

Title: Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)	Date of Meeting: 15 th September 2025
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Job Title: Executive Director of Customers , Director of People	
Strategic Heading: Strategy	Status: Decision
Purpose: To update Board on progress relating to EDI.	
Customer Voice and Impact: Customers have influenced our approach through feedback, and through engagement activities as outlined throughout the report. The impact on customers is tailored services, increased awareness of and fair / equal access to services and improvements as identified	
Recommendation: To approve the objectives outlined at Section Nine	

1. Strategic Risk

- [STR6 Not meeting regulatory expectations](#)
- [STR8 Failure to deliver high levels of customer satisfaction](#)
- [STR9 Inability to recruit and retain high calibre staff](#)
- [STR17 Inaccurate or poor quality data](#)

2. Background

In 2022, the Board approved North Star’s EDI Policy, committing to go beyond legal compliance to be a fair and inclusive landlord and employer. The policy is due for review during the 2025 year. The 2023–2026 Leading and Growing Strategy reinforces this ambition, focusing on learning from diverse lived experiences, preventing discrimination, and building a workforce and Board that reflect the communities served. Addressing under-representation is recognised as a strategic priority, requiring planned, sustainable, and serious action.

3. Context

As an employer and provider of services, we must comply with legislative and regulatory requirements, as outlined in the policy.

The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard explicitly state that it is a regulatory requirement that Registered Providers (RPs) must:

- Take action to deliver fair access to, and equitable outcomes of, housing and landlord services for all tenants, and where relevant prospective tenants.

- Use relevant information and data to understand the diverse needs of tenants, including those arising from protected characteristics, language barriers, and additional support needs;
- Assess whether their housing and landlord services deliver fair and equitable outcomes for tenants.
- Ensure that landlord services are accessible, and that the accessibility is publicised to tenants.

This report provides Board assurance on EDI, complementing the July 2025 Campbell Tickell Board effectiveness review, which confirmed that the annual EDI report offers a good level of assurance.

4. Data Collection

Customers

The National Housing Federation (NHF) has identified the information that it believes it would be helpful for all RPs to collect. This is set out in the table below:

	Data held by North Star	% data held on tenant population
Disability	Y	97.8%
Age	Y	99.0%
Sex	Y	98.7%
Ethnicity	Y	95.1%
Contact details	Y	97.1%
Support needs	Partial	As applicable
Language	Partial	77.7%

At the start of each tenancy, a government statistical return, CORE, is completed to record the characteristics of new social housing tenants. The information is also entered onto our housing system to record the tenants Age, Sex, Ethnicity, Language spoken and any vulnerabilities including disabilities. The IT system is still being refined to enable us to fully record the above. In the Campbell Tickell review of Board effectiveness, it stated that an area for improvement would be to increase the data on language (64% 2024) This has increased to almost 78% in the last year.

Staff and Board

Board and staff data was collected in April 2025. Demographic surveys were completed by 80% of Board and 90% of Staff. The arising data is shown as a percentage of those responding.

Data Held on Staff and Board	Staff	Board	Reported in annual EDI report to Board
Disability	√	√	Y
Age	√	√	Y
Sex	√	√	Y

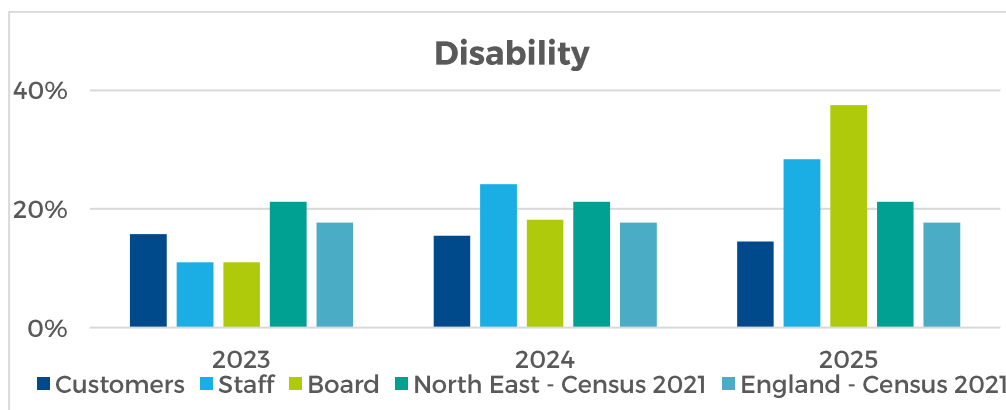
Ethnicity	√	√	Y
Sexual orientation	√	√	N
Gender Identity	√	√	N
Caring Responsibilities - Either for children under the age of 18 or adults over the age of 18	√	√	N
Marital Status and Living Arrangements	√	√	N
Socio-economic	x	x	N
Religion /Faith	√	√	N

Whilst we have followed NHF advice on the data that we should collect for Board and Staff, we have not routinely reported on six data sets. We were waiting for NHF advice on how we could meaningfully use and compare the data. This has not emerged.

5. Data - Is the Board, Staff Team and Customer base representative of regional and national demographics?

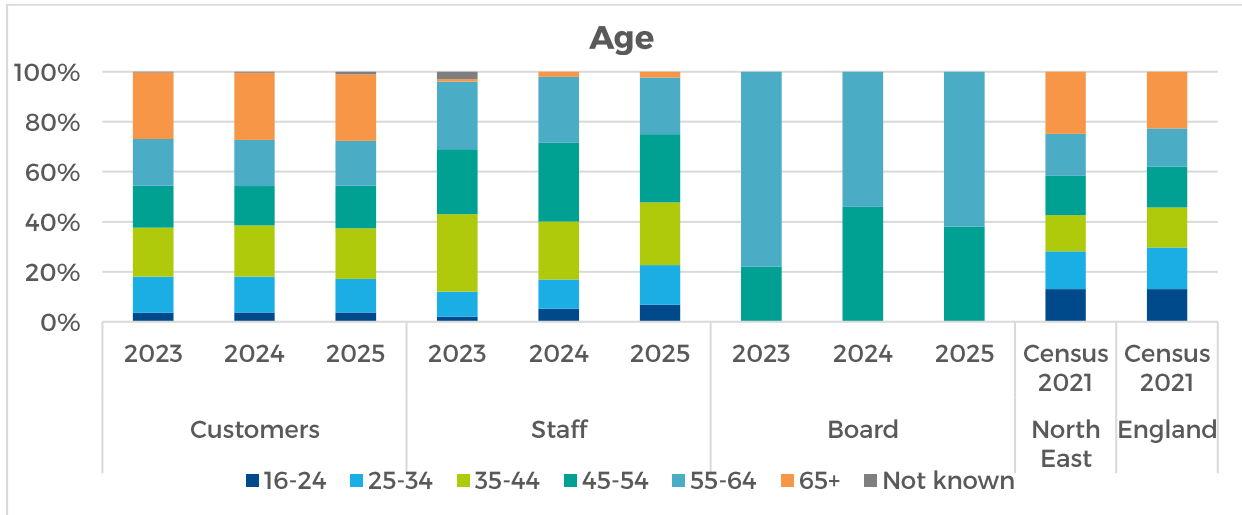
Issues of significant under representation are highlighted throughout this section, as are any specific points to note.

Disability



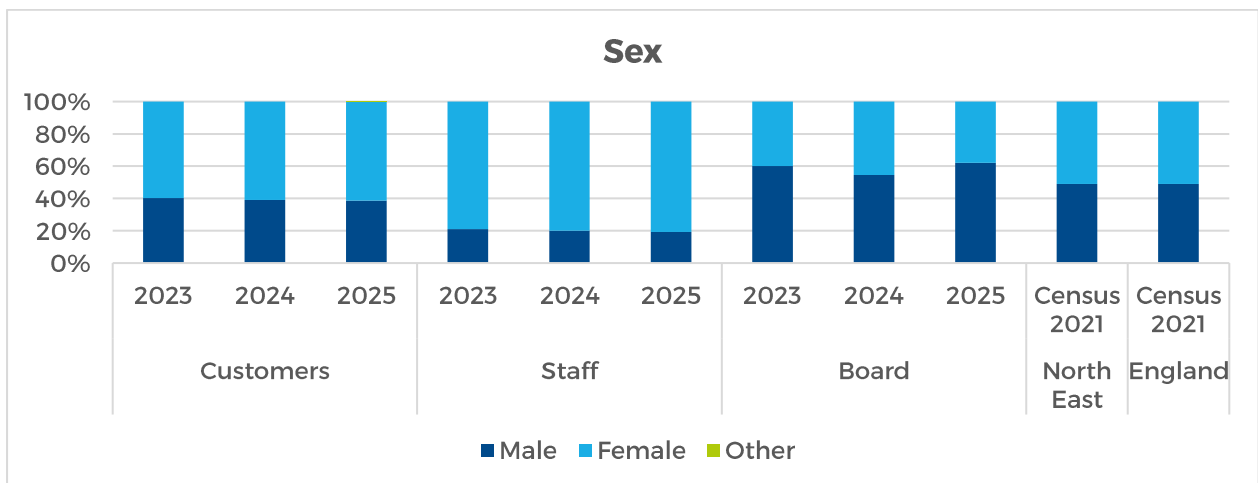
- The levels of customers that state that they have a disability is not representative of the demographic of England or the North East. We intend to investigate this further so that we can understand more and identify what action may be required.

Age



- It is good to see that the age profile of the Staff team has continued to change. It was a strategic priority to increase the numbers of younger people joining North Star. This helps with succession planning as well as diversity.
- Most Board members are aged 55-64. Board may wish to consider the age demographic when recruiting new members.

Sex

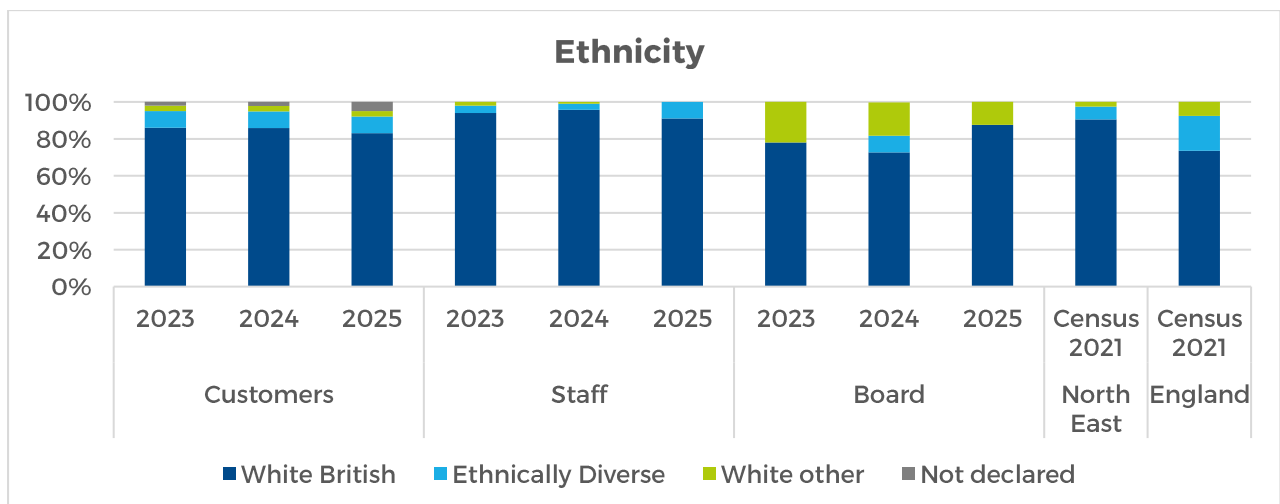


Staff - Data at March 2025	Male	Female
Overall workforce	21.5% (22)	78.5% (80)
Leadership - SMT	50% (2)	50% (2)
Business Leadership - Directors/Heads of Service	62.5% (5)	37.5% (3)

Functional Leadership- Service Managers	20% (1)	80% (4)
Team Manager/ Maintenance /Housing Officers	14% (7)	86% (42)
Customer Service Assistants, Support Worker	19.5% (7)	80.5% (29)

- The Staff Team continues to be under representative of the male population.
- The differential is more obvious at the Team Leader level and below. Benchmarking highlights that organisations that deliver its repairs service using an in-house team, employ more men, and therefore as a whole tend to have more male staff.

Ethnicity



- The North-East data is probably the most appropriate to use as a comparator.
- In total, around 7.0% of the North East population comprised of people who state they are ethnically diverse, compared to 18.3% across England & Wales
- We now have 9% of the staff team who state they are ethnically diverse. This is representative of the wider customer base of 9%. It is good to see that our strategic approach to set and publicise targets, target recruitment, guarantee interviews to those who meet the essential criteria, and review our approaches has helped to increase levels of representation.
- Board is not representative of the customer base. Board may wish to consider this demographic when recruiting new members.

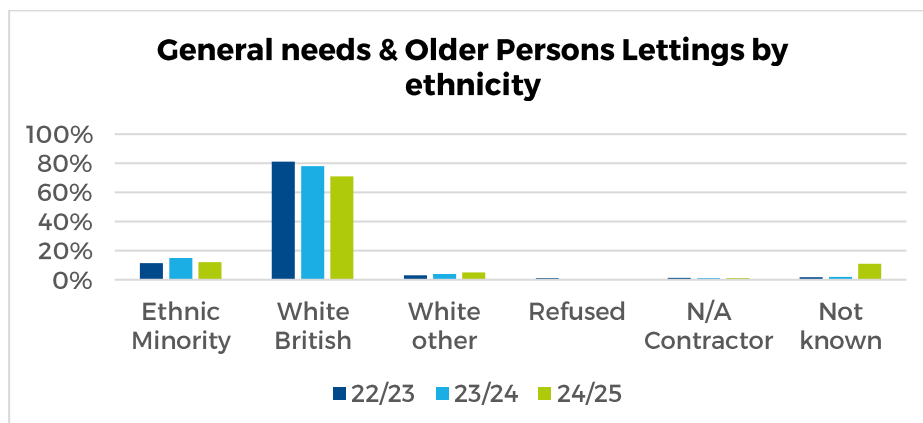
6. Access to services, and outcomes - Is this equitable?

North Star ensures services are accessible and publicised, offering alternative formats, accessible digital platforms, and ensuring staff are well trained. The Recite Me toolbar on our website supports diverse user needs, and we offer translation, Braille, and read-aloud services on request. An external review is assessing compliance with regulatory standards of our website. This will include accessibility, with actions to follow any

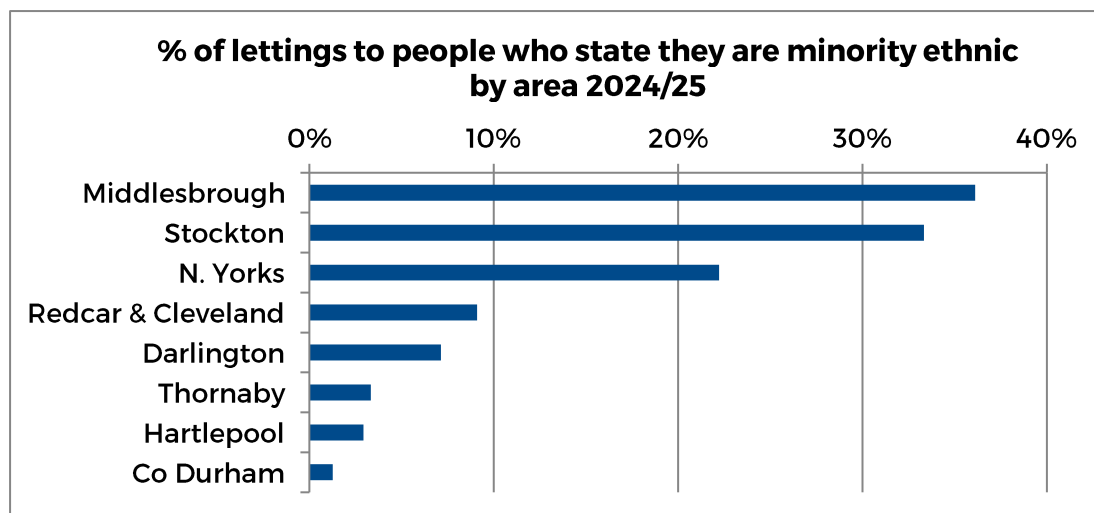
recommendations. In July 2025, the customer-led Consumer Standards Group found performance on access to services and outcomes good but suggested greater promotion of available support; this will be addressed via tenant communications, and the group will “mystery shop” our approach, with findings reported to Board. Areas of significant under-representation or inequality in service access are highlighted in this section.

6a) Access to Housing

Ethnicity

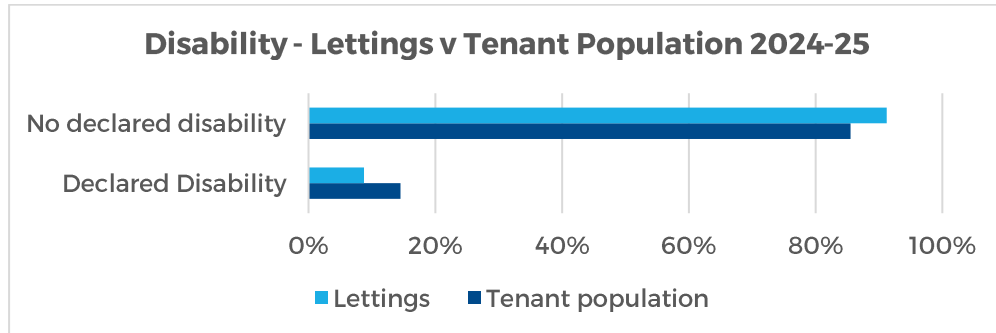


- There has been a drop in the percentage of homes let to people who classify themselves as Asian/ Black /Mixed Heritage from 15% to 12%. However, this continues to be higher than our existing customer base of 9% and the demography of the North-East. There has been an increase in homes let to people who describe themselves as Eastern European (white other).



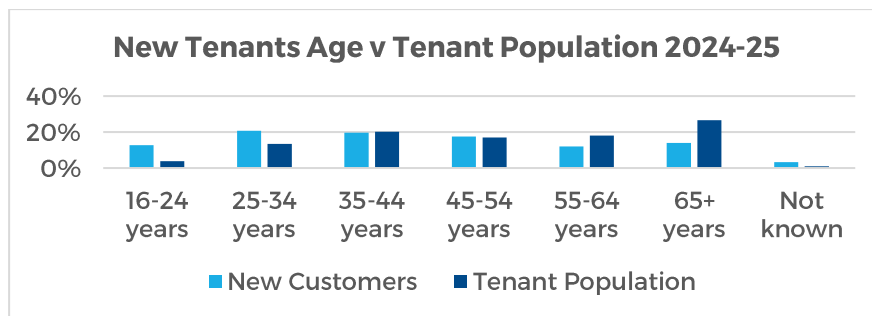
- Middlesbrough remains the area with the highest proportion of properties let to people who state they are of are Asian/Black/Mixed Heritage. This follows the same pattern as previous years and is to be expected given the location of multi-ethnic communities within the town.
- Stockton lettings have increased from 11% to 33%. This is largely due to refugees and/or asylum seekers in emergency accommodation in the area who have been given leave to remain and have priority status for housing.

Disability



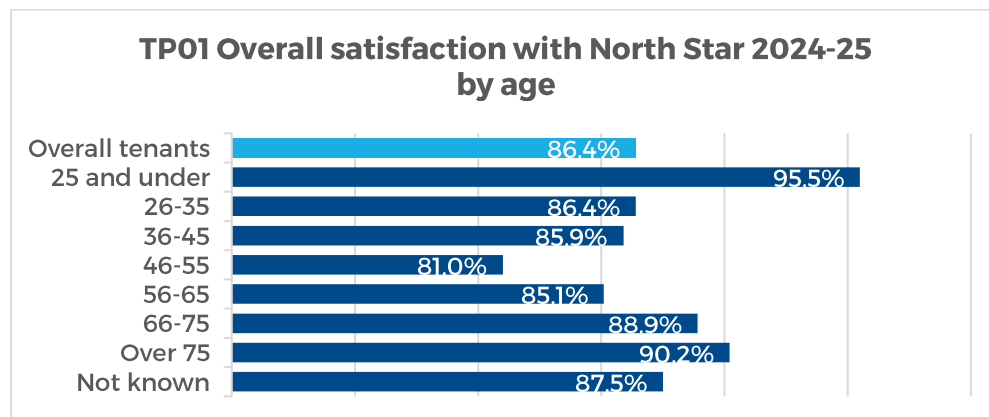
- The number of people rehoused with a declared disability has increased from 6.5% last year to 8.8%
- This is under representative of the tenant base, the local and national demography
- As previously outlined, we intend to investigate this further so that we can understand more and identify what action may be required.

Age

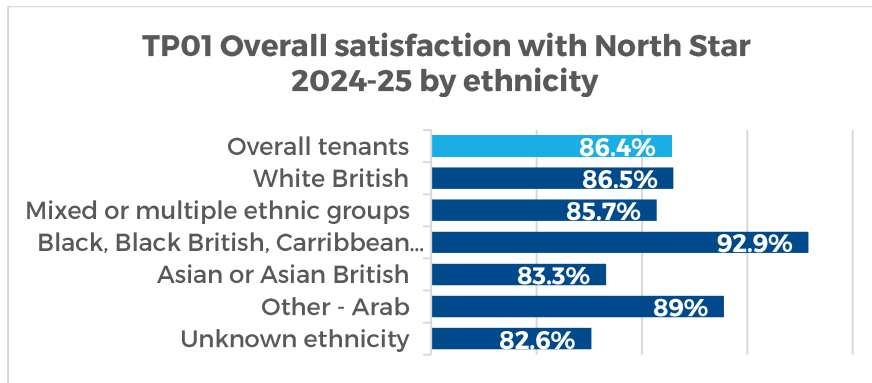


6b) Satisfaction levels – Is satisfaction consistent amongst different customer groups?

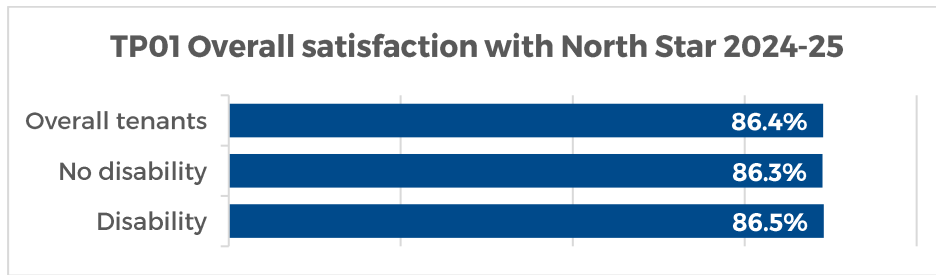
Tenant Satisfaction Measures - TP01 Overall satisfaction



Like the previous year's result, the 46–55-year-old group was the least satisfied. The group 25 and under are the most satisfied. There are no discernible reasons why.

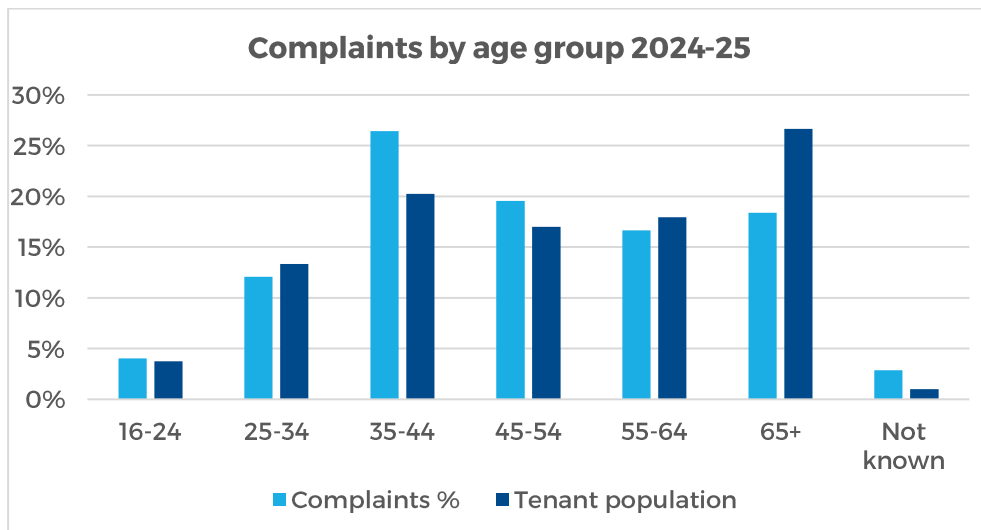


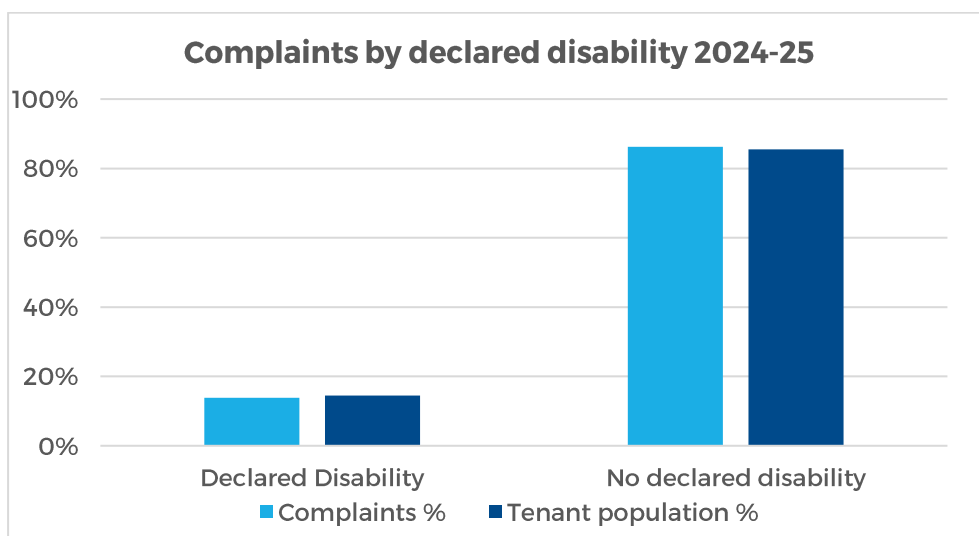
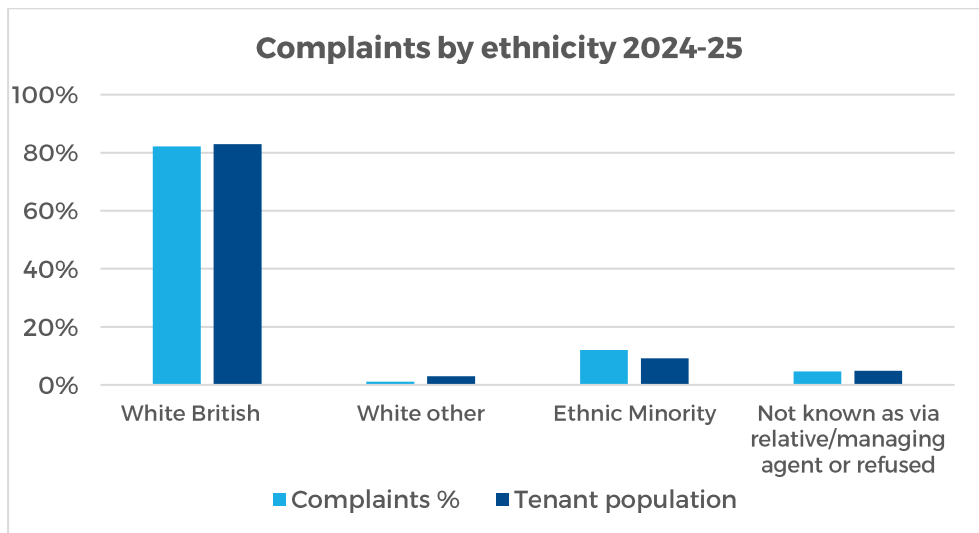
Asian or Asian British customers had the lowest satisfaction (83.3%), mainly with repairs and home quality, but were more positive about fairness, communal areas, ASB handling, and neighbourhood contribution. Black, Black British, Caribbean or African customers remained the most satisfied, with results similar to last year. The Leadership Factor (TLF), which conducts the surveys and analyses the results, advises these differences are not statistically significant, as the relative numbers of people included are quite low.



6c) Complaints

We have analysed complaints to establish if the levels received are representative of the customer base.



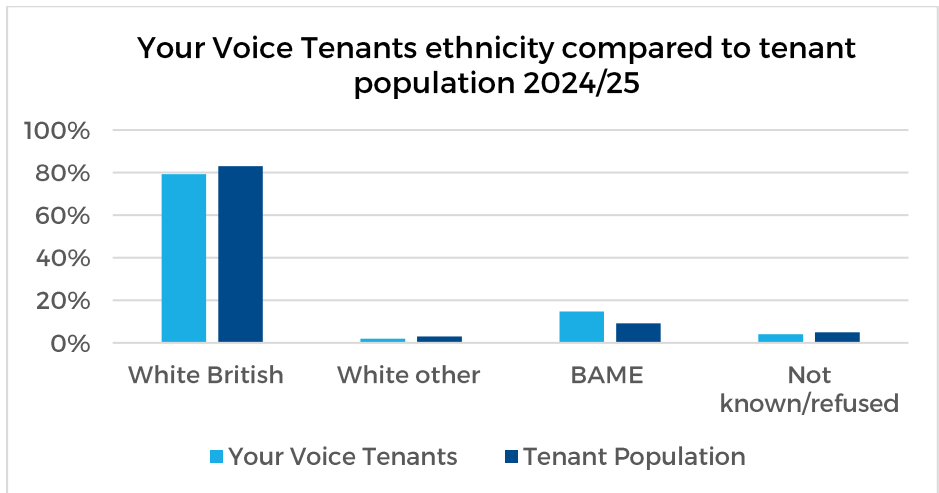


Overall, the levels of complaints received by each group are representative of the overall tenant population.

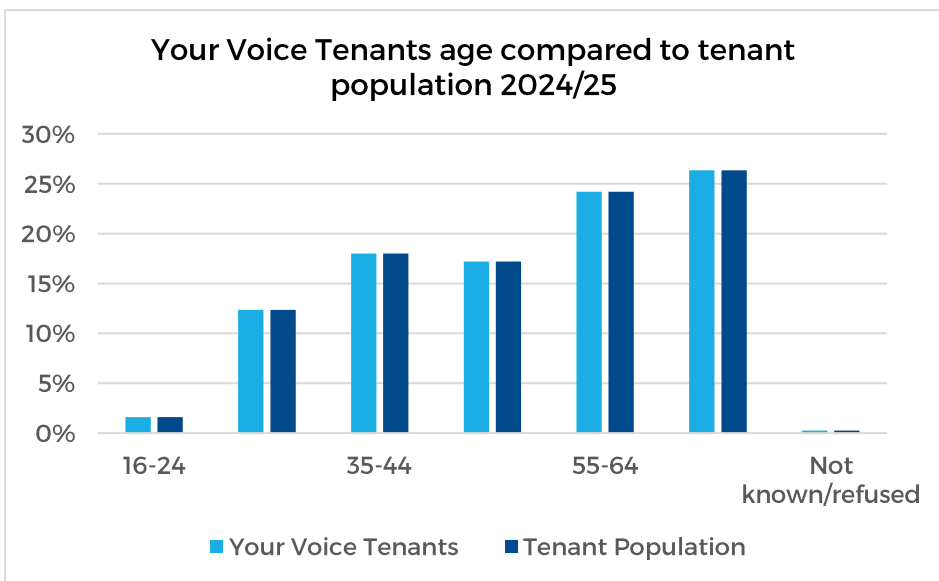
6d) Involved Tenants

The “Your Voice” group includes almost 400 people who have advised that they want to be involved with us and expressed an interest in various opportunities. For example, people who are interested in policy development, people who want to engage by e mail, text, virtually or people who want to meet.

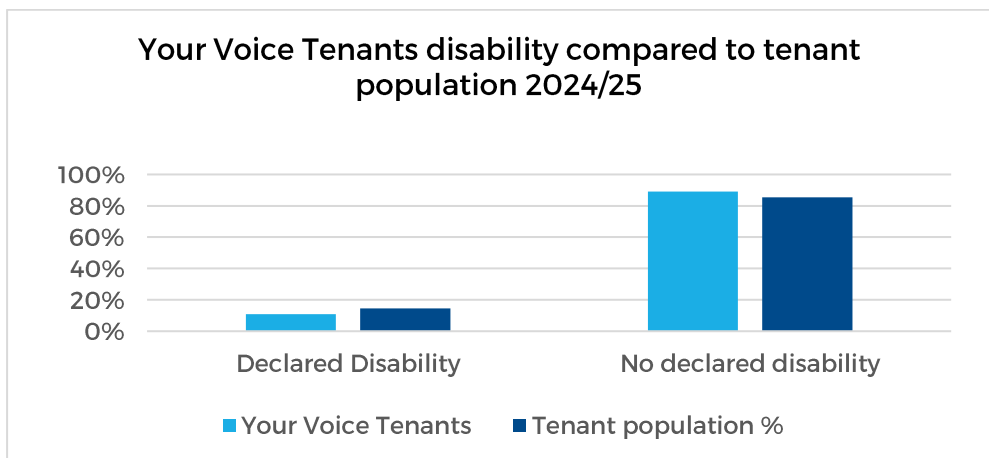
We have analysed how representative the membership of the Your Voice Group is when compared to the wider tenant base.



There is good representation of people who classify themselves as minority ethnic.



There is good involvement from people across all age groups with those in younger age groups improved in recent years.



There is a small under representation of people with a declared disability. Improvements have been made over the last few years with the use of technology

to enable those that may find it difficult to attend meetings to do so remotely via Teams. We also provide help and support with transport. This may be an area where we will promote that we are underrepresented and encourage participation.

7. Job Applicants

All vacancies continue to be advertised internally before we go out to the market, as aligned with our strategic approach to workforce and succession planning.

Total vacancies	33	Demographic
Appointed through internal recruitment	10	Breakdown below
Agency appointment	2	1 x white, female, 35-44 1 x Asian/British - Pakistani; male; 25 - 34
Apprentice recruited	1	White, female, 18-24
Appointed through external recruitment	14	11 x White; 2 x Mixed White/Caribbean; 1 x Black/British Other 11 x Female; 3 x Male 4 x 25 - 34; 5 x 35 - 44; 4 x 45 - 54 and 1 x 55 - 64 1 x Disability
Appointed through external consultancy	4	4 x White, Male 3 x 45-54 and 1 x 35 -44
Appointed via Refugee Futures	1	Any other ethnicity; Female; 25 -34
Did not appoint	1	Support Assistant - Norton Road - pushed into 2025-26 recruitment

Internal Recruitment								
Age				Sex		Disability	Disability	Ethnicity
18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	M	F	Yes	No	White British
1	1	5	3	1	9	1	9	10

Our approach to workforce planning needs to be carefully balanced with the ability to employ people who contribute to the diversity of the staff team.

We can do this by continuing our approach of positive action to target recruitment, guarantee interviews to those who meet the essential criteria, and continue to review what we do and how we do it. our approaches. That said, it is good to note that 37% of internal appointments were to people under the age of 34. We will also target apprenticeship opportunities at underrepresented groups. We have a good track record of developing apprentices to the extent that they secure permanent employment with us.

8. Anti-racism

We believe that we continue to have a crucial role in fostering safe and inclusive communities. Our work in this area is not new. However, we reviewed our approach against good practice issued by the Housing Diversity Network.

There is more that we can do to challenge the narrative through anti racism practices. This relies on more than staff training. It requires myth-busting, fact-checking, and challenging misleading statements which can be made either in person or online. This is especially in important in terms of allocations where there is potential for wildly misleading claims about priorities in the rehousing of refugees and asylum seekers. We

are members of the North East Anti Racism Coalition and the Middlesbrough Silver recovery group. We have a group of staff exploring what anti racism practise is needed in North Star. This includes the development of an organisational statement. We also maintain close relationships and work with Refugees Futures, Taste of Africa, Investing in People and Culture, Media Cultured, and Cultures CIC towards our shared goal of advancing anti-racism.

9. Progress against 2024/2025 Objectives

Addressing issues of under representation is evolutionary. To tackle inequality, actions need to be well planned, strategic, sustainable, and taken seriously. For North Star this is a strategic priority. It is good to note the progress during the year. Two objectives have not been delivered; reasons are set out below. It is our intention to conclude delivery during the 2025/26 year

Objective	Outcome
Review the purpose of collecting the categories of data for Board and Staff. Stop collecting what is not being actively used or reported.	We could see no benefit in collecting socio economic data at this stage.
Explore the opportunities to run another further Board Apprenticeship scheme	Four Board Apprentices have been recruited.
Implement a system to enable our customers to update their own data, so that they can advise us of any changes	This is linked to the launch of a customer app. We anticipate this will be live by December 2025.
Target apprenticeship opportunities to underrepresented groups	We will be recruiting a new cohort of apprentices during 2025/26 so this will be carried forward
Continue with our approach of positive action to set and publicise targets, target recruitment, guarantee interviews to those who meet the essential criteria, and review our approaches.	This will continue. It is especially good to note that the number of young people in the organisation has increased. As has the level of ethnic diversity in the staff team
Promote and support anti-racism practise	Active members of North East Anti Racism coalition, building connections, relationships and developing the agenda Active members of the silver recovery group, using our community connections to influence action Staff group working on developing the North Star way

10. Objectives for 2025/2026

Addressing issues of under representation is evolutionary. To tackle inequality, actions need to be well planned, strategic, sustainable, and taken seriously. Therefore, the objectives for 2025/26 are aligned to those of 2024/25

We recommend that the following objectives are approved by Board:

Action	Completion Date and Lead
Implement a system to enable our customers to update their own data, so that they can advise us of any changes	December 2025 Director of Customer experience and Transformation
Target at least 3 apprenticeship opportunities per year to underrepresented groups	March 2026 Director of People
Implement recommendations arising from the tenants mystery shop of accessibility standards	December 2025 Director of Housing

Implement recommendations from the external review of the website	December 2025 Director of Customer experience and Transformation
Promote and support anti-racism practise	March 2026 Executive Director of Customers
Investigate why the customer base (Disability) is not representative of the demographic of England or the North East. Identify what action may be required.	March 2026 Director of Housing