



Uniting the movement – driving change

We are shaping a future where equity is not just an aspiration but a lived reality for all.

Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2025–2029

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Welcome



Chris Boardman
Chair



Jason Fergus
Board ED&I Champion

“

‘This is a place I want to be’ is a hard thing to do. Nevertheless, it’s exactly what we intend to do, for our workforce and for the people we want to be active.

One of the main barriers in life, that determine whether we participate in an activity, join a club or apply for a job, is cultural. A sense of comfort, familiarity and rightness, that helps make that decision or activity a genuine option.

Defining the small actions and behaviours that combine to create a sense of ‘this is something for me’ or make us feel ‘this is a place I want to be’ is a hard thing to do. Nevertheless, it’s exactly what we intend to do, for our workforce and for the people we want to be active.

Our new Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan will bring clarity to the actions we need to take and make us accountable for delivering them, to ensure our organisation is a welcoming and natural place for all and an environment where everyone feels at home.

”

“

Culture is shaped by the behaviours we choose to accept or challenge.

As Sport England’s Board Champion for Diversity and Inclusion, I am deeply committed to creating the conditions where meaningful change can take place; it’s about ensuring everyone, regardless of background, has access to sport and physical activity opportunities.

This is not the responsibility of a few: it’s everyone’s business. Culture is shaped by the behaviours we choose to accept or challenge, and through this Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan we are setting clear expectations that inclusion must be intentional.

”

A message from our CEO



Tim Hollingsworth OBE
Chief executive



Welcome to Sport England's Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan for the period 2025-2029.

As an organisation, we're united by a strong and transformative vision, **Uniting the Movement**, our 10-year strategy to shape a nation where equal, inclusive and connected communities thrive through sport and physical activity.

We're determined to make England a place where people live happier, healthier and more fulfilling lives and are deeply committed to delivering the real and lasting change needed to achieve it.

Our approach to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is therefore purposeful, focused and ambitious. It's embedded in all areas of our work, with the aim of creating a positive and inclusive experience for everyone.

EDI is at the heart of our People & Culture Strategy. We're building a culture where every colleague feels valued, respected and empowered to thrive. Where fairness and belonging aren't optional: they are essential.

Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2025-2029

Our belief in inclusion defines how we work. We encourage all staff to set individual inclusion goals aligned with our organisational values and we empower our teams to model inclusive behaviours in every interaction and decision.

It is embedded in our everyday actions, from respectful conversations and fair decision-making, to real opportunities for development and progression. We seek always to speak up, challenge non-inclusive behaviours, and celebrate the diversity and strengths of our people.

This plan is more than just a set of goals for Sport England, however – it's about changing behaviours, leading with intention and creating sector-wide impact and goes well beyond making positive changes within our own organisation.

Our **Tackling Inequalities Roadmap** and **Inclusion by Design** work are examples of our leading from the front and we're committed to sharing learning, shaping best practice and delivering meaningful changes through collaboration and innovation.

Bold new objectives

Our updated Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan highlights four new objectives that have been developed in partnership with colleagues and are based on evidence and insight.

These objectives will guide our actions over the next four years and reflect the areas where we can make the most meaningful impact. Everyone in our organisation has a role to play to ensure they are met. Together, we will remove barriers, track progress through clear representation targets and build a culture that supports equity at every level.

Accountability and measuring progress

We're committed to accountability. Our progress is monitored through strong governance including our Board, Equality & Diversity Steering Group, Executive Leadership, and Strategic Leads. This ensures we remain focused on outcomes and on continuous improvement.

We will continue to listen, learn and evolve, working with staff, stakeholders and partners to grow our collective understanding of EDI and embed it in everything we do.

Thank you for being part of this journey. ”

Tim Hollingsworth OBE
Chief executive

July 2025

The Equality Objectives recognise the principles as set in the Code for Sports Governance and meet our Public Sector Equality Duties to set and publish our Equality Objectives.



Equality Objective One – Take proactive steps to build and sustain a workforce that reflects the diversity of wider society.



Equality Objective Two – Develop the awareness, confidence and skills of the Sport England workforce to drive forward our ambition to provide leadership to the sporting sector on inclusion.



Equality Objective Three – Promote a culture of inclusivity across Sport England by prioritising actions that create meaningful engagement with the ambitions and actions in the Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan at every level across the organisation.



Equality Objective Four – Act on new upcoming legislation, ensuring all our policies and practices align with evolving equality and inclusion legislation.

A word from



Jeanette Bain-Burnett
Executive director, policy and integrity

“

Over the past four years, we've set some very meaningful actions in motion and delivered an inclusive leadership programme, marking a significant step in shaping what inclusive leadership looks like.

As we move into our next Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP), my ambition is to build on that momentum, create a sense of belonging and clear the path through systems for leaders from every walk of life to thrive in our sector. I hope that this will be felt within Sport England and across our networks. We want our whole staff team to feel excited and challenged in equal measure by this refreshed call to action. As we launch this DIAP, I'm renewing my personal commitment to champion a sharper focus on inclusion within Sport England's leadership culture and practices.

”



About us



Our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan is our internal commitment to Uniting the Movement, our 10-year strategy.



[Link to webpage](#)

We're here to invest in sport and physical activity to make it a normal part of life for everyone in England, regardless of who you are.

Because it's not always a level playing field. Right now, the opportunities to get involved in sport and activity – and reap the rewards of being active – depend too much on your background, your gender, your bank balance and your postcode.

We're determined to tackle this and unlock the advantages of sport and physical activity for everyone.

This isn't just about our long-standing purpose of helping more people to enjoy playing sport and being physically active. We believe that by removing existing barriers to sport and activity, we can be part of a bigger picture of work that helps to address many of society's biggest challenges.

Uniting the Movement is our 10-year strategy for 2021-2031, aiming to do just that.

Together, we can change lives for the better in every home, and in every community, right across the country.

Our vision



We know that having a supportive, inclusive environment and having a diverse workforce leads to better decisions and **improved outcomes** for both our people and our work.

This isn't about just policies or strategies; it's about **people**. Every single one of us has a role to play in driving forward our equality ambitions.

Our four overarching **equality objectives will drive everything we do**, backed by a clear Action Plan to turn words into actions. These are not just aspirations; they are **OUR** commitments.

What's your role? Whether our staff lead teams, make decisions or support colleagues, you are part of this movement. We want you as member of staff to **identify your role** and your **own impact**, to be part of the change.



We are... inclusive



Harnessing our collective strength and respecting difference to create the conditions for everyone to engage and to excel.

One of our four values is **We Are... Inclusive**. This value is paramount in supporting our belief that everyone should have the right to benefit from sport and physical activity, regardless of age, background or ability.

In terms of an inclusive culture, we know that by being more diverse we'll make better decisions, be better able to meet the needs of the breadth of audiences we serve and, ultimately, actively reduce the inequalities present in sport and physical activity.

Our inclusive value echoes what our employees have told us:

- We value diverse perspectives and treat everyone with dignity and respect
- We feel able to share our ideas, and we listen to the voices of others
- We respect each other, always mindful of the impact of our thoughts, words and behaviour.

Our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan encourages our employees and teams to explore our Inclusive value and to understand how we'll further support employees to develop the behaviours that are expected of them. Additionally, we expect regular discussion and individual inclusion goal-setting, and this forms a cornerstone of our Coaching and Valuing Performance Framework.



Our plan

Our plan



Our plan outlines our ambitions to support Uniting the Movement and drive inclusion across Sport England. The commitments we make as part of the plan to champion equality, diversity and inclusion in our workplace and beyond will ensure that we are all held to account for the plan's delivery and success.



This is not our first Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. It has been built upon the successes and learnings of our 2021–2024 plan, and developed further through engagement with our employees, our Board and our partners. We will report on the plan's progress on an annual basis and publish our findings on our website.

Our plan forms a cornerstone of our wider people ambitions. Our strategy, Uniting the Movement, has a vision to imagine a nation of more equal, inclusive, and connected communities – a country where people live happier, healthier and more fulfilled lives.

This vision translates into how we want our own employees to feel about their employment: we want our employees to thrive and lead happy, healthy and fulfilled working lives in an environment that places our values and inclusion at its heart. This vision is central to our wider People and Culture strategy.

Human Resources and Development Team

Integrating ED&I across Sport England



Our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan is not a standalone initiative – it is embedded across our entire business, shaping how we operate, plan and grow. By integrating into every aspect of our operations, we aim to create a culture where inclusion is not just a priority but a shared responsibility across the organisation.



One word

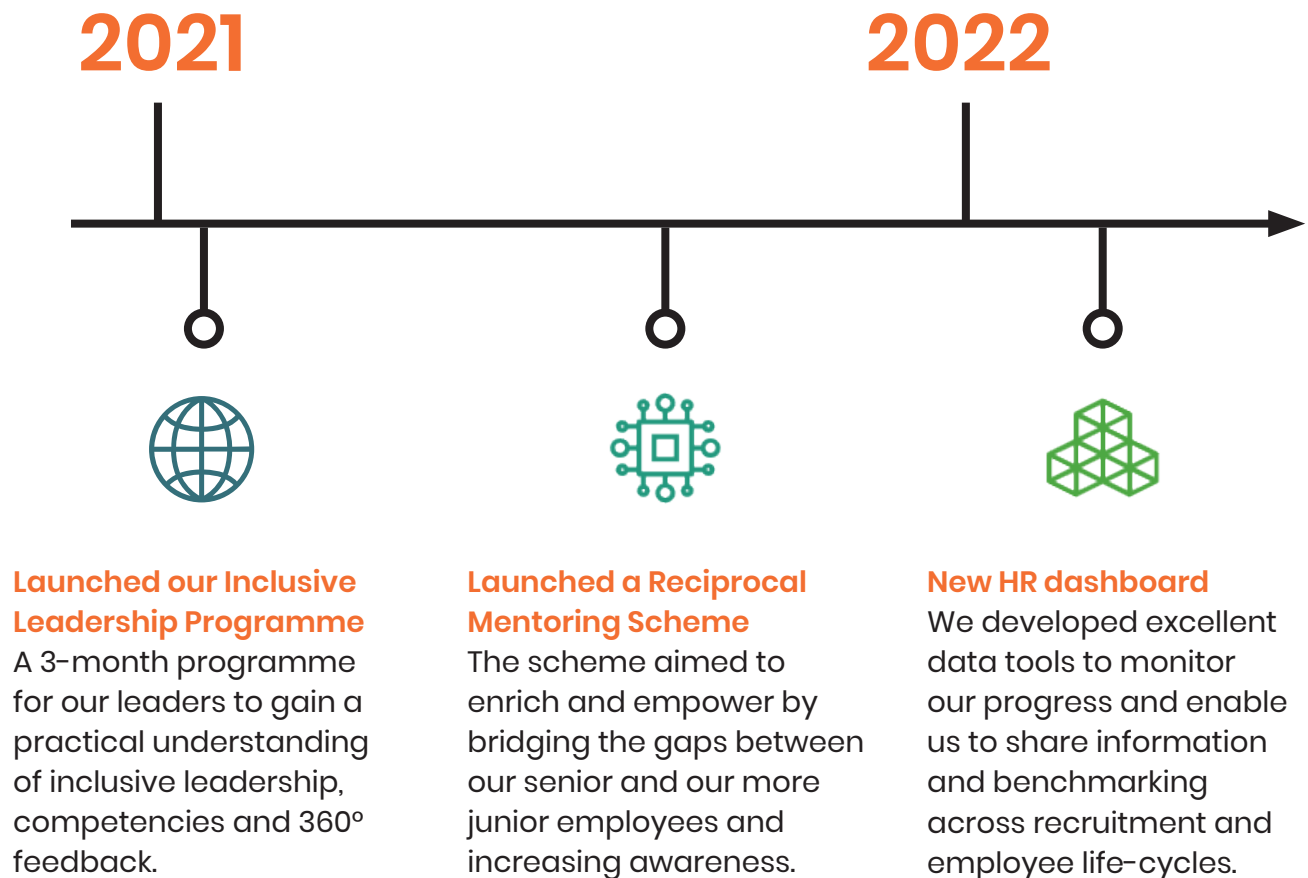
During our diversity and inclusion action plan meetings, when we engaged with various groups on our culture, we asked them to post one word or a phrase that came to mind when they thought about creating a more inclusive workplace and sports sector.

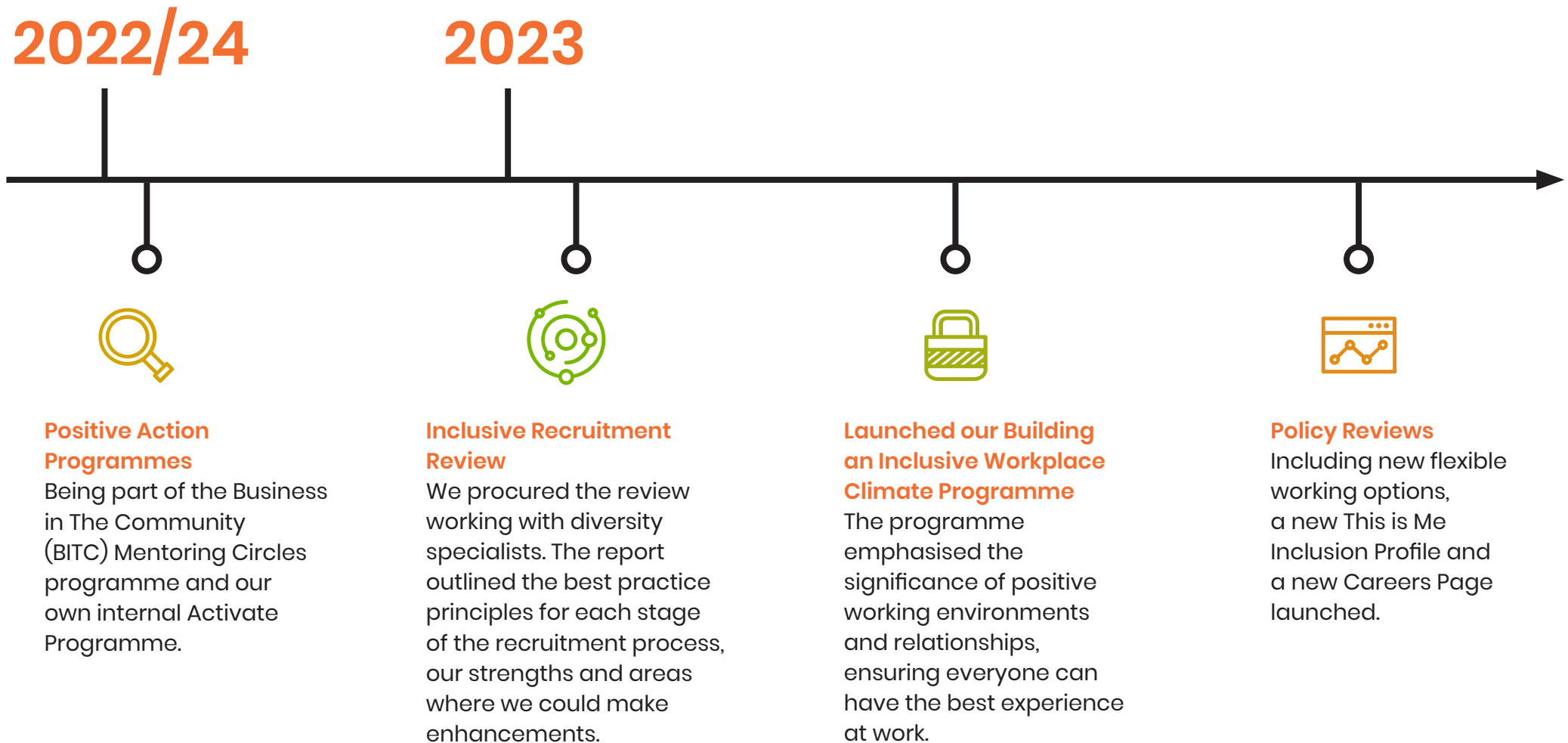


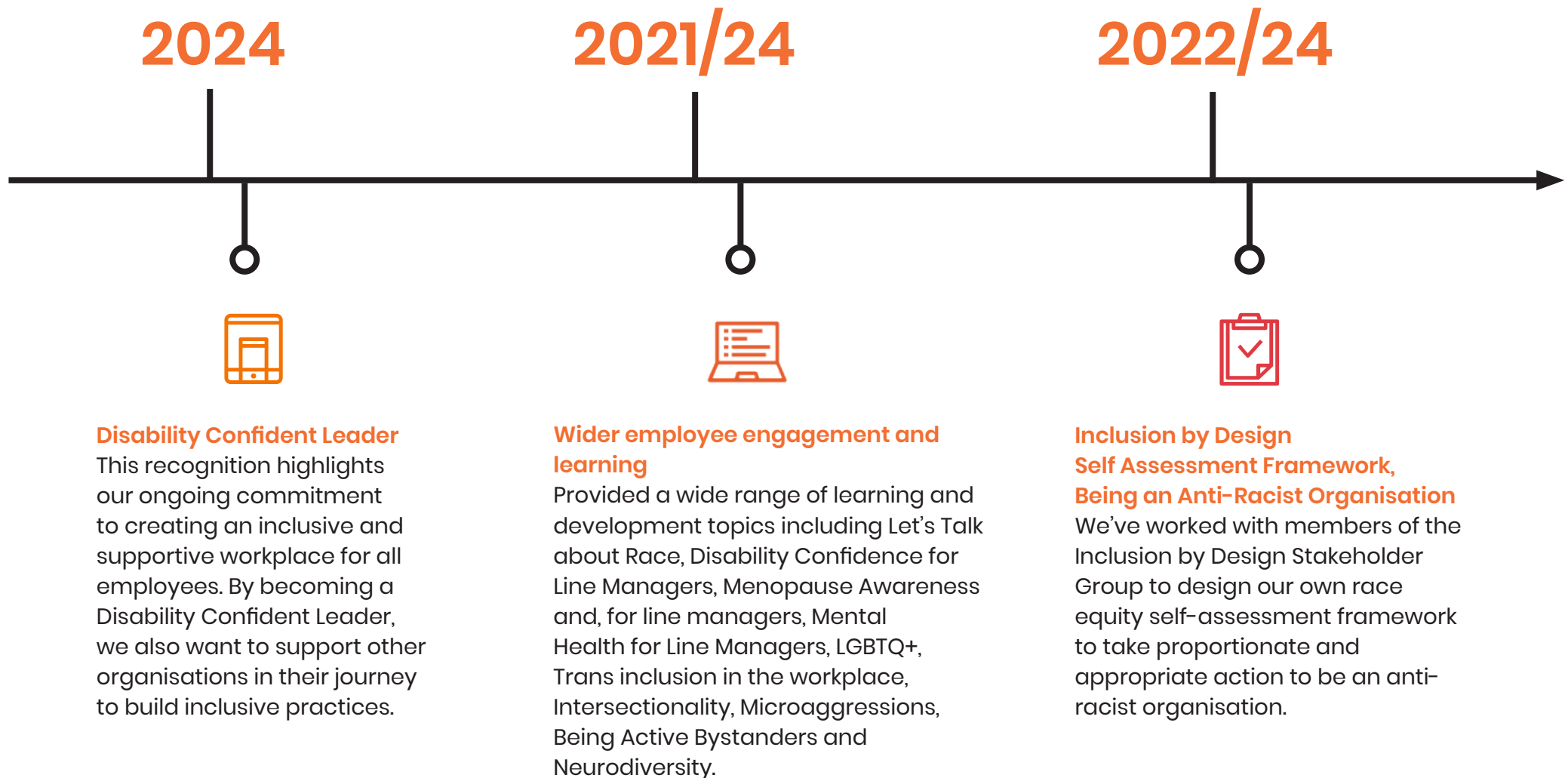
Key highlights of our journey so far...

- Improvements in our workforce diversity metric
- Employees reporting greater awareness of the importance of inclusion
- Positive employee responses to the engagement question: *Sport England values and respects employees from all backgrounds*
- Successful achievement of Disability Confident Leader status.

Diversity and inclusion action plan highlights 2021–2024







Working together

Creating an inclusive workplace isn't just about policies – it's about all of us taking action, sharing responsibility and holding each other accountable. When we work together, we make real progress towards our shared vision.

We see inclusion as something that involves **everyone** in our organisation. Each of us has a role to play in shaping a fairer, more welcoming workplace and a more inclusive sector.

What this means in practice:

- **Listening to diverse voices** – making sure everyone has the chance to be heard and valued
- **Leading by example** – showing inclusive behaviours that actively drive equality, diversity and inclusion
- **Providing learning opportunities** – helping all employees grow, with targeted learning and awareness programmes
- **Building meaningful connections** – recognising that our identities and experiences overlap in unique ways

We believe in the power of **collaboration** – when we come together, we can create real, lasting change. At the same time, we acknowledge that some individuals have specific responsibilities in this space, and it's important to recognise and support their contributions.

By working together, we can create a workplace where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.



The key roles in our inclusive ecosystem



Chief executive Provides strong purposeful leadership on all equality, diversity and inclusion matters	Board champion for equality, diversity and inclusion Represents the views of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group at Board level and conversely the views of the Board to the wider organisation	Chief strategy officer Executive with responsibility for all internal equality, diversity and inclusion matters	Strategic lead, HR and development Lead for all internal equality, diversity and inclusion matters related to our role as an employer
Diversity and inclusion manager Subject-matter expert on equality, diversity and inclusion issues relating to our role as an employer The Equality, Diversity and Steering Group The Group has strategic oversight for all internal ED&I matters with Sport England and has a number of broad aims, including the delivery of the Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan and seeking to ensure that there is a strong link between our internal and external ambitions in sport	The Equality & Diversity Forum Group The group brings together core members with diverse perspectives to support and advance Sport England's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. The Group provides valuable insights and includes updates on Equality Network Activities and PCS Equality. The Group helps align EDI initiatives with organisational EDI goals and priorities	Executive director for policy & integrity and our equality, diversity and inclusion in sport director Leads our over-arching approach to tackling inequalities in sport and physical activity	Executive Champions for our Equality Networks and our BITC Race at Work Sponsor Using their voices to advocate the work that needs to be done
Employee networks Our networking groups amplify diverse voices and engage with colleagues within the ecosystem Allies Visible advocates and allies of everyday inclusion who act at all times. Allies learn about their role and this can be done through education, examining biases, and becoming someone who intervenes instead of being a bystander	Senior leaders Leaders set expectations, shape group dynamics and role model inclusive behaviours	Line managers Managing diverse teams ensuring fairness in decision-making, including recruitment decisions and career progression opportunities, project allocation, role modelling and challenging behaviours	PCS (our union) A valuable contributor and partner in achieving our equality, diversity and inclusion agenda

All Staff

Employees play an important role in developing inclusive workplaces. For example, call out exclusionary behaviour and treating colleagues with fairness and respect.



Delivering our Equality Objectives

Delivering our Equality Objectives

We've prioritised four Equality Objectives relating to our internal and external work. These are based on the equality priorities that we've identified across our functions from the analysis of our evidence.



Equality Objective One – Take proactive steps to build and sustain a workforce that reflects the diversity of wider society, and the communities that we work with.



Equality Objective Two – Develop the awareness, confidence and skills of the Sport England workforce to drive forward our ambition to provide leadership to the sporting sector on inclusion.



Equality Objective Three – Promote a culture of inclusivity across Sport England by prioritising actions that create meaningful engagement with the ambitions and actions in the Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan at every level across the organisation.



Equality Objective Four – Act on new upcoming legislation, ensuring all our policies and practices align with evolving equality and inclusion legislation.

How we will measure our Equality Objectives

Measuring our success is an important part of our plan and will include a number of metrics.



Equality Objective One

We aim to have a workforce which is more reflective of the communities that we work with and by the end 2029 our ambitions include:

- Increasing the number of leaders who identify as being from a Culturally Diverse Group from 10% to 18.3%, and Disabled from 11% to 17.7%
- Increasing the number of employees from our middle tiers who identify as being from a Culturally Diverse Group from 12% to 18.3%, and Disabled from 8% to 17.7%
- Increasing the number of employees from our junior tiers who identify as being from a Culturally Diverse Group from 14% to 18.3%, and Disabled from 15% to 17.7%
- Ensuring that each of our Directorates reflect the ambitions above.



Equality Objective Two

We aim to have a workforce that has the confidence and skills to drive forward our ambition to provide leadership to the sporting sector on inclusion and by the end of 2029 our ambitions include:

- Integration of Tackling Inequalities Roadmap, Inclusion by Design and next steps for Equality Impact Assessment
- Delivering a programme of learning that is bespoke to the differing needs of our employees, and increases their competence to both deliver Uniting the Movement and support our internal diversity ambitions
- Each of our employees having a measurable and SMART inclusion objective.

Our ambitions are high and these don't sit with one team or person; they are part of efforts across all teams. These are the changes that we want to see, but we also recognise some factors that may affect these; these include low turnover rates.

How we will measure our Equality Objectives

Measuring our success is an important part of our plan and will include a number of metrics



Equality Objective Three

We aim to promote a culture of inclusivity across Sport England and by the end of 2029 our ambitions include:

- Each of our employees having a measurable and SMART inclusion objective
- Increasing the number of employees who respond positively to the question 'Sport England values and respects employees from all backgrounds' to over 90%
- Increasing the number of employees who respond positively to the question 'Sport England creates an environment where everyone feels safe to express their ideas and perspectives' to over 90%
- Ensuring that each quarter during the year there is an opportunity for employees to participate in an informal learning opportunity centred upon inclusion.



Equality Objective Four

We aim to ensure that all our policies and practices reflect evolving equality and inclusion legislation, and by the end of 2029 our ambitions include:

- Being compliant with all emerging equalities legislation and ensuring that our employees are aware of any changes through engagement programmes, and where necessary mandatory compliance training.

Equality Objective One



Equality Objective One - Take proactive steps to build and sustain a workforce that reflects the diversity of wider society, and the communities that we work with.



Refresh diversity demographic data we hold, and introduce two new measures – socio-economic and caring – then benchmark.



Create mechanisms to actively monitor and review data from all aspects of the employee life-cycle, creating a baseline of the current employee experience, and where targeted interventions are needed.



Review diversity demographic targets across Sport England, by Directorate and Levels and how this can inform our approach to attraction and selection.



Review what innovative and positive action measures could be introduced to Sport England's approach to attraction, to address any pockets of under-representation.



Taking positive action to support career development and progression, and aid retention internally.



Build upon the momentum of the 2021-2024 DIAP to continue to improve diversity in recruitment by implementing all the recommendations from an Inclusion Recruitment Review.



Mandatory online recruitment skills training for all those involved in recruitment and selection, including the launch of a 'license to recruit' preventing those who do not comply from selection processes.



Continued support and engagement with key pledges e.g. the Race at Work Charter and Disability Confident Leader Accreditations.

Equality Objective Two



Equality Objective Two – Develop the awareness, confidence and skills of the Sport England workforce to drive forward our ambition to provide leadership to the sporting sector on inclusion.



Recognising our advocacy role as a lead influencer and change agent within the sporting system.



Building ED&I skills and capability across Sport England – a learning needs analysis to identify what targeted learning interventions can support a more inclusive workplace with the confidence to support and challenge the wider sports sector on inclusion matters.



Integration of Tackling Inequalities Roadmap, Inclusion by Design Equality Impact Assessment – next steps.



The development of a set of inclusion employee competencies that clearly define the knowledge, behaviours and skills required to create and maintain an inclusive workplace, fostering respect and valuing diverse perspectives, and encourage all employees to have an inclusion objective.

Equality Objective Three



Equality Objective Three – Promote a culture of inclusivity across Sport England by prioritising actions that create meaningful engagement with the ambitions and actions in the Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan at every level across the organisation



Create an engagement strategy for the DIAP that provides a compelling vision for all employees and embeds accountability for our 'We are... Inclusive' value.



Building a culture of belonging across Sport England

Building upon earlier programmes, a holistic refresh of our approach to respect, dignity and psychological safety in the workplace, extending to staff engagement and leadership, line manager and wider-ranging opportunities.



Building upon earlier informal programmes, utilise strategic interventions to build a culture of engagement, inclusion and belonging, such as regular programme of educational opportunities (Lunch and Learns / blogs) on different inclusion topics, and use relevant moments to celebrate successes.



Continued support for our employee networks through leadership sponsorship, dedicated funds for events (owned by the Networks) and established communication channels, and a clear pathway to contribute to diversity strategies by attendance at Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group.



Champion the implementation of the Moving to Inclusion Framework.

Equality Objective Four



Equality Objective Four – Act on new upcoming legislation, ensuring all our policies and practices align with evolving equality and inclusion legislation.



Ensure Sport England proactively engages with legal and public policy initiatives, and that our people policies and practices are fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010, any new emerging employment legislation and best practice.

Currently identified work includes:

- Duty to prevent sexual harassment
- Review of our Equality Policy
- Disability and Ethnicity Pay Gap reporting
- Changes to flexible working legislation
- Menopause/menstruation guidance
- Department for Culture, Media and Sport-led domestic abuse initiative.



Building upon earlier informal programmes, utilise strategic interventions to build a culture of engagement, inclusion and belonging, such as regular programme of educational opportunities (Lunch and Learns / blogs) on different inclusion topics, and use relevant moments to celebrate successes.

Our people 2025



We encourage staff to voluntarily share their diversity information when joining Sport England. Our response rates are high, ranging from 97.6% – 100%, by various protected characteristics. In 2025 we will begin to collect some new data for Social Mobility and Caring.

Women

56%

Culturally
Diverse Groups

14%

Declared
Disability

10%

Part-time staff

13.8%

Female 87% / Male 13%

LGBTQ+

4%

Social Mobility
data gathering

Carers
data gathering

Our journey so far

Our people 2021-2024



We've made progress over the past four years.

We still have challenges to improve representation at senior and middle management levels.

A note on terminology:

Culturally Diverse Groups or Communities

In Sport England we use this terminology, a more favoured term.

In the UK, Ethnic Group is the formal classification used in official documents (for example by Government, the Office for National Statistics, ONS).

Women	2021	2022	2023	2024
Grade 3 and above	47%	52%	52%	50%
Grade 4-5	53%	53%	54%	56%
Grade 6, 7, 8	65%	69%	67%	61%
All grades	55%	58%	57%	56%

Culturally Diverse Groups	2021	2022	2023	2024
Grade 3 and above	*	*	*	*
Grade 4-5	10%	10%	11%	12%
Grade 6, 7, 8	22%	21%	16%	20%
All grades	12%	12%	12%	14%

Declared Disability	2021	2022	2023	2024
Grade 3 and above	*	*	*	*
Grade 4-5	6%	*	7%	8%
Grade 6, 7, 8	15%	16%	14%	15%
All grades	8%	8%	9%	10%

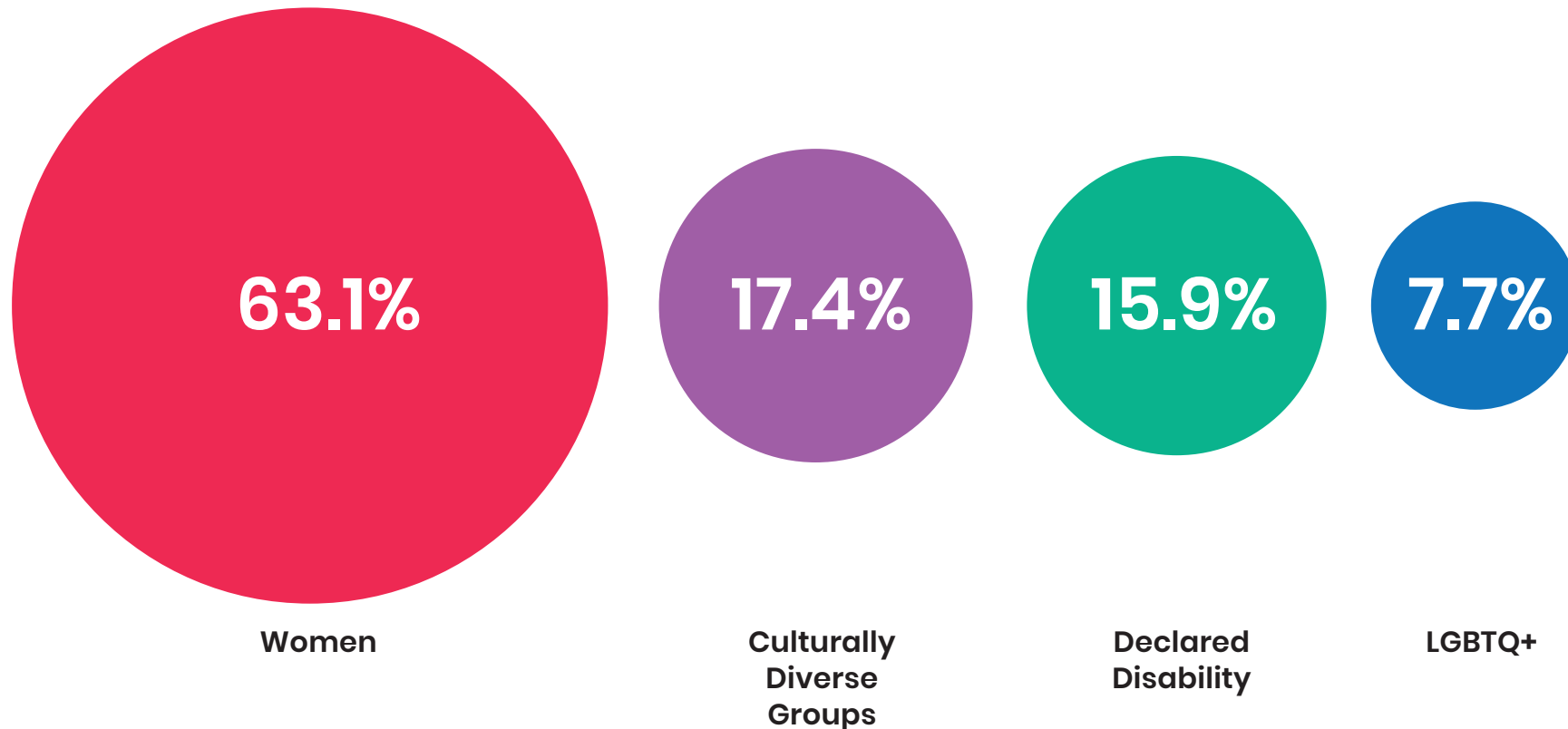
LGBTQ+	2021	2022	2023	2024
Grade 3 and above	*	*	*	*
Grade 4-5	8%	*	6%	*
Grade 6, 7, 8	*	*	*	*
All grades	9%	6%	5%	4%

* GDPR rules applied

Our recruitment data 2021-2024



Our evidence suggests we made significant progress towards meeting our stated inclusion goals, particularly in recruiting diverse representation and fostering a more inclusive workplace culture.



Celebrating our staff equality networks and other additional support groups

To create a space where staff can connect with others who share interests, can network together and provide informal peer support, encourage debate and diversity of thought, get involved in events to celebrate our own diversity, secure in the knowledge that individual differences are valued and respected

– ***We are... Inclusive***

Our staff equality networks and what they mean to us

We recognise that our staff equality networks and additional support groups play a role in shaping an inclusive, supportive and empowering workplace. They provide a safe space for connection, discussion and advocacy, ensuring that every voice is heard and valued.

Our networks celebrate diversity, bringing colleagues together through events and initiatives that foster understanding and inclusion. They also help us identify and address barriers, and influence practices and policy.

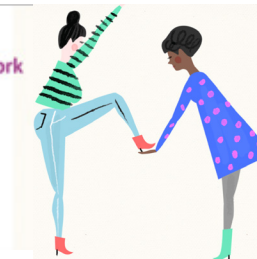
We actively invest in our staff networks, providing dedicated budgets and Executive Champions to ensure they have the resources and leadership backing they need. Each network has a seat at our ED&I Leadership Steering Group and ED&I Forums, where they contribute to shaping our strategic direction.

Together, our networks and our additional support groups help us move from words to action, creating a workplace where all staff feel valued, supported and belong, providing ideas based on lived experience for improving diversity and inclusion.

Together with our PCS union we value their invaluable input.



Sport England
Women's Network



Movement
Champions



- **Support**
- **Trust**
- **Respect**
- **Inform**
- **Development**
- **Excellence**

Allies Network
Supporting all our Staff
Equality Networks





Aims

The primary aim of the group is to create a safe space for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues to connect with each other and to further support colleagues to completely be themselves at work.

We also have a key role to play in strategic development and policy influence through the lived experience of our diverse membership. Our members can play an invaluable role in designing approaches to both promote best practice and to challenge instances of discrimination, racism and inequality.

Achievements

Our main highlights over the past year include:

- Review of our Terms of Reference.
- Hosted Lunch and Learn sessions with guest speakers for South Asian Heritage Month and Black History Month.
- Organised a Pledge Wall for staff members to make public commitments about supporting culturally diverse colleagues.
- Training for members delivered by Inclusive Employers.
- Recruitment of a new Executive Champion.

Upcoming focus

The areas that we plan to focus on include:

- Succession planning process for the Co-Lead roles.
- How best to utilise our budget to support members with training and development opportunities.
- Better connectivity and collaboration with the other staff networks.
- Providing insight to the organisation's Race Equity Champions.



Race Equity In Every Move We Make

Racism and racial inequalities still exist within the sport and physical activity sector. More action is needed to address this, and we know this requires time, a culture shift, and a review of ways of working. In response to [Tackling Racism & Racial Inequality in Sport \(TRARIIS\) research](#) and **Tell Your Story lived experience insight**, Sport England has made a public commitment alongside the other UK Sports Councils to drive a culture of anti-racism throughout sporting structures.

A key milestone for the organisation has been the training and development of a cohort of Race Equity Champions to play an influential role in this movement.

Vision (our long-term goal)

For Sport England to be an anti-racist organisation where race equity is at the core of decision-making processes in our ambitions to tackle inequality.

Mission (our purpose)

To build a movement of aware, anti-racist colleagues so that we influence policy, strategy and behaviour across the organisation.

Outcomes (the changes we seek)

All colleagues are aware of the findings, recommendations and commitments of TRARIIS and Tell Your Story, and the role we play in that.

Colleagues are talking about race more often at work.

Colleagues are engaging with the Inclusion by Design framework to influence the decisions they make about the work they do.

Updates

The current areas of focus being prioritised by the Race Equity Champions include:

- Brand development and awareness.
- Stakeholder mapping.
- Introducing the Inclusion by Design [IBD] framework and starting a conversation with colleagues through 'Culture of Curiosity' sessions.
- Developing the toolkit for facilitated sessions on embedding the IBD framework.

STRIDE

- Support
- Trust
- Respect
- Inform
- Development
- Excellence

Purpose

STRIDE's purpose is to provide a positive and inclusive voice for all disabled colleagues and those with lived experience at Sport England. It provides a community where colleagues with shared experience can come together for support and connection.

STRIDE objectives

1. To provide **a safe and supportive community** where colleagues with shared experience of and interest in disability can come together.
2. To **influence Sport England policy, practice and culture** to achieve greater inclusion and equity for disabled colleagues.
3. To **advocate for and celebrate disabled people**, recognising the value disabled colleagues bring to Sport England, and the wider contribution of disabled people to society.
4. Work with Sport England's other staff networks, to **strengthen inclusion**.

Membership

Membership of STRIDE is open to any Sport England employee who wants to participate in and support its work. This includes disabled colleagues and non-disabled colleagues with lived experience of disability, including family members and carers. STRIDE also welcomes any colleagues who want to be allies.

Achievements in 2024/25

Our main highlights over the past year include:

- Review of our Terms of Reference.
- Hosted Lunch and Learn sessions with guest speakers for Paralympics and Disability History Month for the whole organisation.
- Guest speakers at STRIDE member sessions.
- Supported the planning and delivery of All Colleagues Day.
- Helping the organisation to gain the Disability Confidence Leaders accreditation.

Upcoming focus

- Succession planning process for the Co-Lead roles.
- Support members with training & development opportunities.
- Stronger connectivity and collaboration with the other staff networks
- Working in collaboration across the organisation to help scope and deliver the next steps of the Disability Confidence Scheme and what gaining Leaders (Level 3) means in practice for the organisation.

Women's Network

The main aim of our network is to be a safe and welcoming space for women to talk and connect with one another outside of work functions and teams, developing a supportive community for those with shared experiences. We also have a role to play in influencing the organisation's policies, practices and behaviours to ensure the organisation has a culture that values women and ensures that Sport England is an even greater place for women to work.

Membership

We welcome all women from across the organisation – all levels, job roles, ages and backgrounds. The network is also open to allies of all genders who share our aims and objectives.

Our mission

To create and nurture a working culture and environment that allows and encourages women to thrive, fulfilling their personal and professional potential.

Four objectives

- Offer support, encouragement, and development to female colleagues, helping us build relationships and make connections, regardless of our work role or function.
- Raise women's voices as we implement our strategy and nurture our organisational culture, systems and working practices.
- Celebrate women's achievements within Sport England, women's sport more broadly and the wider world.
- Strengthen connections to the Women's Sport Collective as a platform in which to help women connect, develop and learn across our organisation and beyond.

Upcoming focus

We have just consulted with women in Sport England and are having a refresh of our network. A calendar of activities and engagement for the next 12 months is soon to be shared. We will be working closely with our partner the Women's Sports Collective to bring some exciting opportunities to our network.

Our focus for this year is on:

- Leadership
- Development
- Perimenopause and menopause
- Caring responsibilities.



Sport England Women's Network



We will be working to develop a range of opportunities to develop and engage on these topics including guest speakers, informal networks, learning opportunities and mentoring, as well as opportunities to shape our ways of working. We will also be developing opportunities with our other employee networks where there is clear commonality.

We are always open to new ideas and people to help increase our offer to the network.



Purpose

Sport England's LGBTQ+ Network is here to support, connect and celebrate colleagues from our community, made up of members from across the organisation.

It's a safe space where colleagues can be authentic without apology, explanation or self-censorship.

The network is about a place to have fun and celebrate the gift that a queer identity truly is.

Our objectives

The network aims to:

- Provide peer-to-peer support to colleagues across the organisation.
- Raise awareness of issues across the entire LGBTQ+ spectrum.
- Act as a 'critical friend' within the organisation to support inclusion.
- Work with the EDI Team and PCS Equality Group to help advance the inclusion of all LGBTQ+ people in sport and physical activity.

Membership

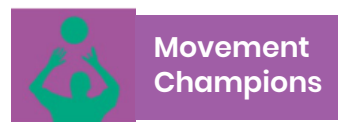
We primarily exist for the benefit of our LGBTQ+ colleagues – but anyone is welcome to join the network, especially any colleagues who are allies to our community. Some of our members openly identify within LGBTQ+ communities and some members attend as allies.

Achievements

- Recruited new co-leads following a period of staff departures.
- Supported the most recent Colleagues' Day all-staff event, representing the network.
- Hosted a Lunch and Learn with internal and external guest speakers for PRIDE month.

Upcoming focus

- Re-establishing our online and in-person network meet ups for 2025–26.
- Working in connection and collaboration with other staff networks.
- Refreshing our communications and being more proactive with getting colleagues engaged.



Our Wellbeing Group aims to promote and sustain a positive, healthy and supportive environment within Sport England by implementing various initiatives that enhance the mental, physical, social and financial wellbeing of all employees.

Our Health and Safety Group's purpose is to promote a safe and healthy work environment for all employees, temporary staff, contractors and visitors by identifying and addressing health and safety issues, and by developing and implementing policies and procedures to prevent accidents and injuries.

The mental health and wellbeing of our people is a priority for us. We are a Mindful Employer, a commitment for employers who are Positive About Mental Health. We provide access to an Employee Assistance Programme, independent Occupational Health Assessments, Mental Health Awareness Training for

Managers, various mental health and wellbeing awareness webinars for all staff and access to Mental Health First Aiders and Mental Health Champions.

Mental Health First Aiders

Offer initial support in a confidential and non-judgmental way. They are trained volunteers who aim to:

- Provide mental health support to Sport England colleagues to preserve life, provide help, promote recovery and provide comfort.
- Raise awareness across Sport England of mental health support, issues and opportunities
- Reduce mental health stigma and discrimination among colleagues.

Mental Health Champions

Are volunteers who are trained in mental health awareness and support. They are passionate about developing a positive and supportive work environment for everyone. They work closely with our Mental Health First Aiders, contributing as much or as little time to the role as they can afford.

Movement Champions

Are a group of colleagues who volunteer their time to advocate and support the organisation to integrate movement into their daily routine. Their mission is to build a culture where movement is the norm, and activity is embedded into the working day.

Our public pledges



Our long-term approach to ED&I is built on a strong commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, not just in principle but in action.

We have made public pledges to champion ED&I across the sector and our people practices as an employer, ensuring that our workplace is inclusive, fair and representative of the communities we serve.

These commitments are embedded in our participation in:

- The Race at Work Charter – driving race equality and creating fairer workplaces
- The Disability Confident Scheme – supporting and empowering disabled employees
- The Mindful Employer Scheme and adopting the charity Mind, Thriving at Work Standards.

These pledges are more than just words or plaques on a wall – they provide us with strong frameworks to guide our actions, set clear expectations and drive meaningful, lasting change. They help us create a workplace where everyone can thrive.



Appendix 1 Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan



Our four-year Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan can be found on the following pages:

Equality Objective One

Take proactive steps to build and sustain a workforce that reflects the diversity of wider society

Strengthen our understanding of workforce data

Action	Success/impact	Measured by	Baseline data (2025)	Target data (2029)	Accountable	Year
Engage with our employees, Board and Committee members to refresh the diversity demographic data we hold, and introduce two new measures – socio-economic and caring – and map this data against general workforce statistics and other public bodies e.g. civil service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved data quality Greater ability to use diversity data to develop more effective EDI strategies, targets and interventions 	% of employees, Board members and others who participate in the data refresh exercise	97% data currently collected (although some data may be outdated, and no data held on caring or socio-economic data)	98% participation rate	Human Resources and Insight	2025
Create mechanisms to actively monitor and review data from all aspects of the employee life-cycle e.g. pay gaps, progression, attrition, exit data, employee engagement data, to create a baseline of the current employee experience, and where targeted interventions are needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved data quality Greater ability to use diversity data to develop more effective EDI strategies, targets and interventions 	Regular reporting on a range of metrics	2024 Median Pay Gaps Gender Pay Gap 7.45% Disability Pay Gap 7.95% Culturally Diverse Groups Pay Gap 7.17% Equal Pay Audit – completed New data points to be added	Pay gaps reduced to less than 5%	Human Resources and Insight	2029

Review diversity demographic targets across Sport England, and how this can inform our approach to attraction and selection

Action	Success/impact	Measured by	Baseline data (2025)	Target data (2029)	Accountable	Year
Review the progress made during the 2021-2024 DIAP, our internal metrics (e.g. attractiveness and talent flows) and general workforce statistics to engage with Board and ELT to agree Sport England's approach to aspirational diversity demographic target-setting for the life-cycle of the current DIAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To see positive changes in our workforce composition to ensure that we are more reflective of wider society Transparency and in line with Public Sector Equality Duties 	Aspirational diversity demographic targets set for Sport England	Current workforce composition statistics Women 56% Declared disability 10% Culturally Diverse Groups 14% LGBTQ+ 4%	Reflective of the communities that we work with across all Grades / Directorates	Human Resources, ELT, and Board	2029
Build upon the momentum of the 2021-2024 DIAP to continue to improve diversity in recruitment via implementing all the recommendations of the Pearn Kandola review into Sport England's recruitment and attraction practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To see positive changes in our workforce composition to ensure that we are more reflective of wider society Transparency and in line with Public Sector Equality Duties 	Robust tracking analysis of data through the recruitment and selection cycle (including adverse impact analysis); Increased number of applicants from disadvantaged groups	Applicant statistics 2021-2024 New data points to be added for 2025	Reflective of the communities that we work with across all Grades / Directorates	Human Resources	2025-2026

Continued...

Review what innovative and positive action measures could be introduced to Sport England's approach to attraction to address any pockets of under-representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To see positive changes in our workforce composition to ensure that we are more reflective of wider society 	Robust tracking analysis of data through the recruitment and selection cycle (including adverse impact analysis); increased number of applicants from under-represented groups	New recruits joining Sport England 2021-2024 Declared disability 15.9% Culturally Diverse Groups 17.4% LGBTQ+ 7.7%	Reflective of the communities that we work with across all Grades / Directorates	Human Resources	2026-2027
Mandatory online recruitment skills training for all those involved in recruitment & selection including the launch of a 'license to recruit' preventing those who do not comply from selection processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To see positive changes in our workforce composition to ensure that we are more reflective of wider society Ensure that we have trained recruitment assessors that understand bias in the process 	Robust tracking analysis of data through the recruitment and selection cycle (including adverse impact analysis); increased number of applicants from under-represented groups	Data currently not collected	100% participation rate for interview panels	Human Resources / Selection Panels	2026-2027

Taking positive action to support career development and progression, and aid retention internally.

Action	Success/impact	Measured by	Baseline data (2025)	Target data (2029)	Accountable	Year
Continued support and engagement with a number of key pledges e.g. the Race at Work Charter and Disability Confident Leader Accreditations	Sport England consistently adheres to accreditation standards e.g. Disability Confident Leader Accreditation (Listening and Valuing feedback) employee survey, and responds to any findings; helps Sport England to attract and improve representation; leaders can demonstrate a commitment via the accreditations	Conducting annual self-assessments to track progress on D&I initiatives	Work in progress. To be defined by Disability Confident Leader sub-group	Annual review of each pledge and positive feedback from providers	Human Resources / Others e.g. Disability Confident Sub-Group/ Networks	2025-2029
As part of wider initiatives to attract, support and retain talent across Sport England review the opportunities for positive action developmental programmes across Sport England e.g. continued support for BITC mentoring circles, internal reverse mentoring programmes and a structured development programme for more junior grade employees from across Sport England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of a strong internal talent pipeline of diverse talent Improved employee engagement and satisfaction 	% participation rates; number of positive programme evaluations; improved rates of progression and reduced attrition; improved employee engagement scores	Attrition statistics Women 61.9% Culturally Diverse Groups 10.9% Declared disability 11.3% LGBTQ+13.8% Other data points to be collected	Proportionate with overall Sport England workforce composition	Human Resources	2029

Equality Objective Two

Develop the awareness, confidence and skills of the Sport England workforce to drive forward our ambition to provide leadership to the sporting sector on inclusion

Recognising our advocacy role as a lead influencer, and change agent within the sporting system

Action	Success/impact	Measured by	Baseline data (2025)	Target data (2029)	Accountable	Year
Integration of Tackling Inequalities Roadmap and Inclusion by Design	Good EDI practices are embedded throughout key Sport England functions through the use of Tackling Inequalities Roadmap support and resources	Spotlight audit of 3-5 Sport England work packages annually, scored against the Roadmap Rubric	Not currently available	75% of Sport England teams scoring 2+ for EDI tool application in annual audit	Director for EDI	To follow
Equality Impact Assessment - next steps	High-impact decisions are supported by a timely, high-quality EqIA that demonstrably informs outcomes, includes documented mitigation actions and evidence of ongoing monitoring of equality impact	Annual cross-organisational audit of EqIAs from across SE	No capacity at present to repeat audit for 2025	<p>100% of eligible decisions include a completed EqIA reviewed by the EDI team</p> <p>Annual sample audit of 20% of EqIAs shows year-on-year improvement in quality and legal compliance</p> <p>100% of decision-makers (Board, ELT, Delegated Authorities) complete EDI-specific training annually</p>	<p>Executive Director for Policy & Integrity / Chief Strategy Officer</p> <p>Executive Director for Policy & Integrity / Chief Strategy Officer</p> <p>Board / ELT / Delegated Authorities</p>	To follow

Continued...

All new policies, programmes and funding streams undergo an EqlA at the design stage (baseline and annual tracking)	EqlA quality scores improve year-on-year	Quarterly reporting on EqlA implementation shared with executive leadership and used to inform business planning cycles At least 75% of business units reviewed	To be advised	100% of relevant business cases explicitly reference EqlA and equality considerations in their priorities or delivery plans 90% of senior leadership decisions logged in governance records include a documented summary of equality considerations	To follow To follow	To follow
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Building ED&I skills and capability across Sport England

Action	Success/impact	Measured by	Baseline data (2025)	Target data (2029)	Accountable	Year
Completion of the Learning and Development Task and Finish Group's learning needs analysis, which aims to systemically understand the workforce's current skills, knowledge and abilities in relation to ED&I to identify what targeted learning interventions can support a more inclusive workplace with the confidence to support and challenge the wider sports sector on inclusion matters	<p>The development of targeted programmes will express the developmental specific needs of the Sport England workforce that will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote behaviour change and a workforce that champions inclusion • provide leadership and challenge in the wider sports sector on all matters around ED&I • lead to greater employee engagement and satisfaction we are investing in our employees 	% participation rates; number of positive programme evaluations; improved employee confidence; improved employee engagement scores	Work in progress. To be defined by the Learning and Development Task and Finish Group	Work in progress. To be defined by the Learning and Development Task and Finish Group	Human Resources	Ongoing

Continued...

As part of a refreshed performance development review (PDR) cycle, development of a set of inclusion employee competencies that clearly define the knowledge, behaviours and skills required to create and maintain an inclusive workplace, fostering respect and valuing diverse perspectives, and encourage all employees to have an inclusion objective	Having measurable competencies is crucial for identifying strengths and developmental areas and ensuring employee alignment with, and ownership of, UTM and our inclusion goals	Development and roll-out of the competencies; % of employees with an inclusion objective	Data not currently collected as this information cannot be filtered from the current PDR system	All employees have an objective linked to inclusion	Line managers	2026-2027 PDRs (linked to a new online PDR system)
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Equality Objective Three

Promote a culture of inclusivity across Sport England by prioritising actions that create meaningful engagement with the ambitions and actions in the DIAP at every level across the organisation

Create an engagement strategy for the DIAP that provides a compelling vision for all employees and embeds accountability for our 'We are... Inclusive' value

Action	Success/impact	Measured by	Baseline data (2025)	Target data (2029)	Accountable	Year
EDI Steering Group with active support from Board and ELT to develop a strong narrative and engagement strategy around the DIAP which enthuses employees and explains why this action plan matters and how it connects to our vision, values and strategic goals	All employees at all levels demonstrate an understanding of how the action plan directly supports Sport England's broader objectives	Increased clarity and alignment; employees demonstrate a clear understanding and can demonstrate Sport England's broader objectives	Engagement strategy currently being formulated	Annual engagement activities around the DIAP	EDISG/Internal Communications	2025
With support from EDISG leaders champion, drive forward and are accountable for workplace inclusion and key actions within the DIAP through their active involvement – setting a positive example	Visible leadership advocacy for the plan will cement the plan's importance within Sport England; Leaders are aware of their responsibility for everyday inclusion, and act upon this in their interactions with colleagues and others, and within their business decisions	Engagement metrics, participation rates in activities 360 degree feedback (existing programme)	New engagement question to be defined; New 360 exercise in late 2025	To be defined	ELT	On-going

Building a culture of belonging across Sport England

Action	Success/impact	Measured by	Baseline data (2025)	Target data (2029)	Accountable	Year
Building upon earlier programmes, a holistic refresh of our approach to respect, dignity and psychological safety in the workplace, extending to staff engagement and leadership, line manager and wider-ranging opportunities	Increase in confidence levels where staff feel comfortable challenging inappropriate behaviour, and report feeling psychologically safe; positive impact on workplace culture	% of employees and leaders who attend training; improved employee engagement scores; monitoring the number of complaints	Engagement question Sport England creates an environment where everyone feels safe to express their ideas and perspectives 58% Dignity at Work complaints where remedial action was taken 24/25 - 2 Exit data highlighting any bullying or harassment	Increase engagement score - 95%	Human Resources	2027



Continued...

Building upon earlier informal programmes, utilise strategic interventions to build a culture of engagement, inclusion and belonging e.g. a regular programme of educational opportunities (Lunch and Learns / blogs) on different inclusion topics, and use relevant moments to celebrate successes	Encouraging feelings of inclusion and belonging will increase staff satisfaction and engagement	% of employees and leaders who participate; improved employee engagement scores	Engagement question Sport England values and respects employees from all backgrounds 82%	Increase engagement score - 95%	Various (employee lead) / Internal Communications	Ongoing (EDISG to agree an annual programme each year)
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Continued support for our employee networks through leadership sponsorship, dedicated funds for events (owned by the Networks) and established communication channels, and a clear pathway to contribute to diversity strategies by attendance at EDISG	Support for diverse groups; promoting ongoing conversations about inclusion; helping to maintain a focus on strategic diversity goals; insights that are aligned with employees' needs and contribute to a culture of continuous improvement	Active Membership; event participation rates	The networks to define success	Continued activity and engagement	Employee Networks / EDISG	Ongoing
Conduct and complete an Accessibility Maturity Model assessment to evaluate our organisation's current approach to disability inclusion, identifying strengths, gaps and areas for improvement	Use the findings to develop a structured plan that enhances accessibility across our work, practices and workplace environments, ensuring a more inclusive experience for disabled employees	Assessment completed with a documented action plan. Progress will be measured through periodic review and feedback from disabled employees	Data not currently collected	Periodic reviews	HR / IT / Procurement/ Facilities	2026

Champion the implementation of the Moving to Inclusion Framework

Action	Success/impact	Measured by	Baseline data (2025)	Target data (2029)	Accountable	Year
Task and Finish Group to be set up to oversee the implementation of the existing Moving to Inclusion self-diagnostic assessment framework across pillars of Leadership, Culture and Experience, Relationships, Communications, and Representation	The group will ensure the framework is effectively deployed to evaluate organisational inclusion efforts, generate insights, and guide actions across the pillars	The number of completed actions	Data not currently collected. Task and Finish group to define success	Task and Finish group to define	EDISG	2027



Equality Objective Four

Act on new upcoming legislation, ensuring all organisational policies and practices align with evolving equality and inclusion legislation

Ensure Sport England proactively engages with legal and public policy initiatives

Action	Success/impact	Measured by	Baseline data (2025)	Target data (2029)	Accountable	Year
<p>Ensure all our people policies and practices are fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010, any new emerging employment legislation and best practice. Currently identified work includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duty to prevent sexual harassment • Review of the Equality Policy • Disability and Ethnicity Pay Gap reporting • Changes to flexible working legislation • Menopause/menstruation guidance • DCMS-led domestic abuse initiative 	<p>Review to ensure Sport England remains current, effective and aligned with best practices, legal requirement and Sport England's organisational commitments to inclusion</p>	<p>Compliance with the latest legal and regulatory standards; % of employees who understand and feel confident in applying updated policies</p>	<p>Currently compliant</p>	<p>Continued compliance and 100% of employees understand our policies</p>	<p>Human Resources</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Appendix 2

Evaluation report

We completed our evaluation report for our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2021–2024.

The report highlights both our successes and areas needing further progress, which have helped to shape our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan for 2025–2029.

If you are interested in seeing how we did, you can [read it here](#).



Appendix 3

Statutory duties



We have statutory responsibilities through the Equality Act 2010, Public Sector Equality Duties, Gender Pay Gap reporting, Equal Pay Audits, and guidance from the Civil Service Commission.

- Equality Act 2010 – we comply with equality law and implement [good practice](#) in all aspects of employment including recruitment, pay, working hours, managing staff and developing policies.
- Public Sector Equality Duties – we’re a public sector organisation and have Public Sector Equality Duty responsibilities and must pay ‘due regard’ across all of our functions including:
 - eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010
 - advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who don’t share it
 - fostering good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who don’t share it
- meeting specific Equality Duties through the publication of this Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, sharing our Equality Objectives and through our Annual Progress Review Report.
- Gender Pay Gap Reporting and Equal Pay – we publish [details of our approach](#) to reward externally through our Equal Pay Audits and Gender Pay Gap reporting.
- Our Equal Pay Audits take place regularly and the Gender Pay Gap Report is reported annually, based on a snapshot of 31 March of the preceding year.
- [Guidance from the Civil Service Commission](#) – it’s a requirement of the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act that selection for recruitment to the Civil Service must be on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

July 2025

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