



# DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2017 – 2021

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England Athletics

## **ABOUT US**

England Athletics is the membership and development body for grassroots athletics and running clubs in England. Whilst offices are based in Birmingham, we have staff around the country. England Athletics have achieved intermediate level in the Equality Standard framework.

We work closely with UK Athletics, who are responsible for establishing the rules of the sport across the UK, for organising major televised events and for the British Athletics team. We also work collaboratively with the other home country athletics federations in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and other athletics bodies in England.

In 2016 we released our Strategic Plan where we outlined our priorities, ambitions and the context which we operate in. The plan is designed to help the organization identify where we are best placed to lead or to influence and support others in the athletics and running community. It will direct how we work as an organisation during the coming years: what we do and how we do it. We will use it to identify shared ambitions with partners and possible funders. [www.englandathletics.org/strategicplan](http://www.englandathletics.org/strategicplan)

## **OUR MISSION**

To grow opportunities for everyone to experience athletics and running, to enable them to reach their full potential.

## **OUR VISION**

Athletics and running will be the most inclusive and popular sport in England, led by a network of progressive clubs and organisations and supported by a sustainable, respected and trusted governing body.

## **OUR VALUES**

Pride - We take pride in the work that we do and demonstrate commitment to our athletes in recognition of the important role that we have to play. Athletics and running in England has a rich history and we will celebrate our athletes, runners, coaches and volunteers from today and yesteryear to inspire future generations.

Integrity - We will demonstrate integrity in all that we do to earn respect and to build effective partnerships.

Inclusivity - Athletics and running can contribute towards a healthy lifestyle and a sense of achievement, whatever the age, ability or background of the athlete or volunteer. We will promote inclusivity in all our actions.

# Message from Our Chair



England Athletics have a long history of commitment to increasing equality, diversity and inclusivity in Athletics and Running. We are passionate about more people and a wider range of people participating, volunteering and getting involved. We believe this makes the sport and the organisation stronger. As the first female Chair of the organisation it is an area I am particularly passionate about.

As a sport we are proud that 48% of our registered club members are women. Indeed, 70% of the growth in participation has come from women and girls over the last 10 years as a result of targeted campaigns, inclusive practices and insight-led activation.

Our sport also has an extensive range of targeted competitions and participation programmes across the spectrum of impairments in disabled and para sport. Our clubs continue to work to integrate the two wings of the sport so that everyone can take part in our members clubs.

In 2015 we made the commitment public by selecting inclusion as one of our three core values and by confirming our mission and vision as one explicitly focused on inclusion and access for the widest possible group of people. We now have 4 women on our board (out of our 10 non-executive directors) and a public commitment to move towards a board and council with more members from underrepresented groups.

This commitment is also visible in our recent focus on diversity of volunteering and our gender specific campaigns such as This Girl Can Run.

But behind the scenes we are working hard to continue the work that first began 4 years ago. The plan that follows, continues the work of the 2013 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan, specifically focussing on one area, diversity in our governance.

England Athletics, through our Board, Employee Engagement Forum and National and Regional Councils will continue to work hard to implement our plans with the long-term ambition of achieving a governance structure representative of our sport and our community.

In practice, this means ensuring the commitments made in the following pages are actioned as outlined and outcomes are revisited until we reach our aim.

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Recruitment</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">How the organisation will attract an increasingly diverse range of candidates</p>		Code for Sports Governance				
<p><b>Objective:</b> Increase the number of people from underrepresented groups engaging in recruitment process for Board and Council</p>	✓	✓		✓		
Priorities	Actions			Person(s) Responsible		Completion Date
<p><b>Short Term:</b> Continue to ensure recruitment materials are as inclusive as possible and include all EA statements on equality and inclusion.</p> <p>Ensure roles are advertised to widest possible audience especially under- represented groups.</p> <p>Increase representation of underrepresented groups in groups and committees supporting the Board.</p> <p>Identify key people able to promote opportunities and act as champions for diversity.</p>	<p>Continue to work with specialist organisations such as Sporting Equals, Women on Boards, Disability agencies to ensure recruitment materials are proofed, and design checked.</p> <p>As Above</p> <p>Begin recruitment of co-opted member of Governance Committee from a priority underrepresented group (BAME, disabled or other).</p> <p>Initiate appointment of diversity champion on staff Senior Leadership Team .</p>			<p>Gill Jones</p> <p>Michael Davis</p> <p>Chris Jones</p>		<p>March 2018</p> <p>March 2018</p> <p>March 2018</p>

Raise awareness on Board of opportunities for increasing diversity and agree series of actions.	Governance Committee to prepare and submit a paper to Board outlining options of co-opting and immediate options for 2018 Board appointments. (eg coopting someone to act as athlete representative voice)	Karen Neale	March 2018
<b>Medium Term:</b> Renew appointment of Board Diversity Champion.	Initiate appointment process of diversity champion at board as tenure is due for completion.	Michael Davis	December 2018
Increase number of applications to Board from BAME candidates resulting in at least 1 BAME director.	Meet with specialist organisations like Inclusive Boards and Sporting Equals to develop a plan of action including promotion of opportunity and recommendation process.	Michael Davis	December 2018
<b>Long Term:</b> Review Diversity Action Plan V1 and devise V2 to move the organisation towards a more reflective governance structure in terms of diversity.	Schedule a review in line with wider England Athletics Strategy review involving board, staff, council and volunteers.	Chris Jones	December 2020
Increase number of BAME candidates standing for National and Regional Council.	Lessons learned from Board actions can be implemented into Council processes post-review.	TBC	March 2021

Engagement	Code for Sports Governance					
<p>Ensuring that your organisation's commitment to diversity is communicated through internal practices and externally</p>	<p>Adopt a target of, and take all appropriate actions to encourage, a minimum of 30% of each gender on its board</p>	<p>Demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards gender parity and greater diversity generally on its board</p>	<p>Demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards achieving greater diversity generally (including but not limited to BAME, disability, LGB&amp;T and socio-economic)</p>	<p>Each organisation shall identify proportionate and appropriate actions to be taken to support and/or maintain (as appropriate) the diversity targets set out in Reg 2.1</p>	<p>The board shall ensure that the organisation prepared and publish on its website information (approved by the Board) about its work to foster all aspects of diversity with its leadership and decision making)</p>	<p>The board shall ensure the organisation prepared and publishes on its website information (approved by the Board) including an annual update on progress against actions identified in Reg 2.2</p>
<p><b>Objective:</b> Raise awareness of England Athletics commitment to diversity and current on target gender balance on board</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>			<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
Priorities	Actions		Person(s) Responsible		Completion Date	
<p><b>Short Term:</b> Continue to ensure all policies, strategies and other materials are as inclusive as possible.</p> <p>Create an online home for diversity at <a href="http://englandathletics.org">englandathletics.org</a>.</p> <p>Raise awareness of 40% of non exec Board are women.</p> <p>A better educated staff supporting organisation objectives.</p>	<p>Continue to work with specialist organisations such as Sporting Equals, Women on Boards, Disability agencies to ensure all policies and key materials are proofed, and design checked.</p> <p>Publish Diversity Action Plan on <a href="http://englandathletics.org">englandathletics.org</a> including versions for Visually Impaired and Learning Impaired.</p> <p>Produce Case Study of Women on Board and Council and news story about plan.</p> <p>Upgrade staff training on equality and diversity and unconscious bias. Support staff to apply for governance roles elsewhere through internal mentoring.</p>		<p>Michael Davis</p> <p>Andy Barber</p> <p>Andy Barber</p> <p>Gill Jones</p>		<p>March 2018</p> <p>October 2017</p> <p>December 2017</p> <p>March 2018</p>	

<p><b>Medium Term:</b></p> <p>Continue to partner in the Sporting Equals BEDSA Awards programme.</p> <p>An upskilled board with a common base level of knowledge and understanding.</p>	<p>Renew relationship and support of the work of Sporting Equals. This relationship is now into its 4th year as we work to celebrate the role of BAME communities in driving forward our sport.</p> <p>All directors to complete equality and diversity training and ideally training in “managing unconscious bias”. A review of this plan to be scheduled as part of the annual board evaluation.</p>	<p>Chris Jones</p> <p>Michael Davis</p>	<p>March 2018</p> <p>March 2019</p>
<p><b>Long Term:</b></p> <p>Ensure processes are continually reviewed to reflect governance changes and recommendations.</p> <p>Improve the visibility of England Athletics commitment to diversity and reasons behind that commitment.</p> <p>Identify tools for member organisations to support their drive to diversity.</p>	<p>Review and revise recruitment procedures after each Task and Finish group is completed (eg Council Review).</p> <p>EA will develop an online home on <a href="http://englandathletics.org">englandathletics.org</a> for information, advice diversity which will consist of 2-4 web pages promoting EA commitments and policies and signposting training and support materials.</p>	<p>Gill Jones</p> <p>Jennie O Brien/Liz Purbrick</p>	<p>Mar 2019</p> <p>Mar 2021</p>

<h2>Progressing talent from Within</h2> <p>A focus on developing a strong internal pipeline of diverse talent to populate decision making and other structures.</p>		Code for Sports Governance					
		<p>Adopt a target of, and take all appropriate actions to encourage, a minimum of 30% of each gender on its board</p>	<p>Demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards gender parity and greater diversity generally on its board</p>	<p>Demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards achieving greater diversity (including but not limited to BAME, disability, LGBT and socio-economic)</p>	<p>Each organisation shall identify proportionate and appropriate actions to be taken to support and/or maintain (as appropriate) the diversity targets set out in Reg 2.1</p>	<p>The board shall ensure that the organisation prepared and publish on its website information (approved by the Board) about its work to foster all aspects of diversity with its leadership and decision making)</p>	<p>The board shall ensure the organisation prepared and publishes on its website information (approved by the Board) including an annual update on progress against actions identified</p>
<p><b>Objective:</b> Increase the number of people from underrepresented groups in councillor roles</p>			✓	✓	✓		
Priorities	Actions	Person(s) Responsible			Completion Date		
<p><b>Short Term:</b> Ensure the Review of Council Structure considers how governance involvement from members and registered athletes from underrepresented groups can be improved.</p> <p>Develop Youth Panel, growing the number of young people engaged and extending their development investment and remit.</p>	<p>Diversity Action Plan shared with Chair of Review.</p> <p>Review to specifically state recommendations regarding increased diversity at Regional and National Council.</p> <p>Execute the Youth Panel Development Plan, recruit train additional Youth Panel members and identify input into National Council review. Consult with specialist organisations on attracting more applicants from BAME, disabled and other underrepresented communities.</p>	<p>Steve Grainger, Chair of Council Review</p> <p>Kerry Marland</p>			<p>December 2018</p> <p>March 2018</p>		
<p><b>Medium Term:</b> A more inclusive national council environment.</p>	<p>Develop and deliver a National Council Training Plan (online and/or in person. Consult with specialist organisations such as Inclusive Boards on plan development.</p>	<p>Michael Davis</p>			<p>March 2019</p>		

<p><b>Long Term:</b> A more inclusive regional council environment.</p> <p>Take a proactive approach to being an “early adopter” organisation regarding equality and diversity.</p>	<p>With advice from specialist organisations (eg Inclusive Boards), create and action a training plan (online and/or facilitated meetings) .</p> <p>Review SLAs with key Equality and Diversity bodies to improve work. Work closely with partner organisations to understand and meet the requirements of advanced level of Equality Standard.</p>	<p>Michael Davis</p> <p>Head of HR</p>	<p>March 2020</p> <p>March 2020</p>
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# Key Questions

## How does this feed into our broader governance plan?

1. Current Council Review - England Athletics are currently conducting a review of Council and its structures. This plan will be one of the considerations for this review and will also be reviewed post review to identify additional opportunities with any changes to structure.
2. Investment into People – England Athletics are passionate about developing current and future leaders. One tactic used generally is ensuring appropriate training and mentoring is offered to staff and board. This plan will ensure that approach is continued
3. England Athletics is currently working on a broader diversity plan for its volunteer workforce, specifically focussing on increasing diversity in terms of young people, BAME and disabled people in the volunteer workforce of athletics and running. This includes youth training programmes, volunteer champions in clubs who are equipped with diversity training and a series of campaigns over 3 years.

## Who are the key people responsible for the delivery of this plan?

Whilst we are committed to the concept of diversity being an ambition to be owned throughout the organisation, England Athletics recognise there are some who can more directly take action. Therefore we have identified the following people as having key role and outlined those roles:

- 1) **Myra Nimmo** – Chair  
Responsible for ensuring the plan is regularly reviewed by the Board
- Chris Jones** – Chief Executive Officer  
Responsible for reporting to the board on Plan progress and ensuring the Senior Leadership Team (staff) action where appropriate.
- 2) **Michael Davis** – Director of Finance & Governance  
Responsible for ensuring the process of recruitment of board positions complies with the actions outlined.
- 3) **Gill Jones** – Head of HR and People  
Responsible for ensuring the plan links effectively with equality staffing plans
- 4) **Steve Grainger** – Board Member and Lead for Council Review  
Responsible for ensuring this plan and its ambitions are included as part of the context in the Regional Council review.
- 5) **Board Champion for Diversity** – This is currently Karen Neale but is due to change in October 2017

### **How will we measure overall success?**

We will measure success in a number of ways. We will track the following data to inform staff, board and council on progress on an annual basis timed to coincide with board evaluation process

- 1) Recruitment – An increase in women, disabled and BAME councillors
- 2) Recruitment – An increase in number of women, disabled and BAME applications to Board
- 3) Recruitment – An increase in number of disabled and BAME Youth Panel members
- 4) Website Engagement – An annual increase in visits to diversity pages
- 5) Training - % of staff and board in receipt of diversity training in last 4 years.
- 6) Improved Internal Culture - A fall in number of unknown status in staff, board and council surveys regarding protected characteristics

### **How does your Diversity Action Plan (DAP) cross-reference other parts of the code or other relevant equality or diversity monitoring standards/framework?**

1.21 regarding Board Conduct – It is intended that additional diversity training for current and future Board members will also help England Athletics achieve progress in regard to this section

2.7 – Succession Planning – It is intended that the review of Council structure will achieve a number of outcomes relevant throughout the Code but with particular impact here

4.1 – Annual Evaluation – It is envisaged that annual review of impact of this plan will form part of the Boards annual evaluation