

BWL DIVERSITY and INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

January 2024



Message from Our Chairman – Angus Kinnear

“At British Weight Lifting, diversity & inclusion has always been and continues to be, an important part of our culture. We are committed to promoting and increasing diversity in our leadership, workforce, operational decisions, performance training and community development. Facilitating diversity and inclusion are not initiatives or programmes with expiry dates. They’re the right things to do and also core principles for the way we do business. We firmly recognise that leadership, governance and decision making are greatly enhanced when calling on a wide range of different opinions.”

BWL’s strategic vision for 2021-2025 [STRONGER TOGETHER](#) sets out our mission to educate, inspire and create greater opportunities that appeal to a more diverse and inclusive audience resulting in greater levels of activity and a fitter, healthier stronger nation. Progress against our strategy is managed through the BWL (annually) operational plans which include monitoring of the development of an effective workforce, and a commitment to develop employees through effective management, structured reporting systems, training, implementation of fair and consistent policies and the provision of benefits that assist with the health and wellbeing of all staff.

We believe that a good Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) cuts across all aspects of an organisation, it’s stakeholders and the way in which it carries out its activities. Our DIAP is a development of our Diversity, Equality and Inclusivity statement [BWL Commitment Statement on Gender Diversity and Equality](#), follows on from our Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Action Plan from 2022 [bwl diversity action plan](#) and is a key component within our People Plan.

BWL Values

Care: maintain integrity and respectful relations with all our stakeholders, customers, partners, suppliers, employees and communities

Share: expertise, knowledge, passion, enjoyment and innovation

Dare: to make a difference to solve problems and achieve goals that drive performance and the sport forwards in a collaborative manner

BWL Strategy

Our strategy “**STRONGER-TOGETHER**” for 2021-2025 incorporates two key strands:

BWL as an enabler and partner showcasing strength as a lifestyle:

- Advocate for Strength
- Positive Experiences for all

- Connecting Health and Wellbeing
- Connecting Communities

BWL as an enabler of sporting success:

- Membership at the Heart of everything we do
- Enabling ambition – Performance and Talent
- Workforce and People
- Innovation to Enable Broader Management

BWL Mission

To educate, inspire and create greater opportunities that appeal to a more diverse and inclusive audience resulting in greater levels of activity and a fitter, healthier and stronger nation.

BWL Mission Successes

We have made some good progress working towards our BWL Mission and will be using our DIAP to focus our actions on mitigating the challenges we have faced and to work towards achieving our priorities. The successes we have achieved (outlined in the below themes) give us a strong foundation to build upon.

Representation

- Our Articles of Association were amended to ensure the recruitment process for elected and appointed directors is more transparent and to further enhance our commitment to EDI.
- We appointed a Board Champion for Equality and Diversity
- We implemented an Internal Governance group who (currently) oversee progress against the development and progress of our DIAP.
- We have implemented a flexible working policy that helps support employees and their families to navigate every stage of their life and creates an inclusive working environment where there are reduced no barriers to a healthy work-life balance.

Leadership

- We have complied with UK Sport's Code of Sports Governance requirements which includes succession planning for our Senior Leadership Team, all of which have been endorsed by our Board.

- The 2023 staff survey results show that 95% of people believe that “BWL is open and honest with employees” and with a 30% positive increase from last year on the positive work life balance questions.

Governance

- We have recruited a Governance and Operations Manager; the role includes the development and progression of the DIAP with a priority task of setting up a Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Forum. The Forum (once established) will provide the oversight for the monitoring, reviewing and progress against the DIAP.
- Governance is now a standing item on weekly staff meetings, updates are provided on compliance with UK Sport requirements and other areas such as Anti-doping and Safeguarding.

Stakeholder Participation

- An EDI eLearning package has been developed and made available free of charge to all our staff and members.
- We have run and continue to run focussed communication campaigns targeted at our priority areas of engagement, including Women in Sport #StrongIsNotASize, Couch2Kilos a strength challenge designed to help every woman get stronger, Movember supporting the spotlight on men’s mental health, promotion of Pride, LGBTQ+ and Black History Months.
- A new initiative was launched during 2023 aimed at increasing accessibility into other aspects of weight lifting for 16-25 year olds via our Youth Event Team promotion. We welcomed applications from volunteers to help organise a national weight lifting competition.
- We implemented a virtual element of the AGM to reach a wider audience and therefore cascade our decision-making process to a wider number of stakeholders.
- We delivered a fully funded Coaching Scholarship initiative, to support people from underrepresented groups to become qualified coaches. This targeted applicants with a disability, female applicants, aged 16-25, applicants from ethnically diverse backgrounds, applicants from disadvantaged areas, applicants from the LGBTQ+ community, applicants who are refugees or asylum seekers
- We changed our rules for competition to be inclusive for Refugee and Asylum Seeker Athletes, those athletes seeking Permanent Residence (PR) status in the UK are now able to compete in BWL events with full medal status.
- Competition dress code rules were relaxed, we removed the requirement for compulsory singlets to be worn at tier 3 events and for under-12 athletes at tier 1 and 2 competitions.

We still face challenges in relation to capturing enough data to be able to have a holistic view of the demographics of all our people but in 2023 we made good progress and now have some baseline figures to work from that has informed our DIAP ambitions and actions. As our data enriches, we will use our DIAP to ensure we are still targeting the right areas of engagement.

BWL DIAP Development and Ambitions

In 2023 we invested in collecting data to better understand our organisation and membership demographic make-up, this will help us understand where we can do better to ensure that we are working towards our overall mission. We implemented a data collection process attached to membership processes, over time as memberships are renewed this new data collection process will provide a richness of information. We also worked for the first time with Sporting Equals Our History - Sporting Equals, who exist to promote ethnic diversity across sport and physical activity and are a national partner of both Sport England and Sport Scotland. We designed and implemented a new data collection process that gathered information from our employees, members, athletes, coaches and technical officials so that we could complete their Race Representation Index (RRI). The RRI is part of their efforts to understand ethnic diversity within national governing bodies. We will receive a bespoke report from Sporting Equals based upon our data submitted, we will use this report to inform our target areas going forward.

Our DIAP uses our data to inform where we need to do better and identifies where we are improving. It is focused on our organisation's core ambitions/values, aligned to our overall mission and will help us achieve our goals set out in our STRONGER TOGETHER strategy.

Our data shows us that in some areas of the organisation and membership we need to focus on attracting individuals from a diverse ethnic background and those with disabilities or long-term conditions. The Data collected from the RRI shows us that 15% of members are classed as 'masters' and less than 10% representing female masters. In addition, we also believe that by focussing on other areas of inclusivity that cut across all nine protected characteristic such as, mental health, and supporting those from low socio-economic areas we can increase the accessibility into weight lifting and be truly reflective of UK society.

To ensure we remain focussed on our priority areas, our DIAP has 4 overarching ambitions. Each ambition is underpinned by a list of targeted actions, intended goals, responsible leads and timeframes.

- Ambition 1: Our people are reflective of UK society
- Ambition 2: Our organisation is an inclusive and trusted environment to work within
- Ambition 3: To promote weight lifting as a vehicle for social cohesion, bringing communities together
- Ambition 4: To actively promote inclusion to anyone connected to any areas of the organisation

Our proactive DIAP actions are targeted at;

- Filling in the gaps in our data capture and baselines
- Developing and promoting initiatives aimed at raising awareness and supporting those with Mental Health
- Supporting and developing initiatives to celebrate Pride month annually and reflect on the issues that affect the LGBTQ+ community, along with looking at what can be done moving forwards.

- Supporting and developing initiatives to celebrate and support those from an ethnic background
- Increase support to and participation of Masters Lifters, concentrating on the Female demographic
- Support and develop initiatives aimed at enabling participation of individuals from deprived communities (postcode areas defined by Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD))

Our Board will review the DIAP and progress against it on at least an annual basis, with direct support and challenge from our Board Diversity Champion. We will be transparent and public on how much progress we are making against the actions we have set out; and where we are not doing enough and what we will do about it. To assist us in meeting our intended goals a priority action within the DIAP is to set up a Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Forum, the forum should include independent interested individuals who are able to be able to advise on matters relating to diversity and inclusion. Once set up, the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Forum will be responsible for monitoring, reviewing, and recommending next steps for progress. Until the forum is up and running the Senior Leadership Team and the Internal Governance Group will provide this governance role.

Benchmarking Diversity in our People

We're committed to capturing demographic data to enable the comparison of our People to the UK population, around gender, ethnicity, and disability. There's still some progress to be made to capture demographic data in some areas however as of January 2024 we have the following baseline data.

	DEPRIVATION	GENDER	ETHNICITY	DISABILITY
Estimated UK population	40% IMD 1-4	51% female	15% from a diverse ethnic background	19% disabled / long term condition (LTC)
Lifters - Members 3,611 people	27.3% IMD 1-4	45.5% female	14.6% from a diverse ethnic background 2.8% prefer not to say (1,386 responses from 3,611 people)	2.4% disabled / LTC 2.1% prefer not to say
Lifters – Performance	No current data	52% female*	13% from a diverse ethnic background	7% disabled*
Lifters – Talent Pathway	No current data	No current data	No current data	No current data

Licensed Coaches 428 people	No current data	33.8% female	4.6% from a diverse ethnic background 0.5% prefer not to say	0.5% disabled / LTC 1.4% prefer not to say
Licensed Technical Officials 274 people	No current data	46.7% female	4.7% from a diverse ethnic background 1.4% prefer not to say	0.7% disabled / LTC 2.5% prefer not to say
Board Responses: 4 from 9 people	No current data	25% female	25% from a diverse ethnic background	0%*
Senior Leadership Team 5 people	information yet to be analysed	20% female	0% from a diverse ethnic background	0%*
Employees 18 Responses	No current data	65% female*	11 % from a diverse ethnic background (from RR)	0%*
<p>Based on current business data as of 19/01/2024 Board, Senior Leadership Team, and employees are counted once in the most senior role they hold e.g. the CEO is counted on the Board. * Information taken from the Race Representation Index survey and the responses received. We will continue our data collection efforts as we acknowledge that this is an area that we need to improve so that we can make informed decisions on our diversity and inclusion priorities. We will continue to baseline and cross reference against ONS data.</p>				

Ambition 1: Our People are reflective of UK Society

Objectives:

- 1.1 Embed good diversity and inclusion practices into our recruitment process and policies for board, employees and members so that candidates feel valued and supported throughout the process**
- 1.2 Use data to inform future recruitment processes (board, employees and members) to help attract people from diverse backgrounds**
- 1.3 Showcase our inclusivity principles to attract and recruit an increasingly diverse range of employees and members**

	Actions	Lead	Success measures
Recruitment actions for board, employees and members	1.1 conduct a review and update of our recruitment processes and policies to ensure they are fit for purpose	Lisa Smith – Operations and Governance Manager / Senior Leadership Team	An inclusive, unbiased recruitment process that attracts a diverse set of skills and experience within its workforce
	1.2 from our membership baseline data: focus future membership recruitment campaigns in low socio-economic areas, with a target audience of individuals from an ethnic minority background	Lisa Smith – Operations and Governance Manager / Senior Leadership Team	Increased percentage of people from an ethnic minority background become BWL members. Increased accessibility into weight lifting for those people living within a low socio economic area.
	1.2 use findings from past employee recruitment campaigns and findings from Sporting Equals to inform next steps for future (employee/board) recruitment campaigns to ensure we have a representative diverse workforce.	Lisa Smith – Operations and Governance Manager / Senior Leadership Team	An inclusive workforce with a diverse set of skills and experience.
	1.2 once the report is received use the findings from Sporting Equals report to inform where we need to target out future membership recruitment campaigns to ensure we have a representative diverse membership.	Lisa Smith – Operations and Governance Manager / Senior Leadership	A diverse membership base that is representative of UK Society.

	1.1 write all job specifications to ensure each role will attract the most diverse range of applicants.	CEO / SLT / Marketing and comms department	Prospective candidates can see that we are committed to inclusivity from their first interactions.
Data - employee and member	1.2 carry out employee and membership diversity and inclusion survey on an annual basis to continue understanding the make up of our people.	Lisa Smith – Operations and Governance Manager / SLT	Focused recruitment, retention and/or succession initiatives to enable a diverse set of skills and experience within our workforce and membership base.
	1.2 continue monitoring of data provided from employee and membership surveys to ensure our priorities are aligned to where the gaps in representation are		
Leadership and Governance	1.3 board and senior leadership team to promote and maintain a positive and engaging culture by participating in safeguarding training, promoting positive EDI messages through various channels (for example newsletters), using the CEO updates and actively being involved in EDI decision making.	Senior Leadership Team / BWL Board	Diversity and inclusion conversations to be present in all governance processes.
	1.3 Governance of EDI to be a standing item on Board & SLT meeting agendas.		
Stakeholder Engagement	1.3 Have an EDI focus in member and non-member newsletters. To showcase the work and projects we are doing to encourage and support inclusivity and diversity.		Shows stakeholders that we are serious about representing and promoting our people and embracing our diversity.
	1.3 adhere to our inclusive media requirement, so members and general public can see our proactive approach to inclusion and diversity.	CEO / SLT / Media and Marketing	

Ambition 2: Our organisation is an inclusive and trusted environment for all our people to work within

Objectives:

2.1 Diversity and inclusive principles are embedded in the organisation's way of working

2.2 BWL employees and members feel valued and empowered and supported

	Actions	Lead	Success Measures
Internal Stakeholder engagement	2.1 Use existing weekly staff engagement meetings to hear from staff and feedback progress on development and actions against DIAP Plan	CEO / COO / Lisa Smith – Operations and Governance Manager	Diversity and inclusive principles are part of our way of working. Meeting agenda includes EDI
	2.2 Use staff Away Days to engage and collaborate with employees on the progress against the DIAP	CEO / COO / Lisa Smith – Operations and Governance Manager	Employee feedback used in the progression against the DIAP helping employees feel empowered and supported
Training	2.2 Develop and deliver a Coaching Conference specifically designed to support our licensed coaches.	Hugh Gilmore	Our coaches feel valued, empowered, and supported by our organisation.
	2.1 Implement Safeguarding training for all licensed coaches and embed as a mandatory element of obtaining a BWL coaches' licence.	Sue Ward – Safeguarding Officer / SLT	Our coaches have access to Safeguarding training that includes diversity and inclusion awareness and supports their continuous development.
	Include EDI Awareness training for all staff, coaches and volunteers		EDI Awareness Training Attendance sheet
Leadership and Governance	2.1 Implement Safeguarding & EDI training for all board members.	Sue Ward – Safeguarding Officer / SLT	Showcases a commitment to diversity and inclusion and promotes the

			commitment to safeguarding from our leaders
	2.1 Set up a diversity and inclusion working group responsible for the monitoring and reviewing the DIAP - priority Agree terms of reference for the group	Lisa Smith – Operations and Governance Manager	A fit for purpose active Inclusion and Diversity Group.
	2.1 Complete a review and update of all organisational policies focussing on diversity, inclusion and equality aspects	Lisa Smith – Operations and Governance Manager	To ensure that diversity, inclusion, and equality principles are embedded throughout organisational policies
Data – employee and members	2.1 Implement an Annual Employee survey with questions included that gather employees' thoughts and feelings about working at BWL and how inclusive it is.	CEO / SLT / Internal Governance group / Lisa Smith – Operations and Governance Manager	Increase in positive response from employees in relation to the way in which we consider and promote inclusion and diversity.
	2.2 When available use findings from employee survey to understand how staff are feeling in relation to inclusion and align future actions as required.		Increase in positive response from employees in relation to feeling valued at work (currently at 22% from 2023)

Ambition 3: To promote weightlifting as a vehicle for social cohesion, bringing communities together

Objectives:

3.1 To focus community engagement and awareness activities in the key priority areas as agreed by the BWL Board

Key priority areas/target audience for engagement activity

3.2 Developing and promoting of initiatives aimed at raising awareness and supporting those with Mental Health

3.3 Supporting and developing initiatives to celebrate Pride month annually and reflect on the issues that affect the LGBTQ+ community, along with looking at what can be done moving forwards.

3.4 Supporting and developing initiatives to celebrate and support those from an ethnic minority background

3.5 Increase support to and participation of Masters Lifters, concentrating on the Female demographic

3.6 Support and develop initiatives aimed at enabling participation of individuals from Deprived communities (postcode areas defined by Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD))

	Actions	Lead	Success Measures
Representation	3.1 Conduct a project mapping exercise across all departments to identify where the gaps are against our priority areas.	Lisa Smith - Operations and Governance Manager	Actions aligned to fill the gaps.
	3.6 Raise the bar – Youth Talent. Initiatives are free for participants and delivery within deprived areas is encouraged	Chris Murray Performance – weight lifting	Young individuals (via inclusion academies) from the age of 12-17 provided the access to weight lifting. Participants understand the benefits of weight lifting for physical and mental health wellbeing.
	3.6 Raise the Bar – Extended Projects. Initiatives are free for participants and delivery within deprived areas is encouraged	Chris Murray – Performance weight lifting	Young individuals engaged, and provided with an extended block of free training and access into weight lifting as a competitive sport to those living in areas of deprivation.

	3.3 & 3.4 Implement a legacy programme post the Commonwealth Games focussed on tackling inequalities	Hannah Bussey – Sports Development Manager	Campaigns inspire more diverse audience to take part in weight lifting, para powerlifting and strength related activities
	4.8 Develop a cohesive young person's offer	Hannah Bussey – Sports Development Manager	Expand existing participation pathway to engage with schools, colleges and universities
	3.6 Develop and launch a “one-day competition membership”	Hannah Bussey – Sports Development Manager	Competitions are more accessible to a wider audience, including people from deprived areas
	3.4 Empowering Black Female Champions – Mentorship Programme To provide guidance, resources, lifestyle and career support and mentorship opportunities that foster growth and development. To promote inclusivity and diversity within the weight lifting community.	Marketing and Comms & Education	Young female Black athletes are empowered to reach their full potential in weight lifting.
	3.3 & 3.4 The Brain Hamill Award	Senior Leadership Team	Target audience – young lifters Each calendar year the Weight Lifting Foundation will be awarding the sum of £400 to young people in the under 23 category who they decide have made an outstanding contribution to their club in a way that reflects Brian's ethos. This may be split between a number of young people in any way that they decide.
	3.5 Include and promote 'masters' categories at BWL competitions	Competitions Events Team	Increased participation in weight lifting competitions from masters lifters.
External Stakeholder engagement	3.2 Develop and implement a partnership strategy to widen our reach, voice and influence around strength. Identify and work with relevant community groups or experienced individuals identified from membership base to inform stakeholders of our commitment to	Hannah Bussey – Sports Development Manager	Increased awareness of the benefit of weight lifting for physical and mental health well-being

	<p>EDI and gather their input to inform our next steps to progress.</p>		
	<p>3.1 Develop and deliver focussed comms campaigns, using various communication channels including newsletters and social media resources, that target the audiences from the key areas to communicate our EDI commitment and progress.</p>	<p>Marketing and Communications</p>	<p>International Women's Day (March 8) Campaign's key message: Highlighting female athletes' achievements and promoting gender equality in weightlifting and para powerlifting. Platform: Instagram, Facebook</p> <p>Mental Health Awareness Week (May) Campaign's key message: Emphasising mental health support within the athletic community and beyond. Platform: Instagram, Facebook, BWL Website</p> <p>Pride Month (June) Campaign's key message: Supporting LGBT+ athletes and promoting a culture of acceptance and equality in sports. Platform: Instagram, Facebook, BWL Website, Spotify, Youtube</p> <p>World Refugee Day (June 20) Campaign's key message: Honouring the courage and determination of those who have been forced to flee their home country. Platform: Instagram, Facebook, BWL Website</p> <p>Black History Month (October) Campaign's key message: Highlighting the achievements of Black athletes and promoting diversity and inclusion in weightlifting and para powerlifting Platform: Instagram, Facebook, BWL Website, Spotify, Youtube</p>

			<p>World Mental Health Day (October 10) Campaign's key message: Supporting mental health awareness among athletes and within the weightlifting community. Platform: Instagram, Facebook, BWL Website</p> <p>Dwarfism Awareness Day (October 25) Campaign's key message: Supporting athletes of short stature and promoting inclusivity and equal opportunities in para powerlifting. Platform: Instagram, Facebook, BWL Website</p> <p>Disability History Month (November-December) Campaign's key message: Promoting accessibility and inclusivity for athletes with disabilities in para powerlifting Platform: Instagram, Facebook, BWL Website</p> <p>International Men's Day (November 19) Campaign's key message: Addressing mental health and promoting positive role models in the male weightlifting and para powerlifting community. Platform: Instagram, Facebook</p> <p>International Day of Persons with Disabilities (December 3) Campaign's key message: Highlighting the contributions and achievements of para-powerlifters Platform: Instagram, Facebook, BWL Website</p>
	3.5 Launch digital tools to support new people learning to strength train /	Education	Target audience – master lifters

	develop products for the end consumer		
	<p>3.1 Funded Coaching Scholarship - British Weight Lifting</p> <p>Applications targeted for coaches who fit into one or more of the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants with a disability • Female applicants • Applicants aged 16-25 • Applicants from ethnically diverse backgrounds • Applicants from disadvantaged areas • Applicants from the LGBTQ+ community • Applicants who are refugees or asylum seekers 	Hannah Bussey – Sports Development Manager	Increase in people from a diverse background becoming qualified, start a club, or progress as coach.
	3.1 Prison Project Working with the Prison College of PE as Learning Development Partner	Ashleigh Smeaton - Education Operations Manager	Increase in people from a diverse background participating and becoming qualified in weight lifting.
Data	3.1 Continue to utilise employee/member feedback from engagement actions to highlight ideas for stakeholder engagement within key priority areas	Lisa Smith – Operations and Governance Manager	Continued development of engagement actions within key priority areas
	3.6 Continue to use feedback from competitions in relation to accessibility of venues and attraction	Lisa Smith – Operations and Governance Manager / Competitions Team	Informed decision making for future competition venues and areas
	3.1 Continuation of data collection to fill knowledge gaps and be able to make informed decisions on our diversity and inclusion priorities	Lisa Smith – Operations and Governance Manager & SLT	Information decision making for diversity and inclusion priorities

Ambition 4: To actively promote inclusion across all areas of the organisation

Objectives:

4.1 BWL DIAP is fully embedded and progress against it is regularly assessed

4.2 BWL employees understand the part they play in promotion of diversity and inclusion across the activities they lead are involved in

4.3 BWL advisory forum works effectively by challenging decision making

	Actions	Lead	Aim
Leadership and Governance	4.1 Conduct a review of the employee handbook for employees and codes of conduct for members to ensure diversity and inclusion are at the heart of each policy	Lisa Smith – Operations and Governance Manager	Employees have the right information and are able to understand how diversity and inclusion is a part of all of the organisation
	4.2 Engage with employees about the development and design of the DIAP		
	4.1 Development of, and agreement by Board of DIAP		
	4.3 Set up a diversity and inclusion working group responsible for the monitoring and reviewing the DIAP - priority	Lisa Smith – Operations and Governance Manager / Senior Leadership Team	A fit for purpose DIAP that is monitored, reviewed and actioned.