

# Standing in solidarity with the voiceless

*“When people are determined they can overcome anything” Nelson Mandela*

Events around the globe in the last few weeks and months have shown us all the best and the worst of humanity. First, we saw the overwhelming compassion, care and selfless acts by so many, in particular, people working in the frontline in the fight against a deadly virus and keeping the essential services going that the country needs. Then we mourned for the loss of countless lives – elderly, vulnerable and disproportionate deaths of people, professionals and frontline workers from BME communities. Now we are witnessing the anger, anxiety and solidarity of local communities, led by millennials from all colour and creed - coming together to say no to racism in any form.

Racism exists in the UK. We as BME London Social Landlords believe that saying nothing and doing nothing moving forward will only set us back. The loss of even one more life is too many for communities that are just beginning to breathe from Grenfell Fire disaster, Windrush Scandal, and an immigration system that tears migrant families apart.

All institutions and businesses have to learn and to act to bring lasting change to address the deep divisions that has come surface since the death of Mr George Floyd. As BME social housing businesses that were founded to address the housing injustice facing our communities, we are acutely aware of our responsibility to shine the light on the social and economic injustices experienced by them.

The collation of cross sections our communities in everyone town and city – whether it is supporting those who are isolating protect themselves from the virus or calling and standing up for equality gives us all a once in a generation opportunity to build on the good work that has gone since race relation riots in the 80’s and the Stephen Lawrence inquiry in the 1990’s

We call on all partners in the Social Housing sector, civil society, and government not to lose this opportunity to bring about the long-lasting change. This means challenging ourselves, our own attitudes, finding the courage to speak out, give voice to the voiceless, truly explore what diversity, equality and inclusion really means for us and the also work we do.

Whilst we stand proud of our community’s selfless acts, we share their sadness, stand in solidarity in their quest for social and economic justice and stand ready to play a constructive part, and work hand in hand with the allies and partners to listen, learn and act so that BME communities can triumph in their hopes and dreams - “A winner is a dreamer who never gives up”.