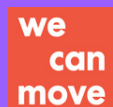


2024 / 2025

Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

Evaluation Report



Active
Gloucestershire



Contents

	Page
Introduction	1
Ambition 1: A more diverse and representative workforce	2 & 3
Ambition 2: A safe, inclusive and supportive workplace	4 & 5
Ambition 3: Making EDI everyone's responsibility	6 & 7
What we've learnt	8
Looking ahead	9
Active Gloucestershire's staff demographic diversity	10
Board thoughts on our DIAP and EDI work	11
What our staff have to say (video)	12 to 15
A final word	16

Introduction

A year of listening, learning and leading

At Active Gloucestershire, our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is no longer just something we talk about. It's becoming part of who we are, how we work and how we lead change alongside others.

During 2024/25, we developed an ambitious and bespoke diversity inclusion action plan (DIAP), which outlined our commitment to improving our internal EDI governance, culture and practices.

Over the past year, our DIAP has guided us through a period of reflection, growth and connection. Co-produced with our staff and Board, the plan has helped us understand ourselves more clearly, build stronger relationships with partners and take meaningful steps to become a more inclusive organisation.

We've explored what it means to create space for everyone - from the makeup of our team and Board, to the voices we elevate and the support we offer each other. We've embraced complexity, asked better questions and listened more deeply - to our colleagues, our partners and the communities we serve across Gloucestershire.

This report provides an overview of the progress we've made - highlighting some of our biggest wins, our areas for improvement and some of the lessons we've learned along the way.

Also included in this report, are infographics illustrating the composition of our workforce, what it's like to work for us, plus feedback from our team around how they have contributed to this year's DIAP and the ways in which the plan has impacted them.

We hope you enjoy the following pages.

Ambition 1

Ensure our workforce is more diverse and representative of our county and the priority groups we work with.

Ambition 2

Build a safe, inclusive and supportive workplace.

Ambition 3

Ensure equality, diversity and inclusion is an organisational priority.



Kirsty Dunleavy-Harris
Deputy CEO



Geetha Dean
Governance and
Compliance Manager

Ambition 1

A more diverse and representative workforce



Data analysis: a new starting point

We knew in order to make progress in this area, we had to take an honest look at our current staff composition. We analysed our workforce diversity data and our past applicant data and drew comparisons with local and national benchmarks to establish our starting point. We also focused on understanding the diversity of personalities, behaviours and skills within our workforce by analysing our DiSC profiles and Board skills audit results. This gave us a much clearer picture of who was in the room – and who wasn't. These insights are already influencing how we attract, recruit and retain talent. They've shaped our people plan and helped to highlight where we want to grow representation – particularly among ethnically diverse candidates, disabled applicants and Board members from voluntary, community or health backgrounds. And significantly, they've helped us to consider how we might go about doing this.

Recruitment: opening doors and attracting diverse talent

Working with staff, we spent time reviewing and redesigning our recruitment process. We analysed our exit interview and probation data to gather feedback from staff around what currently works well, where the gaps lie and which parts of the process we needed to strengthen. We also reached out to Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) partners to see what we could learn from their recruitment processes and practices. This has helped us create a set of bespoke and evidence-informed actions spanning the entire recruitment process, from job descriptions to our selection process and interviews through to onboarding. These are actions we're now excited to take forward and implement to ensure our process becomes even more inclusive and accessible.

This past year has also seen us adopt a different approach to trustee recruitment. Our trustee recruitment pack was redesigned to ensure it was more accessible and informative. This included improving clarity around trustee duties, the type of skills we're looking for, the support new trustees can expect from us, the time commitment required and the different ways that candidates are able to apply for the position. And, knowing that we wanted to recruit trustees from the voluntary and community sector, those who are or have worked with people impacted by inequalities and those who had an understanding of the health care system, we explicitly invited applicants with these experiences or backgrounds. We chose to advertise through a recruitment agency as well as local voluntary and community networks, in order to target these applicants. As a result of this more targeted approach, we recruited four new trustees and increased the diversity of lived experience on our Board.

Ambition 1



Elevating voices

We've also created more space to hear from voices that aren't always represented. This has included staff-led lunch and learns, insights from peer networks and lived experience that have informed our work and collaboration with local partners like Lives of Colour, Focal Elements, The Barnwood Trust and Inclusion Gloucestershire.

There is undoubtedly more to do, specifically around increasing the diversity of membership of our we can move programme group and exploring how else we bring underrepresented voices to the table and provide them with opportunities to influence decision-making. However, we've made important progress this year and are looking forward to continuing to improve diversity – in all its forms, across our organisation.

Reporting on workforce diversity

Towards the end of 2024/25, we communicated our findings around workforce diversity to the staff and Board and published these on our website, with an accompanying summary of our findings and how these could shape our future recruitment priorities. We have also included these infographics in this report, along with some other questions we asked staff, in an effort to capture non-visible identity markers and reach a better understanding of their whole identity – what drives them, what motivates them and what enables them to feel respected and heard. We recognise that building a diverse team – rich in perspective, knowledge, lived experience and skill, will not only improve our decision-making and problem-solving, but will lead to a more creative, motivated and engaged team.



Ambition 2

A safe, inclusive and supportive workplace

Creating the conditions to thrive

Our staff are our greatest asset and they deserve a workplace in which everyone feels safe, supported and able to thrive. As part of this commitment, our team came together to explore what feeling psychologically safe meant to us. Following these discussions, we co-produced a psychological safety charter, which outlines the principles by which we agree to work, to ensure everyone in the organisation feels like they belong and can learn, contribute and challenge safely. We plan to use the charter as a contracting tool during meetings, as a guide to frame tricky or challenging discussions and to help us foster greater openness, challenge and mutual respect.

We've also taken steps to improve our onboarding process by reviewing the systems we use and exploring how we can tailor the onboarding process so that it reduces overwhelm and better aligns with the new employee's needs. Wellbeing check-ins during all meetings have become a cultural norm now as have peer support groups, which provide staff with a safe and supportive environment to connect, share experiences and learn from one another.

Finally, our core policies and procedures including EDI, grievance, whistleblowing and pay and benefits which underpin our commitment to staff wellbeing, have all been reviewed this year to ensure they are up to date, reflect our values and meet the needs of our staff.



Ambition 2

Growing talent and support

This year, we've also continued to invest in our people and nurture talent across the organisation.

We ran a hugely successful 'emerging leaders' programme – a series of co-designed sessions involving our senior project officers, operations manager and CEO. The sessions were aimed at developing the confidence, skills and talent of our senior project officers, providing them with a space to deepen their understanding of our organisational processes, provide feedback, build their confidence and develop their leadership and management skills.

All participants agreed that having dedicated peer-support time to share learning and work through issues and challenges was hugely beneficial. In fact, this then gave rise to monthly roundtable meetings, hosted by the emerging leaders, who used action learning sets to talk through any particularly challenging issues from their work area, with their peers.

We've also created peer-support opportunities for our wider management team and line managers to share advice, best practice and seek support from one another.

Through mentoring, coaching, informal learning and other opportunities to lead, staff are stepping up to shape a more inclusive culture with many driving this work themselves – establishing peer groups, organising events, hosting lunch and learns and championing inclusive change.

Although there's still more to do, especially around creating clear, accessible pathways for progression, the passion and momentum from our team is evident and provides a strong foundation upon which we can drive further action.

How staff feel about working for Active Gloucestershire

- **100%** of staff agree/strongly agree they feel happy at work
- **100%** of staff agree/strongly agree that Active Gloucestershire prioritises individual/shared learning.
- **100%** of staff agree/strongly agree that they feel comfortable being their whole self at work
- **100%** of staff agree/strongly agree that Active Gloucestershire values inclusivity
- **100%** of staff were likely to recommend Active Gloucestershire as a great place to work.

"Great culture and flexible working"

"We have a strong and inclusive culture – I feel supported and have the opportunity to do my best"

"[AG] is a supportive, collaborative and engaging organisation to work for. We are given multiple opportunities to develop and there is genuine and authentic connection between team members underpinned by a culture which celebrates individuals, invests in their passions and interests and supports them when they struggle. The leadership team advocate for, and role model psychological safety and the Board are supportive and responsive, genuinely interested in the work we do.."

*Results taken from the People Survey 2024

Ambition 3

Making EDI everyone's responsibility

Embedding strong governance

This year, we took steps to embed EDI at every level of the organisation. We began by completing a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis to help us understand our current EDI landscape, identify areas for improvement and develop strategies to leverage our strengths and mitigate our areas of weakness. We also evaluated where EDI decision-making and authority currently lay within our organisation. And finally, we developed and circulated a new governance model to better understand who will be involved in the delivery of our diversity inclusion action plan and accountable for it. Having an improved awareness of where EDI governance lies within our organisation, has provided us with the necessary structure, focus and commitment to translate good intentions into meaningful and sustainable change.

We've also been bolstered by the support and commitment from our Board. We've held quarterly meetings with our Board Chair and EDI Board champion, during which we received vital feedback and guidance around our DIAP. These meetings have helped to ensure that the wider Board remain connected to and updated on our plan and wider EDI work. Many of our trustees have also demonstrated their ongoing commitment to EDI by attending EDI learning opportunities we've arranged, such as menopause and active bystander training. They've also demonstrated their commitment to our priority groups by attending events hosted by some of our community partners, including 'Unreflected Reflections', a film and photography exhibition telling the untold stories of Gloucester's early Muslim community, hosted by the Friendship Café.

Strengthening confidence and capability

Keen to ensure responsibility for EDI is engrained throughout our organisation, at all levels, we've built EDI objectives into job descriptions and strategic plans and are starting to see EDI take root in meetings that we host, events we plan, training we run and just in the way we frame conversations.

As a team, we have become far more proactive in embedding the principles of diversity, inclusion and accessibility into our work areas and interactions with others. We're becoming braver at holding conversations about issues that matter to us – however uncomfortable they may feel. In August 2024, following the country's race riots, we convened a safe and supportive space for partners to come together to connect, share thoughts and have conversations about how we can facilitate safe, inclusive and anti-racist provision across Gloucestershire.

This perceptible change in our confidence has rippled throughout the organisation and beyond, with other organisations asking us to share some of the resources we have created and initiatives we have undertaken. We're proud of the championing and role-modelling we've done around EDI this past year and look forward to continuing this during the next phase of our DIAP.



Ambition 3

Sparking curiosity and building understanding

We also launched a programme of learning to strengthen our understanding of EDI. From formal training to informal reflection and from national conferences to local community hubs, staff have taken the lead on exploring topics like accessibility, disability inclusion and intersectionality, bringing new energy and authenticity to our culture. It's been really heartening to see how passionate our staff and Board have become about deepening their understanding of our priority groups.

Whether learning from partners and stakeholders, listening to colleagues or holding conversations with experts by experience, there is a real appetite amongst the team to understand the experiences of others and use what they've learnt to shape their work.

As well as driving our learning through our internal EDI champions and steering groups, we've also amplified our impact by establishing an external EDI peer network in partnership with Gloucestershire's VCS Alliance, creating a space for passionate advocates from across the sector to share EDI knowledge and best practice from within their organisations.

Learning and engagement summary 2024-2025

Supporting priority groups through insight, inclusion and action.

We know that in order to better support and enable underrepresented groups to participate in sport and physical activity, we need to understand their strengths, drivers and barriers to engagement.

Throughout 2024/25, our team have both hosted and attended various learning opportunities with the aim of deepening their insight into our priority groups, building understanding and enriching the support we provide.

We're proud of our learning we've done this year but know there's more to do. We remain committed to building relationships, expanding our understanding, and enabling inclusive, meaningful engagement across Gloucestershire.



What we've learnt

- **Progress comes from being honest.** Sharing what's gone well and where we've struggled has helped us grow, course-correct and develop. We've learnt that by being vulnerable, discussing the challenges we're facing with those around us and openly seeking support, we can often create much better outcomes.
- **Change takes time.** We've learnt to stay flexible, patient and keep going, even when plans have shifted. During the delivery of our DIAP, some actions took longer than anticipated to deliver, diaries got full and the capacity of staff changed. We tried to remain responsive, keep dialogue with the team open and productive and bring colleagues along with us by connecting DIAP actions into existing work priorities.
- **Collaboration works.** We accept that we don't hold all the knowledge. Proactively convening colleagues as well as local and national partners from across the system and co-producing solutions with them, has quite simply led to better outcomes. Building consensus with those around us and drawing on the incredible diversity of perspective, knowledge and insight from across the team and the sector has created richer discussions, stronger impact and more sustainable results. The encouragement, insight and constructive challenge we were offered throughout the past year has helped us to align expectations and create a plan that was universally embraced and easier to embed.



Looking ahead

We are undoubtedly proud of the impact our DIAP has had this year. However, we know there are areas we need to strengthen. Over the past year, we have held quarterly review meetings with staff to capture their thoughts on what was working well and what could be improved. The next iteration of our DIAP provides us with an opportunity to keep up the collective momentum we've discovered, whilst also addressing these areas for improvement.

Therefore, looking ahead we will:

- strengthen how we communicate and report on our progress throughout the year
- explore how we can better capture and share our learning across the team and with local and national system partners
- embed EDI into programme design, delivery and evaluation by exploring equality impact assessments and data-driven decision-making
- expand our policies, including those focused on disability, women's health and neurodiversity
- provide our workforce with more tailored support and learning opportunities
- strive for more diversity in the stories we share, understanding that one person's experience doesn't represent a whole community and that we may be missing voices, particularly from our priority cohorts
- be proactive in our local and national commitment to anti-discrimination through the attainment of the Race Equality Code and delivery of the Active Partnership Network's race equality commitment.

We're building on strong foundations. With a committed team and shared ambition, we'll keep moving forward - together.



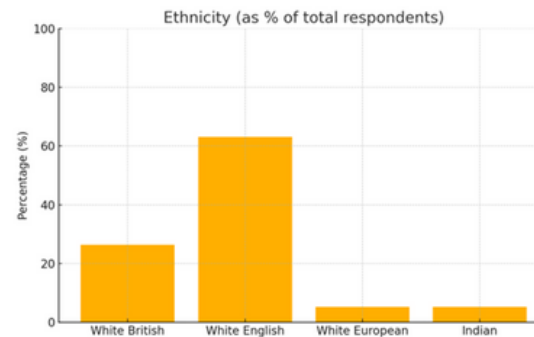
Active Gloucestershire's staff demographic diversity

(Results from our August 2024 Staff Diversity Survey)

Moving beyond tick-box diversity

Optional wider identity questions we included in our survey to ensure we capture and can build diversity of perspective and experience into our decision-making:

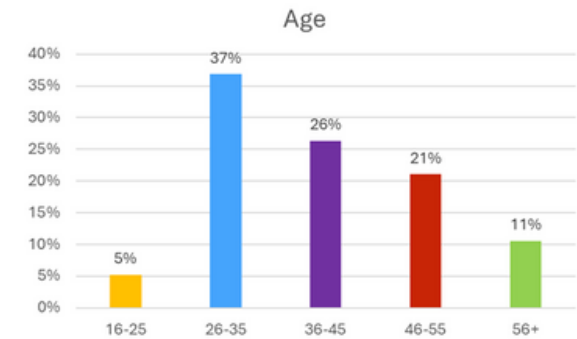
- Lived experience
- Issues staff personally align with
- Causes or passions staff champion
- Occasions staff celebrate
- Qualifications held
- Caring responsibilities
- Socioeconomic background
- Education level



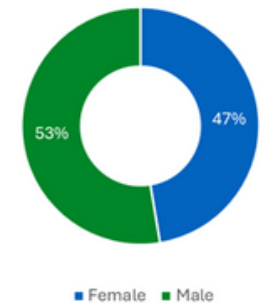
5% identified as having a disability or long-term health condition.

5% identified as neurodiverse

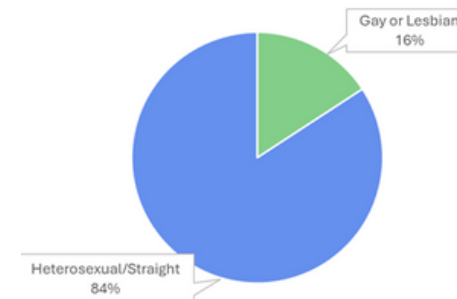
0% identified as having accessibility requirements



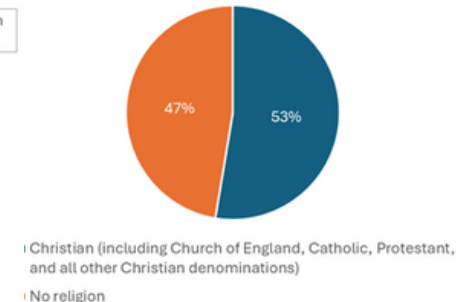
What is your gender?



What is your sexual orientation?



What is your religion or belief?



Board thoughts on our DIAP and EDI work



“At Active Gloucestershire, embracing equality, diversity, and inclusion is not just a commitment – it lies at the heart of everything we do. As we review our diversity and inclusion action plan after its first year of implementation, we’re also taking time to reflect on the positive change we’ve seen around our approach to EDI, most notably – its prioritisation across the organisation over the past five years or so. As well as becoming a key driving force for our team of employees and trustees, it has also become critical to the achievement of our work with changemakers across the county.

On a personal note, as Chair, I am committed to ensuring that EDI remains a central priority for us as a team – it is fundamental to tackling inequality and achieving our vision of a healthier, happier and more active Gloucestershire for all.”

Emma Owen (Board Chair)

“A year on since our new-look diversity inclusion action plan (DIAP) and more than ever, equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) can be seen and felt at the heart of everything Active Gloucestershire does. I couldn’t be the Board EDI champion if it didn’t!

At Active Gloucestershire, EDI shapes our values, underpins our culture and runs through all our projects, processes and conversations. A fair and equitable organisation that celebrates diversity and inclusion, it feels that we are leading the way in many spaces and hosting safe conversations around external factors – most recently around the race riots and current transphobia. When working with us, we want staff and partners to be free from discrimination and feel safe to be their true selves.

Our DIAP continues to develop with the collaboration and backing of staff and Board, who have each made a personal commitment to promoting EDI, by adopting a specific EDI objective. We believe the plan provides us with an inclusive framework that supports our EDI focus, helps us to create a safe space for our staff and better equips us to identify inequalities and support marginalised communities to become more active.

Our DIAP, along with our voluntary sign up to the Race Equality Code, Disability Confident Scheme and Healthy Workplaces accreditation go some way towards highlighting our ambitions and demonstrating our commitment to being the best we can be.”

Tania Hamilton (Board EDI Champion)

Listen to what our staff have to say:

Tom Beasley – [View here](#)

**How strongly do you agree that
EDI has become an organisational
priority for Active Gloucestershire
over the last 12 months?**

So, Tom,

Listen to what our staff have to say:

Chris Davis – [View here](#)

How strongly do you agree that
EDI has become
priority for Activ
over the la

How **strongly** do you agree that

Listen to what our staff have to say:

Lisi Cottam – [View here](#)



Listen to what our staff have to say:

Rob Toomer – [View here](#)



A final word

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to our DIAP journey – our staff, trustees, partners and communities.

Your voices, insights and support have helped bring this plan to life.

Together, we're building a fairer, more inclusive future for physical activity in Gloucestershire. And we're only just getting started.

Published by Active Gloucestershire: June 2025

Active Gloucestershire
City Works
Alfred Street
Gloucester
GL1 4DF

www.activegloucestershire.org
www.wecanmove.net

Contact us:

T: 01452 303528

E: kirstydunleavy@activegloucestershire.org

Alternative formats

If you would like to receive a copy of this report in an alternative format such as Braille, large print, audio or a different language, please call us on 01452 303528 or email kirstydunleavy@activegloucestershire.org

