



Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan

Progress 2023-2024

Be part of it!



Introduction

In 2023, Active Cumbria developed a thorough and robust Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) setting out an on-going commitment to progressing our skills, knowledge, and practices around inclusivity.

In September 2023, the Advisory Board formally approved the DIAP and delegated its delivery to the ED&I Group. Members requested to be updated on progress through the production of an annual Progress Document, that once approved, would be shared publicly via the Active Cumbria website.

This document provides a narrative to the progress we have made against our stated ambitions over the initial 12 month period. We are very aware that we are on a learning journey with this agenda with much more work still to do. This document provides an opportunity to take stock, reflect, and see the progress we have made, and where we go next with our ED&I work.

The following pages highlight some of the progress made across the three ambitions of the DIAP, these being:

Ambition 1: Our people are truly reflective of the population of Cumbria.

Ambition 2: Our people talk confidently about, and are committed to equality, diversity, & inclusion.

Ambition 3: Our culture, practices, and ways of working are inclusive.

This document also contains an infographic regarding Active Cumbria, which we will use over the coming years to monitor our progress against a selection of Key Performance Indicators relevant to this work.

We hope you enjoy reading this report.



Paul Kasiera
Advisory Board ED&I Champion



Oliver Carswell
ED&I Lead Officer

Ambition 1:

Our people are truly reflective of the population of Cumbria



Recruitment

Our strategic five-year plan made a clear commitment to prioritise effort and resources to the people and places that need it most. To enable this, we ensure that Staff capacity and our investments are designated to the parts of Cumbria that need most support. We are also developing our approaches to the marketing of our vacancies, to ensure that these are more targeted and specific, so to attract a wider pool of high quality and diverse applicants.

To ensure gender equity on our Advisory Board, in September 2023, we sought to recruit two women to the Advisory Board. To help us achieve this, we changed our standard recruitment plan to explicitly ask for women only to apply. Additionally, a two-pronged communications approach was implemented when the vacancies went live, which was a mixture of our standard procedure and a more targeted approach to individuals and organisations that would result in the opportunity being made available to more high quality female candidates. The result of this more targeted approach was that four high calibre applicants applied to join the Advisory Board, and following a successful recruitment process, two individuals joined.

Internal ED&I Structures

During the year we have undertaken an internal review of how ED&I is structured and embedded within Active Cumbria. We have, for several years, had an identified Lead Officer driving this work within

the Staff team, and more recently we have introduced the role of Advisory Board ED&I Champion. Specific Role Profiles are in place for both roles, with full induction provided. These individuals are responsible for ensuring a clear line of communication between the Staff team and Advisory Board, ensuring that ED&I issues are considered across the wider team, but also within decision making at the Advisory Board.

The Group operates under an agreed Terms of Reference and is led by the ED&I Lead Officer, along with eight other staff members and the Advisory Board ED&I Champion. There is equal representation regarding gender from the team and all areas of the team are represented. This Group leads the conversation internally and monitor progress against our ambitions and associated actions contained within the DIAP.

Monitoring

To help monitor progress against our DIAP, we have created an infographic that will form part of our annual progress summary statements. This will enable us to show who Active Cumbria are and what it is like to work for and with us. This can be found on page 9 of this document.

Priorities for 2024-2025

- We will review Role Profiles for any new vacancy at both Staff and Advisory Board level, to ensure that they are inclusive and accessible, so that a more diverse pool of applicants feel able to apply.
- We will build on the good progress made regarding developing specific communications plans for each vacancy.



Ambition 2:

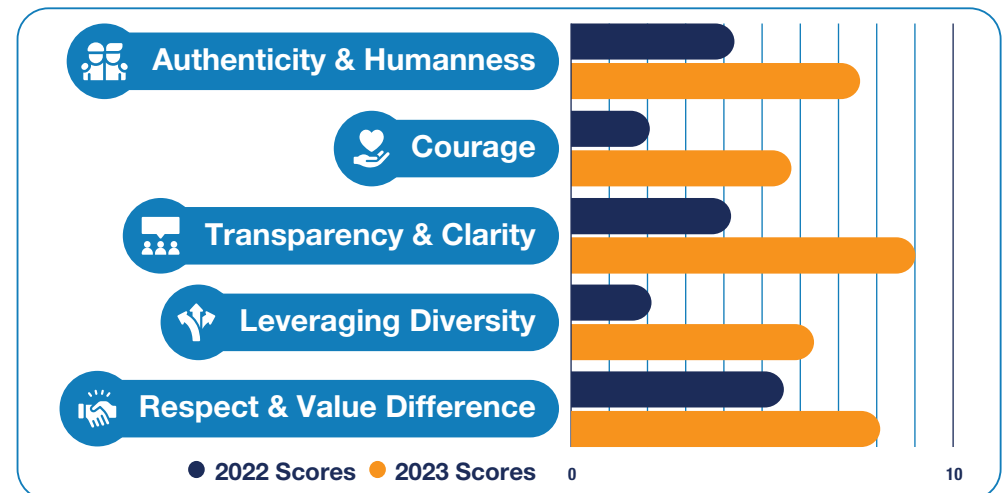
Our people talk confidently about, and are committed to, equality, diversity, & inclusion



Increasing our Knowledge and Confidence

As a Staff team, we are still on a learning journey regarding ED&I, and during the period we have developed our knowledge through a series of thought-provoking, whole team training activities, which have included exploring LGBTQ+ issues with Gendered Intelligence, as well as hosting two full day Anti-Racism workshops. Both have been extremely helpful in supporting our learning, whilst at the same time being extremely challenging too.

This learning, coupled with more regular conversations and reflections internally through the ED&I Group show that our confidence in a range of ED&I related issues is growing. The table below compares the Staff team responses to the Inclusive Behaviours Self-Assessment Questionnaire taken over a 12-month interval period and shows our progress against five key characteristics during that time which would also support that view. However, we do appreciate that we are still in the early days of this work, and there is still much more we can do.



Support for the Sector

A key part of our wider role is to support the learning and development of partner organisations across Cumbria, to spread learning and provide opportunities for them to also develop their thinking around this work. We are also keen to learn from other partners who may be progressing their thinking too. To help facilitate this, we have hosted two networking forums for national governing bodies of sport and county sports associations that have focused on the themes of ED&I and Safeguarding respectively. This has enabled a joined up strategic conversation between traditional sport bodies to work together on ensuring the clubs they support are more inclusive and accessible for the residents of Cumbria. This will be continued into 2024 and beyond.

In a separate initiative we have developed our support package for schools, which now includes specific CPD opportunities for staff members to broaden their knowledge on specific topics relating to physical activity at school through an ED&I lens.

Marketing & Communications

We were conscious that our use of imagery across our marketing and communications functions wasn't sufficiently representative of the audiences we are trying to reach through our services. To help this, we have now embedded ED&I throughout our communications, utilising images of the people, places, and programmes we are

aiming to support and making sure accompanying language is accessible for the audience we are targeting. We have also undertaken a review of our website, which now passes the relevant accessibility mark criteria. Furthermore, we have begun the process of reviewing our branding guidelines to improve the accessibility of the content we promote either on social media or in print.

Priorities for 2024-2025

- We will undertake a Staff and Advisory Board training event regarding Neurodivergence in the workplace, to further support our learning and confidence.
- We will continue to bring traditional sports partners together and develop a needs-led ED&I training plan which supports the learning for the sector and their clubs.
- We will create a checklist for any marketing content to ensure that it meets standardised accessibility requirements before being promoted.



Ambition 3:

Our culture, practices,
and ways of working
are inclusive



Internal Culture

We have analysed the results of our most recent People, and Partner Surveys. Whilst the results of both surveys are very encouraging, there were aspects of the People Survey which we felt needed to be explored in more depth, as these results were perhaps not what were expected.

Specifically, on the People Survey, the internal ED&I Project Group were empowered to discuss the results that fell below the national average for other active partnerships and really start to understand and unpick these to create solutions or changes to improve things. The Group are still exploring these issues, making recommendations to the whole team as and when required. To demonstrate our progress a number of these specific questions will be tracked over time through the People Survey, and form part of the Infographic contained on page 9 of this document.

At the same time, an external evaluation of our governance practices and documentation has also been undertaken. A small number of recommendations has been agreed by the Advisory Board, with a specific request to increase the frequency of joint training activities undertaken by the Staff Team and Advisory Board, as well as ensuring that the lived experiences of our communities are considered when designing services.

Inclusive Communications

To help us publicly demonstrate our commitment to ED&I, we support a range of social media campaigns across the year, including Race Equality Week. During this year's campaign we showcased some highlights from the journey we have been on and the tangible things we have done to improve the lives of people from ethnically diverse backgrounds through physical activity.

There are many other examples of progress we have made in relation to our programmes and themes and making them more inclusive and accessible, these include:

- We adapted and tailored the content and training methods used for our Rambler's Wellbeing Walks to community organisations who support specific audiences, so that it would meet their needs and not be a barrier for them.
- As part of our Travel Actively work, we have translated all the information we provide to our volunteers, specifically for one whose first language isn't English.
- Our Live Longer Better in Cumbria Summer Boost campaign promoted resources and activities by the 'We Are Undefeatable' programme to empower disabled people and those with long term health conditions to take part in physical activity.

Priorities for 2024-2025

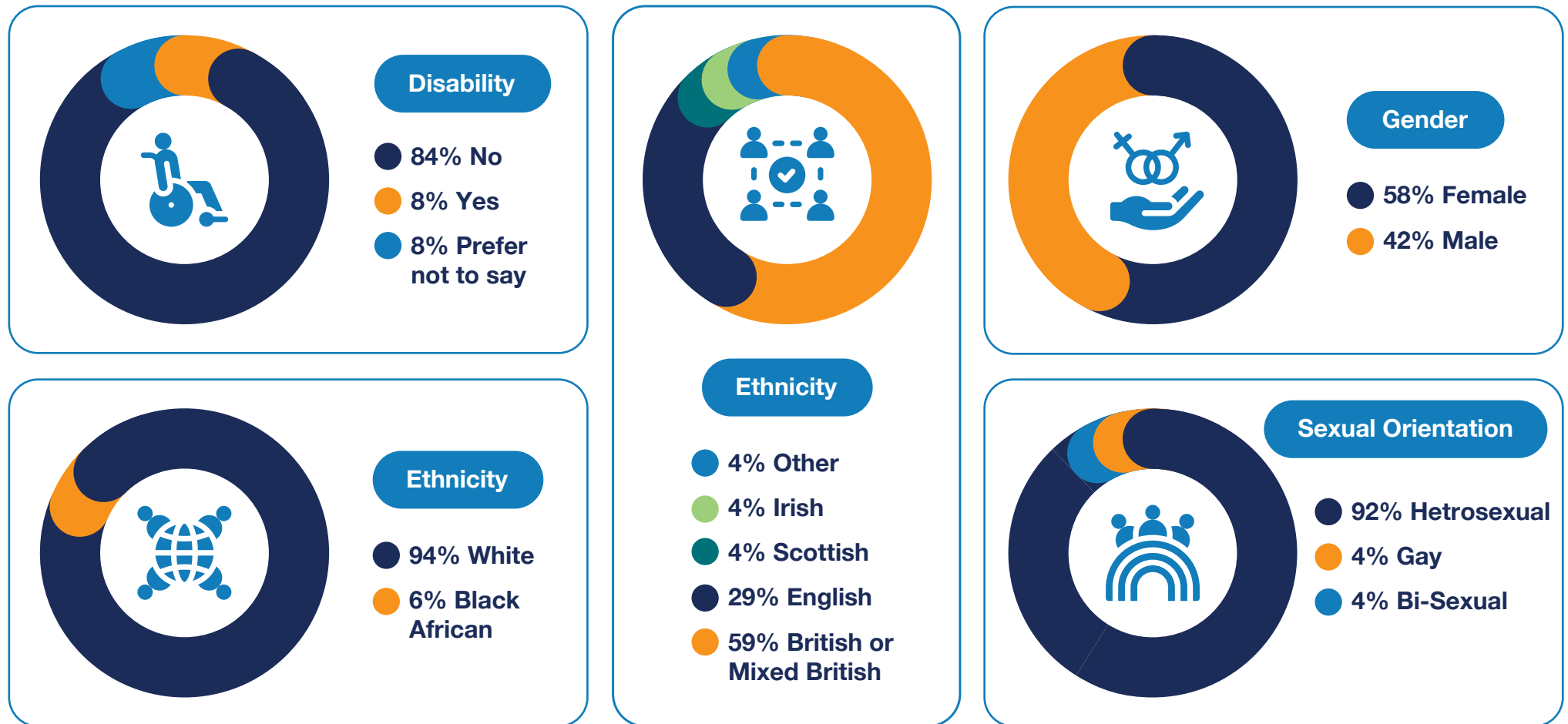
- We will identify training opportunities for the team that focus on increasing our skills and confidence in having courageous conversations.
- The ED&I group will begin to implement actions that will support the development of an even more positive inclusive culture within Active Cumbria, leading to improved results in the annual People Survey.
- We will complete an audit that will show the ways in which we hear relevant lived experiences when designing our services.



Diversity within Active Cumbria

This infographic aims to provide an overview into Active Cumbria, regarding who we are and what it is like to work for and with us. We'll monitor this information over the coming years and state our direction of travel in comparison to the previous year.

Demographics: Current Organisation Size: 10 Advisory Board Members, and 21 Staff Members



What is it like to work for Active Cumbria?

Taken from the People Survey 2024

- 68% agreed or strongly agreed they were encouraged to express opinions and ideas
- 69% agreed or strongly agreed diverse perspectives were encouraged
- 79% agreed or strongly agreed there are core values which underpin everything we do
- 100% agreed or strongly agreed there is a culture of team-working, supportiveness, and collaboration embedded
- 84% agreed or strongly agreed the organisation values inclusivity



What is it like to work with Active Cumbria?

Taken from the Stakeholder Survey 2024 (59 responding people or organisations).

- 95% agree or strongly agree there is trust and respect for each other
- 100% rated the extent to which working with us had an impact on their organisation as positively or very positively
- 100% rated being satisfied or very satisfied with the quality and advice provided by Active Cumbria
- 100% rated being satisfied or very satisfied with the professionalism and helpfulness of our staff



Cumberland Council

Published by
Cumberland Council
June 2024



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