**Introduction**

Active Black Country (ABC) believe that being active has the power to improve people’s lives - we want to see ‘***A future Black Country where all ages, abilities and backgrounds are able to be active, move and play sport.’***

Our partnership works to the objectives set out inthe[‘Creating an Active Black Country’](https://aro365735305.sharepoint.com/Active%20Black%20Country/Active%20Black%20Country%20-%20General/5.%20Strategies%20&%20Resources/3.%20Black%20Country/Active%20Black%20Country/Creating%20an%20Active%20Black%20Country%20Updated.pdf) which aims to unite all people and partners who have a role to play in tackling the inequalities that prevent Black Country people from being active, moving more and playing sport.

As an organisation we seek to develop detailed in depth understanding of our communities and partners to support high-quality partnerships and collaboration, resulting in a stronger, united, and connected system that creates more opportunities for people to be active.

Our role as a charity - working to address equity of opportunity for local people - means we have a responsibility to develop understanding and to role-model organisational approaches to equality, diversity and inclusion.

In this work, we have three broad spheres of influence.

* Firstly, as a local employer. It is essential for the success of our mission to ensure we are reflective of the communities we serve & we embed the voice of local communities within our decision making. We need to recruit, develop and equip our people to support effective and meaningful engagement with communities & partners we work with.
* Secondly, through our role as a partnership-based organisation. We work with a diverse range of partners, we need to fully maximise this reach of our established networks to advocate & influence inclusive organisational cultures & practices.
* Thirdly, as a commissioner through the work that we lead on including - promoting campaigns, providing grants, undertaking research & developing insight, hosting events to bring partners together and advocate.

**The Black Country**

The Black Country contains over 340,000 people who are currently physically inactive.

We have a working age population of approximately 729,000 people, this comprises of 52% female and 48% male, with ethnically diverse people making up 25% and white people 75% respectively.

We gather data through a range of channels internally including our people practice which draws on a range of diversity, inclusion data from application stage through to ongoing people survey and Learning Needs Analysis for colleagues.

This data is compared to Office National Statistics data sets and Active Lives that enable us to produce a dashboard highlighting ward area breakdown of age profile, ethnicity, gender, deprivation and life expectancy. This enables us to identify need and opportunity in an intelligence led approach across the ward areas.

[Black Country Place Based Working (arcgis.com)](https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/56842e8c8cd348bbb2b0e2da84df4b0f?item=2)

**Active Black Country**

Since 2009 the Active Black Country (ABC) Partnership was hosted as an unincorporated partnership by Black Country Consortium Ltd. In April 2022, the Active Black Country Partnership Board commissioned an independent options appraisal to identify our future operating model & legal entity.

Following the conclusion of the options appraisal in September 2022 the ABC Board approved the establishment of an independent Company Limited by Guarantee with charitable status for the Black Country Active Partnership.

The staff, assets, and financial resources of the partnership will be transferred to ABC Ltd from the 1st of May 2023.

Through the transition we have revised the governance structure and membership, appointing a Board Champion for Equality, Diversity & Inclusion and employed an Active Communities Strategic Lead with operational responsibility for Equality, Diversity & Inclusion.

Our Board currently features a gender breakdown of 43% males and 57% females, with ethnically diverse people making up 29% of the Board & 71 % of white people. The executive team currently comprises an equal split between male & female of 50% respectively and 24% ethnically diverse people and 76% white people.

Active Black Country’s Board of Directors hold to account the work of the executive team to implement our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion strategy and supporting Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan.

We are committed to embedding good cultural practice & have established the Strategic Investment Committee. This committee has delegated authority from the ABC Board & seeks to understand local partner need through representation on the committee from community partners; ensuring this is reflected in the future decision-making process of the Board.

The Audit Risk & Compliance Committee will be responsible for a regular rolling review of all financial and non-financial control, regulatory compliance, and risk-management policies of Active Black Country.

In addition, our executive coordinates both an internal inclusion & diversity staff group and an external inclusion & diversity forum that brings partners together to build understanding, connectivity and share knowledge.

**Diversity & Inclusion** **Action Plan**

The Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) outlines our internal objectives to achieving our ambitions of a diverse, inclusive and highly skilled Active Black Country workforce and boardroom which is representative of the local places we serve. It sits alongside our People Plan which has Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) at its heart. [Active Black Country People Plan](file:///C:\Users\IanCarey\Active%20Black%20Country\Active%20Black%20Country%20-%20General\5.%20Strategies%20&%20Resources\3.%20Black%20Country\Active%20Black%20Country\Active%20Black%20Country%20People%20Plan.pdf)

There are a number of strategies, policies and plans that the Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan links to either directly or indirectly:

1. [ABC Diversity & Equality strategy](https://aro365735305.sharepoint.com/Active%20Black%20Country/Active%20Black%20Country%20-%20General/13.%20Equality,%20Diversity%20&%20Inclusion/Strategy/ABC%20EDI%20Strategy%20Jan%202024.docx)
2. [ABC Equality & Diversity statement](https://aro365735305.sharepoint.com/Active%20Black%20Country/Active%20Black%20Country%20-%20General/13.%20Equality,%20Diversity%20&%20Inclusion/Diversity%20&%20Eqaulity%20Statement/Active%20Black%20Country%20Diversity%20Statement%20.docx)
3. [ABC Equality & Diversity policy](https://aro365735305.sharepoint.com/Active%20Black%20Country/Active%20Black%20Country%20-%20General/2.%20Operations/10.%20Company%20Policies/ABC%20Eqaulity%20Policy.pdf)
4. [ABC Equal Opportunities policy](https://aro365735305.sharepoint.com/Active%20Black%20Country/Active%20Black%20Country%20-%20General/2.%20Operations/10.%20Company%20Policies/ABC%20Ltd%20Equal%20Oppourtunities%20Policy.docx)

Through our work we prioritise the following areas, which are based upon our existing understanding of the inhibiting factors on local peoples ability to lead an active lifestyle.

* age
* disability
* ethnicity
* religion or belief
* gender
* pregnancy & maternity
* socio-economic

Through prioritising them we give due regard to key aspects of the Equality Act 2010 and use our resources effectively.

We appreciate these areas do not stand alone and can and do intersect. The make-up of our local place means that socio economic and deprivation is the greatest single determinant on people being able to access the benefits of an active lifestyle and as such is a cross-cutting.

Consultation is important in order to ensure that the Action Plan is reflective of the issues facing communities within the Black Country. The consultation process will include key internal groups and external partners to ensure that any gaps in provision are identified and addressed.

The DIAP will need to be monitored and evaluated on a regular basis – reporting against the actions will be included in the revised ABC Board dashboard.

All ABC staff and partners involved have a responsibility for taking ownership of the plan to ensure that actions are implemented effectively, and tasks achieved throughout the year. The monitoring and evaluation process is as follows:

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| **Responsibility** | **Owner** |
| Approval of DIAP | ABC Board of Director’s |
| Accountability for monitoring implementation and reviewing progress of delivery of the DIAP. | ABC Board of Director’s (N&G/ARC Committees) |
| Advice & guidance for the delivery of the DIAP | Black Country Inclusion & Diversity Forum |
| Operational implementation | ABC CEO/EDI Working Group |
| Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of plan progress (quarterly): | Director of Partnerships & Impact |

Our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion strategy has 3 thematic areas:

1. An inclusive Active Black Country
2. Develop People, Leadership & Capacity
3. Our Place, it’s People & Advocacy

For consistency & alignment we have maintained the overall thematic areas but identified key actions under each thematic area. The key actions are grouped under the below operational areas:

1. Governance
2. Strategy & Policies
3. Learning & Development
4. Research, Data & Intelligence
5. Grant Funding
6. Stakeholders & Partners
7. Communications

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| **An Inclusive Active Black Country** | | | | |
| **Objective - Ensure our organisational culture is wholly inclusive & reflective of Black Country communities** | | | | |
| **Operational Area** | **Action(s)** | **Lead** | **Completion Date** | **Measure** |
| Governance | Review Active Black Country (ABC) values ensuring they reflect a tackling inequality focus.  Creation of a focus group to capture staff views & experience of working for ABC. | ABC Chair/CEO | Dec 23 (every 2 years)  March 2024 | Survey responses to reflect confidence levels.  Input / feedback received from board, staff & partners. |
| Governance | Add EDI considerations to standard board report template.  Appoint ABC Board Champion for EDI reporting to the Strategic Investment Committee & Inclusion forum to improve alignment between board & executive. | Business Operations Manager | Feb 2024  Sept 2023 | Stronger board reporting & featured discussions that revolve around equity of access. |
| Governance | Undertake an annual skills & diversity audit of the ABC Board.  Review board learning & development needs - add Unconscious Bias training to induction training for new board members and staff, along with Mandatory Equality and Diversity course. | Board Chair/EDI Board Champion | March 2024 (Completed annually)  April 2024 (reviewed quarterly) | Development of a 2-part skills matrix that identifies development needs and support & recruitment.  Updated board learning & development plan.  Completion of training and updated development record |
| Governance | Support the EDI Board Champion to chair the Black Country Sport & physical Activity Inclusion Forum. | Board Chair | October 2023 | Reporting into ABC Board |
| Governance | Include diversity in every annual board evaluation as a measure directly linked to performance to improve diversity as a part of the overall Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. | Board Chair/EDI Board Champion | June 2024 (annually) | Completed evaluation & annual appraisal process |
| Governance | Complete board members individual annual objective setting & appraisal process to include an EDI objective. | Board Chair/EDI Board Champion | July 2024 (annually) | Annual appraisal process outcomes.  Board satisfaction survey results. |
| Governance  Research, Data & Intelligence | Review current EDI items on ABC Risk Register.  Ensure EDI items remain relevant and reflect current risks and mitigations to support our EDI objectives. | CEO | March 2024 (annually) | Risk Register |
| Strategy & Policies | Review all ABC policies & procedures support our legal requirements & bring to life our values and commitment to tackling inequalities.  Undertake equality impact assessment against all policies to ensure decision making processes are fair and do not disadvantage any protected groups.  Promote the ABC Equality Policy Statement and ensure our anti-racism statement is referenced within relevant policies and strategies including Code of Conduct, Implementation Plan and Employee Handbook. | CEO/ Business Operations Manager  Strategic Communities Lead/Director of Impact | Commence April 2024 (policies then reviewed through the internal audit plan schedule) | Policies & procedures which reflect best practice and current legislation as reviewed & reported via internal review.  Completed Equality Impact Assessments.  Quarterly monitoring and annual report produced. |
| Strategy & Policies | Identify & sign up for relevant standards i.e. Disability Confident & Inclusive Employers | CEO/Business Operations Manager | July 2024 | Completed accreditation/standards  ‘Compliance statement with Code for Sports Governance’ |
| Learning & Development | Review ABC People framework & team learning & development plan.  All staff to have a good understanding of equality and diversity agenda and how it links to their role. | Director of Partnerships/Business Operations Manager | March 2024 (annually) | All new staff to have received briefing sheet at induction.  Survey responses reflect confidence levels. |
| Learning & Development | Carry out a staff learning needs analysis.  Ensure staff receive equality and diversity training to create inclusive workforce and workplace as part of team development plan to include;   * Inclusive Communications (Disability) Training * Equality and Diversity Training * Cultural Awareness Training * Unconscious Bias training for staff * recruitment & selection training.   Creation of a Career Progression Plan for staff to understand how they can progress to senior leadership roles. | CEO/ Business Operations Manager | March 2024 (annually)  Learning & Development plan schedule  July 2024 | Record of training required.  Records evidencing staff have completed training modules.  Learning & development records. |
| Learning & Development | Issue annual EDI specific survey to all staff and complete annual appraisal process to improve personal development, including specific EDI objective. | CEO/Business Operations Manager | June 2024 (annually)  Monitored through monthly one/one meetings | Completed appraisals & setting of annual objectives  Staff survey results |
| Research, Data & Intelligence | Revise the DIAP reporting to ABC Board including key People data to ensure we are capturing ‘pay gaps’, recruitment & appointment, disciplinary & exit information through EDI lens, using this data to understand if there are any stages in the recruitment process which are limiting the progression of diverse candidates. | CEO/Business Operations Manager/Director of Impact | April 2024 (bi monthly board reporting) | Enhanced people data being reported to the ABC Board. |
| Governance  Policies  Communications | Review our recruitment processes outlined for the Board, Executive and staff recruitment, including but not limited to:   * Language & imagery. * Recruitment channels. * Review of equality monitoring capture at application to appointment stage to inform detailed analysis of People practice. * Use relevant and appropriate language in job specifications. statements to encourage applications from under-represented groups. * Review the positive support processes that exist around under-represented groups. * Ensure recruitment panels and those shortlisting are representative. * All line managers and staff on recruitment panels to have successfully completed the Equality & Diversity in Recruitment & Selection e learning. | CEO/Business Operations Manager | June 2024 | Equality & diversity data reporting.  Compliance with ABC standard interview procedures. |

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| **Develop People, Leadership & Capacity** | | | | |
| **Objective - Ensure Active Black Country has an approach to people & partnership development that nurtures and develops role models and leadership capability in equality, diversity and inclusion.** | | | | |
| **Operational Area** | **Action** | **Lead** | **Completion Date** | **Measure** |
| Strategies & Policies  Learning & Development | Develop and maintain an externally focused People Plan that can support the expansion of the local workforce, including:  Promotion of the inclusion modules on the ABC Activation Platform.  Creation of children & young people & adult ‘Everydayyourway’ capacity building programme to address skills shortages and access to work & volunteer across the sector. | Director of Partnerships | June 2024  September 2024 | Digital monitoring & reporting of programme data. |
| Research, Data & Intelligence | Consolidate the existing community organisations database.  Undertake an annual EDI survey for partners & stakeholders to build detailed understanding of the workforce an inform people practice. | Director of Impact | May 2024 (Annually) | People data including establishment of a Black Country baseline of workforce to be published annually. |
| Stakeholders & Partners | Review the ABC stakeholder mapping with executive & partners.  Publish the ABC stakeholder mapping.  Develop the forward plan for the Inclusion Forum & Strategic Investment Committee to connect & amplify messages across Black Country Health & Planning, Anchor Network. | Director of Partnerships | Workshop March 2024  May 2024 | Membership of networks & forums  Increased representation  Community representatives on the strategic investment forum  Stakeholder & partner survey |
| Stakeholders & Partners | Promotion of EDI focused activities on the Active Black Country Wayfinding Platform | Director of Impact | May 2024 | Increased number of sessions featured & sign ups. |
| Stakeholders & Partners | Promote the Active Black Country People Plan & workforce data to the Local Skills Board to Influence practice and governance relating to EDI. | CEO | May 2024 |  |
| Stakeholders & Partnerships | Develop initiatives via the Black Country Inclusive Aquatics programme supported by the Black Swimming Association to develop participation across culturally diverse communities | Director of Partnerships | June 2024 (Quarterly review) | Number of leisure providers offering sessions  Number of community partners engaged.  Resources to support wider scaling of the approach. |
| Stakeholders & Partners  Communications | Develop a ‘seal’ recognition award for local organisations exhibiting great practice across EDI. | Active Communities Lead/Director of Impact | September 2024 (Annually) | Development of local seal/mark  Uptake by partners |
| Research, Data & Intelligence | Deliver and publish annual people survey beyond 2024 and improve response rate each year. The survey will draw internal/external data together to highlight the importance of our data being publicly accessible and accountability of steps to improve diversity and role model for other organisations. | Director of Impact | September 2024 | Annual data survey |

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| **Our Place, People & Advocacy** | | | | |
| **Objective - Ensure that the services we design, commission and deliver are accessible to all, and resources are focused on those in greatest need and good practice and learning is widely shared to build capacity across our local place.** | | | | |
| **Operational Area** | **Action** | **Lead** | **Completion Date** | **Measure** |
| Research, Data & Intelligence | Develop an EDI focused Key Research Question as part of ABC evaluation & learning framework to develop ongoing understanding of the experiences of local people. | Director of Impact | April 2024 | Completion of KRQ’s  Increased insight & evaluation reports |
| Stakeholders & Partners | Further develop the network of local community organisations to consult on specific infrastructure developments & service offers across 4 LA partners. | Active Communities Lead | Monthly | Networks engaged with.  New partners and networks established / supported.  Learning identified and shared. |
| Grant Funding  Research, Data & Intelligence | Review grant management process.  Consider the accessibility within the application process i.e. alternative formats & languages.  Embed EDI objectives within the grant award process.  Ensure all forms used for monitoring collect equality information & case studies.  All Active Black Country funded projects will continue to be asked about their Inclusion plan for delivery, which will be assessed and advice provided where necessary. | Active Communities Lead/Director of Impact | April 2024 | Revised grant award process  Application data included in reporting.  Equality Impact Assessment |
| Learning & Development | Produce Equality Impact Assessments for all grant programmes. | Active Communities Lead/Director of Impact | April 2024 | EIA for all programmes of activity |
| Grant Funding | Embed local community voice in decision making process for criteria & award through representation on the ABC Strategic Investment Committee. | Board/CEO  Strategic Investment Committee | May 2024 | Representation on panels |
| Communications | Ensure through our communications that we adopt a zero-tolerance approach to any form of discrimination.  Deliver targeted local campaigns #everydayyourway  Develop a bank of local imagery reflective of our local place to be used in future promotional material.  Review website & ensure accessibility for all. | Strategic Communications Manager | Quarterly review through Inclusion Forum & Strategic Investment Committee | Communications data |
| Communications | Update marcomms calendar linking to national campaigns to amplify awareness, incorporating diversity events/festivals/celebrations. | Strategic Communications Manager | May 2024 | Communications data inc market saturation/coverage |
| Learning & Development  Communications | Create a dashboard summary to report on progress to board & partners that can present information, demonstrating impact, progress and support advocacy of inequalities.  Analyse data to identify local insights and trends and identify opportunities to influence. | Director of Impact/Director of Partnerships/Insight & Communications Manager | May 2024 (Schedule of board meetings & local network forums) | Communications data inc market saturation/coverage |
| Communications | Publish staff and board survey data in annual Impact report ensuring our data being publicly accessible and accountability of steps to improve diversity |  | April 2024 (Annually) | Dashboard reporting via website. |