



# AP01 Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2024-2028

Approved by Sport England 26th November 2024

## A Message from our Chair, Eric Prescott

Angling is one of the largest participant sports in the country, enjoyed by millions of people each year. In the Angling Trust, our member angling clubs have about 600,000 members. Each year our competitions attract thousands of participants, and we work with tens of thousands of people of all ages and backgrounds to introduce them to the joys of angling. We employ more than 75 staff in the Angling Trust and thousands of volunteers give up their time to support the work that we do.



Angling is a highly accessible sport, people with physical disabilities can fish alongside others on equal terms and angling has strong and proven benefits in supporting mental wellbeing of participants. Angling is a great leveller, and a way of bringing people from different backgrounds together.

In that context, it is vital that our organisation is accessible to all people, and that our programmes reflect their needs.

Angling is not fully representative of diversity in the general population. A majority of anglers are male, and participation amongst ethnic minority communities and females is lower.

To improve engagement, we must ensure that our work programmes, our competitions, and our communications are relevant, appropriate, and welcoming to all existing and prospective participants.

The composition of our board and staff sends a strong signal to would be anglers about the type of people who take part. The board and executive understand the needs of the community it currently serves, but it

also needs perspectives from the community it might serve. This will ensure the boards decisions are inclusive of all communities when decisions are made and the formation of our network of advisory groups from across our community is a strong statement of intent in this area.

We will continue to seek to recruit more diverse directors, whenever opportunities arise to do so. We will look at the way we advertise for co-opted roles on the board to reach the widest possible range of candidates willing to volunteer to serve and further integrate individuals within advisory groups as a stepping stone to future board roles.

. As a sport we have a lot to be proud of, our national championships are universal and have been for many years and our participation initiatives are seeing 26% female participation. 18% of participating anglers recognise themselves as having some form of disability and our proactive work with the Eastern European community across the past decade has resulted in strong community cohesion and integration within our sport. Change will take time and will require a commitment from everyone involved but we are seeing positive change both in terms of new entrants to the sport and interest in the work we do from a broader cross section of communities.

On behalf of the Board of the Angling Trust, I am making this commitment to improve the diversity and inclusion of angling because I believe that it is vital for the future of angling as a mass participation sport and for angling to have a bright, vibrant, and sustainable future.

Eric Prescott (he/him)

Chair, The Angling Trust and Non-Executive Director lead for EDI.

## Overview

This latest iteration of our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (“DIAP”) details the work we are and will be undertaking across the areas of equality, diversity and inclusion (“EDI”) within angling over the next four years. This DIAP will look at what we – Angling Trust, as the recognised national governing body for angling in England – will do both internally as an organisation and what we will do to influence angling both within our membership reach and our activities and across wider sport of angling.

In line with the UK Code for Sports Governance, we will ensure our DIAP aligns with our strategic plan and we will publish a progress update annually.

We recognise the need to communicate our plan to our key stakeholders, detailing how we intend to make progress over the period of this plan. We will report our progress annually against the ambitions within this plan.

Over the past few months, we have updated our Equality, Diversity and inclusion Policy (PD19a) which may be found here: <https://anglingtrust.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/PD19a-AT-Equality-Diversity-and-Inclusion-Policy-Nov-2023-v.1.1.2-FINAL-APPROVED.pdf>

Our planned actions are detailed below, split into strategic business wide actions and departmental actions. This DIAP is not intended to be exhaustive but captures the key areas of work we are or intend to undertake that focus on diversity and inclusion.

In producing our DIAP we have considered our corporate vision, mission and values, which are:

## Vision

- Promote, develop and protect angling for all

## Mission

- To fight for fish, fishing and the environment, championing the joy of angling and all its benefits from grassroots to elite levels

## Values

- PASSION - We place anglers and angling as the heart of everything we do.
- We LISTEN to our colleagues, members, stakeholders and the wider angling community.
- We RESPECT each other and ensure angling is inclusive and open to all.
- We are ACCOUNTABLE, transparent and strive to deliver the best for angling and the environment.
- We COLLABORATE, learn and grow together.

If you have any questions or require further information about our DIAP, please contact our EDI lead [stuart.sharp@anglingtrust.net](mailto:stuart.sharp@anglingtrust.net)

## Background

Angling participation, at least in Britain and like many other sports and pastimes, has traditionally been male dominated for many reasons. As a result, the communities we serve and the angling-focused staff and directors we recruited, largely reflected the demographics of anglers within the UK. This brought valuable angling insight and knowledge, together with passion for our waters and fish. However, it may also have not challenged us enough in reaching new anglers, by not looking at angling from alternative perspectives and by not fully understanding the barriers some members of the wider community may face in deciding whether to have that first go at fishing or to apply to work at Angling Trust.

With this in mind we have implemented programmes across many areas of the sport to engage a wider cross section of society. We have our highly successful “Building Bridges” programme through which we engage with anglers from a variety of eastern European countries integrating them into angling to our rules and laws. We continue to run highly successful angling competitions for older anglers (veterans and masters), younger anglers (cadet, junior and youth), for ladies and for those with disabilities. Alongside this our national championships are universal events and allow all anglers to compete shoulder to shoulder for equal prize money. Our England teams follow the same structure and we have been strong advocates on the international stage to ensure that angling remains a

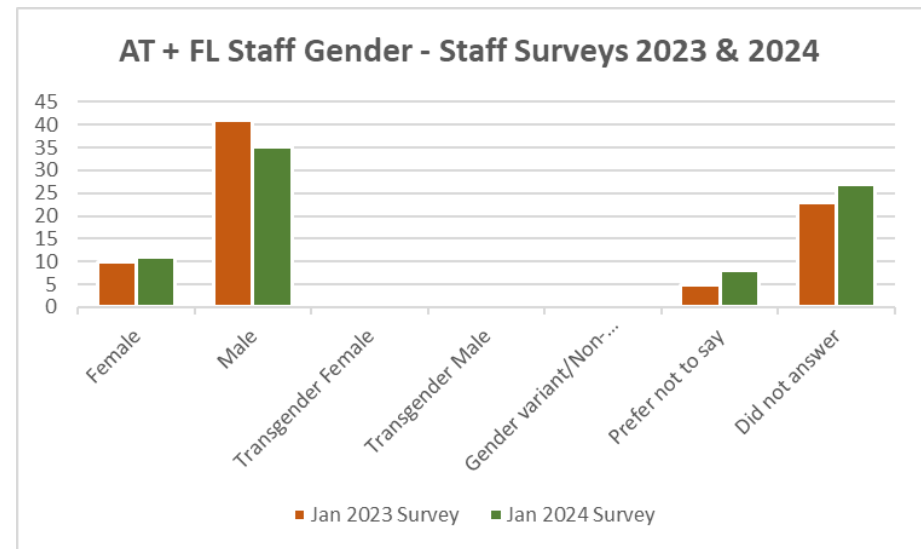
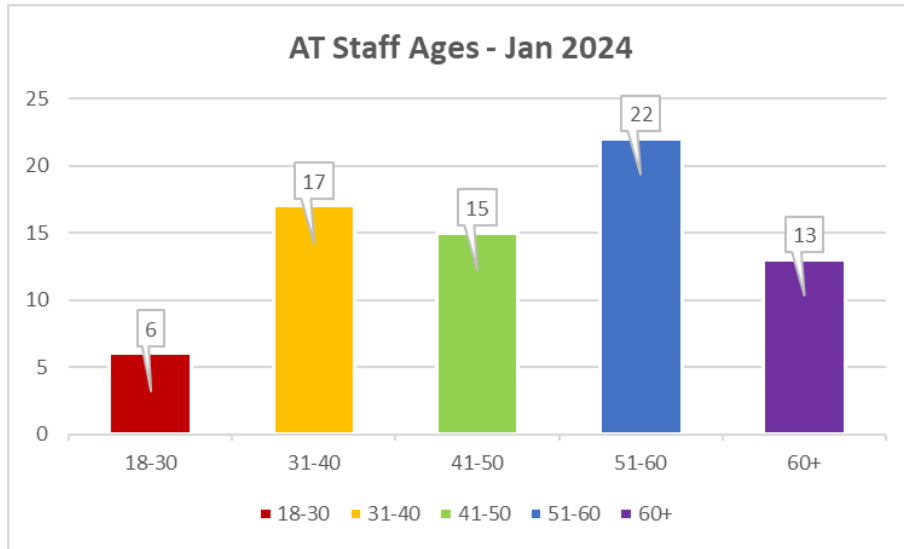


universal sport with categories designed to break down barriers to wider participation and provide pathways to increased participation. Over the past couple of years, we have also launched the “Reel Education” programme, with support of Shakespeare Fishing Tackle, taking angling into schools and giving thousands of key stage 1 and 2 children their first taste of angling with initial results showing huge interest from all audience demographics. The Angling Trust’s We Fish As One campaign has generated significant interest and is celebrating positive examples of our diversity and inclusion work down the route of “if you can see it you can be it” but we need to embed this further throughout both the organisation and the community.

Angling has a proven record for combating PTSD, anxiety and depression and is used by numerous veterans’ groups as well as being prescribed via the NHS. With 18% of anglers recognising themselves as having some form of disability there are areas in which angling has a strong and successful heritage in welcoming a diverse cross section of participants however, we have a desire to go further in a number of areas as this plan sets out.

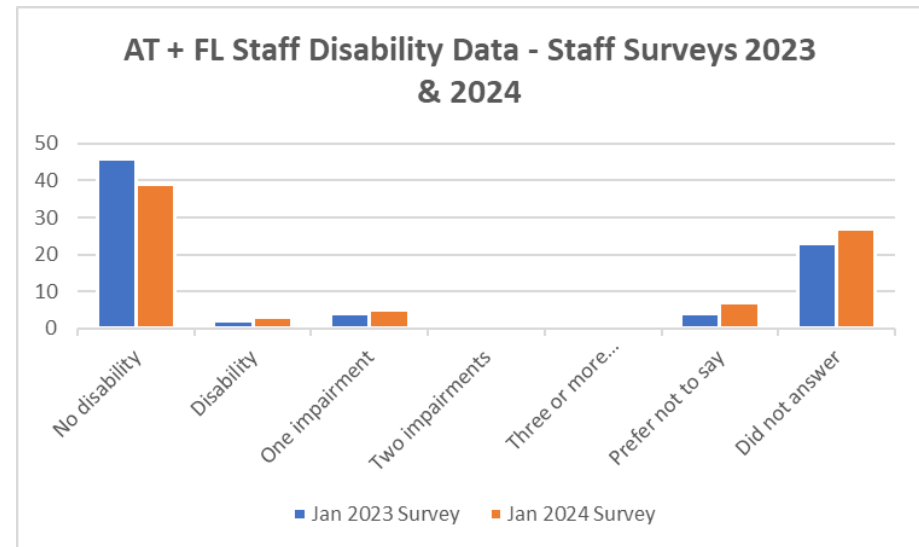
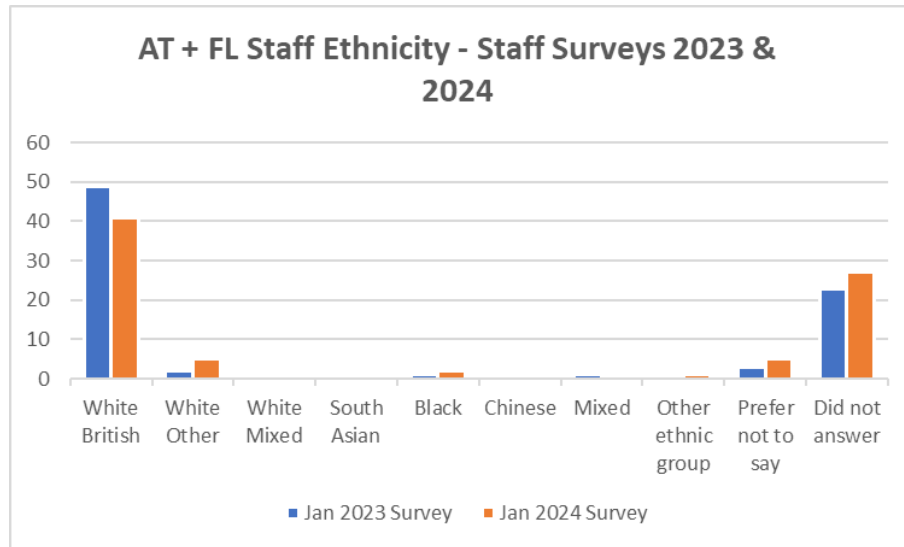
## Key Baseline Metrics

As with any journey, we need to recognise where we are starting from. The following is a snapshot of the diversity of our staff, as collected through our HR systems or via our annual staff survey:



The ages of our staff are available via our HR system and indicate that almost 50% of our staff are over 50 years of age. Our youngest and oldest staff members are 20 and 70 years respectively.

The staff gender information is from our annual all staff survey undertaken across both Angling Trust and Fish Legal. This survey is anonymised and is not mandatory. Unsurprisingly the survey reports a significant bias in staff who identify as male. This reflects the existing participation bias across the sport. The survey uses Sport England survey questions.



While the ethnicity data reflects the majority of our staff being white British, it should be noted that we employ a number of staff of different nationalities and heritage.

The disability data indicates that the majority of staff do not have or disclose one or more impairments. We do have one wheelchair user in our employment.

Further, it is our intention to undertake the same analysis of our Board and our ambition to undertake a similar exercise with our membership over the next year.

We are conscious of the benefits of benchmarking our own diversity against other national governing bodies however, at this time we have been unable to find another organisation that undertakes the breadth of work we do as a combination of NGB/NGO/delivery partner/membership organisation.

## Strategic Action Plan

	Objective	Action	Desired Outcome	Review Date	Action Owner/s
S1	To increase the diversity of Board, SMT members and workforce	<p>Measure the diversity of our Board, our Senior Management Team and our staff generally.</p> <p>Ensure our recruitment campaigns and associated materials are family friendly and reach the widest possible audience</p>	By 2028 to have a broader mix of diversity across our Board, SMT members and workforce as measured annually in our Directors' and Staff Surveys using 2024 data as the baseline.	Review annually. Target by 2028	AT Board CEO Head of Delivery
S2	To increase the diversity of anglers fishing in England	<p>To foster a welcoming culture across angling and specifically reaching out to those segments of our society who are under -represented at this time.</p> <p>Baseline measurements will need to be established.</p>	By 2028 to be able to demonstrate an increase the number of anglers who are female, from ethnic minorities, and/or have disabilities.	Review annually. Target by 2028.	AT Board CEO
S3	Embed EDI language and culture across Angling Trust and our membership	Provide leadership in embedding change and challenging existing cultural norms.	By 2028 to be able to demonstrate that angling is visibly open to all, that inclusion is the default position for Angling Trust and member organisations and that angling caters for a diverse range of individuals.	Review annually. Target by 2028.	AT Board CEO Head of Delivery

<b>Operational Action Plan</b>
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	Objective	Action	Desired Outcome	Review Date	Action Owner/s
1	Increase awareness of Diversity & Inclusion across staff	Continued awareness sessions of our EDI Strategy and work, including regular EDI articles on internal systems. Awareness to be measured through both annual surveys and observed actions.	Increased awareness across staff on a year or year basis that is reflected in their work	Annually	Head of Delivery
2	Improved capture of diversity metrics for staff	Improve data collection through the anonymous annual staff survey and other methodologies	To capture an accurate and wide data set of diversity metrics for our staff	Annually	Head of Delivery
3	Enhanced reporting of Diversity metrics for staff	Continue to develop the reporting of staff diversity to our Board and the Senior Management Team through our Operations reports	To better understand the diversity of our staff and to use the same as a measure against which we can aspire to increase diversity	Quarterly	Head of Delivery
4	To reach a wider range of candidates during recruitment campaigns	Advertise vacancies in a variety of job platforms, encouraging applications from a broad range of society while reflecting our values as an inclusive employer and family friendly policies.	To increase the diversity of candidates, which should feed through to increased diversity of the workforce. Through equality monitoring of candidates we expect to see an increased range of diversity across applicants by 2028.	Annually	Head of Delivery

5	Embed diversity as a default factor across all business areas	Regular EDI articles on our internal systems. Challenge non-inclusive actions or language. Recognise and celebrate diversity and the benefits this brings to the workplace.	Increased regular articles from a variety of perspectives. Adoption of gender neutral and diverse terminology. No complaints related to protected characteristics. Increased awareness of events and understanding of impact on/importance to others.	Annually	Head of Delivery
6	Attract and retain high quality staff through diverse and family friendly policies	Continue to aim to enhance our maternity/paternity/parental pay and leave policies where possible. Continue to encourage flexible/home/hybrid/term time only working patterns that work for the employee and the business.	Introduction of further family friendly policies; an increased range of working patterns for staff and continued high retention rates.	Annually	Head of Delivery and Head of Finance
7	To ensure there is no unconscious bias in the shortlisting of job applications	Review our application process to allow for easier blind-sifting of applications and roll-out blind sifting for all recruitment campaigns.	Introduce blind sifting across all applications by 31 December 2024	By 31/12/24	Head of Delivery
8	To better resource our work on EDI and to have greater insight from those with a wide range of lived experiences and improved stakeholder engagement.	Form an EDI group to support our work across aspects of diversity and inclusion. Agree Terms of reference. Meet on a quarterly basis.	EDI group formed and TOR agreed by 30 June 2024 comprising a mix of individuals. Meet quarterly from Q1 2024/25. Improved insight into the needs of staff and members. Actions agreed that feedback into the delivery plans across the organisation.	By 30/6/24	Head of Delivery

9	To understand the diversity of the AT Board for use as the baseline measurement in reporting changes of diversity.	Undertake an analysis of the AT Board by age, gender, disability and race.	To have undertaken a survey of the Board within Q1 2024/25 and to have reported the outcome to the Board within Q2 2024/25.	By 30/9/24	Head of Delivery
10	To understand the diversity of the AT membership	Undertake data collection and analysis of the AT membership by age, gender, disability and race.	To have undertaken a survey of the membership or otherwise collected the relevant data by 30/9/2024. Results published 31/12/2024.	By 31/12/24	Head of Delivery And Head of Marketing & Membership
11	To understand the diversity of anglers in England	Undertake data collection and analysis of the angling community by age, gender, disability and race.	To determine an appropriate methodology for capturing the data; undertaking the data capture and analysis; and publishing results by 31 December 2025.	By 31/12/2025	Head of Delivery And Head of Marketing & Membership
12	To effectively portray the diversity of existing anglers and the benefits to our community that this diversity brings	Promote stories that highlight the diversity of our sport and the mental and physical health benefits the individuals get from fishing.	Increased engagement in angling, whether as members or participants in our events, from individuals in under-represented groups. Engagement will be measured through surveys and other methodologies including data collection at events.	Annually	Head of Marketing & Membership
13	Reduce barriers to Angling Trust membership and information for migrant anglers	Review the need for foreign language sections of the Angling Trust website Liaise with Building Bridges Team and audit key AT Website pages. Scope out costs, timeline and practicality of including foreign language pages on the website.	Review the AT website, identify the scope of works required including any financial and staffing costs required and have agreed a plan to deliver the necessary changes.  To deliver the planned changes to the website.	By 31/12/24  TBC	Head of Marketing & Membership And Building Bridges Manager

14	Support AT outreach and engagement with under-represented groups	Embed the EDI approach to champion, encourage, and educate – by developing a network of potential voices and/or ambassadors from these communities who can leverage AT messages and reflect concerns of the communities.	To have a deeper understanding on the issues that of concern to, and impact on, under-represented groups in angling, to inform our future work, leading to greater engagement from and with under-represented groups.	On-going	Head of Marketing & Membership Head of Delivery Head of Campaigns
15	To listen to, understand and take into account the diverse views of the angling communities that we work with	<p>Ensure we engage with and listen to the angling communities and take their views into consideration when developing and delivering our lines of work, whether that be:</p> <p>During angler engagement forums</p> <p>While developing policy and campaigns, particularly those that have an impact on, under-represented groups in angling</p> <p>Conduct a pilot virtual forum with speakers from communities with whom we are not currently engaged (e.g. female anglers, BAME communities, etc.)</p>	<p>To have a greater understanding of the concerns and to better reflect the diverse views of the angling community through a greater awareness of different views. This should be reflected in:</p> <p>Increased attendance across a broad range of forums based on angling interest and the anglers' characteristics and locations.</p> <p>Campaigns and policies that positively supported by the angling community</p> <p>A deeper understanding on the issues that of concern to, and impact on, under-represented groups in angling.</p>	Quarterly	<p>All dept heads</p> <p>Head of Fisheries</p> <p>Head of Campaigns</p> <p>Head of Campaigns</p>

16	To understand barriers and opportunities to angling in the black, Asian and ethnically diverse communities	In partnership with Sporting Equals to undertake insight research into barriers and opportunities.	Research undertaken and barriers and opportunities identified, which can then feed into wider participation interventions during 2024/25.	By 30/6/2024	Head of Participation
17	We want angling to be a truly inclusive experience for everyone in the community	To continue to deliver, directly or in partnership with others, accessible angling opportunities for all including:  10% of all angling participation interventions being in post codes rated 1 -3 on the index of multiple deprivation.  20% of Get Fishing Funds to be devolved in communities delivery interventions to improve disabled access to fishing.	To have increased the public perception of fishing among under-represented groups by 2025, which contributes to 30,300 people having tried angling at one of our or our partners' interventions, including individuals from areas we have previously struggled to reach.	By 31/3/2025	Head of Participation
18	Diversity of competitors – to ensure we continue to attract a diverse range of anglers to our domestic competitions.	We will continue to ensure our range of angling competitions appeal to a broad range of anglers and with few exceptions are fully accessible all genders, age-groups, ages, levels of ability and disability. When designing potential new events we will include diversity as a design criteria.	Maintain and broaden the diversity of our competition participants.	Annually	Head of Competitions

19	International teams – our England teams continue to cover the full range of age groups, genders, both able bodied and with disabilities.	We will continue to support a broad range of England teams across all international federation disciplines and entry criteria.	Maintain our current diverse portfolio of England teams.	Annually	Head of Competitions
20	International teams – reducing the financial barriers for competitors	We will continue to seek sponsorship for our international teams, where they do not currently benefit from sponsorship, to ensure that affordability to compete is not a self-selection criteria. Our focus will be on those teams where sponsorship will make the largest change in the ability for anglers to attend – this will include our disability and youth teams.	Successfully attract sponsorship for non-sponsored teams. Renew existing sponsorship deals for currently sponsored teams.	Annually	Head of Competitions
21	To increase the number of coaches from more diverse communities, especially those that do not traditionally engage with angling as sport and to increase the number of female coaches.	To train 15 Event Lead Coaches from ethnically diverse backgrounds and 20 female Event Lead Coaches.	To raise the profile and appeal of angling for women and girls and those from diverse backgrounds, which in turn should lead to an increase in the number of female and anglers from diverse backgrounds who can then be supported through the Get Fishing programme and CAST awards.	By 31/3/2025	Head of Participation and Coaching Centre Manager



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