



Somerset Activity and Sports Partnership's Diversity and Inclusion Plan (DIAP) 2024-2025

1. Foreword – A message from SASP's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Board Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Champion

SASP's purpose is to “achieve healthier and happier communities in Somerset through physical activity and sport”. We do this so the people of Somerset can live a healthy and fulfilling life.

The third southernmost county in the Southwest region and characterised by large expanses of rurality, provincial towns and coastal communities, we are conscious that our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) will be launched into an environment that hosts a “traditional” Somerset population. The 2021 Census told us that...

- Somerset is home to 572,000 people living across 250,000 households.
- 39.2% (223,683) are aged 55+
- Somerset's average age is 47.3 years, higher than the national average age of the UK which is 40.1 years.
- 91.3% (521,829) identify as white British.
- 50.2% (286,672) are Christian.
- 18.7% (106,000) have a disability (as defined under the Equality Act).

We know that there is a host of information and data pertaining to some of the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010, in particular, age, disability, gender and race. We will of course use this information and data to inform our work, but we will go further to increase and improve our knowledge and understanding of lesser understood sections of our population, with a particular focus on caring status, educational background, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, religion or belief, sexual orientation, and socio-economic background. Furthermore, we will improve our knowledge and understanding of the additional impact on these groups of people, determined by whether they live in a rural or urban part of our county.

Only when we have plugged these gaps in our knowledge and understanding, will we truly be able to change and develop ‘the way we do things’ so that everyone in Somerset can access sport and physical activity equally.

The recent review of Sport England’s Code for Sports Governance and its substantive focus on diversity and inclusion was welcomed by SASP. As an organisation in receipt of public sector funds, we understand that there will always be requirements placed upon us, ‘things that we must do’, however this is not what drives us. We are determined to create an environment and foster a culture that does not pay lip service to equality and diversity. We genuinely believe that by becoming an organisation that is reflective of the area it serves and one that embraces difference, we will be empowered to realise our mission of “achieving healthier and happier communities in Somerset through physical activity and sport”.

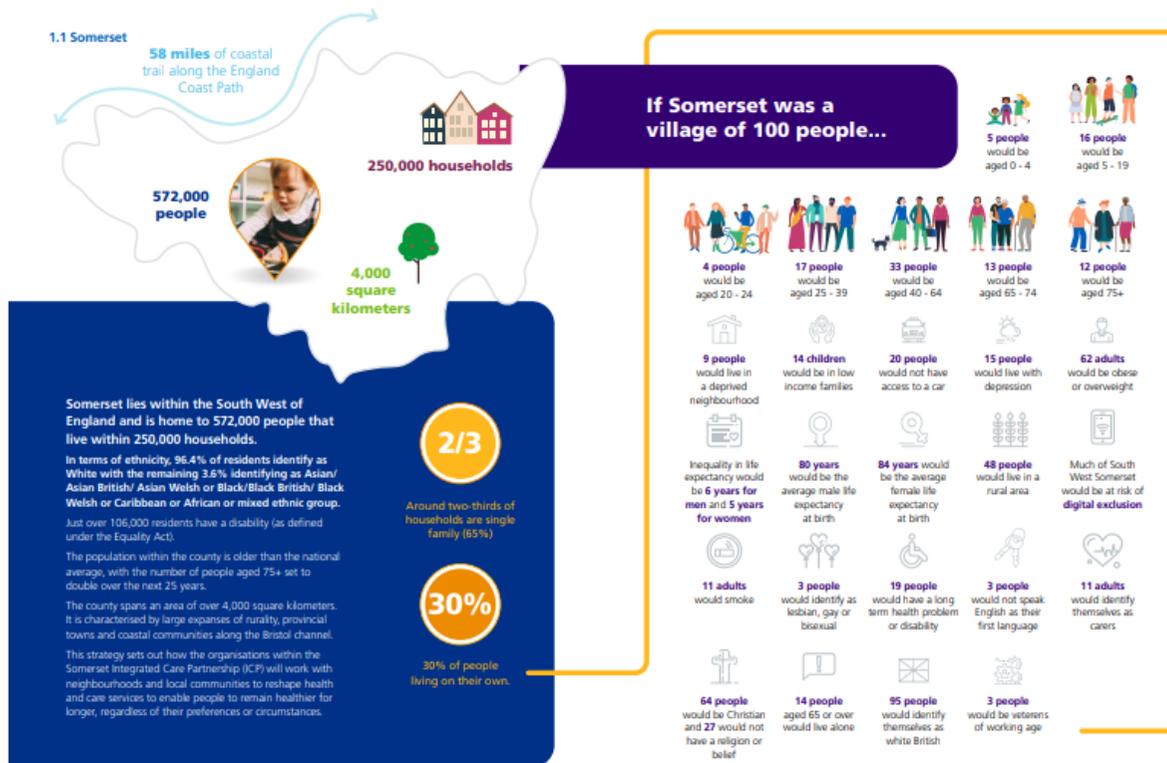
We have established relationships with key local stakeholders including 2BU (a specialist support service serving the needs of young lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ+) people aged 11-25 across Somerset) and Somerset Diverse Communities (a charity working with and supporting minority ethnic communities across Somerset). These connections have allowed us to shape our thinking and respond to challenging comments on our social media platforms, but there is still much to be done and relationships to be formed.

Looking ahead to our first DIAP, we will take a long, hard look at the makeup of SASP’s people (including our Board, our management team, and our staff as a whole). At this moment in time, we have no equality monitoring, nor socio economic data for our staff or Board – a fundamental gap in our insight that prevents us from comparing ourselves to our local community and in making progress against our DIAP. An equality/ socio economic monitoring exercise will be amongst our very first actions. We will scrutinise our policies and procedures, assessing for potential bias and discrimination and making changes when needed. We will educate our people through meaningful, impactful training, in which real life stories will be shared. All the while, we will compile our learning, our knowledge, and data to simultaneously craft a follow up DIAP to go live in April 2025.

Overarching all of this, we will take accountability! In January 2024 we appointed a dedicated EDI Officer who will dedicate 2.5 days per week to overseeing progress against our DIAP. To be clear, it is everyone’s responsibility to ensure that EDI becomes and remains a golden thread that weaves through everything we do and everything we are at SASP.

Our DIAP will be reviewed, reflected upon and if required, altered throughout the year. It will form a standing agenda item at every monthly senior management team meeting and quarterly Board meeting, as well as be subject to a formal review by the Board once a year. We will publish the findings of the review and any alterations to the DIAP itself annually, on our website.

For now, we understand that there is much to be done and we are excited to get to work. Twelve months from now, we will be in a much stronger position to know what the population we serve need from us and how we can bring about change, to support even more people to be physically active in Somerset....



2. What is SASP's DIAP?

SASP's DIAP is a single document that sets out our ambitions for advancing and celebrating equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) at every level of our organisation and in *all* that we do. The plan acts a single point of reference for all things EDI, drawing *from* and influenced *by* key shaping documents including SASP's business plan, people plan and multi-agency, external strategy, "Somerset Moves".

Our first DIAP will span one year from April 2024 – April 2025, with year one focussed on collecting information and data that will allow us to create a meaningful, longer term action plan for Somerset (to begin in April 2025). This longer term, second DIAP will be created alongside the delivery of our year one plan. A dynamic document, crafted as a direct result of the data and information we gather between April 2024 – April 2025.

3. Why do we need a DIAP?

EDI is considered the ‘golden thread’ that runs through every facet of our organisation – our policies and procedures, our communications, and the way we interact.

There are two main documents that guide us in all that we do. Our business plan and Somerset Moves (our system wide, multi-agency strategy, for improving lives in Somerset through physical activity and sport).

SASP’s business plan sets out our mission to **“achieve healthier and happier communities in Somerset through physical activity and sport”**. Our DIAP speaks directly to the first goal set out in our business plan, which says that we will achieve our mission by:

- **Addressing inequalities and removing barriers to physical activity and sport;**
- Providing accessible opportunities locally for all ages and abilities, prioritising those who are least active;
- Supporting clubs, communities, schools and the workforce to embrace physical activity and sport;
- Bringing together organisations and partners to create positive change to enable active lives for all.

Launched in 2022, [Somerset Moves](#)’ mission is **“enabling active lives for all”**. It’s opening line. **“We believe everyone should have access and opportunity to the benefits of moving regardless of age, gender, race, ability, background or geography.”**

Our DIAP provides a set of specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely actions to support us in achieving the goals set out in both our business plan and Somerset Moves, whilst simultaneously enabling us to meet the requirements set out in Sport England’s revised [Code for Sports Governance](#).

4. What is Sport England’s Code for Sports Governance?

The Code for Sports Governance sets out the levels of transparency, diversity/inclusion, accountability, and integrity required from organisations who seek (and are in receipt of) UK Government and National Lottery funding from Sport England and/or UK Sport.

In July 2020, against the backdrop of Black Lives Matter and three years after the Code became active, Sport England and UK Sport announced a review aimed to identify areas where the Code would benefit from further development, with a substantive focus on diversity and inclusion.

As a result of the review, a new requirement for eligible organisations to “create a Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan” was introduced. The DIAP must set out “clear ambitions to ensure its leadership represents and reflects the diversity of the local and/or national community”; must identify actions to achieve, support and maintain their ambitions; demonstrate a strong, public commitment to promote, embed and advance diversity and

inclusions on the Board, Senior Management Team and beyond; agree the DIAP with Sport England and/or UK Sport; and review and publish results on the DIAP annually.

5. What is SASP's DIAP based on?

SASP's DIAP is based on three core ambitions:

- AMBITION 1: Our people are reflective of Somerset.
- AMBITION 2: We set a positive example for others, taking opportunities to promote diversity and inclusion whilst educating and bettering ourselves and our stakeholders.
- AMBITION 3: Our leaders are committed to fostering and developing an inclusive and empowered culture, putting strong policies and procedures in place, and supporting staff to work towards a shared vision.

Each ambition is underpinned by a set of targeted actions, responsible leads, intended goals and specific timeframes, and covers our Board, Senior Management Team, specific members of staff (such as the EDI Officer and Workforce Development Manager) and the staff as a whole. Any action specifically relating to or apportioned to the Board has been highlighted in orange.

7. Who will monitor and progress our DIAP?

The success of SASP's DIAP is the responsibility of every Board member and every member of staff. Every one of these individuals will have the opportunity to shape, challenge and champion the plan and it is hoped, that as knowledge and understanding increases, these valued contributions will become more frequent.

Progress against our DIAP will be monitored by our EDI Officer weekly (with input from the Staff EDI Action Group) and on a quarterly basis, by our Senior Management Team. An update on our DIAP will become a standard agenda item at **every** quarterly Board meeting and SASP's Board will formally review the plan and progress against it twice a year, with direct support and challenge from our Board EDI Champion. We will commit to publishing our DIAP and our progress against it annually, highlighting changes and evolvments and sharing the information that led to them.

AMBITION 1: Our people are reflective of Somerset.

Outcomes:

- We have information and data to support a better understanding of the population we serve.
- We can compare Somerset based data and Southwest regional data.
- We have up to date equality and socio-economic monitoring data for our people and use it to advance representation.
- We have an inclusive recruitment process that allows for equal opportunity of selection at both Board and staff level.

	Action	Lead	Intended goal	Deadline
Available information and data	1.1 Search for and compile readily available information and data depicting the population of Somerset and the Southwest. For example: results of the 2021 Census; Somerset Schools Health & Wellbeing Survey Results 22/23, and the ONS website.	EDI Officer/ Workforce Development Manager	We know how the population of Somerset and the Southwest Region is comprised and have baseline data to support this. If a traditional Somerset population is identified as a barrier to driving representational change, then Southwest data will be considered.	31/05/24
	1.2 Search for and compile readily available information and data pertaining to the protected characteristics set out in The Equality Act 2010, in particular those not covered by The Public Sector Duties (caring status, educational background, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, religion or belief, sexual orientation, and socio-economic background). For example: Women In Sport’s Dare To Dream: The Gender Dream Deficit In Sport; Activity Alliance’s Annual Disability & Activity Survey Demographic Report 2023, and Moving To Inclusion’s Guidance For Transgender Inclusion In Domestic Sport Review.	EDI Officer/ Workforce Development Manager	We better understand the barriers and experiences of individuals identifying with one (or more protected characteristics) in a sports/activity context, and take steps to address the hierarchy of equality by concentrating on those protected characteristics not covered by The Public Duties.	Ongoing
	1.3 Create a shared staff folder to capture reports, case studies, papers, and other relevant diversity & inclusion documents to aid with	EDI Officer/ All Staff	We better understand the barriers and experiences of individuals identifying with one (or more protected	Ongoing

	increasing knowledge & understanding of the protected characteristics amongst staff.		characteristics) and use this information to inform our EqlA's.	
	1.4 Create a simple document to portray the breakdown of the Somerset and Southwest population by protected characteristic (plus other relevant characteristics to include: caring; marital and socio-economic status and educational background) and geographical location (urban/rural). Include additional statistics or information to aid staff when carrying out an equality impact assessment and in understanding the baseline representation in the county.	EDI Officer/ Workforce Development Manager	We know how Somerset's population is comprised by protected characteristic and geography and use this information to inform our EqlA's.	31/05/24
Diversity Monitoring Data	1.5 Create a simple document to explain the importance <i>of</i> and need <i>for</i> capturing diversity monitoring information for our people (Board, staff, and stakeholders). Identify opportunities to communicate this message to staff ahead of any diversity monitoring exercises taking place. For example, at a staff meeting, via a fact sheet or offering one to one discussion.	EDI Officer/ HR Manager	Our people speak confidently on how and why diversity monitoring is needed.	31/05/24
	1.6 Undertake a diversity monitoring exercise to capture Board member data, completing the data set across all protected characteristics beyond disability, gender, and race and to include caring, marital, and socio-economic status in addition to educational background.	HR Manager/ EDI Officer	We know how our Board is comprised and use this data to implement specific percental recruitment targets for under-represented groups including those from a lower socio-economic & educational background. Use data to challenge non-diverse shortlists if applicable.	30/06/24
	1.7 Undertake a diversity monitoring exercise to capture staff data, including position held within SASP.	HR Manager/ EDI Officer	We know how our Staff is comprised and use this data to implement specific percental recruitment targets for under-represented groups. Data is used	30/06/24

			to challenge non-diverse shortlists if applicable.	
	1.8 Review data gathered using it to create a Board Diversity Plan and inform additional actions to achieve representation across the Board and staff. For example, using positive action in recruitment (or when considering promotion) or when allocating the training budget.	EDI Officer/ HR Manager/ CEO/ Board EDI Champion	Increase the number of recruits from diverse backgrounds at Board, senior management and across the staff.	31/03/25
Recruitment & Selection	1.9 Collect and review diversity data of all applicants applying for roles at SASP and record where they exit the recruitment process.	HR Officer/ EDI Officer	Understand and baseline the diversity of applicants for all roles (Board & staff), across all levels of the organisation. Data is used to challenge non-diverse shortlists and to enforce changes to the recruitment & selection process if applicable, mitigating against the potential for bias or disadvantage.	Ongoing from 01/04/24
	1.10 Carry out an equality impact assessment (EqIA) on SASP's recruitment and selection policy to include: how and where job adverts are placed; how job descriptions and person specifications are decided; how an interview panel is formed, and what an interview comprises. Identify opportunities to maximise diversity at each stage of the process. Report findings to the SMT and use the information gathered to inform additional actions to improve equality of opportunity.	HR Officer/ EDI Officer	Recruitment processes are inclusive with opportunities to maximise EDI embedded and maximised throughout. Candidates feel valued and supported throughout the process and any opportunity for bias and/or disadvantage are identified and removed.	30/11/24
	1.11 Carry out a review of the current board induction process and ensure that E&D is fully embedded within it.	HR Officer/ EDI Officer	Board members are certain of SASP's commitment to EDI and understand their responsibility in promoting and embracing EDI.	30/11/24

	1.12 Ensure new members of Board and staff receive an accessible, full, formal induction within two weeks of joining.	HR Officer/Managers	Board members experience an open and inclusive environment which enables them to contribute to Board discussion and decision making.	Ongoing from 01/04/24
	1.13 Provide recruitment and selection training for any staff or Board member likely to be involved in the interview process. Ensure that these staff are supported and well versed in SASP's recruitment and selection policy, including the positive action process when required.	HR Officer/Managers	Those involved in interviewing are aware of the potential for unconscious bias and understand the options available to achieve greater representation throughout our people.	30/06/24 - Ongoing

AMBITION 2: We set a positive example for others, taking opportunities to promote diversity and inclusion whilst educating and bettering ourselves and our stakeholders.

Outcomes:

- SASP Board members and staff have greater awareness and understanding of all aspects of diversity and inclusion.
- We actively seek opportunities to promote diversity and inclusion in all that we do.
- We positively influence those that we fund, supporting and encouraging them to look at diversity and inclusion in their own practices.

	Action	Lead	Intended goal	Deadline
Training	2.1 Identify an interactive and engaging diversity and inclusion training offer for Board members and staff.	HR Manager/ EDI Officer	Our people understand the moral, business, and legal case for EDI and take opportunities to increase and promote equality of opportunity through their work.	30/06/24
	2.2 Roll out mandatory diversity and inclusion training for all Board members and staff, monitoring attendance and feedback.	HR Manager/ EDI Officer	All our people have attended EDI training and had the opportunity to feed back. Feedback informs improvements to our training offer.	31/03/25

	2.3 Develop a series of informal staff sessions to feature different guest speakers, speaking about their lived experience.	EDI Officer	Our staff better understand the barriers and everyday experiences of individuals who identify with one (or more) protected characteristics. Our people take this learning in to their work and are confident in sharing their knowledge.	Monthly - Ongoing
	2.4 Introduce a one side of A4, short, engaging, and relevant fact sheet to be emailed to staff on a monthly basis and placed on the staff noticeboard. Topics to be instigated by any member of staff or Board and could include: What are pronouns and why are they important? What is Black History Month? What is positive action and why is it needed?	EDI Officer	Our people are empowered to request information on EDI and have access to the information in different formats. Our people have an increased understanding and knowledge of specific topics.	Monthly from 01/09/24
Communication	2.5 Carry out an EqlA on SASP's communication strategy to include: accessibility and standardised comms; language and tone, and forms of communication. Identify opportunities to maximise diversity across all comms. Report findings to the CEO/ Communications Manager and use the information gathered to inform additional actions to improve accessibility, diversity, and inclusivity of comms.	HR Officer/ EDI Officer/ Communications Manager	Our communications are accessible for everyone. Areas for improvement/ potential for disadvantage are identified and changes put in place.	31/01/25
	2.6 Work with Introtweet to develop and communicate a protocol to report on and respond to negative and/or hateful speech used on any of SASP's social media platforms. Take opportunities to feed back to staff when incidents arise to aid with their continued learning and development.	EDI Officer/ CEO/ Communications Manager	Respond firmly and consistently to incidents of negative and/or hateful speech as they arise. Take opportunities to educate those involved and share incidents with staff to increase their knowledge and understanding.	31/01/25
	2.7 Develop a series of social media posts and physical posters to celebrate and highlight key	EDI Officer/ Comms Team	Take opportunities to promote and celebrate EDI across our social media	Monthly from 01/09/24

	dates and events pertaining to diversity and inclusion. For example: World Autism Awareness Day; Eid; Malcolm X Day; International Day of Friendship etc.		platforms, expanding our reach throughout Somerset and beyond.	
Funding	2.8 Develop a checklist to form part of our fund giving activities, to include assurances around key areas such as EDI, safeguarding, and organisation identity (for example). As a minimum, request an E&D Policy and ask whether staff receive E&D training.	EDI Officer/ CEO/ Senior Management Team	The organisations we fund understand that we take EDI seriously and that we will encourage them to advance their work around EDI too.	31/03/25

AMBITION 3: Our leaders are committed to fostering and developing an inclusive and empowered culture, putting strong policies and procedures in place, and supporting staff to work towards a shared vision.

Outcomes:

- SASP’s Board represents and reflects the diversity of Somerset (refer to AMBITION 1: Our people are reflective of Somerset).
- Our DIAP is fully embedded within SASP with progress being monitored and shared regularly.
- Our Board EDI Champion works with the CEO and EDI Officer to drive SASP forward on equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Our staff and Board members strive to develop and sustain an inclusive culture throughout the organisation.
- Our policies and procedures are equality impact assessed and maximise opportunities to advance equality, diversity, and inclusion.

	Action	Lead	Intended goal	Deadline
Board and Finance & Governance Group	3.1 The Finance & Governance Group will commit to a dedicated EDI budget based on projected costs, for the life of the DIAP.	Finance & Governance Group/ Board/ CEO	Our DIAP is suitably funded and allows for targeted projects/ activities in relation to our priority groups.	30/06/24
	3.2 The Board EDI Champion, CEO and the EDI Officer will stay in regular contact to share progress made on SASP’s DIAP, reporting back at quarterly Board meetings.	Board EDI Champion/ CEO/ EDI Officer	The Board is fully briefed on the progress of the DIAP and prepared to challenge if necessary.	April 2024 July 2024 October 2024 January 2025 April 2025

	3.3 The Board will formally review the DIAP bi-annually (mid-way through the plan and on conclusion). Progress against the DIAP will be published annually along with any updates to the DIAP itself.	Board/ Board EDI Champion	The Board fully considers and incorporates EDI in its decision making, reviews the DIAP and publishes outcomes.	October 2024 April 2025
	3.4 The Board will undertake a skills and satisfaction survey (separate documents) annually, taking the opportunity to feedback on diversity and inclusion and identifying gaps in learning.	Workforce Development Manager	Our Board members are committed to being positive role models for all our people.	31/09/24
Senior Management Team and EDI Officer	3.5 The CEO and EDI Officer will develop terms of reference for SASP's existing Staff EDI Action Group. The group will be responsible for championing the DIAP, monitoring progress of the actions within it, contributing to EqIA's and generally promoting EDI throughout SASP.	CEO/ EDI Officer/ EDI Action Group	The DIAP is influenced, shaped, and championed by a cross section of staff to achieve buy-in and engagement from staff and in time stakeholders.	31/01/25
	3.6 The CEO will lead on the implementation of SASP's DIAP, working closely with the EDI Officer, Board EDI Champion, and EDI Action Group.	CEO/ EDI Officer/ Board EDI Champion/ EDI Action Group	The DIAP is influenced, shaped, and championed by a cross section of staff to achieve buy-in and engagement from staff and stakeholders.	Ongoing from 01/04/24
	3.7 The DIAP will be a standard agenda item at SASP's monthly SMT meetings. Senior Management Team will check and challenge on the DIAP at least quarterly.	HR Manager/ Senior Management Team	SMT carry out quarterly checks and challenges on the DIAP	Monthly from 01/04/24
	3.8 Each member of the Senior Management Team will adopt and share an individual SMART EDI objective as part of their personal development plan. Objectives to be shared with staff at a staff meeting and progress reported in the same way.	HR Manager/ Senior Management Team	SMT publicly role-model our commitment to EDI, demonstrating accountability and leading by example.	31/01/25
	3.9 The Workforce Development Manager will devise an annual staff and Board survey (separate documents) to provide an opportunity	Workforce Development Manager	Our people feel psychologically and physically safe, included and valued.	31/01/25

	for staff and Board members to share their views on SASP's culture and how successfully EDI is being embedded			
Staff	3.10 Staff attendance at EDI activities (including mandatory training) to be recorded and shared with line managers to feed into staff appraisals.	HR Manager/ EDI Officer/ Managers	Staff are held accountable for their own learning and development around EDI and understand the importance of EDI in relation to the appraisal process.	Ongoing from 01/04/24
	3.11 SASP's DIAP to be emailed to staff and an opportunity to discuss the plan to be offered at a staff meeting. Staff to be encouraged and empowered to shape, challenge and champion the plan.	EDI Officer/ CEO/ All Staff	Staff are encouraged and empowered to help deliver our DIAP.	19/04/24 (due to Easter Holidays first 2 weeks of April)
Equality Impact Assessments	3.12 Develop an equality impact assessment policy and procedure, complete with an easy-to-use form and supporting guidance.	EDI Officer/ HR Manager	We have the tools to carry out a robust and meaningful equality impact assessment.	30/06/24
	3.13 Role out a 'how to equality impact assess' workshop to be piloted with the Staff EDI Action Group in the first instance, before the training is expanded to other members of staff.	EDI Officer/ HR Manager	Our people are confident in undertaking an equality impact assessment and understand the role they play in supporting equal opportunities in our organisation.	31/03/25
	3.14 Devise a schedule of equality impact assessments, beginning with those which have the potential for the most impact. For example: recruitment and selection; communication; code of conduct; equality & diversity and bullying & harassment. Identify opportunities to maximise diversity across all policies and procedures. Report findings to the CEO and use the information gathered to inform additional actions to ensure all policies reflect and embed SASP's strong position on diversity and inclusion.	EDI Officer/ EDI Action Group/ HR Manager	Our policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and assessed. Potential for discrimination is identified and removed.	31/01/25