



Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan 2026-2030

Building collective power to make community ownership and development of land commonplace

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion action plan

EDI in our vision and mission

Our vision is that every community has the power to further social, economic and environmental justice through community ownership of land.

Our mission is to build collective power, particularly among those most marginalised and oppressed, to make community ownership and development of land commonplace.

An important element of our mission is that we want to transform our land and development systems so that this is possible for every community, rather than just growing a niche of communities able to overcome those systemic barriers.



Robert Swann and Charles Sherrod, Civil Rights Leaders, with members of [New Communities, Inc.](#) at a planning meeting, circa 1970.

Community Land Trusts (CLTs) are a global movement that emerged from the American civil rights movement, and with diverse roots including British garden cities. Our movement focuses on the potential for more equitable ownership of land to help communities create better places. We build power in communities to overcome and change oppressive systems, to protect and create the places they love.

Power and exclusion in our land and property systems

We focus on three levels, or aspects, of community power:

1. the ability of local communities to control or influence how land is used and developed in their local area (**process**);
2. their ability to exercise this power to achieve more socially, economically and environmentally just uses of land (**outcomes**);
3. their ability to mobilise at a national level to transform systems that undermine their ability to exercise power through a CLT (**movement**).

We think this is important because:

- Communities currently have very little power in the current land, planning and development systems, other than a weak power to object, and a largely tokenistic ability to influence through consultation. There are many ways to exercise power in these systems, but the pioneers of the CLT model in the US civil rights movement recognised that ownership of land is a key source of power.
- These systems oppress most people, in all communities. Three-quarters of people say they feel they have 'not very much' or 'no control' over decisions that affect their neighbourhood or local community¹. Twice as many people report a negative rather than a positive impact from development in their area, 93% distrust councils and 98% distrust developers to make decisions that will be positive for their community². Communities that experience other injustices such as systemic racism and poverty feel this lack of power more acutely, and suffer the consequences more acutely.
- The way that land is used and developed is leading to clear injustices such as inequality and discrimination in access to decent, affordable homes; disinvestment in some communities, and displacement of communities by extractive investment in others; and unequal access to land for those who would like to build homes, build a business, farm the land, restore nature, etc.

¹ Power to Chance (2022), [Empower communities, don't just tinker with Westminster](#)

² Planning (2019), [Just 2% of public trust developers on planning for large-scale schemes, Grosvenor poll finds](#)

- Communities trying to acquire land for just ends find a thicket of barriers in hostile and oppressive systems, and so need to mobilise as a movement of CLTs to build the power to change those systems and build alternatives.

The Community Land Trust model is a form of community power exercised by a local community as a whole, through the ownership of land, and directed towards justice. It is not only for those most oppressed, nor should their power be exercised by a paternalistic few on behalf of the ‘vulnerable’. CLTs should build collective power and solidarity across a community, with diversity and inclusivity in their membership and governance. This can include means to balance and uplift the power both of those with lived experience of the oppression of the land system in general, and those with lived experience of unjust outcomes such as poverty or discrimination.

EDI and our strategy

Our strategy for 2026-30 states that equity, diversity, inclusion and justice are core values. As such, they lie at the heart of our strategy for scale, which begins with our understanding of how oppression is manifested when communities try to acquire and develop land:

- How some communities face greater barriers in organising with a CLT, are less likely to be given permission to try, and how CLTs must ensure their governance and activities are truly inclusive and empowering for the most oppressed in their community.
- How success stories can mask hidden foundations that cannot be replicated, and the need to create pathways for community ownership and development that meet the needs of the most oppressed communities.
- How we are more powerful as a large, united movement advocating for changes nationally that build power in every part of every community.

Our strategic objectives and our plans and priorities under each reflect this analysis. We commit to periodic reviews of outcome indicators focused on equity, diversity and inclusion – in the leadership of CLTs, the ability of CLTs facing greater oppression to complete projects, their engagement in our movement lobbying work, and in the board leadership and staff of the charity.

Safeguarding our values in our strategic objectives

As well as proactively working towards a vision of a more just world, we also commit to the following principles to safeguard our values in our work. We will publish specific details on how we have applied these approaches in our reporting, to ensure accountability to our members and other key stakeholders.

Strategic objective	Approaches
Cross-cutting	As leaders in a broad and diverse movement, we commit to support, challenge and inspire others in our movement to reflect on and uphold our values.
Communities organising with CLTs	- We will invite our members to align with and champion our core values. - We will promote good practice, e.g. providing example policies and procedures and highlighting positive case studies. - We will consider withholding membership, services, grants and CLT awards from CLTs that don't align with our values.
Innovating & scaling development models	We will ensure that communities remain in control of the decisions that are important to them as we develop more scalable models.
Building a powerful movement	We will oppose policies that reduce the ability of communities to pursue their objectives, or that are unjust (e.g. reducing access to housing support for refugees, or overly strict rules

	around housing allocations). • We won't lend publicity to politicians or political parties or policy proposals that significantly and consistently conflict with our values, even if they support CLTs. • We will continue to speak to, and seek to influence, all political parties and related stakeholders that are, or may be, in positions of power.
Sustaining the network	• We will ensure we stay within the law, and only work with partner organisations that have a similar commitment to the law and to our core values.

Action Plan for 2026-28

In the past year we have already made significant progress in better embedding EDI into our operations:

- Commissioned training for all staff and trustees in EDI, anti-oppression and anti-racism.
- Convened a group of leaders of colour from the CLT movement to work with staff and trustees, facilitated by KIN Structures, to help us identify next steps following research we commissioned/co-funded on EDI in 2019 and black-led community-led housing in 2024.
- Held discussions between our staff and full board to reflect on the findings of the same research.
- Published a statement on our [racial justice journey](#).
- Undertaken an EDI survey of our staff and trustees, and also a first attempt to survey our membership to establish which have EDI policies, and which monitor the make-up of their board/membership.
- Organised a set of peer learning sessions for our members on inclusive community engagement and organising.

We have developed an action plan for the next two years setting out a number of commitments to further embed equity, diversity and inclusion in our business planning.

The table is colour-coded to indicate:

| Things we can do, to some extent, with our resources in the next year

| Things we are committed to raising funds for

Focus	Goal	Actions & Timing
Targeted interventions with marginalised communities and leaders	Map and identify other coalitions and partnerships we could support, or that could support our network.	Ongoing.
	Better gather and analyse data on reasons why CLTs go dormant, or their projects fail, and the relationship between these outcomes and markers of oppression such as race or deprivation.	First analysis completed for 2026 Impact Report. To revisit in 2027.
	Develop funded project work to put resources into the hands of oppressed communities and community leaders to develop resources and tactics	Launching Leaders of Colour Solidarity Group and subsidised support programme, funded by Oak Foundation - Dec 2026
	Develop funded project work to design and test new scalable development models focused on marginalised	Unsuccessful bids in 2026, ongoing fundraising priority.

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	communities and leaders, reflecting a variety of lived experiences and cultural practices.	
Embedding social justice into our membership work	Share this Action Plan with our membership and promote further discussion about our movement's values and how we further them.	Shared with all members in Sept 2026, and will be a topic at AGM in Nov 2026 Community power event Oct 2026
	Put more specific guidance and background on social justice and oppression into the member flow for CLTs just getting started.	Launched on 8th Sept 2026.
	Revise and improve materials on offer such as a template EDI policy, EDI survey of leadership.	Partially addressed by pilot Community Power Survey and the Leaders of Colour Solidarity Group, seeking funding to expand this member-led work.

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	Review text of handbooks especially CLT Essentials and Local Advocacy.	Review set for 2027, improved content in new 'getting started' self led course published 8th Sept 2026.
	Bring an EDI lens to the review of our Model Rules for Community Benefit Societies, including considering the benefits of the tripartite governance model common among CLTs in the USA.	Partially picked up in review so far, the board has paused this work until funding is less certain.
	Undertake annual surveys of our membership asking about the diversity of their own leadership and membership, and their work on inclusive and participatory engagement within their communities.	First Community Power survey launches Nov 2026, intended to be repeated annually
	Review membership fees and look for ways to reduce financial barriers to oppressed communities joining the network, balanced with the need to sustain the network.	Board agreed approach to support a small number of most marginalised groups in July 2026, Oak Foundation funding will also subsidise access for

Focus	Goal	Actions & Timing
		some groups for 18 months
Actively creating values, culture and behaviours in CLTN	Review recruitment processes, including moving to blind recruitment to reduce changes for unconscious bias.	Blind recruitment adopted for new staff in 2026
	Review the new hire onboarding process, building on the CEO explaining our history and roots to ensure new recruits read this action plan and understand our strategy and commitments.	Onboarding presentation strengthened, further review of understanding and application needed in 2027
	Annual surveys of staff and trustees to test whether they feel valued, included, and to benchmark diversity of our staff and leadership against the population of England & Wales.	First run 10th July 2025, to be reviewed annually

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	Host and prompt more discussion about oppression, and equity, diversity and inclusion, with our members, what it means for them, and how they can work together to build equitable power.	Community Power season in autumn 2026, with new Inclusive Governance community of practice
Shifting CLTN's approach, language, external messaging	Ensuring staff understand, and can be more intentional and explicit about, our strategy in our external communications, including an agreed use of language.	Language reviewed and discussed with staff and board following training and group work facilitated by Social Justice Collective in autumn 2025. Language guide intended for 2027.
	Reflecting our new language and understanding in our new strategy for 2026-30, including in our KPIs and other outcome measures to track community power and anti-oppression work.	Published on 16th Sept 2026

Focus	Goal	Actions & Timing
	Clearly communicating our EDI action plan as part of our wider business strategy to our members and external audiences.	Published on 17th Sept. Ongoing.
	Asking our members and organisations working on anti-oppression for their feedback on this action plan.	Part of communications to members this autumn CEO to reach out to networks and organisations we work with for feedback