HACT Racial Equality Group – 2024 Activity Round Up

1. **Background and details:**

HACT's Racial Equality Group (REG) is a diverse cross-sector network of housing professionals who are committed to conversation and action about racial inequality within our sector and the communities it serves. While the focus of the Racial Equality Group is on racial equality and social housing overall, there is a particular focus on service delivery and the work housing associations do with communities. The Racial Equality Group organise events for the social housing sector to come together on different aspects of racial equality.

The REG is Chaired by Dele Ryder (Partnership and Fundraising Manager at A2Dominion). Dele has worked for A2Dominion Housing Group for over nine years as a Partnership and Fundraising Manager within community investment. Working with HACT, Dele is keen to ensure that the sector is strong and diverse, and this group promotes opportunities where black and minority ethnic voices can be heard – with a focus on securing resources and additional funding to deliver on core objectives.

2. **Meetings & Training**

No. of meetings	No. of attendees	No. of Organisations	No. of speakers
6	176	92	9

- **February 2024 – "Unequal and disproportionate: the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on Black, Asian and minority ethnic residents".**

  The cost-of-living crisis has disproportionately affected social housing residents, especially those from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, who are more likely to be on low income. This webinar explored how the cost of living crisis continues to affect Black, Asian and minority ethnic social housing residents and explore what actions housing associations can take to support them.

- **August 2024 – Sector roundtable following the riots**
  Roundtable discussion following the August 2024 riots for sector to discuss implications for the housing sector and where they can make a difference and build community cohesion. This session provided insights and direction for the REG that informed the programme of activity for the remainder of the year.

- **<u>September 2024</u> - Right Wing Extremism Training with Small Steps'** Following the sector roundtable, a REG-organised training session on Right Wing Extremism was identified as the next activity to be hosted and funded by A2 Dominion. This session was useful oversight and a first-hand account from Small Steps on the causes of communities and individuals being recruited by the far right and the role of housing providers within this.

- **<u>September 2024</u> - Responding to the riots discussion with Hope Not Hate** Following the sector roundtable, a REG-organised training session on Right Wing Extremism was identified as the next activity to be hosted and funded by A2 Dominion. In response this – a session with Hope Not Hate was organised to understand their organisation and their objectives better and their goals, and what the role of the housing sector might be in supporting them or carrying out their own activities.

- **<u>September 2024</u> – EDI Plenary** During HACT's Community Investment conference, the main afternoon plenary focused on EDI with contributions from Housing Diversity Network, Hope Not Hate, Parasol Homes and Hyde Housing. This session brought together the currently trends in EDI, it's importance within organisation and it's role in building trust and cohesion within social housing communities.

- **<u>December 2024 -</u> Antisemitism & Islamophobia training with Small Steps' John North. Funded by A2 Dominion** Following up from the extreme right wing awareness training earlier in the year, a further session on Antisemitism and Islamophobia was arranged with Small Steps with funding from A2 Dominion, to give a overview of both forms of racism and prejudice and provide the housing sector with the knowledge and insights to understand how this might impact their organisations or communities.

3. <u>Funding Bids</u>

During 2024 we discussed progressing a programme of work to address racism in social housing communities and look to build cohesion and places where people can feel they belong. These were timely discussions with the violence and disruption seen in August 2024. The result of this was that a draft programme and bid was submitted to the Nuffield Foundation that outlined a programme that would examine and bring together the sector's work in community cohesion. We are awaiting a decision on this funding but hope to carry forward the aims and principles of this programme into 2025 whatever the result is.

4. **Plans for 2025:**

   During 2025 we hope to continue to build on our activity in this last year and build connections between the housing sector and key organisations and training to understand what role housing associations have in building community cohesion within their communities to break down barriers and bring people together.

   2025 meeting dates:

- Monday 17th March 2025 – 2pm – 3:30pm
- Thursday 12th June 2025 – 10am – 11:30am
- Monday 25th August 2025 – 2pm – 3:30pm
- Monday 17th November 2025 – 10am – 11:30am

   For more information about the REG or future meetings and events please get in touch with Rebecca Rieley – Rebecca.Rieley@hact.org.uk.