widest spectrum of views from all our communities and creates a virtuous circle of enhanced understanding, targeted actions and purposeful improvements. EDI is a process of continual feedback and evolution and in that spirit we always welcome feedback from team members, partners, residents or businesses, so do please get in touch if you have any queries or suggestions on this update.

## 2. Key Highlights

### Internal Achievements

1

**43%** of  
new starters from  
a minority ethnic  
background. An increase  
of 4%.

2

**82%**  
of our staff have  
completed EDI  
objectives.

3

Increased diversity in  
our Planning Committee  
Member recruitment -

**40%**  
female, 40% from  
Black, Asian, Minority  
background.

### External Achievements

4

**45,000**  
beneficiaries reached through 21  
local projects funded by the Small  
Grants funding programme

5

Helped **180** local  
residents into work in the OPDC  
area. Of these more than 60% are  
from an ethnic minority background.

6

Increased engagement with  
community members from ethnic  
backgrounds by

**28%**

7

Generated over **25** pieces of  
community-led, grassroots content  
across our communications channels

### 3. Internal Focus: What we have done so far

OPDC wants to be an organisation where our staff feel supported and empowered to reach their true potential regardless of their background, ethnicity, age, gender expression, ability, sexual orientation, or other protected characteristics.

The first section of our EDI strategy focuses internally on our ways of working, processes, values and support mechanisms for our staff. The internal objectives and outcomes outlined in the strategy are highlighted in the diagram below.



#### What we have achieved

We have achieved much over the year to improve our internal processes – as set out below. As a small and young organisation our actions are incremental, building to more ambitious goals within the strategy's five-year timeframe. In particular, over the coming year, we want to focus more on equitable learning and development, to ensure we give all our employees an opportunity to progress.



## Objective 1:

### Create a Culture of Equity and Connection

- Introduced a **New Starter Induction process**, with an EDI focus from day-one. **100% of new starters received a face-to-face introduction to our EDI strategy, mandatory EDI training and receiving engaging information about** our networks and core values. We also have a **Buddying System** in place for all new starters which provide a friendly and supportive introduction to the organisation culture, insights and best practise.
- Launched an **EDI Channel** providing an interactive 'one-stop-shop' for open dialogue, knowledge sharing, and collective efforts to advance our EDI goals. The channel plays a crucial role in promoting awareness, understanding and engagement amongst staff and contribute to creating a more inclusive and equitable workplace culture. Examples include Black History Month, events such as the Women's Network Winter Wellness and Local LGBTQ+ communication.
- We took up membership with **Stonewall, the Diversity Champion Programme** in September 2022 to further our commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion. Our membership has supported the development of our LGBTQ+ Network's Action plan and our forthcoming submission to Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index. During Pride Month, OPDC rolled out an invitation to all staff to share their pronouns in their emails, at meetings and when attending events to show support and solidarity for trans and non-binary people in acknowledging all genders.
- As members of **Inclusive Employers**, we provide staff with external resources like webinars, insight reports and access to a library of practical diversity and inclusion resources. Most recently, Inclusive Employers facilitated an online session for staff to explore what makes an organisation inclusive and how OPDC can take proactive steps to achieve this.





## Objective 2:

### Deliver Open and Inclusive Communication

- **Network Newsbites** is a monthly newsletter created by colleagues for colleagues, providing digestible content focussed on EDI news and issues. It gives staff a platform to champion diversity in the workplace, explore key issues, recommend further reading, events and media and promotes a more inclusive and supportive environment.
- Held **Social Events to Celebrate Diversity**, including an EDI Bake Off where participants created dishes reflecting their heritage and culture, and a theatre trip to see &Juliet.
- OPDC has number of **Staff Networks**, including **Race Equity, LGBTQ+ and Women's Network**. We also have access to the GLA staff networks. Our staff networks play a crucial role fostering a more inclusive, engaged and productive workforce.





## Spotlight Supporting LGBTQ+ Staff and Local People

This year, the LGBTQ+ Network have continued their work to ensure OPDC strengthens itself as a welcoming and supportive workspace for all our LGBTQ+ staff.

In September 2022, OPDC joined Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme and commenced the development of its LGBTQ+ Action Plan.

Our internal communications programme has included Network Newsbites – a monthly update which provides a spotlight for both the LGBTQ+/Queer and Race Equity working groups, highlighting key news and important resources to all staff.

As part of LGBTQ+ History Month, our Network provided all-staff training to 'unpack' the LGBTQ+ acronym. This introduced the rainbow of identities that make up the LGBTQ+ community and provided an overview of the challenges that the community faces. This will enable further training to be rolled out for specific elements. Our Network Co-Chair held a Shared Experience session for Growing Up Gay under Section 28 where he shared his experience of living under homophobic legislation and highlighting the importance of providing inclusive education for all young people.

Our LGBTQ+ Network is working with our planning team to ensure that emerging planning guidance helps to deliver inclusive and accessible places for everyone. This has involved helping to develop best practice guidance shaped by research and peer reviews to understand and meet the needs of groups with protected characteristics.



## Objective 3: Embed Inclusive Recruitment

- We have improved our Inclusive Recruitment practices and processes. This includes 87% of our interview panels being diverse with the drive for more junior members of staff on panels, an inclusive application process with anonymised CV's and screening all interview questions to ensure they are inclusive.
- Enrolled in the Future of London Emerging Talent Programme an inclusive programme aimed at attracting ethnic minority entrants to professional roles within the built environment sector. As part of the programme we have employed a young graduate for a 9-month paid placement in the delivery team.





## Spotlight Inclusive Recruitment

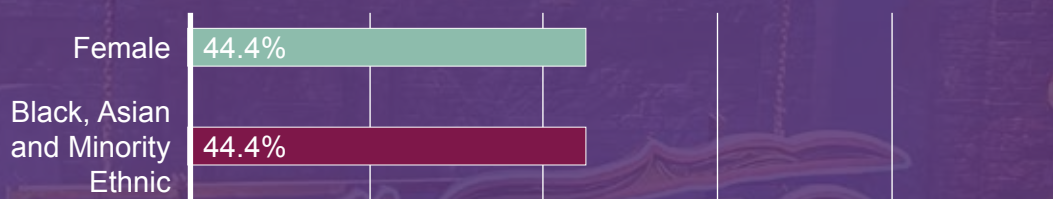
Inclusive recruitment is a part of our broader commitment to diversity and inclusion. Human Resources has focussed on making our hiring processes more inclusive. This is important to us as inclusive hiring means that OPDC will be made up of people from different backgrounds and reflect the communities that we serve. Our Inclusive Recruitment approach has improved the diversity profile of OPDC.

- **Inclusive interview panels** – interview panel members are from a diverse background to ensure balanced representation. More recently we have encouraged our more junior members of staff to attend the Recruitment and Selection training, and to be a part of interview panels.
- **Inclusive application process** – Candidates applying for roles at OPDC are required to submit a CV and covering letter which are anonymised. This approach promotes fairness, objectivity, diversity, and inclusion into the recruitment process leading to more equitable and successful hiring outcomes.
- **Inclusive interview process** – the process includes screening interview questions to ensure they are specific and relevant. An EDI question is always included to assess a candidates' attitude, experience and behaviours related to diversity and inclusion in the workplace. The panel also shares a printed copy of the interview question for candidates for face-to-face interviews or posting the questions in the chat function for virtual interviews, which supports candidates with diverse needs.



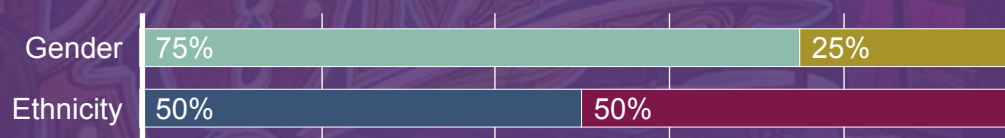
## Diversity Profile of OPDC

### OPDC Board Members as at 31 March 2023

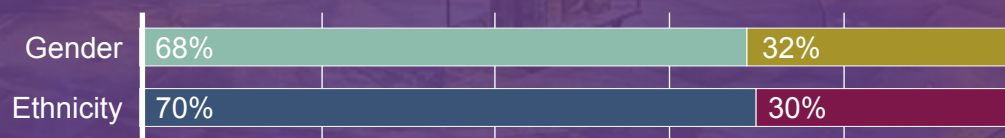


This is considered to be a balanced and diverse board profile.

### Senior Management Team as at 31 March 2023



### Entire Organisation as at 31 March 2023



#### KEY

■ Female 
 ■ Male 
 ■ White 
 ■ Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic





## Objective 4:

### Deliver Equitable Learning and Development

- Launched our Learning and Development Framework to provide staff with a comprehensive and equitable learning and development offer, which includes EDI focused training. Staff are required to complete six mandatory EDI courses and are also encouraged to complete other non-mandatory EDI training. The training includes Let's Talk about Race, Mind Mental Health Awareness, Disability Equality training, Responsible Procurement and Working with Small and Diverse Suppliers, Dignity and Inclusion, Public Sector Equality Duty and Unconscious Bias.



## Internal Focus: Looking Ahead

We will continuously make improvements to create a more inclusive, innovative and high performing work environment.

### Focus areas for 2023/2024 include:



**EDI Staff Survey** - will be launched this year to track our progress against the strategy, measure the impact of our EDI efforts, and allow for employee engagement, accountability, and transparency.



**Learning and Development** - to review our EDI training offer for staff to ensure that it is fit for purpose and achieving our objectives. We will achieve this by collaborating with the GLA and involve staff with proposals.



**LGBTQ+ Network Action Plan and submission to Stonewall Workplace Equality Index** - to help measure our success as an LGBTQ+ inclusive workplace. We will also consider how we can measure LGBTQ+ pay gaps internally.



**Inclusive Recruitment** - to involve benchmarking best practice across the GLA Group. We will review and measure the success of the Future London Emerging Talent placement and consider whether to host another placement. We will further improve our inclusive recruitment practice. This will involve tracking all recruitment campaigns from Grade 10 upwards to assist us with making informed decisions on how we can make improvements. We are keen to explore apprenticeship programmes, and we will collaborate with the GLA Group to establish whether there are any opportunities.



**Mentoring and Talent Management** – OPDC are a member of the HR Collaboration Professional Community (CPC). The CPC are building a mentoring community across the GLA Group which is intended to support all employees in particular underrepresented groups. CPC is also developing a secondment portal where all GLA Group can post opportunities to a wider pool of talent.

## 4. External Focus: What we have done so far

This section of the EDI strategy focuses on our commitment to increasing our understanding of local communities, ensuring diverse representation in our projects, particularly those whose voices have tended to be less heard, and planning for a place that is fully accessible and inclusive, reflecting local needs. Our external objectives and outcomes are highlighted in the diagram below.



### What we have achieved

We have achieved much over the year – as set out below – working closely with local organisations and individuals who represent our diverse communities at Old Oak and Park Royal, through collaborating on communications that promote culture, diversity, and heritage, as well as kick starting and promoting community-led projects.

Over 2023/24 we will continue to drive our efforts to increase our understanding of our local communities, through further research and engagement.



## Objective 1:

Increase our understanding of our local communities

- 37% of staff have engaged in some form of Volunteering within the local community. **Volunteering** has included canal and public realm clean-ups where thousands of bags of rubbish have been cleared, CV writing and interview skills workshops community-led events and career fairs.
- Over **1,000 young people** **benefitted** from OPDC surgeries, talks, workshops, and attendance at careers fairs. To achieve this and maximise reach, we have created partnership working arrangements with local organisations including Imperial Coll (Makers Challenge programme), Park Royal and West London College and Twyford High School & Sixth Form.
- Held **EDI Community Focus Groups** with eight local people from diverse backgrounds who directly influenced actions implemented in our EDI strategy and Action Plan, including the OPDC Food Festival.
- Commissioned a comprehensive **Baseline Study** specifically for the OPDC area, which will build on data from the 2021 Census and collate a holistic and current picture of the demographic and socio-economic make-up of our area.







## Objective 2:

Champion and celebrate the rich diversity of our area

- Delivered a **Small Grants Funding** programme providing support to 21 local community initiatives and 45,000 beneficiaries. The grant awardees provided a variety of services to community such as foodbanks, arts and culture. An example is the initiative by Society Dance! which orchestrated Ground Zero. This event provided a platform for local dancers to showcase their talents and brought community members of all ages, backgrounds and races together to celebrate a shared love of dance.
- Transformed our **Communications Channels**, working with local groups and individuals to deliver over 25 community-led content pieces that celebrate diversity, identity and culture, including newsletter blogs, community led films or interviews within films, community radio and social media takeovers.





- Recruited six **Community Champions** to help us reach less heard voices in the community. Our community champions help us with engagement activities such as Small Grants showcase where we celebrated the grant recipients by exhibiting the great work, they have done in the OPDC area.
- Bespoke **Training and Employment Support for Young People**, including Street Elite, which worked with 15 local young men living in estates in Brent, Ealing and Hammersmith & Fulham aged between 17-25. The young men attended a 14-week academy combining sports activities, training and skills geared towards gaining work.
- Participants learned how to plan and manage sports events, attending the London Sports Trust, a coaching hub which delivers sports and coaching qualifications. To date the Forge has got more than 180 local residents into work in the OPDC area. Of these more than 60% are from an ethnic minority background.
- Hosted the **OPDC Food Festival** brining different food businesses in Park Royal and neighbouring communities together to showcase cuisines from around the world to the public, through market stalls, tastings, demonstrations and walking tours.



## Objective 3:

Ensure diverse representation in our projects and panels

- **Major Procurement EDI Assessments** making it mandatory for all bids to supply EDI action plans which are scored against their commitments to provide training and workshops to local schools, and commitments to employ local people.
- **Improving Supply-Chain Diversity** by measuring spend with SME suppliers, identifying reserve contracts for SMEs, and procuring services through the GLA's Architecture + Urbanism Framework, panel to address the under-representation of women and minority groups in public procurement and promote equality of opportunity in accessing public sector work.
- Promoting the **Mayor's Good Work Standard Accreditation** to existing suppliers, a mark of quality for measures a business has in place, ranging from fair pay and conditions to EDI recruitment practice. We have had several applications and expressions of interest to date.
- **Community Representation on Project Teams and Procurement Panels**, with 21 community members embedded across Harlesden Canalside, Willesden Junction public realm, our Community Review Group, affordable workspace delivery plan and business community study.
- **The Community Review Group Recruitment** delivered an inclusive engagement and application process to recruit new members.



## Objective 4:

Plan for a welcoming, accessible and inclusive place

- Hosted 33 **Community and Stakeholder On-Site Engagement Events**, 70 site visits and attended community engagement sessions hosted by local organisations like HS2, Old Oak Neighbourhood Forum and Maternity Champions. We also attended careers fairs and lived experience talks experience talks about the built environment at local schools, colleges and universities.
- Launched a **Collaborative Co-design** process to understand the diverse needs of local communities to inform future plans for Old Oak West. We engaged over 200 local people across 27 events, including dedicated workshops with groups with protected characteristics, including Acton on Disability, Old Oak Maternity Champions and a range of schools, youth groups and colleges. This has resulted in suggestions from the community to shape the emerging Old Oak West Supplementary Planning Document which provides planning guidance for the area.
- We are embedding equity, diversity and inclusion considerations within emerging **Supplementary Planning Documents** to ensure needs of groups with protected characteristics are met in the built environment.
- Development and promotion of our **Consultation Platform** has increased visits to our platform, including a rise in the percentage of participants from ethnically diverse backgrounds providing rich information.





## Spotlight Accessibility and inclusion in the public realm

A number of projects to support accessibility and inclusion in the public realm have been a key focus for OPDC in the past year, including installation of a ramp at the Old Oak Lane Towpath, designed to comply with the latest accessibility standards.

As well as this, we have made a number of enhancements to Willesden Junction Station, including new public art developed with the community, signage, new planters, a new community noticeboard with lighting, and alterations to cycle canopies and stands. The improvements have front-ended community involvement particularly in the public art element.

Both projects were extensively shaped by views from the local community to ensure the plans best met the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors through surveys, drop-in exhibitions, co-design and online events.



## Spotlight Small Grants Programme

In early 2022, OPDC launched the 2022/23 Small Grants programme. The Small Grants Scheme is a funding programme for community projects that supports our mission to uncover, showcase and celebrate the heritage of London's largest industrial area. The programme supports grass-roots initiatives and less-established community organisations, providing funding to 21 local organisations with £145,000 of funding being awarded in total.

Partnering with these local organisations has allowed OPDC to help champion diversity, inclusion and engagement with local communities, as well as extending volunteering opportunities for colleagues and build deeper connections with local people throughout the OPDC area.

Overall, the 22/23 programme supported a breadth of activities and reached 45,000 beneficiaries. Some examples of projects supported include:

- 1. A-Z book of artists and culture in Old Oak and Park Royal, building on a community zone in 2021 (A Look Into)**
- 2. Artist studios Open Weekend for local residents and families (ArtWest)**
- 3. Food bank, gardening club and day trips (John Keble Primary School)**

In May 2023, together with local residents, OPDC hosted a showcase event for the Small Grants programme. The event - attended by awardees, residents, businesses and councillors exhibited the projects, with talks from the awardees and fantastic performances from talented dancers, singers, and rappers.

## External Focus: Looking Ahead

We have worked hard to progress key external priorities in 2022. However, we are keen to make further progress to achieve our external EDI objectives.

In the year ahead, we will be focussing on a number of key projects, actions and initiatives to enable us to make further meaningful advances within equality, diversity and inclusion.



## Focus areas for 2023/2024 include:



**Extending and focussing our Small Grants** – to roll out a new two-year programme that provides targeted grants to those who need them most, making the funding specifically available to young people, under-represented groups and to support the cost-of-living crisis.



**Community Renumeration** – to adopt a policy for paying local community members London Living Wage to participate in focus groups, panels and steering groups, removing barriers from community participation.



**Launch Ideas Book working** – with local artists from diverse backgrounds to capture community feedback in an engaging and inclusive way. This is a reflection on the co-design sessions held by OPDC for Old Oak West. The Ideas Book will credit all community members who took part to provide a sense of ownership and pride to celebrate the identity of the area.



**Inclusive Consultation and Communications Materials** – by working with local people to better understand how we can make materials more accessible, inclusive and engaging; this will range from making materials multi-media, exploring VR, rolling out translation and Braille and joining community-led channels, including dedicated social media and WhatsApp groups.



**Growing Community Networks** – building on relationships forged with groups representing protected characteristics, like Beyond the Bike, Maternity Champions, Somali Advice Forum and Action on Disability to create an EDI steering group of community champions to peer review OPDC's programmes and projects from an EDI perspective.



**Adoption of Supplementary Planning Documents** – we will continue to shape equitably designed places and spaces embedding EDI requirements into planning guidance to ensure everyone can live, work, visit or travel through the OPDC area easily, safely and comfortably.



**Board Member Commitment and Involvement** – to work closely with our senior non-executive team creating a top-down approach to EDI, setting ambitious targets and ensuring every board member plays their part, engaging local groups on the ground.



## 5. Testimonials

*"Stepping into my role as CFO, I have been struck by how embedded EDI is in everything we do, especially for such a small and young organisation."*

**OPDC staff member**

*"The EDI Strategy has given the LGBTQ+ Network a firm basis to establish itself as a small but ambitious group. This is demonstrated by empowering the network to roll out a number of measures to support both our LGBTQ+ officers and members of the community. These elements include funding for training opportunities, support for trans inclusion activities and embedding requirements in projects to identify and meet the needs of the LGBTQ+ community."*

**OPDC staff member**

*"OPDC's commitment to EDI has been apparent since I joined the organisation and the steps being taken to create a diverse and inclusive work environment have made a positive impact on my day-to-day experience. Personally, OPDC's staff networks and learning framework create an opportunity to discover and discuss issues of race, equality and inclusion in the workplace and beyond, which I believe is essential for a regeneration scheme catering to London and its many cultures. There are still opportunities to improve EDI statistics across the organisation, and I'm excited to see OPDC progress towards these targets."*

**OPDC staff member**

*"OPDC's commitment to EDI is evident through the support of the LGBTQ+ Network and Race Equity Network, providing a platform and a safe environment for staff to talk about their experiences and express themselves freely. Lived experiences and lunch & learns provide an excellent opportunity to learn about the identities and cultures that make up the OPDC team and the Old Oak and Park Royal area."*

**OPDC staff member**

*"We were thrilled to work alongside OPDC at the Park Royal Food Festival. The event was a great success, and visitors received lots of positive feedback.*

*We hope this will be the start of a long and fruitful relationship. I have found Food Festivals open to new ways of working with local businesses.*

*Grace and the OPDC team have supported us greatly; they are always approachable and a pleasure to work with.*

*I would highly recommend attending any food festivals in the future, and we will certainly be continuing this journey with you."*

**Park Royal food business**

*"The EDI meeting with community members took place in October 2022, it was well organised with many other community members and leaders being part of it.*

*Great discussions we're held in regards to what would be great to include in the area and we also had the opportunity to hear from OPDC on plans they had to engage the community, especially those who may not usually be involved in community activities.*

*The session lasted for couple of hours and in the end, we agreed that food brings people and communities together - a great initiative to allow the local community to be united and celebrate different food from various cultures.*

*With North Acton having a diverse community, I was happy to be involved and also to be invited to express my thoughts on what should be happening in the local area.*

*I want to thank the OPDC for the great hospitality and also the organisation as a whole - it's truly been informative but also has allowed to meet other likeminded individuals and creatives."*

**EDI workshop participant**

# OPDC

OLD OAK AND  
PARK ROYAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
CORPORATION



@OldOakParkRoyal



OldOakParkRoyal



@OldOakParkRoyal



[london.gov.uk/opdc](https://london.gov.uk/opdc)

---

**MAYOR OF LONDON**