

Active Humber

## Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2025 Progress

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1. Chief Executive's Welcome
2. Purpose of the Report
3. Ambition 1: Leadership
4. Ambition 2: Representation
5. Ambition 3: Stakeholder Participation
6. Ambition: Data, Understanding and Learning





## 1. Chief Executive's welcome

David Gent | Chief Executive Officer

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"2025 marks the second year of delivering our Diversity and Inclusion Actions Plan (DIAP) and has been a year as this report shows that we have made considerable progress against our four DIAP ambitions.

"There remains much to do and the DIAP is providing the means for our Board and staff team on where to best focus our collective efforts with partners in order to have the greatest positive effect and ensure the progress we all desire around equality, diversity, and inclusion.

"Our DIAP covers the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 and so we have arrived at the end of the first period of the DIAP in a stronger position on equality, diversity, and inclusion. We will be publishing in March 2026 our updated DIAP covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2028. The last two years of the DIAP providing an excellent foundation and good progress on what we need to do into the future with our partners across the Humber."

**David Gent, CEO, Active Humber**

## 2. Purpose of the Report

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This report is part of our public commitment around equality, diversity, and inclusion and our role as a system partner of Sport England.

The report looks at the four ambitions we have set ourselves and the progress we have made in 2025 towards achieving those ambitions. We have looked at the 38 actions in our action plan that sit beneath the four ambitions and what progress we have made.

To help us review what we have done and what we should do into the future, we have examined each ambition in four areas.

- Key insights and highlights
- Where we are strong
- What challenges we continue to face
- What we feel we need to do in 2026 to better achieve each ambition with clear proposed actions to do that

Those recommendations and actions will be incorporated into our revised DIAP 2026/2028 and the action plan for 2026/2027.

This report will be published on our website at [Equality, Diversity & Inclusion : People : Work With Us : Active Humber](#)

We welcome any comments or thoughts from the reader on what they believe we should do and please forward those to [info@activehumber.co.uk](mailto:info@activehumber.co.uk)

### 3. Ambition 1: Leadership

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*Our leaders are visible and passionate on inclusion*

#### Were our leaders visible and passionate on inclusion?

During 2025, inclusion was clearly positioned as a leadership priority at Active Humber. Senior leaders demonstrated commitment not only through stated support, but through active participation in learning, reflection and organisational discussions. Inclusion was increasingly embedded into leadership behaviours, decision-making processes and internal dialogue.

Leaders engaged directly in equality, diversity and inclusion training and development activity, including learning linked to disability, mental health, and equality. This engagement helped reinforce the message that inclusion is a shared responsibility led from the top, rather than a delegated or peripheral issue.

#### Key insights and highlights

- Leaders participated in structured inclusion-related learning and reflective conversations.
- Inclusion was referenced in internal meetings, planning discussions and organisational priorities.
- Leadership behaviour helped normalise open discussion of inclusion-related topics, including areas of challenge or uncertainty.
- Leaders increasingly modelled inclusive behaviours, setting expectations for the wider organisation.

#### Strengths

- Strong and consistent leadership commitment to inclusion throughout the year.
- Visible engagement in learning and development, rather than passive endorsement.
- Inclusion increasingly embedded into leadership culture and everyday behaviours.

- Clear signals from leaders that inclusion is a core organisational value.

## Challenges

- Leadership visibility on inclusion was more evident internally than externally.
- Evidence of leadership impact is largely qualitative rather than outcome-based.
- Expectations around inclusive leadership behaviours are not yet fully formalised or measured across all leadership roles.

## Recommendations for 2026

- Increase external visibility of inclusive leadership through communications and stakeholder engagement.
- Clearly define inclusive leadership behaviours and expectations.
- Introduce proportionate measures to assess leadership impact on inclusion outcomes.

## 4. Ambition 2: Representation

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*Our people are reflective of the Humber community and population*

### Are our people reflective of the Humber community and population?

In 2025, Active Humber focused on developing a clearer understanding of representation across the organisation. This included reflecting on who is involved in the organisation, where representation is limited, and how organisational systems and processes may influence diversity.

While progress has been made in awareness and understanding, representation across staff, leadership and governance does not yet fully reflect the diversity of the Humber community. Addressing this remains a longer-term ambition that requires sustained focus and realistic expectations.

### Key insights and highlights

- Improved awareness of representation gaps within the organisation.
- Early exploration of how recruitment, engagement and progression processes may create barriers.
- Recognition that representation challenges are influenced by both organisational practice and wider sector conditions.
- Increased openness to discussing representation in a constructive and reflective way.

### Strengths

- Honest and open reflection on current levels of representation.
- Willingness to question existing systems and processes.
- Growing understanding of inclusive recruitment and engagement principles.

- Recognition that improving representation requires long-term commitment.

## Challenges

- Limited diversity in some roles, leadership positions and governance structures.
- Incomplete data restricts the ability to track progress and trends over time.
- Structural and sector-wide barriers mean progress can be slow and incremental.
- Balancing ambition with realistic, achievable change.

## Recommendations for 2026

- Strengthen data collection to improve understanding of representation.
- Review recruitment and engagement processes through an inclusion lens.
- Set clear, realistic and time-bound goals to improve representation.
- Continue to build organisational confidence in addressing representation challenges.

## 5. **Ambition 3: Stakeholder Participation**

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*We talk and act confidently about inclusion*

### **Do we talk and act confidently about inclusion?**

Confidence in talking about inclusion improved across Active Humber during 2025. Staff increasingly demonstrated willingness to raise inclusion considerations in project planning, delivery and partnership discussions. Inclusive language and approaches became more embedded in everyday practice.

While confidence has grown, it remains uneven across the organisation. Some teams and individuals are more confident than others, and further support is needed to ensure consistency.

### **Key insights and highlights**

- Inclusion conversations became more routine and less reactive.
- Staff showed increased confidence in discussing inclusion with partners and stakeholders.
- Greater willingness to challenge assumptions and ask questions in a constructive way.
- Inclusion increasingly considered as part of stakeholder engagement rather than an add-on.

### **Strengths**

- Improved confidence in inclusive communication across the organisation.
- Strong foundations for inclusive partnership working.
- Increased consistency in how inclusion is discussed internally.
- Greater openness to dialogue and challenge.

## Challenges

- Confidence varies between teams and individuals.
- Some conversations remain cautious rather than proactive.
- Limited formal evidence of how inclusive practice has influenced stakeholder behaviour or outcomes.
- Need for clearer guidance and shared language.

## Recommendations for 2026

- Provide additional support and guidance to build confidence across all roles.
- Share practical examples of inclusive practice internally.
- Strengthen how stakeholder impact and learning are captured and evaluated.
- Embed inclusion more explicitly into stakeholder engagement processes.

## 6. Ambition 4: Data, Understanding and Learning

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*We foster an inclusive culture across Active Humber*

### Are we fostering an inclusive culture?

Active Humber continued to develop an inclusive organisational culture throughout 2025. Learning, reflection and dialogue were central to this ambition, with inclusion increasingly viewed as a shared responsibility rather than the responsibility of specific individuals or teams.

There is evidence of positive cultural change, including greater openness, curiosity and willingness to reflect. However, progress is not yet consistent across all areas of the organisation.

### Key insights and highlights

- Inclusion learning took place throughout the year rather than as one-off activity.
- Staff were encouraged to reflect on their own practice and assumptions.
- Greater openness to discussing lived experience and inclusion-related challenges.
- Inclusion increasingly linked to organisational values and ways of working.

### Strengths

- Strong commitment to learning and continuous improvement.
- Safe spaces for discussion, reflection and challenge.
- Clear links between learning activity and cultural change.
- Growing sense of shared ownership of inclusion.

## Challenges

- Learning outcomes are not always formally recorded or evaluated.
- Data is not yet consistently used to inform decision-making.
- Cultural change is progressing at different speeds across teams.
- Translating learning into measurable outcomes remains challenging.

## Recommendations for 2026

- Improve how learning and insights are captured and shared.
- Strengthen the use of data to inform inclusion priorities and decisions.
- Continue reinforcing inclusive culture through leadership, systems and processes.
- Support teams to translate learning into practical action.