



EDI Annual Report 2024/25

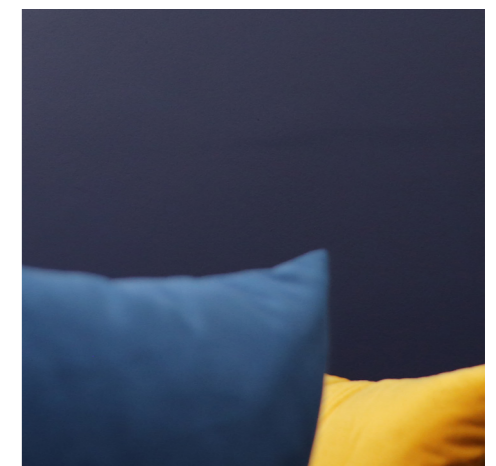
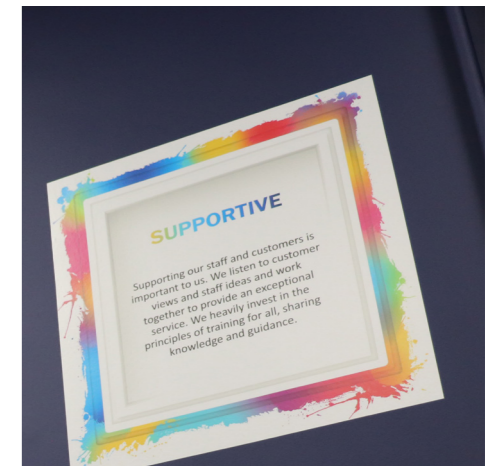


Everyone is welcome!



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A message from Darren Lowe, Managing Director

I am thrilled to share with you Crescent Purchasing Consortium's (referred to as 'CPC', 'the company' or 'the Charity') second Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) report. This report reflects on our achievements throughout 2024/2025, highlights the progress we've made against our objectives and strategy, and outlines how we plan to continue moving forward.

At CPC, we want everyone to thrive. We know that a diverse and inclusive company empowers teams to perform better. Our diversity of backgrounds, experiences, perspectives and ideas provides a great platform for us to do things differently and we're working to make CPC a place where everyone can find the opportunity to succeed. We want to create a culture of acceptance, inclusion and belonging where our differences and similarities are celebrated. Going forward into 2025/26, our EDI strategy and objectives remain resolute, continuing to build a great place to work.

This year, we have designed and implemented a 12-month engagement plan with the goal of ensuring everyone feels engaged and show a consistent presence to colleagues. In this report, we will be sharing equality monitoring data to increase knowledge and awareness because we need to fully understand the diverse needs of our workforce to make more informed decisions.

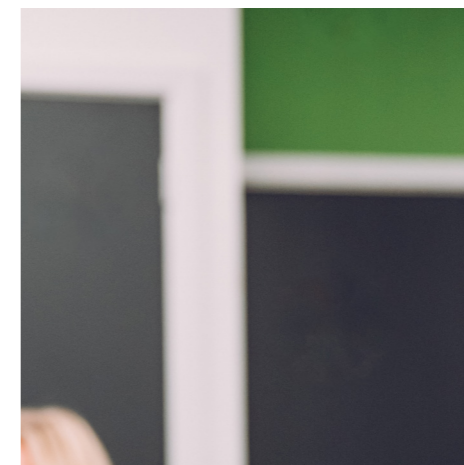
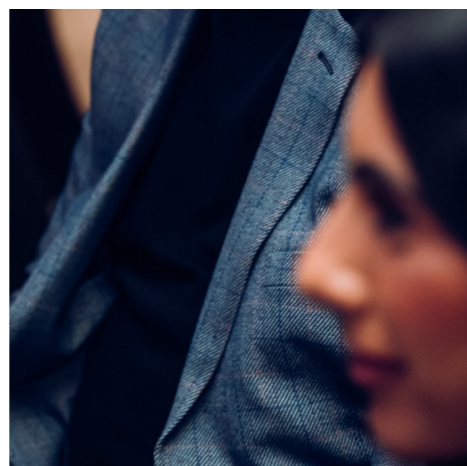
We recognise that fostering a supportive and inclusive culture is central to our EDI efforts. That's why, following the success of both the Men's and Women's Support Networks, we introduced a Carers Support Network. This dedicated network is run by one of our own dedicated colleagues and offers a space for carers to share experiences, access resources and feel less isolated.

Our recent 2025 employee survey results indicate that CPC is continuing to foster an inclusive workplace culture. However, there is always opportunities for learning and growing and we recognise that progress can still be made in achieving the goals outlined in our 5-year EDI strategy. Our long-term goals are to improve equality, diversity and inclusion both internally and externally in the way we create opportunities and work with suppliers, members and clients.

That said, this year has marked a period of continued progress. We've taken steps to move beyond compliance and have identified key focus areas that will drive our EDI agenda forward. I am pleased to present this report, which outlines the EDI activities undertaken over the past 12 months, and I look forward to building on this momentum as we continue to implement our new strategy in the years ahead.

Darren Lowe

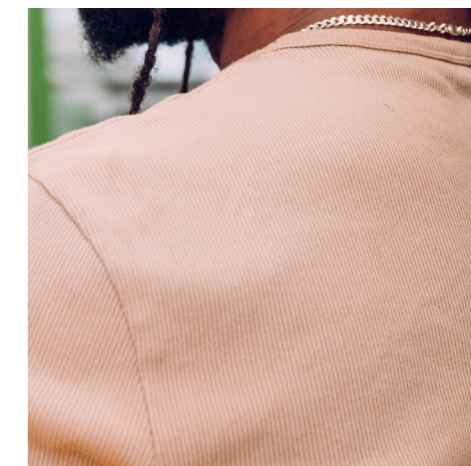
MANAGING DIRECTOR



CPC has specific legal responsibilities we are required to meet to ensure compliance. The Equality Act 2010 tackles discrimination and inequality based on the nine protected characteristics.

These are:

- Race
- Religion and Belief
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Sex
- Age
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Reassignment
- Disability
- Marriage and Civil Partnership



We also have a requirement to have due regard for eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation. Ensuring we advance equality of opportunity and good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who don't.

There is a further responsibility from CPC as a charity, to commit to EDI. EDI is embedded in the Charity Governance Code. The Board have a duty to drive EDI initiatives and to support our commitment to fostering a values-based culture focused on diversity, inclusivity, wellbeing and positive engagement.

To help track our progress and hold ourselves accountable, CPC will continue to provide an annual Equality Diversity and Inclusion Report. Therefore, while we refer to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010, the actions set out here are intended to positively impact groups and individuals beyond these terms and definitions.

At CPC, our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion goes beyond obligation - it's rooted in our belief that it's simply the right thing to do. By embedding EDI into everything we do, we aim to support all our employees and stakeholders, ensuring that our work reflects the diverse experiences and challenges of the people we serve. This approach helps us identify and remove barriers, creating a more inclusive environment for everyone. We remain committed to listening to our colleagues, valuing their feedback, and learning from their experiences - and we're ready to keep moving forward.

Our priorities

One of the main things that the EDI Working Group wanted to achieve was launching a 5-year EDI strategy plan. An effective EDI strategy fosters innovation by bringing together diverse perspectives and ideas. Within the strategy, we wanted to develop clear priorities that align with CPC's values and long-term goals with initiatives and activities to be delivered yearly.

Leadership

We aim to be led by a diverse and inclusive Board, Leadership and Management Team. They will lead by example in creating a sense of belonging for employees, so they are empowered to do their best.

Our aspirations

- Have at least 45% of women representation across management.
- Have at least 25% of diversity representation across management.
- Have at least 45% of women within the Board of Trustees.
- Have at least 25% of diversity within the Board of Trustees.



Awareness

A commitment from the Group to provide training to all employees to develop their knowledge and awareness in all areas of EDI. Encouraging employees to take ownership of their role in equality, diversity and inclusion.

Our aspirations

- Score 95% in our justice and awareness section on our annual employee survey.
- Mandatory annual EDI training for all employees.



Representation

We will ensure we are attracting talent from diverse backgrounds and constantly review our recruitment practices to ensure they are inclusive and accessible to all. Thus, creating a diverse and inclusive workforce where there is a fair and equal representation across all employees.

Our aspirations

- Have a representation of at least 45% women of our workforce.
- Have a representation of 25% of a diverse workforce.



Our roles in delivering the strategy



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Through governance, reporting and accountability.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Strategic leadership and creating supportive culture.

MANAGEMENT TEAM

Assist in delivering the strategy and encouragement and accountability for their teams.

EDI ADVOCATES

Create and take the lead on initiatives within the strategy.

ALL EMPLOYEES

Embrace and embed EDI across CPC.



Accreditations



CPC is proud to hold multiple accreditations which reinforce our commitment to EDI.

We are a Level 1 Disability Confident Employer and as a part of this accreditation, we have committed to ensuring our recruitment process is inclusive and accessible, and that we communicate and promote vacancies by advertising through a range of channels. To ensure we comply with this, we have a detailed recruitment policy that is followed by everyone involved in the recruitment process.

We anticipate and provide reasonable adjustments as required and support any existing employees who are living with a disability or long-term health condition, enabling them to stay in work. In addition, we've recently introduced occupational health assessments for all neurodivergent employees. This initiative is designed to ensure that every individual receives the support they need to thrive in their role, while also equipping managers with the knowledge and tools to provide effective, inclusive support.



CPC have also signed the menopause pledge for a second year in a row and by signing this pledge we have committed to:

- Recognising that the menopause can be an issue in the workplace and women need support.
- Talking openly, positively and respectfully about the menopause.
- Actively supporting and informing employees affected by the menopause.

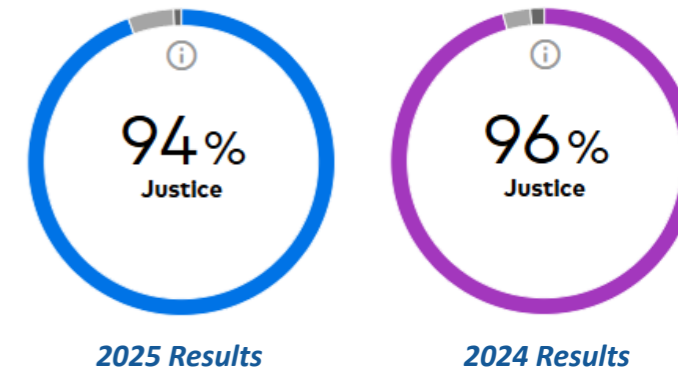
We uphold this commitment by having a written policy that sets out the rights of employees experiencing menopause and explains the support available to them. The purpose of this is to create an open and supportive menopause friendly culture, whereby employees feel comfortable speaking about how this may be affecting their work and how we can support them. This is also supported by a guide for line managers on how they can create a work environment that is supportive for their employees.

We have also won Best Workplaces for Women for a third year and in doing so have shown we are strategically committed to promoting women into leadership positions, setting representation goals and tackling discrimination.

Annual Employee Survey

Every year our employees complete an annual employee survey through Great Place to Work (GPTW).

Within this survey, we ask our employees to answer EDI related questions and use this to highlight the collective voice of CPC's employees. This feedback is also instrumental in shaping the Working Group's action plans, revealing key areas for improvement, and strengthening our inclusive culture. Below are the results from 2025's employee survey compared to our 2024 employee survey results:



As shown, CPC have scored well in all these sections, which is a great reflection on the initiatives and EDI focused actions that have occurred this year. While we've made encouraging progress, there is always room for improvement. This year's survey results show a slight decline in some areas compared to last year. It's reassuring to see that nearly all CPC employees feel they would be treated fairly regardless of gender or sexual orientation. However, the EDI Working Group will be reviewing the areas where scores have dipped to better understand and address the underlying issues.

It's vital that we continue to take meaningful action - challenging discrimination, modelling inclusive behaviours, and creating a workplace where everyone feels safe, respected, and empowered. To achieve this, it requires a collective effort. If we all play our part in promoting inclusion, we move closer to our goal of reaching 100% in the 'justice' section of our annual survey.



Monitoring and reporting our EDI data informs our people-led approach to equality and inclusion. We strive to ensure our Board, management and employee populations reflect and are representative of society as a whole.

These reporting categories introduced in 2024 are the baseline for future monitoring. The below statistics are as of 31st July 2025.

EMPLOYEE STATISTICS

Number of employees by gender

Total	Women	Men	Other
87	52.9%	47.1%	0%

Number of employees by ethnicity

Total	White British	Minorities	Not Specified
87	73.6%	24.1%	1.3%

Number of employees by age

Total	25 or younger	26 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55+
87	2.4%	28.7%	26.4%	16.1%	26.4%

Number of employees by disability

Total	Disability	No Disability	Unknown
87	9.2%	82.8%	8%

Number of employees by religion

Total	Christian	Hindu	Muslim	Other	No religion	Not specified
87	35.6%	2.3%	6.9%	2.3%	48.3%	4.6%

REPRESENTATION STATISTICS

Board of Trustees Representation

Total	Women	Minorities	Disability	LGBTQ+
10	50%	30%	10%	0%

Management Representation

Total	Women	Minorities	Disability	LGBTQ+
22	50%	9.1%	0%	4.6%

Employees Representation

Total	Women	Minorities	Disability	LGBTQ+
65	53.9%	16.9%	7.7%	3.1%

Gender Pay Gap Reporting

Although not a legal requirement, CPC is committed to reporting on our gender pay gap, which is calculated by comparing the average pay of men and women, regardless of the roles they do.

- Figures will show either a positive or negative percentage.
- A positive percentage shows that women have lower pay on average than men.
- A negative percentage shows that men have lower pay than women.
- A zero percentage shows that there is equal pay between men and women.

As at the end of July 2025, there is a -0.23% gender pay gap between male and female employees, in favour of women (excluding the Managing Director). This is a great representation of equality within CPC as our small gap remains much lower than the current UK pay gap of 13.1% in favour of men. It is also an improvement on our 2024 gender pay gap of 1.2% in favour of men as discussed in the 2023/24 EDI Annual Report.

The current UK pay gap data is taken from the ONS Gender Pay Gap in the UK released October 2024.

There is currently an 8.17% gender pay gap in CPC's management roles (excluding the Managing Director), with men earning more on average than women. This marks an increase from the previous year, when the gap was 1.2% in favour of men. One contributing factor to this rise is that, while women still make up 50% of management, there are now fewer women in senior-level management positions compared to 2024, which has impacted the overall pay gap.

As a Charity, we are committed to promoting equality and inclusion, and have implemented a range of initiatives and policies aimed at reducing the gender pay gap. These efforts include:

- Including salary details in all job descriptions and advertisements to enhance transparency.
- Avoiding questions about salary history during recruitment, helping to ensure fair pay for all candidates regardless of background or previous earnings.
- Providing interview training for all hiring managers to ensure a fair, consistent, and unbiased recruitment process.
- Introducing supportive policies such as carers leave, flexible, hybrid, and agile working arrangements, enabling employees to better balance work and caregiving responsibilities without compromising career progression.
- Launching a remuneration policy to bring greater fairness and transparency to how pay reviews are determined.
- Implementing formal ILM management training to all managers to help boost their development and progress.

Reviewing our gender pay gap means we can examine the structural or cultural barriers within CPC that may be contributing to the pay gap and, ideally, tackle them. In other words, addressing the factors that are creating a 'glass ceiling', preventing employees from progressing to the most senior roles or being paid comparatively.

While our current data does not indicate any significant concerns, it remains essential that we stay proactive in creating a fair and inclusive workplace. We are committed to regularly reviewing our policies and procedures to ensure they support equality and inclusion across all areas. As our charity continues to grow, we aim to expand our reporting to include potential pay gaps across all protected characteristics, reinforcing our dedication to transparency and inclusivity.

Employee support networks

Whilst the EDI Working Group was set up to achieve actions and work towards a strategy, our employee support networks provide supportive forums and safe spaces for colleagues to share their experiences.

Run by our employees in their own time, they work together to help one another by providing support and guidance, whenever they can.

The Women's Support Network

The Women's Support Network was set up to connect women from all different teams within CPC, to share experiences and increase connections. This has been a great way to empower the female employees across CPC and build up stronger peer to peer support and confidence amongst employees. As well as being a safe place for women to talk about the issues that mean most to them at work such as how to navigate work-life balance, flexible working and women's health.



The Men's Support Network

The Men's Support Network was set up with similar intentions as the Women's, with the view for the male employees to support one another. Blogs are posted each week providing a light-hearted look at all things related to men's health and wellbeing. During International Men's Health Week in June daily blogs were posted based on the theme of Shoulder to Shoulder: Connecting for Health.



The Carer's Support Network

The Carer's Support Network was recently set up as a hub for sharing practical advice, signposting to external support services, and raising awareness of carers' rights and entitlements. This support network allows employees to discuss their experiences and provides a space where they feel seen and supported. The network encourages open conversations about balancing responsibilities without fear of stigma or disadvantage.



The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Working Group was established in 2023 with the aim of reviewing CPC's existing practices and developing a 12-month engagement plan focused on agreed actions and improvements.

The group is comprised of EDI advocates who are deeply committed to the values of equality, diversity, and inclusion, and who share a vision of driving meaningful cultural change within CPC. Their goal is to take a collaborative approach to creating awareness that benefits everyone across the organisation.

A key priority for the Charity is to ensure that all voices are heard and represented. We are dedicated to fostering an inclusive environment where diverse perspectives are actively considered in decision-making processes.



Progress over the past year

Over the past year, the EDI Working Group has worked together to deliver a meaningful and engaging calendar of activities.

In addition to these, a number of initiatives and processes were introduced to enhance equality and inclusion across CPC. These efforts were supported by colleagues and the Group Leadership Team from across the charity. Below is a summary of some of the awareness and engagement days we have celebrated over the year:

- During International **Allyship Day**, the EDI Advocates posted what it means to be an ally and promoted an article hosting a webinar on Allyship in Action: Creating Inclusive Workspaces.
- We promoted a webinar that explores strategies around navigating dementia and memory loss to enhance support in the workplace for colleagues.
- Through our **EDI training platform, ENEI**, we publicised a webinar on fertility, the webinar discussed balancing health and wellbeing in the workplace and learning strategies to balance health and fertility in the workplace.
- In October, we marked **Black History Month** by sharing a range of resources through the intranet. These included a thought-provoking webinar on the importance of empowering Black voices and an insightful event hosted by Pro-Manchester, which explored how British history is taught and its influence on modern-day racism. Additionally, one of our EDI Advocates contributed a personal article reflecting on what Black History Month means to them and highlighting the significance of celebrating it.
- The theme for **Menopause Awareness Day** focused on Menopause Hormone Therapy, commonly known in the UK as Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) and to support this, a colleague shared an article reflecting on a recent training webinar they attended, offering insights from their experience and providing valuable resources for further learning.
- To recognise and celebrate **World Blindness Awareness Month**, our Technical Lead wrote an article highlighting the key accessibility features built into CPC's website. In addition, we shared a powerful webinar on 'Breaking Barriers: A Deafblind Perspective on Workplace Inclusion' which explored the challenges faced by individuals with deaf blindness, the unique perspective they bring to the workplace and the practical steps we can take to become more inclusive.



- To mark the **International Day of Persons with Disabilities**, one of our EDI Advocates shared a heartfelt article about their experience raising children with autism and the support available to families. We also highlighted the vital role of our Giving Back Group and the meaningful contributions it has made, including donations to support SEND initiatives across schools.

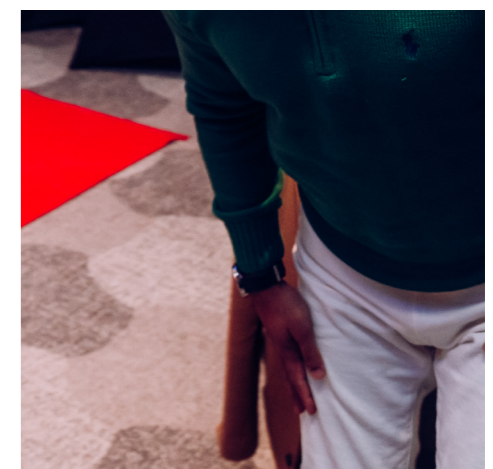
Progress over the past year

- To celebrate **Ramadan**, we shared information with colleagues about the history and significance of the holiday, along with guidance on how to be supportive allies during this important time. As part of our commitment to inclusivity, we've made all meeting rooms at Head Office available for use as prayer spaces and provided two prayer mats for convenience. Additionally, jugs have been placed in the toilet facilities to support ritual washing practices.
- During **Autism Awareness Week**, one of our EDI Advocates shared a personal article celebrating autism and reflecting on what it means to them. Their story aimed to promote understanding and challenge the stigma often associated with the condition.
- As part of **Diabetes Awareness Week**, one of our colleagues generously shared their personal experience of living with diabetes. Their story helped raise awareness, and foster understanding from colleagues and managers.
- For **Learning at Work Week**, we shared various Beginner Sign Language videos to help raise deaf awareness and so colleagues can learn a new skill.
- In June, we celebrated **Pride** and wanted to show our support by donating to a charity that makes a real difference. This year, the EDI Working Group is proud to support the charity 'Just Like Us', which empowers LGBTQ+ young people through education and ensuring that schools have access to LGBTQ+ educational resources. They run school talks, a student-led Pride group programme and Ambassador Programmes. CPC provided funding of £1,000 to support a charity of our choice and we believe that by donating to '[Just Like Us](#)', we are helping to create a world where every young person can thrive and be proud of who they are.



Below are some of the initiatives and processes that have been implemented over the past year:

- Following the recent Supreme Court ruling regarding the legal definition of a woman, the EDI Working Group on behalf of CPC wanted to reaffirm our commitment to **inclusivity** and support for everyone within our Charity. We wanted to remind everyone that the Head Office in Salford have facilities available for everyone and if any of our colleagues ever feel uncomfortable or that they do not have a choice of facilities or services when they are visiting clients or members they should reach out to an EDI Advocate. This was shared internally with colleagues and externally with our members and clients.
- All hiring managers attended in depth **interview training** to ensure all candidates are assessed using the same criteria and an unbiased process. It also ensures all hiring managers understand and comply with employment laws and equality legislation, and promotes diversity by ensuring all candidates have an equal opportunity to succeed.



Progress over the past year

- CPC introduced **occupational health assessments for all neurodivergent employees** to better understand their individual needs. Following the assessment, appropriate reasonable adjustments are implemented and managers receive guidance and development to ensure they can provide the right support to their team members.
- All managers were given the opportunity to enrol in the **ILM Level 3 or 5 course** as part of our ongoing commitment to leadership development and continuous learning. By investing in this training, we aim to equip our managers with the tools and knowledge needed to support their teams, drive performance and contribute to a positive and inclusive workplace culture.
- The Learning and Development Lead introduced a **skills matrix** tailored specifically for all the procurement professionals across CPC. This tool is designed to help employees gain a clearer understanding of their current capabilities by identifying both their strengths and areas for development. The matrix serves as a valuable resource for personal and professional growth, enabling individuals to take ownership of their development. It outlines the key skills and competencies needed for progression into procurement management roles and by providing this level of transparency, it allows for equality of opportunity and empowers colleagues to prepare for future opportunities within the company.
- An **Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)** was developed and implemented to ensure that all CPC-hosted events and activities are inclusive and accessible. This assessment is now a standard part of the planning process and is used proactively to identify and address any potential barriers on individuals with protected characteristics. By embedding the EIA into our event planning, we aim to promote fairness, anticipate diverse needs, and create welcoming experiences for all colleagues.



Looking to the next year

While this report celebrates the significant progress made, there remains continued work ahead to fully integrate and advance Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion across CPC.

The world of EDI is constantly evolving, and it is essential that we, as a company, remain committed to continuous learning and growth. To strengthen the impact of our efforts, our focus over the coming year will be on continuing to deliver our 12-month engagement calendar and EDI strategy, and progressing the key priorities identified. To support this, we have planned the following actions:

Leadership

- A dedicated management page will be launched on the intranet. This will serve as a tool for all training resources and guidance to help managers cultivate inclusivity, and be able to effectively support every member of their team.
- The ILM Level 3 and 5 qualification will be offered to all current managers, with plans to offer to employees aspiring to move into management roles. This initiative aims to create equal opportunities and actively encourage participation from underrepresented groups who may feel hesitant about putting themselves forward.
- Introduce suitable skills matrixes across our support services, such as: Finance, IT, Marketing, Communications and People Development. The plan is to ensure that all colleagues across the Charity are supported with their personal growth and development pathways, and that it improves opportunities for everyone.
- A Board Trustee will become a member of the EDI Working Group. A Trustee becoming a member of the working group demonstrates visible leadership and commitment to creating an inclusive culture.

Awareness

- The Working Group will establish a 12-month engagement plan for 25/26.
- Utilising the Atlas platform, assign mandatory EDI training to all employees annually and assign to new starters as part of their induction programme.

Representation

- Continue to donate to EDI focused charities, with the input and suggestions from employees across CPC.
- Work towards achieving Level 2 of the Disability Confident Employer.
- We plan on obtaining a license to be able to offer visa sponsorship. Visa sponsorship enables us to consider candidates based on skills and potential, rather than nationality or immigration status. This helps level the playing field and ensures that opportunities are accessible to a diverse global talent pool and allows us to employ individuals from different backgrounds. By sponsoring visas, we can help break down systemic barriers and contribute to upward social mobility.
- Look into improving our Applicant Tracking System subscription so we can monitor the diversity data of applicants, regularly review the data and create positive actions to improve representation and inclusivity in our recruitment processes.
- The company is introducing new values that represent the opinions of our current employees. We will be encouraging employees to uphold the new values that support an inclusive and equitable workplace culture and embed them into their daily work.
- In addition to continuously strengthening our internal approach to equality, diversity, and inclusion, it is equally important to consider how we can enhance inclusivity for our external stakeholders, including members and suppliers. This will involve reviewing our processes to ensure they support the success of small businesses in competitive markets, thereby contributing to greater racial equity in the wider business landscape.

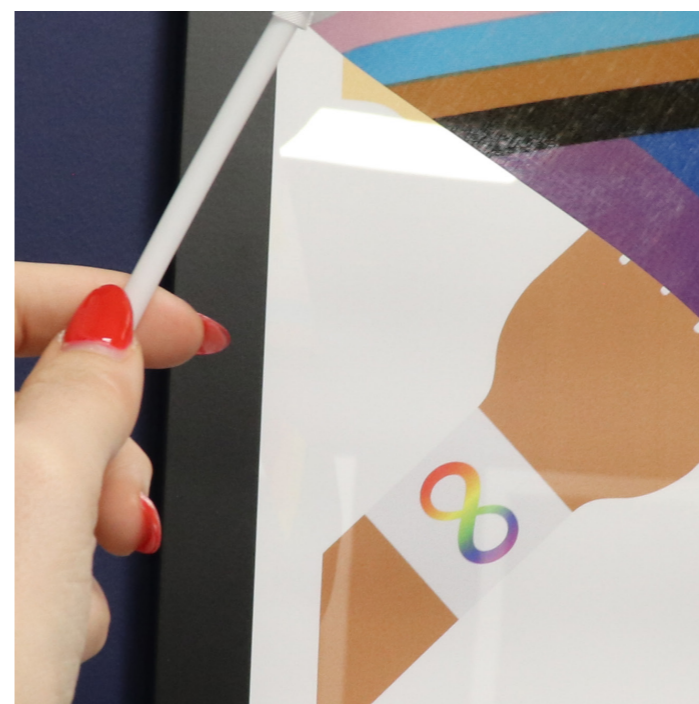
Thank you

As we bring this year's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Annual Report to a close, the GLT and Board would like to express our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has contributed to advancing our equality, diversity and inclusion efforts.

Your dedication and passion have been key to driving meaningful progress. To help drive this forward, we encourage all our employees to actively participate in fostering an inclusive workplace. This includes:

- Educating yourself and others about equality and inclusivity. For more information on this, we ask that our employees review our dedicated EDI learning platform (ENEI) which has equality hubs with resources, webinars and guidance. Links to this platform are available on CPC's EDI intranet page.
- Support and share learning resources with colleagues to encourage collective growth.
- Stay informed about different cultures, identities, and lived experiences.
- Engage in open and respectful dialogue.
- Speak up respectfully when needed and report any concerns related to discrimination or inequality.
- Be mindful of different communication styles and needs, and encourage diverse voices in team discussions.
- Model inclusive behaviour regardless of role or seniority, and foster a culture of respect, empathy and openness.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to creating a culture where diversity is not only respected but celebrated as a catalyst for innovation and strength. We are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead and will continue to move forward with purpose, guided by our EDI strategy and long-term vision. Thank you for being an essential part of this journey.



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