

Like nature our survival depends on diversity.

Nature has no borders and neither do we. We recognise that everyone is individual and different and value what that difference brings to the RSPB. We want to support everyone to unlock their potential and better reflect the communities in which we work.

In 2015 we completed detailed research on our workforce Equality and Diversity, which resulted in a number of recommendations. We are now progressing these recommendations through an organisation-wide project.

Where we are now

We have gender balance and a good representation of disabled volunteers within our workforce.

We have made significant progress against our aim to have an improved gender balance at senior levels. We acknowledge that we have more to do in other areas, particularly in representing the ethnic and racial diversity of the UK.

We are on a journey but believe that together we can change.

Leading the change

The belief that nature is everybody's right and being an equal, diverse organisation is the right thing to do to find solutions to our common challenges comes from the very top of our organisation. In 2018 our Council of Trustees agreed that:

- The RSPB will perform better and have a competitive edge as a more diverse organisation – there will be a wider range of skills, ideas, energy and talent.
- Having Equality, Diversity and Inclusion as a top priority, fully integrated and institutionalised in our culture, is a way to future proof the RSPB and help us achieve our mission of saving nature.
- We want to reduce the RSPB's Gender Pay Gap.

In 2019 our Management Board agreed to the following key performance indicators by 2022:

EQUALITY

1. A gender pay gap of 9% or less, supported by an action plan outlining of steps we will take to achieve that
2. Disabled employees and employees from Black Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds represented as proportionately as line managers as non-disabled and White employees.

DIVERSITY

3. 45% of Senior Managers and 30% of Trustees will be female.
4. 5% of employees will have a self-declared disability.
5. 5% of employees will be from a Black, Asian or minority ethnic background.

INCLUSION

6. 90% of our staff (employees and volunteers) with line management responsibility will have completed unconscious bias training
7. All our HR policies will be analysed to identify and remove any barriers to equality of opportunity.
8. 75% of our staff (including respondents of different ages, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations and disability statuses) completing surveys will agree/strongly agree that:
 - the RSPB is an inclusive place to work/ volunteer
 - Employees and volunteers from different backgrounds are readily accepted and made to feel welcome at the RSPB
 - At work/ Whilst volunteering, I feel able to express my identity and to act in a way that is true to myself

- the RSPB has a real commitment to improving its performance in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We will monitor our progress against these key performance indicators, share this progress with staff, and take further action if we are not progressing quickly enough.

We have allocated resource to realise these ambitions and in 2019 we appointed an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion manager to drive the work forward, supported by senior leaders.

We are committed to showing leadership in the sector, and in 2020 joined with others in the Wildlife and Countryside link to form an inclusion action group and sign up to an anti-racism statement.

Embedding the case for change

We are building organisational awareness and understanding of need through regular multi-channel internal communications. This includes

- videos and e-mails from members of our Management Board.
- an active Yammer (internal social media) group.
- poster campaigns and presentations at meetings and conferences across the organisation.
- intranet stories, spotlight talks, events and activities around key dates such as Black History Month, International Women's Day, National Inclusion Week and International Day of Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia.
- a monthly newsletter sent to all employees and members of our Council of Trustees which includes updates on the latest news and developments from inside and outside of the RSPB, and suggestions of how each of us can make a difference.

Actively removing barriers

We believe that everyone at the RSPB should have equal access to opportunity to fulfil their individual potential. We are keen to encourage more applications from people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, and younger people who are currently underrepresented as RSPB volunteers and employees, and disabled people who are currently underrepresented as RSPB employees. All applications will be judged solely on merit. Over the past few years, we have been for example

- Updating our recruitment and induction materials, to better reflect these commitments and to re-shape the first impressions people have of the RSPB. For example, we've been more explicit around our openness to any adjustments that employees and volunteers might need to achieve their full potential.
- Introducing a greater range of flexible working and family friendly policies and procedures. This have included new TOIL, flexitime and job share policies and revised flexible working request policy and procedure and guidance on shared parental leave and adoption.
- Revising, updating and actively promoting policies on Equality and Diversity, harassment and bullying. For example, all employees must now sign a Code of Conduct which to show that they understand, among other things, that their behaviours, actions and words must not discriminate against others, and that the RSPB will take action if they do.
- Identifying and tackling inequalities in pay and benefits structures. For example, we introduced a job evaluation system to allows us to compare job content more fairly and consistently across the organisation. Likewise, removal of our long service award took away a benefit associated with length of service rather than contribution - which disproportionately disadvantaged women, younger people and ethnic minorities.
- Updating our people imagery and seeking a wider variety of voices to involve in, and to help shape our work to be more reflective of the diversity of the communities we are part of. For example, this has included particular effort to source diverse candidates for key roles such as CEO and England Country Committee.
- Introducing Equality Analysis to reduce bias when planning or revising projects or policies.
- Investing in research into barriers to connection with natural heritage.
- Making improvements to our web accessibility.

Supporting and empowering our staff to succeed

We are committed to an inclusive culture, in which everyone feels welcome, supported and valued and able to be themselves. As part of this we have joined the Time to Change movement, making a firm organisational commitment to ending mental health stigma and signed up as Disability Confident committed and Happy to Talk Flexible Working.

We provide an Assistance Programme, available to all employees and volunteers and their immediate families and a network of Mental Health First Aiders, including one also trained as a trans-ally, in recognition of the particular challenges our trans employees and volunteer may face.

We have also created a diverse network of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Champions made up of volunteers and employees from different roles and all parts of the UK and supported and encouraged support and affinity groups. These groups provide individuals with peer support when facing common challenges and a chance to input into organisational policies and ways of working. They have grown in number and impact and their achievements include:

- Starlings (our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex + group) – facilitating the attendance hundreds of staff and volunteers at multiple Pride events including in London, Brighton, Glasgow, Belfast and Birmingham, and launching a hugely successful rainbow starling pin badge and merchandise.
- Our autism group and menopause café have helped break taboos around these subjects.
- Our Women's group has showcased the achievements of women in senior, scientific and practical conservation and set up an internal RSPB mentoring scheme, prioritising groups underrepresented in RSPB management.
- Members of our Champions network from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds have launched a nature group to provide more diverse role models and set up a group to discuss impacts that the growing awareness of the Black Lives Matter movement has had on them personally in a safe and confidential way.

Building our organisational understanding

We've expanded our training around equality, diversity and inclusion, including

- Investing in four new e-learning modules, including two on Unconscious Bias (the positive and negative stereotypes that can shape our views and impact our actions)
- Creating bitesize RSPB specific content including a video from our CEO talking about the importance of EDI, written guidance on appropriate behaviours and terminology, team exercises, and a podcast on race and ethnicity with two staff talking from their own lived experience.
- Enhancing our offer through our membership organisation, Inclusive Employers, who provide us with learning and networking events, webinars, guidance and advice on a wide range of topics.

We have overhauled our existing equal opportunities monitoring data capture to better reflect external best practice. We are committed to growing our knowledge and tackling emerging issues. We have expanded existing surveys and run focus groups and listening exercises with individuals and groups internally and externally to help us answer specific questions to formulate solutions.

Our next steps

Our Management Board and Council of Trustees are committed to a continued and strengthened focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion as we develop our new Corporate strategy. We will be enlisting an external commission to build on what we have learnt, as well as listening to internal insight to shape our approach.

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