



# UNIFY

Career | Culture | Network | Mentor



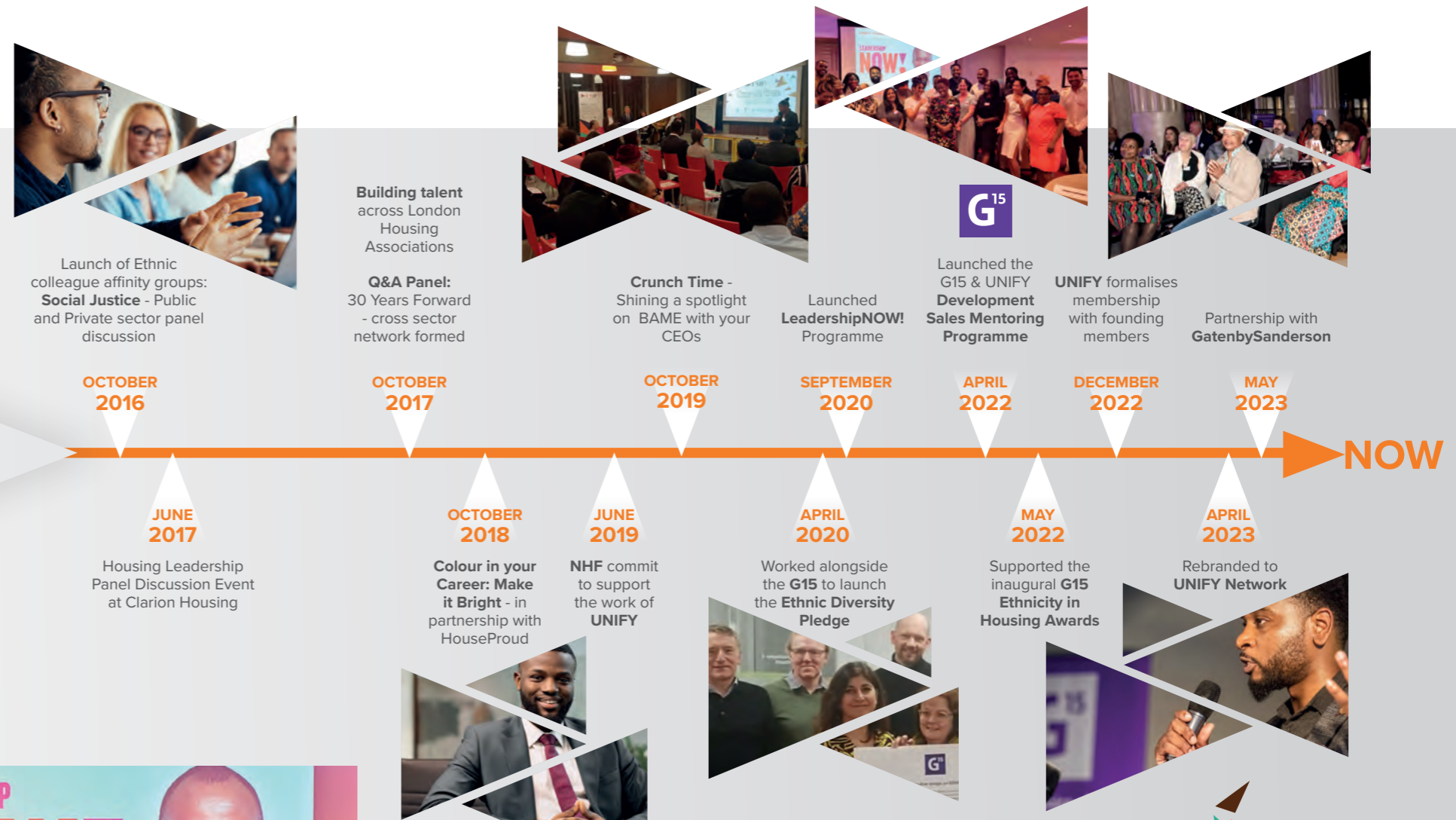


# OUR JOURNEY

UNIFY was formed in 2016 to amplify the voices of ethnically diverse colleagues and communities in the housing sector.

Colleagues from staff network groups across founding organisations including Metropolitan, Circle Housing, Notting Hill, Peabody, Genesis, and L&Q collaborated to address the under-representation of ethnically diverse staff and focus on celebrating different cultures, raising awareness of career barriers and other inequalities within the housing sector.

Today, as UNIFY network evolves and continues to grow, our ethos remains the same, to work in partnership and move forward together.



## OUR IMPACT

We have had significant impact on housing sector strategy. In 2020, UNIFY engaged with CEO's from across the sector to contribute to the G15 Diversity pledge. This milestone enabled us to share the lived experiences of our network members, shaping the pledge and making a meaningful difference.

We have delivered panel discussions on key topics such as social justice and how to improve diversity of leadership in the housing sector. We listen to our network members, engage

with the wider sector and co-create impactful bespoke events, sessions and workshops with partner organisations.

We offer career development and opportunities by partnering with Gatenby Sanderson, a Leadership & Talent Consultancy. Together, we have created a comprehensive leadership programme that provides colleagues with essential skills, boosts their confidence, and most importantly, opens doors to exciting career prospects.

## OUR REACH

UNIFY has members spanning from London, Greater London and the South East of England our network reaches over 770,000 households and over 15,000 staff across the housing sector. We also have member organisations across the Midlands and Greater Manchester.

To continue our work within the sector, we have moved towards a new model that will allow us to expand our reach and become more sustainable as a voluntary group. The more we grow as a network, the more positive change we can achieve.

**WHO** – a network of passionate volunteers seeking inclusion and representation at all levels.



# BECOME A UNIFY MEMBER (ORGANISATIONS)

Our members play a crucial role in driving change. Currently we collaborate with our founding organisations and limit membership to 15 organisations to foster strong relationships and maximise impact. We are asking organisations to make a yearly contribution that will go towards delivering different events and initiatives. Contributions may vary for UNIFY members based outside of London.

Individuals passionate about volunteering and supporting the work of UNIFY are welcome to join and support our objective to improve the representation of people of colour in the housing sector.

## MEMBER PACKAGE

### LEADERSHIP NOW! HOUSING PROGRAMME

Successful leaders need clear insight into their core competencies, capabilities, personal strengths and potential growth areas. Our tailor-made leadership interventions are built on research from our 'Future Leaders in Housing workshops', conversations with CEOs and Chairs across the housing sector, as well as feedback from previous participants.

The programme has been delivered successfully over the last two years and it is certified by the CPD Certification Service.

**WHAT** – accelerate collaboration and confidence to improve racial equality across society.



**89%** of participants agreed they would recommend the LeadershipNOW! programme to colleagues and friends.

The programme involves a series of bespoke workshops, one-to-one coaching, peer conversations and personality profiling spread across eight months. You will also have access to a private networking area for alumni, current participants, mentors and UNIFY members.

The programme's cost is discounted by 30% for UNIFY Members.

**40%** of participants have gone on to secure a promotion or new role

*"I think it's really important that you take charge of your learning and development – no learning is wasted – and as a black woman coming up in Peabody taking opportunities is something I've always tried to do and something I'd always encourage someone to do."*

*A colleague of mine used to say your network is your net worth and it's really true. The more people you can relate to, connect with, learn from, and share with the more likely you are to progress through your career.*



*I really hope that if you're considering this programme, you go ahead and apply. I found it really enjoyable and I'm sure you will too."*

**Ijay Onyechi**  
Peabody



Learn more about Leadership NOW! Programme here.

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE

In October 2019, we delivered an event called "Crunch Time - Shining a Spotlight". The CEOs of the largest housing associations (Clarion, Peabody, L&Q, Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing, and Notting Hill Genesis) were invited to sit down together and have an open discussion about diverse staff in housing. The themes that arose from these discussions have helped to shape positive action regarding addressing inequalities.

UNIFY Conferences will be hosted annually.



## STAFF NETWORK FORUM

One unique aspect UNIFY can offer is its expertise in leading staff networks. With experience in leading networks within our respective organisations, we understand the challenges. Recognising that many housing associations have recently established employee networks, we have created a forum for Network leads (primarily Chairs or committee members) across the sector. This platform provides a safe space for Network leads to openly discuss and share best practices, fostering their development as effective leaders.



## MEMBER BENEFITS

- Promoted as a member on our marketing collateral - website, presentations and campaigns we run
- Mentioned across social media channels - LinkedIn
- Opportunity to have your leadership team join our panel discussions as speakers.
- Featured articles in our blog section of our website.
- Discounted rates for our LeadershipNOW! Programme
- Access to our Staff Network Forum
- Confirmed spaces at our Annual Conference
- Confirmed spaces at our four cultural event activities.



## CULTURAL EVENTS

UNIFY delivers four cultural events throughout the year. This will include one event for each of following areas

- Ramadan / Eid
- Black History Month (October)
- Pride (June)
- Christmas (December)

# BECOME A VOLUNTEER

Volunteering offers numerous benefits. By volunteering at UNIFY, you have the opportunity to get involved in diverse projects that enhance your future career progression. If progression is not your focus, you can still engage for the joy of it. Working on various projects allows you to connect with different individuals, acquire new skills and potentially engage in tasks beyond your usual role.



## BECOME A SPONSOR

There is more work to do, and we rely on sponsors to support us make a positive change in the sector. We are asking organisations to make a yearly contribution that will go towards delivering different events and initiatives. Contributions may vary for sponsors.

### THREE REASONS TO VOLUNTEER WITH UNIFY:

1. If you are **seeking to advance to a senior role**, this represents an excellent opportunity to develop new skills, lead teams and gain experience in areas such as programme development, performance management, conflict resolution, and project management. Working on actual projects enables you to showcase concrete examples in future interviews, further enhancing your prospects.
2. For **managers aspiring to advance to the next level**, this represents a valuable opportunity to access a growing network of professionals. Engage with multiple industries, actively contribute to the creation of new strategies and policies, increase your risk management, influence change at a sector-wide level whilst take driving and delivering meaningful initiatives.
3. For those who are not seeking career progression, this provides the **freedom to explore your creative side, meet new people, and develop new skills** beyond your current role. It's an opportunity to step outside your comfort zone, embrace new experiences, and have fun along the way.

# SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

## NETWORKING

- Members can benefit from regular networking events throughout the year
- Access to the UNIFY Steering group
- Expand your professional network and access our experienced bank of Network Chairs to receive practical resources and tips.

## CULTURE

- Get invited to exclusive events to raise awareness and celebrate diversity
- A safe space to speak about experiences and get support
- Contribute to research to address inequality in the sector.

## CAREER

- Access to our bespoke Leadership and Development course LeadershipNOW! offering career advice across all stages of the recruitment lifecycle at a reduced rate
- Access to practical tips, support and guidance to develop careers
- Individual opportunities to enhance project management and leadership skills through career volunteering.

## MENTOR

- Regular access to networking events and opportunities to meet senior leaders.
- Access to our mentoring programme and LeadershipNOW! alumni.
- Regular access to mentoring events and opportunities to meet specialists in the sector.

## STRATEGIC CHANGE

- The chance to share your insight and experience to influence strategic change
- Strengthen race equality and anti-racism in your organisation
- Drive representation of people of colour at all levels in housing.



## MEMBER ORGANISATIONS





**WHY** - Equality of opportunities to match the equality of talent.



For more information on becoming a partner or sponsor, please contact [unify@unifynetwork.org.uk](mailto:unify@unifynetwork.org.uk)

## Partner Organisations

Like-minded organisations who collaborate with UNIFY to achieve positive change



## Core Sponsors

Organisations committed to financially supporting the growth of UNIFY and representation in the housing sector.

