LIVING BETTER

Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP)

2024-27

At Living Better, and as leaders drawn from a range of backgrounds, we believe in a fairer future for all, and we know that by working together we can do much, much more. We believe that everyone has the right to live without fear or prejudice regardless of race, age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, social class, religion or belief. Everyone should be able to make a full contribution to society in their own unique way and live in a world which demonstrates respect and values diversity. This plan was in many respects easy for us to draft because we live our ethics and values in the truest sense at Living Better. We are driven by our values and behaviours and this features through our tri-fold approach:

1. **Our community** – We will value our differences and benefit from our diversity of thought, background, and experience. We will reflect the diversity of those that we work with and for.
2. **Our behaviours** – Our Leaders will act as role models and champions. Individually and collectively, we will uphold our shared vision and stand up to challenge behaviours that don't reflect it.
3. **Our progress** – Data will be central to our decision making in helping us measure and drive change. We won't stop listening and learning and will be honest and transparent about our progress.

We have felt the challenge of being able to engage across the communities that feel governance or leadership may not be for them and we will boldly tackle this in the coming years as we develop a shadow board to ensure that we challenge inequity and support individuals to step forward as the leaders of tomorrow as part of our succession planning. We will be tenacious, bold and determined in this as we seek to truly represent the communities and people we were established to serve.

Frazer Bennett, Chairman

About Living Better and our commitment to becoming a more inclusive organisation

Living Better is an independent charity, set up in 2006, focused on improving the health, happiness, and wellbeing of the people of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Our staff work collaboratively with partners and communities to support more people to be active in a way that works for them. We focus our work on championing inclusivity, addressing inequalities, and removing barriers, to support communities in the geography we work in. We are always exploring new connections to further develop an inclusive, diverse and innovative sport and physical activity sector in our County.

"Our vision is of lives and communities improved by people being more active."

As one of 43 Active Partnerships in England, we are part of a unique network of organisations supported by Sport England with funding from the National Lottery. It allows us to be the local delivery partner for their national strategy, "Uniting the Movement", connecting us to wider conversations and bringing a wealth of knowledge from across England. We share the vision of a nation of more equal, inclusive, and connected communities, where people live happier, healthier, and more fulfilled lives, maximising the role of movement, sport, and physical activity in achieving that.

Our purpose is to connect, deliver with impact, and influence, to be an enabler for the geography of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, and our three strategic priorities, driven by local insight and data, allow us to drive positive change through these areas:

Communities: Supporting the wellbeing of communities to thrive by becoming more resilient, inclusive and connected

Children and Young People: Supporting positive physical activity experiences for children and young people

Health: Embedding physical activity in prevention and management of physical and mental health conditions

Our values are what make us Living Better. They underpin the way we work to achieve our vision and deliver our strategic priorities. Alongside each of our values are associated behaviours that define how we will work and the way Living Better staff behave. The framework is integral to the way Living Better operates and is part of individual job descriptions, our staff handbook, the recruitment process and staff appraisals.

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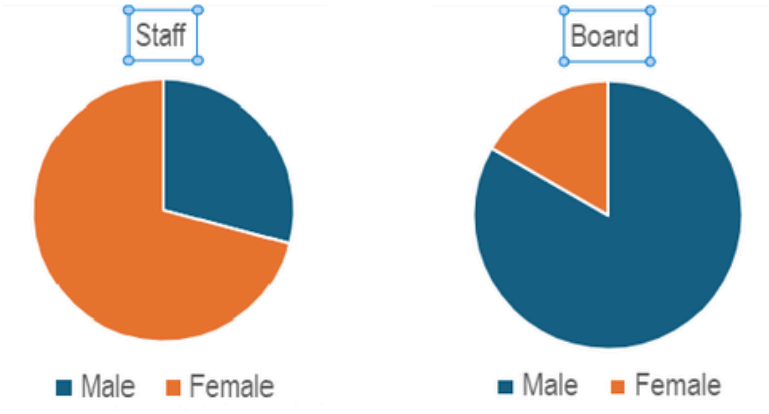
One of our values is 'inclusivity'. We are aiming to make Living Better more inclusive. By this, we mean that we promote a culture of diversity and equality and strive towards access and opportunities for all.

The embedded organisation chart below highlights the structure of our 24 staff (17 white females, 7 white males). Our Staff Survey (to be undertaken in the first half of 2024/25, then repeated regularly) will establish internal baselines, from which we will be able to present further demographic splits of our staff. We will compare this with the 2021 Census data across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough for external benchmarking and present it as an infographic to show how representative we are of the populations we serve:

Cambridgeshire https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/sources/census_2021/report?compare=E10000003
Peterborough https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/sources/census_2021/report?compare=E06000031

Due to small numbers in our senior leadership team (N=7), we anticipate merging this data for Senior Leadership Team (SLT) with other paid staff to enable public reporting and to avoid individuals being identifiable by their responses. We will also consider whether our Board needs to be reported in a similar joined way due to small numbers (currently N=6).



DESCRIPTION OF OUR BOARD

As of March 2024, Living Better has a Board of six (5 white males, 1 white female) consisting of a Chair, Deputy Chair and Welfare and Safety Champion. Recruitment of an additional three trustees from April 2024 is underway with a high level of interest shown: 25 expressed interest, seven shortlisted. One trustee will step down in October 2024 at the end of their term. EDI, as well as safeguarding, health and insight & impact, remain a priority focus through this round of recruitment.

The Board are responsible for ensuring the staff team has the right roles and experience to deliver the organisational strategy in line with the Business Plan, which is reviewed as part of the annual business planning process. They are also responsible for the wellbeing and development of staff and ensuring this is a priority of the CEO and Senior Leadership Team and our People Plan sets out the framework for this. The Board cascade information throughout the organisation through the Senior Leadership Team who attend Board meetings. The SLT share relevant information with the wider staff team through a combination of staff meetings, line management conversations and the staff newsletter.

Although there is much still to do to be at the forefront of EDI, the Living Better Board recognises the responsibility they have to drive forward our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and will be publishing the following statement on our website to demonstrate this:

'Our aim is to achieve a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive workforce by ensuring EDI is reflected in our values and embedded in our practises and individual behaviours. We expect all our third-party suppliers and partners to commit to treating their workforce with dignity and respect; in addition to complying with the Equality Act 2010 and any subsequent updates.'

FOREWORD FROM OUR CEO

This is an internal working document to set out our four ambitions regarding equality, diversity and inclusion and the actions that will be taken over the coming 3 years to work towards achieving them.

EDI Ambition 1 - Leadership (Our Board and SLT): have a leadership that reflects the diversity of local community in which we work.

EDI Ambition 2 - Internal (Recruitment, Training, Culture): provide appropriate and ongoing staff training to improve our confidence and competence to champion diversity and inclusion. We will also promote inclusive practice in our work with other organisations and partners.

EDI Ambition 3 - External (working with partners and stakeholders): support embedding EDI externally with our partners and stakeholders, and use community voice to shape our understanding of what our communities need.

EDI Ambition 4 - Compliance: ensure compliance requirements are met regarding EDI on an ongoing basis and demonstrate public commitment to this process.

We are not starting from scratch but building on our previous 2018-2021 EDI strategy from which we have taken our learning and know what needs to be taken forward in our action plan. We have also not stood still while our action plan was finalised as we are passionate about being an organisation that is inclusive in everything we do. For example, the team have recently undergone Activity Alliance training around attracting and retaining diverse talent; we have undergone our Disability Confident Employer Membership and our Living Wage Employer Accreditation to help attract diverse talent; and our People Plan is written and active and includes a section on EDI.

Across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, we have an extremely varied demographic, and we need to reflect this in our work. For example, over 140 languages are spoken in Peterborough; and across the county we see areas of both very high and very low deprivation as well as significant differences in urban and rural status of localities all of which affects transport, connectivity and income amongst others. One way we are addressing this is to work with Sport England to expand our place-based work in Peterborough and Fenland which will allow us to work in new ways with partners and ensure that an inclusive way of working is inbuilt within that. You will also see that we have highlighted the importance of training through our ambitions and the creation of a shadow board, the latter of which will allow us to take a step change process to becoming a diverse board.

We will report progress against our action plan and review objectives annually through a structured process of working group to CEO to Board for approval to publish. Governance and reporting deadlines are included in the schedule of Audit & Assurance and Board meetings. We will provide a statement of progress annually against our DIAP which will be housed on our website. Actions will be owned by different members of staff, across the wider team and we will also review membership of our internal working group annually so that other staff have the opportunity to take responsibility for a wider area of work.

We can only achieve the ambitions we have set if we all take responsibility for this area of work. It isn't the responsibility of one person, but something that is integral to our values at Living Better and I hope that by working with our partners, who are as passionate as we are about being more inclusive, that we can make a real difference. In the words of Margaret Mead, that truly reflect who we are and how we work "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has", and Living Better will achieve this.

Samantha Hyde, CEO

OUR DIAP AMBITIONS 2024-2027

Ambition 1: have a leadership that reflects the diversity of local community in which we work.

Objectives	Responsible	Measure of Success	Completion
1.1 We will carry out an annual skills audit of the Board and SLT to provide data on current diversity, including their skills, socio- economic background and protected characteristics, against which we can measure progress towards greater diversity.	CEO/Chair/Deputy Chair	That the 2024 audit has been completed and presented as an infographic.	March 2025
1.2 We will ensure priorities for trustee recruitment and succession are informed by an annual skills audit and that these in turn inform the places and ways we advertise vacancies.	CEO/Chair/Deputy Chair	That there is a visible link between skills gaps identified in the skills audit and the skill requirements advertised during trustee recruitment.	March 2025

Objectives	Responsible	Measure of Success	Completion
1.3 We will provide annual updates to the Board, through the Audit and Assurance Committee, showing a comparison of internal diversity information compared to data from the community in which we work.	EDI working group / Board Champion	A DIAP review paper is presented to the Board in July each year, following a review in Audit and Assurance in May.	March 2026
1.4 We will provide EDI training for the Board to increase their understanding of the importance and benefits of a diverse leadership.	EDI working group / Board Champion	That training has been arranged and attended by all Board members and forms part of future Trustee induction.	March 2026
1.5 We will set up a shadow board to identify future talent and develop young people and those with lived experiences relevant to Living Better.	EDI working group / Board Champion	A diverse shadow Board is set up and operating effectively. Longer term, this would be to see members of the shadow Board becoming full Board members.	March 2027
1.6 We will see evidence of a more diverse leadership for the organisation over a period of 3 years	EDI working group / Board Champion	Annual staff and Board surveys show a distinct change towards greater diversity, compared to 2024 data.	March 2027

Ambition 2: provide appropriate and ongoing staff training to improve our confidence and competence to champion diversity and inclusion. We will also promote inclusive practice in our work with other organisations and partners.

Objectives	Responsible	Measure of Success	Completion
2.1 We will continue improving the inclusiveness of the Living Better recruitment process. We will do this by asking the appropriate questions from the start of the process through to induction and ensuring all the applicant needs are met.	HR Lead	Adapting our recruitment processes, adding in appropriate and recommended questions, e.g., any additional requirements. Ensure this is asked every time and followed through.	March 2025
2.2 We will create an inclusive culture where everyone is valued, and our values and behaviours are embedded in everything we do. Ensuring new team members are fully introduced to this and all existing staff demonstrate and promote this culture.	SLT and Management Team	This will be measured through our **Values and Behaviour framework**, measured in 1-2-1, annual appraisals and all staff meetings. Inducting new staff to this framework and all team members demonstrating it.	March 2025
2.3 We will ensure all Living Better members receive the relevant training required to perform their role, alongside receiving core training around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. This is to equip them with the skills, knowledge and confidence to support our communities and deliver on our aim.	EDI Working Group	More training sessions and workshops available to the team. Aim to have a minimum of 2 a year for all staff.	March 2026
2.4 We will work to increase diversity across our staff team by widening our talent pool and developing a pathway for this to feed into as part of the wider succession planning. This will be achieved by widening our recruitment search and the places we advertise our roles. We will make it clear that we accept applicants from all backgrounds, cultures and lived experiences.	SLT and Management Team	Achieve a more diverse workforce with individuals from wider backgrounds, including lived experiences. This will be measured through our people planning (staff) survey and presented as an infographic.	March 2027

Ambition 3: support embedding of EDI externally with our partners and stakeholders and use community voice to shape our understanding of what our communities want and need.

Objectives	Responsible	Measure of Success	Completion
3.1 We will involve community voice in every relevant piece of work that we undertake over the course of the year and use it to shape our decision making and develop our understanding of our places and communities and who works/lives/studies across our county, to gain insight from others, learn from them and value their opinions.	Programmes Lead/ Places & Communities Manager	An increase in proportion of projects that have used community voice to develop planning.	March 2025
3.2 We will include EDI awareness and Training lead / good practice in our partner newsletters throughout the year to educate others and share good practice around EDI processes.	Training lead / Marcomms	Content in every partner newsletter (e.g., sharing outcomes of our own training with partners, inviting them to join our training, or join cross-sector discussion opportunities). Opportunities that may arise outside of newsletter that are more suited to a different communication.	March 2025
3.3 We will create a group of those with lived experience that can feed into our own work and our Board in the longer term.	EDI Working Group	Creation of the group. Number of times the group has been utilised in project planning situations. Create a shadow Board – longer term, see action above.	March 2025
3.4 We will endeavour to champion EDI with partners we work with by encouraging best practice around use of EDI processes to ensure they are EDI aware and promote this to build positive relationships with our partners which strengthen our joint outcomes.	Programmes Lead	Sharing EDI process good practice with partners we work with through our programmes work (e.g., sharing relevant documentation links related to an EDI policy, equal opportunities statement wording, educating and sharing good practice with them through newsletter sign up as above).	March 2027

Ambition 4: ensure compliance requirements are met regarding EDI on an ongoing basis and demonstrate public commitment to this process.

Objectives	Responsible	Measure of Success	Completion
4.1 Redevelop the EDI section of our website to ensure relevant, up-to-date information is published.	Marcomms	That this section of the website is up-to-date, relevant and informative. Team members and, where possible, external partners will be asked to review this.	March 2025
4.2 Decide on the data source against which the diversity of our Board, SLT and wider staff team are measured, that reflects the community in which we work.	Insight and Impact Team	A decision has been made and is being used to assess the respective diversity of our workforce.	March 2025
4.3 Ensure equality and diversity is addressed in the Trustees' Annual Report in relation to the work we do.	CEO	To be included in the 2024 Trustees' Annual report.	March 2025
4.4 Attend relevant training to ensure up-to-date knowledge on best practice and any changes in EDI legislation, cascading this to the staff team and providing updates to the Board.	Head of Finance and Compliance	Up-to-date knowledge is held within the organisation. Legal requirements are met.	March 2026 (immediate if any relevant Equality Act updates)

(2024 update V1.0) Authored by EDI Working Group. Approved by Board on 12/03/2024.

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