



Inclusion in action

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy

2024 – 2027



'Heritage is for everyone to enjoy and the wonderful places we look after are loved and cherished across the world. We have made great strides in welcoming everyone to our sites as visitors, staff, and volunteers but we know we have more to do. We have an important part to play in breaking down barriers so everyone can access and feel connected to our sites and places of work. Inclusion is crucial to the conservation of history, and enrichment of society for generations to come, so we will continue to relentlessly pursue this goal to actively include everyone in our mission to keep history alive and kicking.'

Nick Merriman
Chief Executive of English Heritage

Foreword

Since we launched our first EDI strategy in 2021, we've redoubled our work to uncover untold stories.

We've created a dedicated EDI team to introduce inclusive recruitment to widen our pool of talent, rolled out a variety of learning on inclusion and set up EDI Networks to listen to diverse voices. Through this work we recognise the important part equity plays in being inclusive and diverse, so we are also ensuring this is more of a focus moving forward.

But there's still so much more to do. We need to double down on our efforts to broaden our appeal. And we need to make sure we're taking intentional, purposeful action where it really matters to our people, our audience and the communities that surround our historic sites. In our efforts to be equitable we need to continue to make more changes to adjust to individual needs, so everyone, whatever their circumstances, have access to the same great experiences at our sites and all our places of work.

Why is this important to us?

Our vision is that, by 2040, English Heritage will have helped millions of people to come closer together through their shared enjoyment and love for



England's heritage. We can only do that by becoming a truly equitable, diverse and inclusive organisation. It's our responsibility to encourage everyone to enjoy and value heritage in all its forms. And we do that because we know that connecting with heritage leads to better health, social and economic outcomes for individuals, communities and the nation.

But to make sure everyone has the chance to experience these benefits, we need to do more to make sure the heritage we share is inclusive, relevant and accessible. To do this, we'll need to continue to attract people from every background to work and volunteer with us. We'll need to work more closely with the communities we want to reach, and we'll need to collaborate with partners to drive action on inclusion and bring in fresh expertise.

We want to give as many people as possible the chance to have inspiring and life-enhancing experiences by connecting with England's heritage. We'll do this at sites, online, in local communities and through the London blue plaques scheme.

Nick Merriman
Chief Executive of English Heritage

Our EDI vision

Heritage will be relevant, exciting and accessible for everyone. We will welcome and reflect the nation we represent, in all its wonderful complexity, and in so doing, make a positive difference to society.



Our EDI mission

We will work even harder on ensuring we are an inclusive organisation, where everyone feels like they belong, are respected, valued, and celebrated for the unique perspectives and talents they bring. We will do this by continuing to develop our leaders in this area, as well as taking a systematic approach to inclusion through focusing on our policies and procedures. We will continue to tell diverse stories from the past that have shaped our present and are shaping our future. We will increase our focus on attracting diverse under-represented talent and ensure that our experiences offer an exceptional welcome at our sites that meet a broader range of needs. We will work with communities and partners to co-create inclusive experiences for our visitors.



Our EDI objectives

We've updated our objectives to reflect the progress we've made, and the areas we're focusing on to help achieve our vision.



Our people

To reflect the nation we represent, we will focus on building an inclusive culture, attracting diverse talent, and developing and retaining that talent.



We've already invested in our recruitment to reach a broader range of candidates and potential volunteers, and will continue to provide more opportunities for apprenticeships, work placements and work experience, which offer entry level or career-change opportunities to a wider audience. We have sites across England, but many of them are in areas that are not diversely populated by groups like ethnic minorities, and many are in hard-to-reach rural areas. We'll ensure we have local action plans that are relevant and meaningful to that population area, and

we'll look more closely at what we can do to remove barriers like transport access.

As part of our ongoing strategy, we have established eight EDI Networks for our employees and volunteers. We're incredibly proud of our EDI Networks. They've been involved in everything from inclusive storytelling to policy making, represented us at national awareness events, like Pride, and they have become valuable safe spaces for people to come together and support each other.

'We know that over 50% of candidates are looking for inclusive organisations with positive and diverse work cultures when searching for job roles. With people being our biggest asset, our networks will help support both recruitment and talent retention over time.'

Lycia Lobo
Commercial Director and Disability Network Chair



Our people objectives

Culture, values and behaviours

We will build an inclusive culture, in which everyone feels like they belong, and our leaders' role-model inclusion by:

- Ensuring our Senior Management Team continue their inclusive learning journey, sponsoring three new EDI experiments a year to support organisational development.

- Making inclusive leadership training available for every leader at every level and embedding inclusion learning, inclusive employer and charity brand into induction of all staff and volunteers.
- Integrating diversity data into our business review dashboards.



Attract diverse talent

We will increase the proportion of our people from under-represented minority groups and build our inclusive employer brand by:

- Developing an apprenticeship programme that encourages participation from under-represented groups.
- Embedding our inclusive recruitment process and policy for all departments and embedding our charity brand proposition, relevant to diverse groups to maximise this impact.
- Partnering with organisations that can help us reach out to under-represented groups.

- Creating a new database for volunteer information to help us understand where to focus our efforts to increase diversity among our volunteers.
- Ensuring we have local action plans that are relevant and meaningful to that population area including looking at what we can do to remove barriers like transport access and how to make our brand and marketing more relevant to the diverse groups.



Develop and retain diverse talent

We will increase diversity by developing a talent pipeline that nurtures and supports all individuals to progress their career, including to our leadership roles. We will build an accessible workplace for all where we actively remove barriers for disabled people and celebrate this diversity by:

- Creating a clear, fair and equitable development pathway that identifies and sponsors potential under-represented and diverse future leaders.
- Developing a workplace adjustment policy and process to ensure everyone has the right tools to do their job according to their needs.





‘There is a charity wide understanding of the importance of being an inclusive charity with a diverse workforce, and this results in positive outcomes for our people, our audience, and the impact we can make to society. Our people are everything to us, and we are all working together to ensure we attract and retain the best talent to help us to inspire, innovate, and be socially relevant.’

Tanya Lines
Head of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at English Heritage

Our communities and audiences

We welcome around ten million people to our sites each year, and we have over one million members.

We welcome over 300,000 children on school visits each year, and over a million people subscribe to our YouTube channel. We have a loyal and well-defined core audience, based on our established segmentation of the UK Days Out market. It’s a ‘motivational’ model, meaning it focuses on the visitor intent, rather than visitor identity, so we’ve continued to work to improve our understanding of what ‘heritage’ means to all our visitors, so we are relevant and appeal to all audiences.



We have strengthened our status as a Disability Confident organisation through expert partners like our new Business Disability Forum membership. We will continue to improve disability access across our sites and keep striving to understand our audiences through our community engagement activities.

To connect with our communities and audiences we will focus on understanding and engaging with them, breaking down barriers through learning, working with communities, and making our sites as accessible as possible.



Our community and audience objectives

Understanding our communities

We will reach out to and build long-term community connections to collaborate and offer place-based opportunities to enjoy and engage with our sites. We will work with communities to give them more engaging and relevant experiences by:

- Launching a place-based community engagement strategy with Equity, Diversity and Inclusion running through it.
- Undertake and learn from audience research and brand tracker and implement recommendations through a targeted action plan.
- Applying data-driven insights to reach under-represented audiences e.g. developing new community and commercial activities/experiences, which in time will refresh the notion of 'heritage' and strengthen our Brand.

Accessibility

We will ensure the experiences we offer are as accessible as they can be, meeting the needs of a broader range of visitors by:

- Refreshing our access plan, implementing a programme of improvements that will deliver a deeper level of understanding of access at our sites and undertaking interventions at priority sites to make them as physically accessible as possible.
- Enhancing our pre-visit accessibility information for visitors.
- Developing our teams to give an exceptional welcome to all.
- Delivering experiences that cater for a broader range of needs.
- Embedding access positive decision making.

Learning

We will ensure wider access to learning of history to under-represented groups where it happens in an engaging way by:

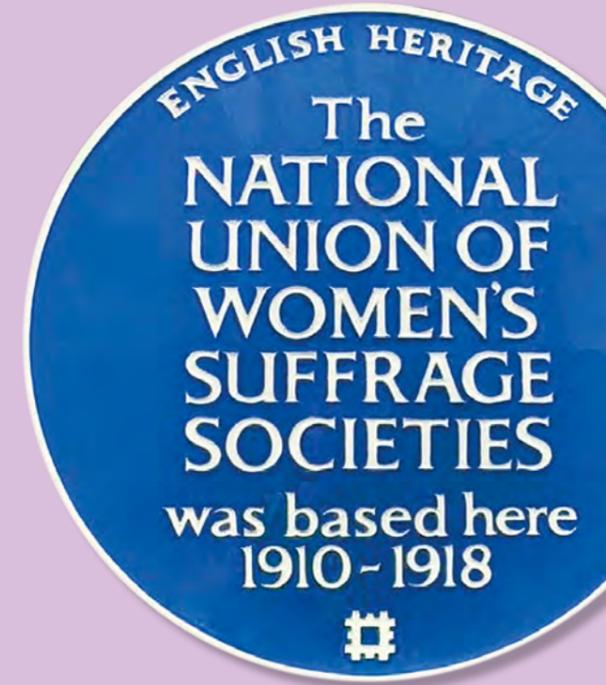
- Working with teachers at three schools (one per year) to identify and develop a plan to address barriers to engagement, especially where we have low engagement from under-represented groups.



Our storytelling

We will ensure the stories we tell at sites, online and with Blue Plaques include under-represented groups and that the learning and interpretation is relevant, engaging, and attractive to these groups to increase interest, participation, and number of visitors from these groups by:

- Embedding a golden thread of diverse stories and voices in our storytelling about our sites and collections and these are distributed across all our content channels.
- Ensuring we evaluate all new interpretation from an EDI standpoint, i.e. 'are we telling the fullest possible story of our sites and collections?'



Our partnerships

We work with over 3,000 suppliers and partners, holding them to the same high standards as we hold ourselves. We have embedded EDI into our procurement process. Going forward we want to build meaningful, diverse partnerships to help us improve our standards on EDI and what we offer our audiences.

We will work with place-based community networks and partners to access deeper expertise in specific communities to enable us to be authentic champions for EDI and market to more diverse audiences by:

- Providing managers and leaders with a SMART Community Engagement training package based on place-based

thinking which will include best practice guidance to help them work with diverse communities.

- Partnering at local levels with organisations to create a positive action programme to recruit people from under-represented groups.
- Exploring opportunities to work with partners to support us in areas like race equity.
- Continuing to be LGBTQ+ and Disability Champions through our membership with Stonewall and our new partnership with the Business Disability Forum. Promote these partnerships through our brand and employer value propositions.

Our definitions

Protected characteristics - As defined by the Equality Act of 2010, protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion/belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership and pregnancy/maternity. It is illegal to discriminate on the basis of any of these protected characteristics.

Under-represented groups - These are individuals that have certain protected characteristics that are under-represented in our workforce such as young people and ethnic minorities.

Our communities - Our communities are the people that live in the local area of an English Heritage site but may not have been to visit the site.

Our audiences - Our audiences are our existing and future visitors and members.

Equality - Our definition of equality recognises that every individual should have equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents. It recognises that certain groups of people with particular characteristics have experienced discrimination, both in the past and in the present.

Equity - Our definition of equity is not about treating everyone the same, as this does not always provide a fair outcome. It is about recognising the disadvantages some people from different protected characteristics face that others do not and making accommodations so that everyone can be treated fairly, have the same opportunities as others and have access to our services.

Diversity - Our definition of diversity is any characteristic which can differentiate groups and individuals from one another. This includes the protected characteristics as defined by the Equalities Act 2010 but also includes others, such as socioeconomic background and status. It also includes and values diversity of perspectives and life experience, for example. It's important to note that groups and organisations can be described as being 'diverse', but individuals cannot.

Inclusion - Our definition of inclusion recognises that people need to feel connected and engaged. Inclusion can be defined as a state of being and feeling valued, respected and supported. An inclusive organisation is one in which everyone is – and in which everyone feels – valued, respected and supported.

Ethnic minority - We use this umbrella term to refer to all ethnic groups except the White British group. We aren't using the terms BAME (Black, Asian and ethnic minority) or BME (Black and ethnic minority) because they include some groups and not others.

LGBTQ+ - These initials stand for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender/transsexual and queer. The plus is inclusive of all other groups who don't feel that they fit under the LGBT names.

'SMART' targets - Targets that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely.



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If our enthusiasm sparks your interest and you want to work with us on the next chapter of our story, we'd love to hear from you:

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To get in touch with our EDI team email
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