

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ACTION PLAN



2024-2025



ABOUT US

England Squash is the national governing body for squash in England. We lead the development and delivery of the sport on both a national and local level.

We strive to help the sport grow and work collaboratively with partners and stakeholders to provide engaging opportunities across the sport; from developing grassroots programmes and resources to producing world-class athletes.

More than 200,000 people in England play squash regularly, at more than 1,500 venues. We help more than 600 affiliated clubs to prosper and create thriving squash communities.





STRATEGY

Our current strategy, Squash in a Changing World has inclusion and diversity at its heart. Our strategic priorities are: to enhance diversity, increase participation and nurture talent.

Squash in a Changing World sets out our vision for squash in England to be a 'thriving, diverse and growing community'.

We will ensure that our sport is reflective of the wider community by providing and promoting new and accessible ways to play that suit different types of players and by working together with people across the game, we will create thriving, diverse and growing squash communities.

BACKGROUND

Squash is a sport that lacks diversity in England and, although this is changing for the better, we know there is still more to do. Squash faces the challenge of declining participation rates, with the most frequent players more likely to be older and male. Younger players and females tend to take part less frequently and, whilst there is greater diversity amongst more casual players, England Squash are currently less connected to them.

Our work to enhance the diversity of the sport has seen us develop programmes such as Squash Girls Can, Mixed Ability Squash and Squash from the Mosque which all take the sport to new audiences. We understand that this isn't a one size fits all approach and that local differences are in place which can require different approaches.

Our recent work in Birmingham has seen us take a new place-based approach to tackle inequalities, working with trusted community partners to engage new people through squash.

We recognise that across our workforce lacks diversity, with fewer females, disabled people, people from ethnically diverse backgrounds and younger people in board, committee and senior leadership positions. We have developed initiatives to enhance the diversity of our coaching workforce through initiatives such as [Squash Girls Can Coach](#) and our [Rally Together](#) campaign - which encourages male allies to support females in the sport to thrive.

We know the importance of diversity of thought and experience, so we have created an Inclusion Advisory Group with expertise and experience in inclusion and diversity to guide our work.



WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Enhancing the diversity across the England Squash team will see us deliver better results and make better business decisions. A diverse board and team will bring a diversity of skills and experiences, different perspectives, and collectively, better problem-solving and more ideas.

Inclusion is one of the solutions to addressing the participation decline in squash. The growth of squash has stagnated and participation is dominated by white males and older players. Younger and more diverse groups are playing squash less regularly or not at all. By opening up the sport to a wider audience, we will show squash as an inclusive and accessible sport with more people seeing it as a sport where they belong. This will help us to address the participation decline and future proof the sport.



CHAIR AND CEO STATEMENT

Enhancing diversity is at the core of the England Squash strategy and this DIAP establishes our commitment to diversity and inclusion across the organisation from our leadership and Governance and our recruitment practices, to the programmes and projects we deliver that engage new audiences. We have a strong track record in delivering programmes to diverse audiences and will build on this momentum to ensure more people and communities feel they belong in squash.

We are proud that we have good gender diversity across the team but we know we lack diversity in other areas. There is more to do to ensure the England Squash team represents diversity in both its skills and experience, and improving this should result in better decision-making and idea generation.

The one-year DIAP aligns with our current strategy to enable us to build the foundations that will inform our future strategy.

Joy Carter, England Squash Chair
Mark Williams, England Squash CEO



CURRENT DIVERSITY DATA

	FEMALE	PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES	ETHNICALLY DIVERSE BACKGROUND	YOUNG PEOPLE (UNDER 34)
Board	36%	0%	18%	0%
England Squash leadership team	25%	25%	0%	0%
Staff	54%	0%	0%	38%
Coaches (Coaches Club members)	21%	2%	7%	32%
England Squash members	15%	2%	8%	38%
English population	51%	20%	18%	37%



PRIORITY AUDIENCES

Our priority audiences are females, disabled people and ethnically diverse communities, as these audiences are underrepresented across the squash community. Alongside this, we have a golden thread of 'young people' that runs through all of our work, in recognition of being a sport with an ageing demographic.

Although we have established priority groups based on demographics, we recognise that these are broad categories and that people belong to more than one group and aren't defined by a single (or any) demographics.

We will look further than protected characteristics alone and will value individual experiences and backgrounds as we seek to ensure representation from people with different backgrounds, experiences and different socio-economic groups.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

Our one-year Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) sets out our objectives for 2024-2025, focusing on priority areas for the organisation and the sport. We have created a one-year DIAP to align with our current strategy, Squash in a Changing World which runs until 2025.

This will enable us to focus on developing our learning and building the foundations on which we can inform future strategy and a longer term DIAP that is central to our future strategic direction.

By the end of this DIAP period we will:



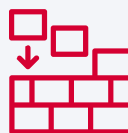
Have a clear understanding of the culture within the sport by listening to people's experiences of equality, diversity and inclusion.



Have a clear understanding of the perceptions of the sport from our target audiences who are not currently playing.



Have an established method for and approach to collecting and reporting on diversity data, providing a baseline on which future targets can be built.



Have laid the foundations on which to build our work on inclusion and diversity into our strategy beyond 2025.



Have an increasingly diverse workforce with a greater awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion.



OUR FOCUS AREAS

We have identified four focus areas in the Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan:

DATA & INSIGHT

We will improve the quality of data that we collect, and gather insight to enable us to monitor progress, track trends and make informed decisions. This includes collecting data around recruitment to better understand diversity amongst job applicants and provide the insight on which to improve our recruitment processes. Data and insight is our initial focus, which will allow us to clearly understand our current position.

LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

We will embed inclusion and diversity in strategic leadership, ensuring accountability from board and senior leadership, and assess our policies and procedures to ensure that we have the appropriate governance in place.

Our goal is to establish a clear understanding of what inclusion means to England Squash and demonstrate our commitment to driving enhanced diversity across the sport. We will further develop our approach to recruitment, and recognise there is under-representation across the organisation. Our goal over the next 12 months is to set the foundations on which we can develop better recruitment practices.



OUR FOCUS AREAS (CONTINUED)

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

We recognise that we don't have expertise in every area of this work, and that we lack representation in some areas, so working with partners and stakeholders to achieve our ambitions will be important. Using the data and insight we gather, we will identify partners and stakeholders to collaborate with and who share and support our goals. We will seek partners across a range of areas from inclusive recruitment experts and delivery partners to training specialists.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The data and insight we gather will inform the training needs of the England Squash team and the wider squash community. Initially, we will focus on inclusive recruitment training for hiring managers and line managers, and in the second half of the one-year plan, we will start to develop training for the squash community.



DATA AND INSIGHT



DIAP Report

DATA AND INSIGHT

We will improve the quality of data and insight that we collect to enable us to understand where we are now, monitor progress, track trends and make informed decisions to demonstrate that rationale.

Task	Action	Completion date	Lead	Measures of success	Actual performance / progress
Improve our understanding of the current level of diversity within the organisation and the sport	Collect and report on demographic diversity data from across the squash community including England Squash employees and consultants, board and council members, committee members, consultancy groups and talent pathway coaches.	Mar 2024	Exec	100% of people in identified roles providing diversity data.	Data provided for all employees and board members.
	Devise a campaign to collect demographic data from the squash community	Apr 25	Exec	100% of new accounts providing diversity data	Complete- all direct members asked to provide diversity data
	Report into the Sporting Equals Race Representation Index annually	As requested	Exec	Progress reported into the Race Representation Index	Overall rating E for 2023
Develop an understanding of the perspectives of the squash community on the culture of squash and their experience of inclusion	Inclusion and diversity survey to England Squash members and players with representation from target audiences that reflect national averages	Feb 2025	Head of Partnerships & Communities	A baseline understanding of the culture within the sport. Responses meet national demographics percentages	
	Conduct a listening exercise to develop our understanding of the culture of squash and experiences from within the sport at all levels	Feb 2025	Head of Partnerships & Communities	A baseline understanding of the culture within the sport.	
	Introduce a process where people can leave feedback (of any kind) around inclusion and diversity.	Mar 2025	Exec	40 responses received from across the squash community	

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE



LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

We will embed inclusion and diversity across the leadership of our organisation, ensuring accountability from board and senior leadership.

Task	Action	Date	Lead	Measures of success	Actual performance /progress
Board and senior leadership are accountable and review progress on a regular basis	DIAP progress will be reviewed on a quarterly basis and inclusion and diversity will be a standing item on board and council meeting agendas.	Mar 2024	Chair / CEO	An inclusion and diversity paper is presented at every board and council meeting	Update provided for review at quarterly board meetings
	There will be nominated board member responsible for inclusion and diversity which will be well communicated internally and externally	Mar 2024	Chair / CEO	A nominated board member in place and identified on website	Board member in place.
	Define the role of the Inclusion Advisory Group, agree process and criteria for Inclusion Advisory Group members Agree terms of reference	Sept 2024	Head of Partnerships & Communities	Inclusion Advisory Group report into board via nominated board member for inclusion	Terms of reference drafted to be approved at next meeting
	Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan shared internally with employees taking accountability within their work during team meetings, and employee Teams channels	Sept 2024	Head of Partnerships & Communities	DIAP targets achieved across the organisation	
Ensure relevant policies and procedures are in place and fit for purpose	Review and where necessary update all polices. Determine the frequency of review for each policy.	Dec 2024	Exec	Policy reviewed at appropriate frequency and inline with EDI best practice	
	Communicate policies and procedures with internal and	Dec 2024	Exec	Policies and procedures available online and	

	external stakeholders			communicated to stakeholders	
Have clear ways for people to report discriminatory behaviours and	Implement and promote a zero-tolerance approach to discriminatory behavior with clear processes for reporting, sanctioning and education.	Apr 2025	Exec	Tracking the number of complaints received from a baseline of 0	
Review recruitment processes to understand how we can better attract candidates from more diverse backgrounds across board, senior leaders and employees	<p>Review diversity data on applications for advertised roles (including staff, board, talent pathway coaches)</p> <p>Develop an understanding of how and where to advertise roles to attract applicants from a range of backgrounds working with partners with expertise in this area.</p> <p>Reduce the opportunity for bias within recruitment process for all roles.</p> <p>All applications are anonymized reducing unconscious bias in selection.</p> <p>Ensure diverse interview panels with a minimum 30% female</p>	<p>Apr 2024</p> <p>Jun 2024</p> <p>Jun 2024</p>	<p>Office / operations Manager</p> <p>Office / operations manager</p> <p>Exec</p>	<p>Data collected and reviewed every 6 months for internal roles</p> <p>Roles advertised in relevant places</p> <p>Increase in the diversity of applicants from the baseline.</p> <p>Increase in diversity for applicants selected to interview and appointed from the baseline.</p>	<p>Data collected and reviewed</p> <p>In progress</p>
Develop a clear vision for what a radical advance in diversity means in squash	Refine our definition of inclusion and what an inclusive squash environment looks like.	Feb 2025	Exec and board	<p>A published definition of what inclusion looks like for England Squash.</p> <p>Employees and board members feel they can clearly describe our ambitions around inclusion and diversity.</p>	

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

We will identify and work with partners and stakeholders to enhance the diversity of the sport and tackle inequalities. We will embed more opportunity to seek the views and experience of our members and players.

Task	Action	Date	Lead	Measures of success	Actual performance /progress
Develop partnerships with stakeholders that shape our work and expand our knowledge on inclusion and diversity	Conduct a mapping exercise to identify where partners can support ambitions. Work with relevant partners and stakeholders to achieve our ambitions within the DIAP	Sept 2024	All Managers	Clarity over the role and type of partner support required. New and relevant partnerships in place.	
	Work with partners to support squash clubs and venues to implement initiatives to improve diversity within their setting such as Squash from the Mosque and Mixed Ability Squash	Jul 2024	Head of Partnerships & Communities	100 new clubs and venues delivering participation programmes or involved in initiatives.	In progress
Regular communication with stakeholders to share progress and influence the wider squash community	Share the DIAP and publish a report annually on the England Squash website, via newsletters and emails and during meetings.	May 2024	Marketing Manager	DIAP and annual reports available via website and circulated with key stakeholders.	In progress
	Include equality, diversity and inclusion messaging in regular communications on social media, via newsletters and emails and on website	May 2024	Marketing Manager	Inclusion and diversity topics feature in newsletters, social media and via website.	In progress
	Identify and provide support and guidance to stakeholders to cascade good practice through county associations and clubs via the club toolkit	Dec 2024	Head of Partnerships & Communities	Templates and resources provided	

Embed an approach for consultation with stakeholders that reflects the views of diverse audiences	Ensure diversity amongst consultation groups, surveys, focus groups and other forms of feedback	Jul 2024	All managers	Diversity within consultation groups is measured and reported on.	In progress
	Conduct a biennial inclusion and diversity survey of members and the wider community to ensure personal experience is represented	Mar 2025	Exec	Range of voices heard and report provided with actions.	
	Review the make-up of working groups to ensure diversity of experience and background is captured	Mar 2025	Exec	Areas where diversity is lacking identified with action taken to improve representation.	

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT



TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Develop training and guidance for England Squash employees and the squash community to improve awareness and deepen understanding of inclusion and diversity and develop new training opportunities that are accessible to more people.					
Task	Action	Date	Lead	Measures of success	Actual performance/progress
Develop the knowledge, understanding and capabilities of people who deliver squash around inclusion and diversity	Embed equality, diversity and inclusion training throughout coach education as a core module	Sept 2024	People and Education Manager	Equality, diversity and inclusion content in coach education courses	In progress
	Share and promote guidance and resources for the squash community on best practice in equality, diversity and inclusion	Dec 2024	People and Education Manager / Partnerships and Communities Manager	A hub of equality, diversity and inclusion resources provided for coaches, venues and players	In progress
	Inclusion and diversity training is mandatory for board members and employees	Dec 2024	Office/ operations manager	All current employees and board to undertake inclusion and diversity training including as part of the induction process for new employees and board members Mandatory inclusion and diversity training and learning opportunities available for employees and board twice a year	

	Source training for line managers in inclusive recruitment practices	Jun 2024	People and Education Manager	All line managers trained in inclusion and diversity	
	Provide a programme of training and guidance to the squash community on equality, diversity and inclusion	Dec 2024	People and Education Manager	A programme of inclusion and diversity training available for the squash community from equality, diversity and inclusion focused training to programme specific training	
	Create internal opportunities to celebrate and learn by sharing the stories of individuals or communities	Mar 2024	All Managers	4 per year employee sessions focused on inclusion and diversity stories and perspectives	In progress
Develop an education programme that is appealing and	Develop educational content that is available in accessible formats	Mar 2025	People and Education Manager	Digital platform that meets accessibility requirements. Content meets accessibility requirements	In progress

accessible to more people from diverse backgrounds	New and relevant training courses available to upskill more people to deliver squash in a variety of settings	Mar 2025	People and Education Manager	New courses such as Community Activator training	In progress
--	---	----------	------------------------------	--	-------------