

# Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan

2025–2027



# Introduction

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Sport for Confidence is a community interest company based predominantly in Essex, UK and began in 2016 when our Co-Founder Lyndsey Barrett left her NHS role of 20 years with an idea to bring together the collective expertise of Occupational Therapy, Coaches and people with lived experience to utilise sport and physical activity to promote good health and prevent ill-health.



# Introduction

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## Our Vision

A future where fairer access to physical activity and sport narrows the gap in occupational, health and social outcomes, allowing everyone to benefit in a way that is meaningful to people's lives.

Sport for Confidence centres and prioritises the needs of people and communities furthest away from physical activity and sport, recognising everyone has a right to experience physical activity and sport, which can empower, provide meaningful choice and a sense of belonging.

We work locally and nationally in spaces and places making use of the expertise of participants, occupational therapists and the physical activity sector.

This combined skill set is ideally suited to address barriers to accessing physical activity and sport, tackling inequalities and providing the best possible experiences for people and communities to take part in a way that is relevant and meaningful to people's lives.

We recognise and value the unique contributions of people, their environments, occupation and participation when using physical activity to promote good health and prevent ill health. We work together to ensure systems and services can meet the needs of everyone in our community.



# The Story So Far

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Since inception, Sport for Confidence has provided a 'no labels' model to individuals and communities that are furthest away from sport and physical activity. We believe everyone has a right to experience physical activity and sport, which can empower, provide meaningful choice and a sense of belonging.

In this time frame, we have grown from a small team of 5 to 50. We have expanded service provision from our headquarters in Basildon, Essex further afield to the likes of Clacton on Sea, Westminster, Ipswich and now nationally as a system partner to Sport England.

We believe we have a role to play in addressing unfairness in occupational, social care and health outcomes for people.

*“ Everyone has a responsibility to ensure opportunities are accessible to people furthest away from full and meaningful participation in society, including to physical activity and sport ”.*

Our dynamic model(s) only function when we have kind, brilliant and diverse human beings that deliver the shared vision.

The fast-paced nature of our growth has often provided challenges to ensuring the infrastructure of the organisation provides the platform and support mechanisms needed to be a great place to work.

The Diversity & Inclusion Action plan sets out unwavering commitments & ambitions to ensure Sport for Confidence recognise that all humankind are complex and diverse and we have a duty of care to provide safe spaces and places where individuals and communities feel a sense of belonging.

The action plan won't just be strategic words on a shelf – it will become part of the culture and **everyone's responsibility** at Sport for Confidence.



JTURNER.

**Jake Turner**  
Co-Chief Executive Officer

# A Word From The Board

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**I'll never forget the first time I came to meet Lyndsey Barrett and the team at Basildon Sporting Village back when I was working as the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Manager at Swim England. This must have been around 2016.**

I saw what the team were delivering in every space across the centre, from the pool, to the studios, to the courts, to the cafe, and even from the car park before anyone entered the building. This work was, and still is, changing people lives, and particularly the lives of some of the most vulnerable and neglected people in our society.

I came away from that day utterly inspired and determined to do what I could to support the organisation to grow, and to share their unrivalled expertise in the delivery of holistic wellbeing with the rest of the sector.

Cut to 5 years later and the opportunity of a lifetime to join the board as one of the first new Non-Executive Directors. Now into my second term on the board, it has been fantastic to see the growth of the organisation not least in team members, the breadth and depth of delivery, the growth in knowledge and expertise, and presence in the sector, but also in making Sport for Confidence a better place to work, and the impact that has on service delivery.

*“ Seeing how this organisation continues to strive to improve itself and its offer to participants is absolutely empowering and I am so proud to be a board member.”*

This document sets out the areas that we feel as an organisation we still have improvements to make across diversity and inclusion. You will see this come to life through our 3 commitments and our key areas of focus.

This is the start of the next phase of Sport for Confidence, and we will continue to review, develop further ambitions, and push ourselves to be bolder around our vision through the lens of diversity and inclusion.

I have been so impressed at how Jake has led the team to develop the Action Plan together with the board, with team members, and also with Sport for Confidence participants, but now the work begins to bring this action plan to life!



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jamie Hooper'.

**Jamie Hooper**  
Non-Executive Director  
Equality & Diversity Board Champion

# Lived Experience

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My name is Andy and I am an Occupational Therapist (OT) who has been working for Sport for Confidence for the past two years, within the National Space as a system partner to Sport England, my focus is to elevate the *lived experience voice*. I live with Cerebral Palsy and happen to be a participant (at Sport for Confidence).

Gaining work and getting the right support to work in the physical activity, sport and health sectors as someone living with a disability is certainly not at all straightforward!

I have experienced difficulties with negative assumptions and prejudices throughout previous employment and work placement experiences, including in the fitness industry. I have also felt at times I lacked appropriate mentoring and or support to enable me to have an equal opportunity to succeed and achieve my full potential and finally, I feel concerned with the lack of flexible work opportunities across the health, sport and physical activity sectors.

I am very glad to have found a part-time role at Sport for Confidence where I have the organisations trust I'll fulfil my contracted hours and that they are also flexible to promote a healthier work life balance for me.

I am excited to be involved in the organisations Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan – turning my previous negative experiences into a positive one, reflecting, sharing and learning. It's crucial for us at Sport for Confidence that we are representative of the population we serve, throughout all spaces & places & departments and I am looking forward to implementing our ambitious plans.

The Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan works in parallel to the Sport England, Code for Sports Governance. It is and will prove hugely important. It will ensure that across all levels of our organisation and amongst all the different spaces and places we work, due consideration is given for diversity and inclusion, and it is embedded within our daily practice.

There are numerous actions in this first, of many plans, and my ability to recommend us as an organisation to others living with disabilities is dependent on the desire and ability to meet those actions and fulfil the plan we have in place. It is very important indeed!

The fact that there has been a working group that has considered what is needed from the Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan is hugely valued personally and I look forward to the group continuing to meet on a regular basis to ensure we are truly accountable for all the actions that are put in place.

*“ Throughout the implementation of this plan, we will get things right and wrong, but we will continuously learn and strive to always do better! ”*



Andrew Chapman

Andrew Chapman  
Occupational Therapist

# Our Commitment

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## Representative of those we serve

Ensuring that our workforce reflects the diversity of the communities and participants we engage with across all areas of the organisation.

## Elevate the voice of lived experience

Actively seeking, listening and incorporating the insights and perspectives of individuals with lived experience to inform our practice and drive our standards.

## Equitable and inclusive culture

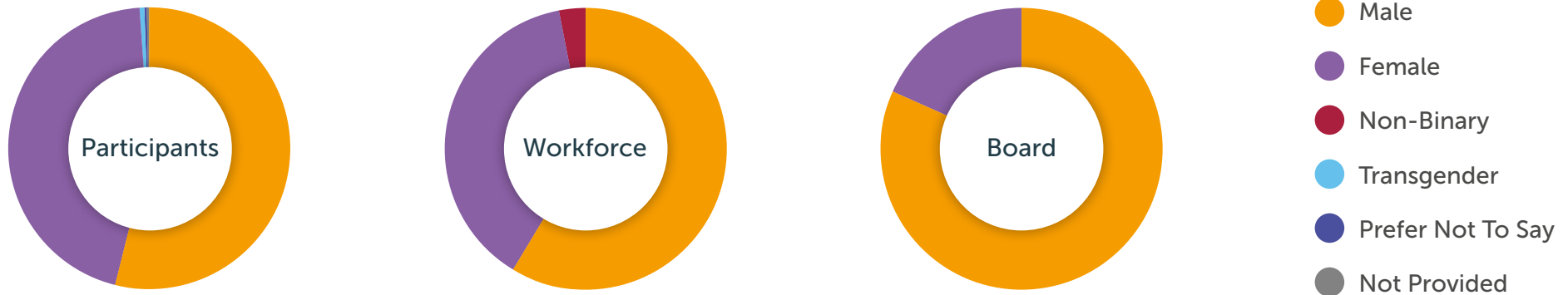
Creating an environment where everyone feels valued, respected and empowered to contribute to the aims of the organisation.



# Our People

The following information was taken at a snapshot in September 2024 and included information regarding participants, workforce and board, completed over the past year.

## Gender



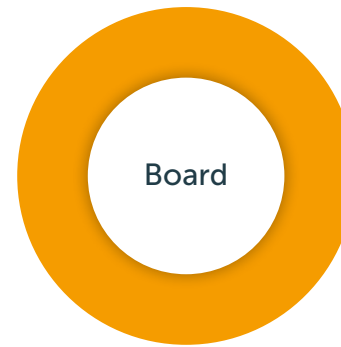
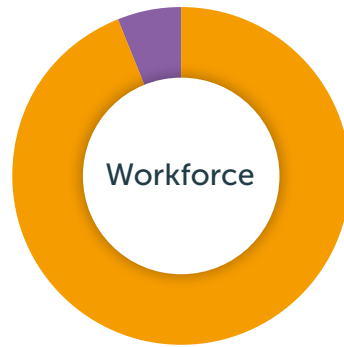
## Age



# Our People

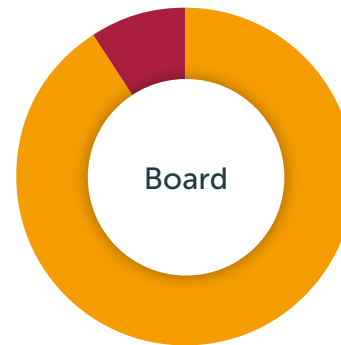
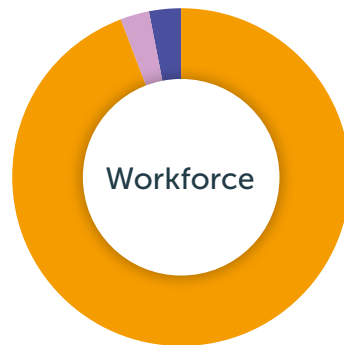
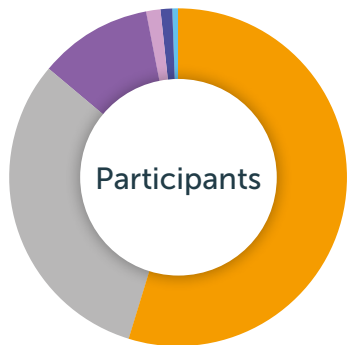
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## Ethnicity



- White, British and/or English
- Black, Asian, or Other Ethnic Minority Group
- Prefer Not To Say

## Sexual Orientation



- Heterosexual
- Gay Male
- Gay Female
- Bi-sexual
- Prefer to Self-describe
- Prefer Not To Say
- Unable to answer due to referring on behalf of someone else and unaware

# Our People

## Disabilities and/or Long-Term Health Conditions



For deeper insight into our participant data, please see [Appendix 1](#).



# Action Plan

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## Introduction

The action plan is broken into 5 principles, which correlate to the structure laid out by the Code for Sports Governance (*Sport England. (2021). A Code for Sports Governance. Sport England.*) We have gathered our baseline information to help us paint a picture as to what we do well, and for where we need to improve.

A Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan working group have been meeting for the past 12 months, the group is made up of invested current employees who have been shaping the plan with support from the Executive and Equality & Diversity Board Champion. The plan has been shared externally with a number of stakeholders: participants, leisure providers, carers, strategic leaders, commissioners & equality & diversity experts through the consultation period.

The 5 principles – 1. Structure, 2. People, 3. Communication, 4. Standards & Conduct, 5. Policies & Processes are broken down into the following:

Baseline Summary	Positives	Areas to Improve	Actions	Who	Measurable
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Each action is then listed to the 3 commitments in the following key:

Example – (A1) – this action is directly linked to commitment number 1 – representative of those we serve.

The plan is for 2 years, in line with our Sport England System Partner relationship, and the action plan will be supported by an operational paper, and the working group will continue to meet frequently to hold the organisation accountable to the actions set out. The Diversity & Inclusion Action plan will be formally reviewed yearly.

# Action Plan

## 1. Structure

Clear and appropriate governance structure, led by a board which is collectively responsible for the long-term success of the organisation and exclusively vested with the power to lead it. The right governance structure, with decisions made at the right level, enables the best decisions to be made to drive the success of the organisation (*Sport England, A Code for Sports Governance, 2021*).

Baseline Summary	Positives	Areas to Improve	Actions	Who	Measurable
<p><b>Board</b> 3 Co-Founders 2 Chief Executive Officers (Co-CEOs) 7 Non-Executive Directors</p> <p><b>Senior Leadership Team</b> Clinical Lead (2) HR Manager (1) National Space Leads (3) Primary Care Leads (1) Single Point of Access Lead (1)</p> <p><b>Total Employees</b> 50 (January 2025)</p>	Our overarching commitment to tackle health inequalities and to support those furthest away from sport and physical activity is clear.	Limited representation of ethnic diversity at board, senior level and overall workforce.	<b>Review current recruitment processes to prioritise diversity, ensuring all positions attract a diverse range of candidates (A1)</b>	Co-CEOs & HR department, with support from People & Culture Sub-Committee	An increase of representation of ethnic diversity throughout the organisation.
	36% of board describe themselves to have a disability and or long-term health condition.	Further develop and imbed our current Disability Confident Employer and Armed Forces Covenant accreditation and initiative.	<b>Establish working groups to further enhance our Disability Confident Employer status &amp; Armed Forces Covenant initiative, whilst considering new accreditation/support programmes nationally available (A3)</b>	Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan Working Group	A yearly board and employee diversity data survey completed.
	A dedicated focus as part of our relationship with Sport England, with a clear focus to elevate the voice of lived experience throughout the organisation.	Lack of clear pathways for diverse talent to progress into leadership positions.	<b>Develop a leadership programme for diverse talent within the organisation (A1,2)</b>	Co-CEOs	New leadership roles fulfilled by diverse talent.
	Values that promote and harness an inclusive environment and culture and multiple support mechanisms throughout the organisation ( <i>Appendix 1</i> ).	Participant and employee engagement at board level.	<b>Establish regular feedback opportunities, to publish and share appropriate and relevant information discussed at board to workforce (A3)</b>	Co-CEOs	Staff feedback and presence at board.
			<b>The creation of Team Experience, to represent the voice of lived experience at board level (A3)</b>	Team Experience, led by our Occupational Therapy Leads in this space	Team Experience to be a voice at board.

# Action Plan

## 2. People

Organisations shall recruit and engage people with diversity of background, thought, independence, skills and experience to take effective decisions that further the organisations goals and best serve their communities and stakeholders. Diverse, skilled and experienced decision-making bodies which contain independent voices and engage in constructive and inclusive debate enable better decision making and build trust (*Sport England, A Code for Sports Governance, 2021*).

Baseline Summary	Positives	Areas to Improve	Actions	Who	Measurable
<p>Total employees – 50 (January 2025)</p> <p>Total volunteers – 34 (January 2025)</p> <p>Our organisation began in Essex, UK. Our operation remains largely within the county, we have expanded to Suffolk and London and have national relationships where we provide a service across the country.</p> <p>Of our workforce, 85% of those are recruited locally, and reside in Essex, with the remaining 15% across the UK.</p> <p>On average, our employees remain with the organisation for 2.5 years.</p>	<p>38% of our employees describe themselves to have a disability and or long-term health condition.</p> <p>50% of our workforce are registered to the Health Care Professions Council (HCPC) where CPD is part of their standards and code of conduct.</p> <p>84% of our workforce serve the communities and participants every day, every week through a range of our delivery models.</p> <p>Processes and support structures that contribute to an inclusive culture for example regular supervision, appraisals, peer to peer huddles and drop-in opportunities.</p> <p>Employee assistance programme.</p>	<p>6% of our workforce are from ethnic diverse groups.</p> <p>On the frontline we serve a diversity of communities &amp; participants in a holistic and evidence-based approach, however, we lack specific Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) training.</p> <p>Pathways for our employees &amp; volunteers to local and national resource groups.</p>	<p><b>A focus, targeting recruitment drives to those who are ethnically diverse (A1)</b></p> <p><b>Identify relevant and appropriate training that can form mandatory and CPD opportunities for all employees &amp; volunteers specifically around EDI (A3)</b></p> <p><b>Explore local and national pathways, and make connections with appropriate and relevant organisations (A2,3)</b></p>	<p>HR Department</p> <p>Training Leads &amp; HR Department</p> <p>Everyone</p>	<p>An increase of employees who are ethnically diverse.</p> <p>Attendance at training events around EDI for employees and volunteers.</p> <p>Dissemination of these pathways, and embedding in the support structures for the organisation.</p>

# Action Plan

## 3. Communication – Internal & External

Transparent, accountable and engaging effectively with stakeholders and nurturing internal democracy. Being responsive to stakeholders, understanding their interests and hearing their voices help shape the organisation governance & strategy. Why does the organisation exist, what is it trying to do, how it is doing it, results, accessible results, empower stakeholders by giving them the information about the organisation they need to know (*Sport England, A Code for Sports Governance, 2021*).

Baseline Summary	Positives	Areas to Improve	Actions	Who	Measurable
<p>Regular communication methods exist throughout the organisation.</p> <p>Up to 6 social media channels including Facebook, Twitter, Linked In, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube.</p> <p>Website domain which includes a contact us page, and our compliments and complaints process.</p> <p>Internal communication methods through our support structures such as huddles and organisational team meetings (<i>Appendix 2</i>), plus formal support through our HR department.</p>	<p>Consistent communication through a variety of different means – which is often two ways.</p> <p>Transparent communication, CPD week as an example.</p> <p>Dedicated workforce to communicate the who, what, why and how to all stakeholders.</p> <p>Team Experience (<i>Appendix 3</i>) who contribute to ensuring how we communicate is accessible to as many people as possible.</p>	<p>Further develop accessibility of our website and communication methods.</p> <p>Communications do not always reflect those communities and participants that we serve.</p> <p>Improve the communication between board and employees.</p> <p>Lack of internal/ external communication around EDI specifically.</p>	<p><b>Enhancing the current social media strategy to ensure its fit for purpose, and it caters for all communities and participants (A1,2)</b></p>	Social Media Content Manager	A new social media strategy that caters for all communities and participants.
			<p><b>Diversify our external communications to ensure it demonstrates our entire reach to communities and participants that we serve (A2)</b></p>	Social Media Content Manager	Gain external feedback. Ensure regular posts are focused around EDI.
			<p><b>Prioritise our feedback, complaints and compliments processes and procedures to ensure they are inclusive and accessible for all stakeholders (A2,3)</b></p>	HR Department	Gain feedback to see whether there is an increase in complaints and compliments.
			<p><b>Specific training around inclusive communication for workforce involved in communications (A3)</b></p>	HR Department & Social Media Content Manager	Attendance at training events, and examples of how the learning has been put into practice.
			<p><b>Establish post board summaries to share with the workforce (A3)</b></p>	Co-CEOs & Board	Email thread demonstrating this has happened. Employee engagement at board level.
			<p><b>Create a yearly calendar to communicate awareness days of certain EDI topics internally and externally (A3)</b></p>	HR Department	Ensure social media communications align with the awareness days and staff participate.

# Action Plan

## 4. Standards & Conduct

The organisation shall uphold high standards of integrity, promote an ethical and inclusive culture, and engage in regular and effective evaluation to drive continuous improvement. Having the right values embedded in the culture of the organisation helps enhance the reputation & effectiveness of the organisation, it also creates an environment that staff stay for longer and enjoy working for the organisation (*Sport England, A Code for Sports Governance, 2021*).

Baseline Summary	Positives	Areas to Improve	Actions	Who	Measurable
<p>We have gone through three phases of imbedding the voice of lived experience into the organisation – Team Create, Conversations with Andy and verbal feedback.</p> <p>The organisation has a clear value led performance review process and policy.</p> <p>We have a number of policies focused around employee standards, behaviours and professionalism.</p>	<p>The foundations are in place to promote standards of high quality.</p> <p>Our values are lived and breathed throughout induction, policy, supervision and daily operation.</p> <p>Support structures and pathways are in place to continually provide opportunity to drive continuous improvement.</p>	<p>Our current Code of Conduct needs reviewing and should prioritise considerations needed for under-represented groups.</p> <p>Review of values – which have been in place since inception (2016).</p> <p>Ensure the next phase of imbedding the voice of lived experience throughout the organisation is sustainable and becomes part of every day practice.</p>	<p><b>Revise the Code of Conduct, to include specific commitments to EDI, with clear procedures for addressing discrimination and harassment (A1,3)</b></p>	HR Department & Co-CEOs	A new code of conduct policy shared and implemented.
			<p><b>Undertake a review of the values with stakeholders (A1,2,3)</b></p>	Co-CEOs	Analyse the review and take to employee focus groups and board – co-design new values.
			<p><b>Finalise the implementation of Team Experience (A2)</b></p>	Occupational Therapy Leads	See Team Experience in action, with the structure of a strategy to support.
			<p><b>Establish an EDI mapping exercise of the accountability within the organisation (A1,2,3)</b></p>	Operational Team	Mapping exercise compliments the operational plan of the DIAP.
			<p><b>Establish an EDI mapping exercise of the accountability within the organisation (A1,2,3)</b></p>	Training Lead & HR Department	Employee attendance at training.

# Action Plan

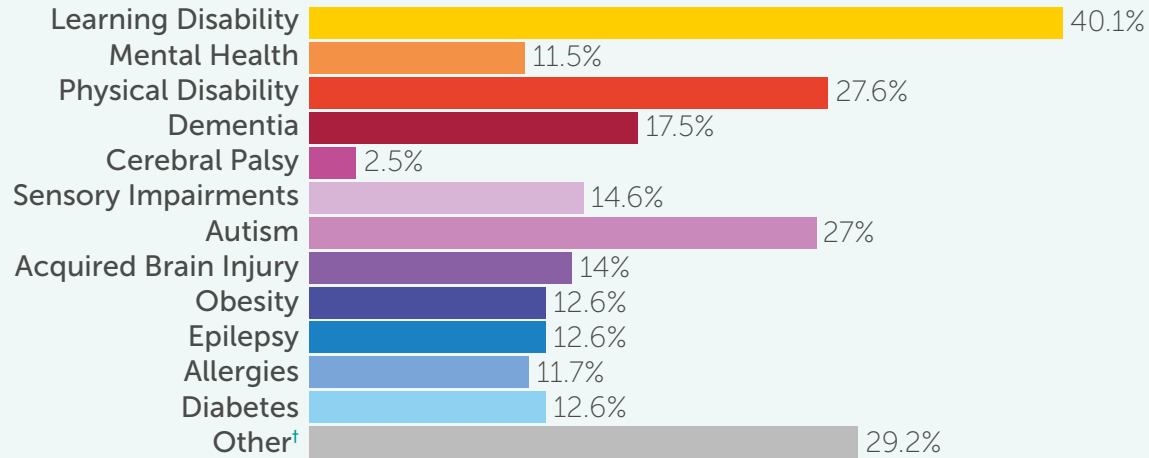
## 5. Policies & Processes

Comply with applicable laws and regulations, considering social and environmental impact of decisions, undertaking financial strategic planning, controls and risk management (*Sport England, A Code for Sports Governance, 2021*).

Baseline Summary	Positives	Areas to Improve	Actions	Who	Measurable
<p>The organisation has an EDI policy, that all employees have to read as part of their induction.</p> <p>The organisation has a Safer Recruitment policy to ensure recruitment processes are fair and inclusive.</p> <p>As part of board, the People and Culture sub committee is in place, and as part of the terms of reference, it has a specific focus around EDI.</p>	<p>The organisation has an abundance of appropriate and meaningful policies in place which governs the organisations processes.</p> <p>The organisation complies with all GDPR laws and regulations.</p>	<p>To ensure the recruitment processes within the organisation are set up to be inclusive and accessible for those from under-represented groups.</p> <p>To have clearer pathways between Team Experience and the EDI champion and sub/board.</p> <p>Ensure the current EDI policy is fit for purpose.</p> <p>What policies are missing that could support the EDI policy?</p>	<p><b>Review of recruitment processes, consider the use of applications forms over CVs (A1)</b></p>	HR Department	An increase of applications from ethnic diverse individuals.
			<p><b>Finalise the implementation of Team Experience (A2)</b></p>	Occupational Therapy Leads	To see the Team Experience in action.
			<p><b>Review of EDI policy (A3)</b></p>	HR Department & Co-CEOs	New policy to be shared.
			<p><b>Review the pathways and touchpoints between employees and board (A2,3)</b></p>	Co-CEOs	To see this in action, share calendar dates of board and post board summaries.
			<p><b>Explore Transgender Inclusion policy and others (A3)</b></p>	EDI Board Champion & Training Lead	Have a portfolio of policies that support our EDI strategic policy.

# Appendix 1

## A Breakdown of Our Participant Data\*



\*Disability and or Long-term health condition (information at September 2024, based upon 2,015 participants who have accessed Sport for Confidence in the past year, participants with dual and singular diagnosis)

†This category includes:

<i>Downs Syndrome</i>	<i>Visual Impairments</i>	<i>Lung Condition (Antitrypsin Deficiency)</i>	<i>Semantic Pragmatic Language Disorder</i>
<i>Neurovascular Disease</i>	<i>Long-COVID</i>	<i>Chrones Disease</i>	<i>Parkinsons</i>
<i>Arthritis</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Diabetes</i>	<i>Echolalia</i>
<i>Depression</i>	<i>Developmental Delay</i>	<i>Aspergers Syndrome</i>	<i>ADHD</i>
<i>Migraines</i>	<i>Dyspraxia</i>	<i>High Cholestrol/BP</i>	



# Appendix 2

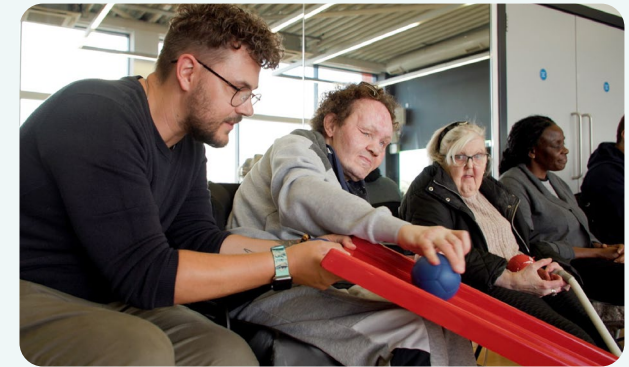
## Support Structures



# Appendix 3

## Team Experience

<b>What It Is</b>	Team Experience launches in Autumn 2025, creating opportunities for people with lived experience to use their strengths in ways that support themselves and contribute to Sport for Confidence and beyond.
<b>The Purpose</b>	To recognise and value the expertise gained through lived experience, offering meaningful opportunities that support both individuals and our organisation.
<b>The Why</b>	Previous involvement work (Team Create and Conversations with Andy) showed how much people value contributing and belonging. It also reminded us that meaningful involvement must happen on people's own terms, reflecting their unique strengths and experiences.
<b>The How</b>	Team Experience will thrive through organisation-wide commitment. Staff will help identify paid and voluntary roles, with a support system that ensures a positive, empowering experience tailored to each person.
<b>The Who</b>	Led by Lyndsey Barrett (Co CEO & Occupational Therapist) and Andy Chapman (Occupational Therapist & Expert by Experience with Cerebral Palsy), Team Experience is for anyone with lived experience—participants, volunteers, caregivers, staff, and wider community voices—who can help shape and improve our work at every level, including our board.



# Contact Us

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