



Diversity Inclusion Action Plan





A message from our Equality and Diversity Champions



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Be Active Board Member



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We are delighted to have the opportunity to share our thoughts on the importance and significance of our work to become a more inclusive and diverse Active Partnership. We serve one of the more diverse populations in the country. If we are to achieve the best possible outcomes, make the best decisions for the long term, and have respect and credibility throughout the county we need to broaden our knowledge and understanding of all of the communities across Bedfordshire.

This sounds a massive task. but we will be much better placed to achieve this if we continue to diversify our Board membership, staffing and the relationships that we foster so that our representation and the people that we work with, much more closely represents our county.

We have made significant strides in this respect over the last couple of years but we know we have further work to do to achieve this. We know that we speak for all of the Board and the team when we say that we are all committed to embrace a culture of inclusion and to deliver on the actions outlined within this Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, (DIAP).

About Be Active

Be Active is hosted by Active Luton, who are a Community Wellbeing Trust within Luton. The Be Active team support and work across the county of Bedfordshire and work remotely across the patch.

As a hosted organisation, the employees observe the terms and conditions, policies, and procedures of Active Luton:

- Capability
- Recruitment
- Code of Conduct
- Disciplinary
- Grievance
- Pay Scales
- Training and Development
- Whistleblowing

The Be Active team is made up of 10.5 Full time equivalent members of staff (1 December 2023). The team structure was reevaluated due to the needs of our strategy “Moving Forwards Together”. The team is split into four areas of focus including, Active Environments, People, Health and Inequalities and Children and Young People. This is supported by a sport and welfare officer, insight and impact and marketing roles. We will always continue to develop the teams and our communities to focus on tackling inequalities and inactivity.

Physical activity transforms lives but we are aware of the barriers many people face to be active and we work to break down these barriers to ensure everyone in the county has an equal opportunity to access physical activity.

Our inclusive culture starts with our Board and we want our members to be representative of modern Britain in all its intersectional glory. We are an energetic bunch, with different life experiences, ages and talents, all of whom are unified by a passion for change and to ensure everyone in the county has an equal opportunity to access physical activity.

At the moment, 30% of adults in Bedfordshire are doing less than 30 minutes of physical activity per week. 54% of children and young people across Bedfordshire are doing less than the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Be Active has a staff team of ten people with the ambition and creativity to support positive changes across the systems within which we work as well as with our stakeholders and community partners. This diversity, inclusion action plan supports the ambitions and aims in our strategy, Moving Forwards Together which details our priorities.

Mission

To work in partnership to support, develop and promote opportunities for people to be active for life.

- We will raise the profile of physical activity as a tool to improve lives, create inclusive, safe opportunities and build community resilience.
- We will influence and support the system to ensure that physical activity is part of the solution.
- We will support, inspire and empower our communities.



PEOPLE DRIVEN

Community orientated. Engage with leaders, influencers, and role models to identify a new workforce to champion Physical Activity as well as supporting the existing workforce.



PLACES

Protect, enhance existing and develop new facilities that better meet the needs of our audiences.



NEW AUDIENCES

Engaging and building relationships with communities who struggle the most to be physically active.



SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Helping the sector to sustain itself, improve and flourish.

Core values

We have three core values which underpin everything we do:

COLLABORATIVE

Work in partnership to support, inform and advise our local communities.

INCLUSIVE

We value diversity and tackle inequalities to engage those who have the most to gain.

AMBITIOUS

A proactive, passionate and knowledgeable team, committed to making a difference.



Our commitment to becoming a more diverse organisation

The Be Active Board has published the following statement to demonstrate its commitment to becoming a more diverse organisation and ensuring that this commitment to diversity underpins every aspect of our work.



“To create and support an environment in which the differences and the contributions of all our staff and volunteers are recognised and valued. It is our aim to ensure that no employee or job applicant receives less favourable facilities or treatment (either directly or indirectly) in recruitment or employment on grounds of age, disability, gender / gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation (the protected characteristics) or any other reason/factor.”

We are passionate about creating an open and honest culture where we are able to challenge each other professionally in order to think and act as inclusively and ensure unconscious biases do not affect decisions. We understand the importance and value of taking a co design approach and we are committed to ensuring people have influence over decision making.

We know that in order to truly make a difference we must have a regular presence within communities to gain insight and feedback, we therefore embed these opportunities within our ways of working. The actions we have identified in this plan reflect these ambitions.

Where are we now

The Board has had a diversity champion in place for many years and in 2023 the Board agreed that two individuals should work together on this area so we have:

Priya Chauhan and Kerry Downs embracing and driving this role forwards on behalf of the Board.

Be Active has worked hard to increase female representation on the Board and currently representation exceeds the requirements of the Code of Sports Governance; that being a minimum of 30% of each gender on the Board. Female representation on the Board as at 1 April 2023 is 66%.

Be Active is also working to ensure that the membership of the Board is reflective of Culturally Diverse Communities that we serve across Bedfordshire. These communities account for just under 20% of Bedfordshire’s population. Following the recent

Board recruitment process representation from these communities is currently 25%.

Be Active is mindful that the Board does not currently have a representative from the disability sector. The Board will seek to address this should a vacancy become available. In the meantime the Board will consider how it can best secure advisory/observer support from this sector.

Both **the Board** and **the team** recently completed an equity and diversity survey. Follow the links to see a snapshot of those findings.

The team does not currently have a representative from the disability sector. The Be Active will continue to mitigate this issue through the development and maintaining of strong working relationships with the disability sector and other minority groups.

Be Active has many strengths to build on



But there remains much to do, which we are excited about and hope that this plan demonstrates that passion and commitment to becoming even more inclusive.

Strategic documents we have considered whilst reviewing this DIAP

[A Code for Sports Governance](#)

[Luton Borough Council’s Commitment to EDI](#)

[Central Bedfordshire’s Commitment to Equality and Diversity](#)

Our diversity plan objectives

We believe that the following objectives will support our ambitions and they are complimentary to, and integrated with the Be Active’s strategy ‘Moving Forwards Together’ and our People Plan, all of which are key drivers to Inspiring Bedfordshire to Move More. The actions within these objectives were developed by the whole team as well as a result of the partnership work we have been doing with AKD Consultants and we are looking forward to exploring these further with our wider stakeholders in 2024.

Understanding our people

Capturing, understanding and sharing our knowledge regarding the workforce across Bedfordshire will allow for evidence-led planning and decision-making.

Getting the right people

Getting the right people is an important consideration when building a strong sector. We will focus on tackling inequalities to be more inclusive and to make our workforce more representative of Bedfordshire.

Developing our people

Developing people from the communities we serve will help us ensure we support our team and the community to develop the right people to lead on physical activity. Developing policies and practices will ensure we are looking after and developing people.

Developing leadership

Leaders exist at all levels of our organisation and within our community. These include our Board and senior staff, to club and group leadership. We want to develop the right skills, behaviours and culture in existing leaders, giving them the ability to lead effectively in their role, as well as broadening the diversity of those undertaking leadership roles.



Understanding our people

Ask the team, quarterly, how fulfilled they feel at work and include this as a key performance indicator.

Continue to conduct annual diversity survey to help us understand and acknowledge diversity within Be Active and include a question regarding educational background.

Conduct stakeholder mapping with our strategic partners as well as our community partners to understand the strength of our relationships and appreciate how they value diversity.

Collaborate with organisations such as Women in Sport, Sporting Equals and the English Federation of Disability Sport together with our Bedfordshire based Unitary Authorities and our hosts to make recommendations on how the AP can best understand the respective markets and potential talent pools and which channels and tools to use to promote our work.

Ensure that all information, publicity and advertising for Board, staffing and volunteer positions promotes a positive attitude.

Continue to develop and review our 'on boarding' process which is our catalyst to acquire greater understanding of the lived experiences of Bedfordshire residents that will impact positively on our decision making.

Learning - survey Be Active to understand the confidence levels regarding equality, diversity and inclusion areas so we can develop a learning programme accordingly.



Getting the right people

Ensuring all roles are publicly advertised to reach all communities, thinking carefully about the channels and tone used to recruit.

Take a positive approach to recruiting and upskilling by focusing on skills rather than flaws, always working to enable people to take opportunities to develop and flourish.

Seek support from our Board Champions and the wider network to see what other recruitment practices are used and play a leadership and influencing role on this with Active Luton.

Work with our stakeholders to influence how we talk about our sector so it becomes more inclusive.

Ensuring that strong and mutually beneficial relationships are developed and maintained with our stakeholders.

Embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in our communications strategy.



Developing our people

Commitment to continued professional development for all team members, allowing opportunities to constantly grow and have a wider understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Seek mentoring opportunities for staff to broaden their understanding and strengthen the support we can offer.

Share local and national insight and resources that highlight the needs and experiences of people who face inequalities and exclusion.

Create opportunities for Be Active to listen and learn from lived experiences this includes more interaction between the Board and staff team.

Involve the Board with more events and site visits to demonstrate internally how we embed quality, diversity and inclusion in our work which will empower the Board to champion our work more effectively.



Developing leadership

Proactively engage with our Diversity and Inclusion Board Champions.

Inspire our stakeholders across the sector to increase their diversity representation, 'more people like me'.

Report our diversity, inclusion action plan journey to Board on a quarterly basis.

Source and share physical activity stories that highlight people from diverse backgrounds being active.

Build our own image library with images that are authentic and representative of the diversity in Bedfordshire

Identify new content, speakers, and facilitators that meet the needs of a more diverse audience and signal our events are 'for you'.

Ensure Be Active's commitment to diversity is communicated through internal practices and externally – this is everyone's business.

To regularly share best practice in a variety of forms; engagement events, community conversations, website and social media platforms.



Moving Forwards Together

The name of our strategy truly reflects the Be Active’s ambitions and the culture in the team that we hold true. We know that the success of this DIAP depends on the strength of our relationships across Bedfordshire, building on the collaboration and genuine partnership working that we already have and taking that further.

We know this is something we need to track the progress of and we have already begun to map who the key stakeholders are locally so we can bring them along this journey with us. Collectively we can make a difference towards a genuine culture shift so that the sector is welcoming to all.

We recognise that the actions we have highlighted in this DIAP need more robust measures so, whilst we are delighted with the progress made to date, we recognise that there is more to do. We will work together to continually stretch ourselves and others to further understand the challenges in addressing diversity and inclusion in the physical activity sector across Bedfordshire. Evolving the measures over time to reflect better understanding of the challenges and opportunities, changing priorities and increasing alignment with the strategies of Government and Sport England.

We are passionate as a team about tackling the disparities that exist between certain groups and we are committed to understanding these issues so we can work to address them. One of the steps we are taking in 2024 is launching our Be Active Pledge to diversity and inclusion. This is our public commitment to building a more inclusive Bedfordshire and we will be asking individuals, community groups, sports clubs and charities to join us to celebrate diversity and create a culture of belonging and empowerment. This is an opportunity to let our local community know that we are working towards a truly inclusive environment, where diversity is welcomed and valued, and therefore physical activity levels are increased.

We hope you enjoy reading our plan and that you are as excited as we are about being on this journey to create a more inclusive and diverse landscape across Bedfordshire.



Clare Fitzboydon,
Director, Be Active



BeActiveBeds

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