

One Swim England

Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (“DIAP”)

Following the development of our new strategy, we recognise that now more than ever, our work areas should reflect our commitment towards diversifying our sports. In 2024 we released our strategy, ‘**One Swim England**, with the following Mission:

To lead and serve an aquatics community to enable safe, enjoyable and successful experiences.

We know that for everyone to benefit from aquatics, there is much work to do to engage groups that are currently under-represented. Our insight tells us that people from ethnically diverse communities, people within the LGBTQ+ community, disabled people and those with long-term health conditions and from lower socio-economic groups are under-represented within our aquatics community. Whilst we have taken action to better understand the needs of these groups, it is a journey. We are committed to further our understanding of these needs and take positive action to address the issues, to tackle inequalities and drive meaningful change. We have developed broad principles that will set out how we will approach this important work, the impact of which will be measured through this plan.

Our Mission will act as a golden thread throughout all of our activities, underpinning our goals and the approach we take. Swimming is fundamentally a life skill, and we passionately believe that everyone, regardless of background, should be enabled to have safe, enjoyable and successful experiences in water.

Our starting position

We recognise that the topics of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion continuously develop. We are committed to reviewing and developing this plan as we learn. Updates will be informed by the communities that we aim to attract, and it would therefore be disingenuous to suggest that we already have solutions to all the challenges we face. We expect the early years to involve a considerable amount of test and learn activity, providing an extended opportunity to gather learning and make initial progress towards our goals. This is reflected by most of the actions listed within the plan below being short to medium term. This provides the required flexibility to develop long-term goals as we create new partnerships and identify areas of opportunity.

When working towards our action plan and determining what solutions are appropriate, we are committed to being led by our organisational values:



We include	We are ambitious	We collaborate	We do what’s right
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Our challenges

Our key challenges are as follows:

- Disabled people and those from diverse ethnic communities are less likely to take part in aquatic sports or become members of Swim England.
- In learning from other sports and looking hard internally we know that we must continue to evolve our approach to supporting the welfare of all those who participate in aquatics and in particular safeguarding young people within our sport.
- Approximately one quarter of 11 year-olds do not meet the curriculum target of being able to swim 25m or rescue themselves from water – a figure that almost doubles for children from some ethnically diverse communities and for those from areas of greater deprivation.
- The economic climate is creating challenges for all organisations within the sector and adds to the pressure on clubs and pools to achieve financial sustainability.
- Facilities for our sports and activities are declining with the nation predicted to be short of the equivalent of eight hundred 25m pools by the end of the decade.
- The sector is experiencing a workforce shortage, in particular amongst swimming teachers.

To address these challenges, **One Swim England** sets out 18 strategic goals under the three headings of: 'Foundations', 'Enablers' and 'Community Growth'.

 Foundations	 Enablers	 Community growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Shift the cultureTrusted welfare and safeguardingStronger clubsEffective Learn to SwimAccess to waterOutstanding eventsSuccess on the world stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Build trustConnected digital ecosystemOutstanding peopleGrow revenuesOperational excellenceEnvironmental sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Tackling inequalitiesIncreasing engagementGrow open waterLifelong participationAquatics for health

Our Strategic Goals

You can read an explanation of each of the 18 strategic goals within the strategy document. For the purposes of our DIAP, we have chosen to focus on the 'Tackling Inequalities' goal. Specifically:

We recognise some communities have historically been prevented from participating in our activities by a range of barriers, both societally and within our aquatic sports. To promote inclusivity, we will work collaboratively to overcome these challenges and improve access for all underrepresented groups.

Our action plan details how we will achieve this goal. Our progress will be internally monitored, with regular updates published within the plan on our website (see 'Communication of Our Plan' below).

Development of this plan

This plan has been developed through internal collaboration within Swim England directorates and formed from insight exercises such as **England Swims**. The input of

external organisations who work closely with the underrepresented communities targeted within this plan, has been sought during development and is reflected in the actions.

There is more work to do to engage locally across the aquatics ecosystem, including with our regions and clubs. As set out within the plan, our first step will be to identify the stakeholders impacted by the plan and work with them to take action and address the challenges identified.

A [glossary](#) of terms with links to further information, and a list of [definitions](#) are available at the end of this document.

Baseline data

	Ethnically Diverse Communities	Disabled People	Living within IMD 1-3 ¹	LGBTQ+
General Population²	19.0%	17.7%	30.0%	3.2%
Our Membership³	8.2%	4.1%	11.9%	2.5%
Our Workforce⁴	5.0%	11.0%	13.0%	Data not available
Our Talent Pathways	10.0%	10.0% ⁵	Data not available	N/A ⁶
Our Team Members	4.7%	3.0%	10.2%	5.0%
Our Board	25%	33%	8%	8%
National Governance⁷	25%	0%	13%	13%
Leadership Groups⁸	4%	20%	8%	12%
Regional Governance⁹	Data not yet available	Data not yet available	Data not yet available	Data not yet available

¹ The Index of Multiple Deprivation, commonly known as the 'IMD', is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in England.

² Office for National Statistics, Census 2021, England

³ Diversity Audit completed January 2025, 18.4% response rate (32,361 members have responded from a total of 175,653).

⁴ Data refers to Teachers, Coaches, Educators and Officials. Compiled from multiple datasets and approximately 12,500 individuals.

⁵ Data includes para-swimming talent pathways.

⁶ The vast majority of athletes on our talent pathways are under 16 and therefore data pertaining to sexual orientation is not requested.

⁷ Data refers to the following committees: Audit, Risk and Probity, Nominations, Oversight, Remuneration, Sport Operations and Health and Safety Forum. Diversity Audit completed November 2023, 47% response rate.

⁸ Data refers to the leadership groups of our Clubs and each of the aquatic disciplines. Diversity Audit completed November 2023, 61% response rate.

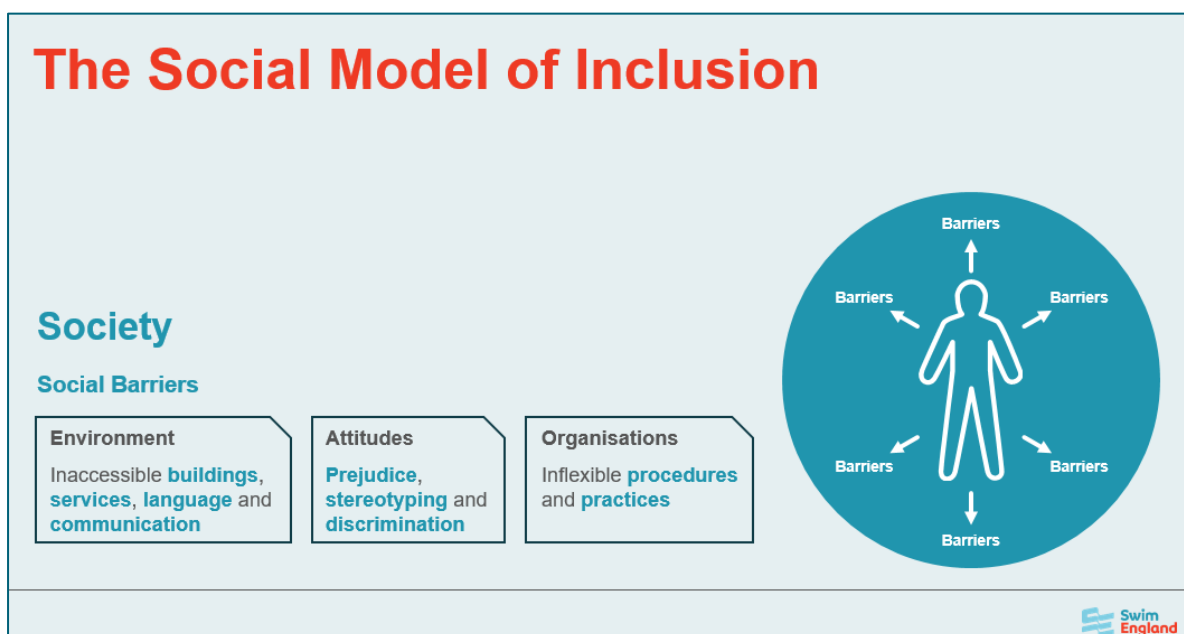
⁹ Data refers to the Swim England regional Boards.

Although the Equality Act 2010 details nine protected characteristics, we have focused on the four in the table above based upon underrepresentation across our sports. This focus does not exclude other groups. For example, whilst we have significant female representation across our membership and talent pathways we will continue to support individuals into our workforce and governance structures, where we have more to do.

For the purposes of this plan, we believe it is necessary to focus on those groups who may face the greatest barriers to access.

Our approach

The basis of Swim England's approach to EDI lies within the 'social model of inclusion', an expansion of the well-known 'social model of disability'. Fundamentally this means that Swim England is committed to removing the barriers associated with our sports and activities. As a result, we believe 'success' involves our entire network of clubs, workforce and members reflecting these values. We do not expect everyone to have all of the answers, we do expect everyone to be open to learning and encouraging progress.



EDI Governance within Swim England

For the purposes of accountability, we also believe it to be relevant to share who holds formal responsibility for the areas of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion across Swim England. You can find a copy of our EDI accountability matrix in Appendix 1. Currently our EDI governance structure consists of the following:

Board Equality Champion: Providing a focus at Board level and supporting the Board in ensuring that it has appropriate oversight of, and meets its responsibilities towards EDI. The Board Equality Champion also helps to ensure that EDI considerations are factored into decisions, is the main contact on the Board for EDI matters and may share their lived experience as appropriate.

Director of Community Participation and Health: To oversee the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion commitments for the organisation ensuring it links to the strategy. Responsible for ensuring that our strategic intent with regards to EDI is realised and decisions taken by the Senior Leadership Team consider and positively contribute to our EDI ambitions.

Head of Diversity and Inclusion: Through collaboration with internal and external stakeholders, turn our EDI ambitions into actions that grow the diversity of people taking part in aquatics within England. Drive a culture of inclusion within our sports and ensure that our actions are consolidated, measured and demonstrate progress against our objectives.

Inclusion Working Group (National): As detailed within its terms of reference, the group are tasked with developing and monitoring the organisation's adherence to and progression towards the agreed Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. This includes scrutiny of the work

we are undertaking, sign off on proposed approaches and knowledge sharing when appropriate. The group are also responsible for collecting and sharing learnings and examples of good practice from across aquatics at a local and national level, in order to continuously inform how we can develop inclusive practice.

As detailed in the plan below we will also implement the following:

Inclusion Working Group (Regional): All of our stakeholders have a key role in the successful implementation of this plan. Nowhere is this truer than across our regional teams. Working with these teams, we will identify and assign EDI Champions ('EDI Leads' or 'EDI Chairs' if a working group is in place) in each of the regions to ensure that operational decisions are made collaboratively via a regional Inclusion Working Group.

Specialist Advisors: We will aim to formalise partnerships with a range of specialist organisations, particularly with regards to disabled people, the LGBTQ+ community and ethnically diverse communities. Partners will be chosen on the basis of their existing work in the sector, the impact of this work and the objectives detailed below.

Special Interest Groups (Internal): We will support special interest groups internally, focusing on demographics and topics such as 'disability' and 'women's health'. These groups provide support with scoping various work areas and identifying solutions to barriers we will encounter.

Responsibilities for Inclusion at a local level:

Aquatic Clubs: Our aquatic clubs are separate from the formal governance structure. Clubs are responsible for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion within their club operating environment. To support Clubs to take proactive steps towards better inclusion, they are encouraged (and required if affiliated) to hold their own Diversity and Inclusion Action Plans. Our **Inclusive Club Guide** has been developed as a source of support.

What does 'success' look like?

By 2035 we want our sports to have moved from a 'hard to reach' environment for some underrepresented groups to one of 'access for all'. 'Success' is equality and inclusion working in tandem to increase diversity at all levels and in all areas. We call upon the entire aquatics community to work with us on our journey towards greater inclusion.

By fostering a culture of inclusion and belonging we believe that the diversity we seek will follow.

Communication of our Plan

We believe that transparency is key and will therefore ensure that progress is reported via our website twice per year. Internally we will implement a formal reporting process to the Swim England Board, working with our Board Equality Champion.

Action Plan

Short Term – Within 2025

Medium Term – Within 2 years

Long Term – More than 2 years

Aim	Objective	Actions	Term	Responsible
Embed accountability for EDI across the organisation, our regions and our membership.	Formalise and publish our full EDI governance structure by end of September 2025.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish DIAP via website by March 2025. • Create and publish matrix of accountability and responsibility via website by March 2025. • Establish EDI Champion for each Region by July 2025. • Establish Regional Inclusion Working Group by September 2025, including EDI Champion for each Region. • Publish terms of reference for each area of structure including our frequency of reporting. • Publish biannual updates for all actions in January and July of each year. 	Short Term	Head of Diversity and Inclusion
	Publish statement setting out our inclusion intentions by end of March 2025.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review our existing public commitment statement with sign off from the Senior Leadership Team. • Draft commitment statement. • Publish commitment statement on website. 	Short Term	Head of Diversity and Inclusion
	Identify relevant stakeholders and engagement plans by end of September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete stakeholder analysis and mapping and agree relationship managers internally. • Identification of the network of trusted advisors. • Formal MOU agreements are put in place where required. • Share DIAP with specialist advisors for feedback, whilst identifying areas of the plan where they can support. 	Short Term	Head of Diversity and Inclusion Place Based Project Manager Business Engagement Director

Aim	Objective	Actions	Term	Responsible
	Enhance the organisation's data analysis capabilities to measure our progress, by improving and increasing the data we collect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement an EDI data collection process across all of the identified groups within the baseline data that are listed as 'data not available' (above) by Dec 2025. • Identify best practice question set that can be used across all groups. • Design and implement data collection process. • Analyse data annually. • Publish annually as part of DIAP reporting schedule. • Complete the annual Sporting Equals' 'Race Representation Index' and publish results with commentary on our website. • Work alongside existing working groups within Swim England to better understand the barriers to completing the 'Diversity Profile' and engage support for Clubs. • Ensure EDI data collection is consistent across all stakeholders and that 30% of members have completed 'Diversity Profile' by December 2025. 	Short Term	Head of Diversity and Inclusion Head of Insight EDI Champions
	Capture and share learnings from EDI related work areas and projects, in order to demonstrate best practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify best practice approach to tracking learnings with a particular focus on social change. • Devise method for sharing learnings internally and periodically assess how those learnings have been utilised for continuous improvement by December 2025. • Publish learnings annually via website as part of DIAP update. 	Short Term	Head of Diversity and Inclusion Head of Insight
	Identify trends within club EDI to ensure appropriate support is provided and resources created.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an analysis of the DIAPs submitted through club affiliation to establish trends of activity and support requirements. 	Short Term	Sports Governance and Welfare Manager
Leverage new and existing stakeholder relationships to	Increase exposure to aquatics sports outside of existing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage our commercial partnerships to consider appropriate opportunities to contribute to actions within this DIAP, or other common aspirations related to EDI. 	Short Term	Head of Commercial

Aim	Objective	Actions	Term	Responsible
increase exposure to aquatic sports outside of existing social circles.	spheres of influence and stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and work with diverse role models and influencers, to champion the inclusion agenda within aquatics throughout 2025. • Create campaigns during Pride month and Black History Month to spotlight the achievements of those with lived experience. • Identify which existing partnerships have scope to include EDI considerations. • Identify commercial opportunities based on insight such as England Swims. • Meet 3 community-level funding requests, allowing for test and learn approach with specialist partners. 		Head of Diversity and Inclusion Media Manager
Increase the proportion of people from under-represented groups taking part in aquatics, measured through Active Lives.	Support the LGBTQ+ Network Pride in Water to increase the size of their network by June 2026.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work will be split into the network's 3 focus areas of: Support, Engagement, and Visibility. • Assist Pride in Water with production of supporting resources for the LGBTQ+ community e.g. coaching factsheet. • Support Pride Swim with their delivery, providing opportunities for the LGBTQ+ community to participate. • Assist Pride in Water with relaunch. • Publish case studies highlighting the LGBTQ+ community in aquatics throughout Pride month. • Investigate integration of Pride in Water membership within existing Swim England systems. 	Medium Term	Head of Diversity and Inclusion
	Continue to support 'Pride Swim' to raise awareness and spread their delivery throughout 2025.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase awareness of Pride Swims amongst Swim England membership. • Support Pride Swims to deliver in new areas. 	Short Term	Head of Diversity and Inclusion Media Manager
	Support specific impairment groups that currently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase awareness of classifications that sit outside of the traditional para-swimming pathway. 	Short Term	Head of Diversity and Inclusion

Aim	Objective	Actions	Term	Responsible
	cannot be classified or may require additional support including Deaf and Transplant athletes and those with Down's Syndrome .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase awareness of participants and impairment-specific events throughout 2025. • Create 'identifier' within membership system to build understanding of the scale of these communities within our sports. • Support external competition providers to raise awareness and attendance of their events. • Support partners to deliver impairment-specific events. • Leverage existing commercial relationships to access financial and/or value in kind support for athletes. 		Head of Membership Para-Swimming Development Manager Media Manager
	Determine how Swim England can better support aquatic clubs and community groups with the costs of involvement, building sustainability and increasing access to aquatics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify opportunities and implement affordable frameworks such as targeted subsidies, discounts, grants for pool hire, training and kit. • Implement frameworks and ensure visibility of access on our website. • Monitor and evaluate investments to determine the change that has taken place over the short, medium and longer term. 	Medium Term	Head of Diversity and Inclusion
	As part of 'Inclusion 360', work with clubs to ensure barriers to disabled people are identified and removed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead on the Inclusion 360 program, supporting clubs directly to improve their levels of inclusivity through the creation of bespoke action plans • Work with external partners to support impairment-specific events e.g. British Blind Sport National Gala 	Short Term	Volunteering Manager Head of Diversity and Inclusion EDI Champions
Increase the number of people from underrepresented groups within the	Ensure the appropriate frameworks are in place to grow the diversity of our	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope what work needs to be done in respect of Attraction, Development and Progression. • Determine what opportunities and alternative support is in place for career progression for those from underrepresented groups. 	Short and Medium Term	People Director Head of People

Aim	Objective	Actions	Term	Responsible
Swim England team and external workforce.	Swim England team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue training for all hiring managers and interview panel members including (but not limited to): Unconscious Bias, Criteria Selection, and Shortlisting. • Review existing recruitment and selection policies and procedures to reduce the potential unconscious bias to be triggered during recruitment by September 2025. • Ensure that EDI is woven into the language across all recruitment resources. • On a biannual basis monitor and evaluate the learnings from Diversity Confident • Review Diversity Confident pilot with a view to embed in all recruitment activities for paid roles. 		People Director Head of People
	Increase the number of teachers from ethnically diverse communities via the Recruitment Academy model. Sustaining a minimum 20% of learners in 2025.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the Recruitment Academy as a model to deliver training and build connections with community groups. • Focus on bespoke projects in targeted areas. • Work with partners to engage with underrepresented groups. • Increased diversity in our marketing assets and marketing outreach to increase the number of applicants and ultimately numbers of people trained from ethnically diverse communities. • Grow awareness of teaching swimming as a career among ethnically diverse communities develop to increase the number of academy applications. • Scope and apply for funding opportunities to remove the financial barriers to becoming a swimming teacher. 	Short Term (Long Term project but KPI set annually).	Business Engagement Director Head of Business Engagement Workforce Business Manager Head of Fundraising
	Enhance the lived experience of our workforce groups in order to identify potential solutions to current and emerging barriers to access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formalise a network of trusted advisors from the following demographics by December 2025: Disabled people, the LGBTQ+ community and ethnically diverse communities. • Organisation wide training needs analysis to be undertaken to determine existing understanding, and identify priorities for Learning and Development. • Identify a learning partner to work with in order to address learning needs throughout the organisation from Board to regional teams. 	Short Term	Head of Diversity and Inclusion

Aim	Objective	Actions	Term	Responsible
<p>Increase club membership from 167,845 members to 200,000 with a greater number of members from under-represented groups, representative of the geographical areas in which they are based.</p>	<p>Create a new membership offer to meet the needs of underrepresented groups by September 2028.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review existing membership offers to determine what opportunities are available with regards to community/health membership. • Conduct further defined research within aquatic clubs to identify support needs for interventions. 	<p>Long Term</p>	<p>Head of Membership</p> <p>Head of Diversity & Inclusion</p>

Glossary

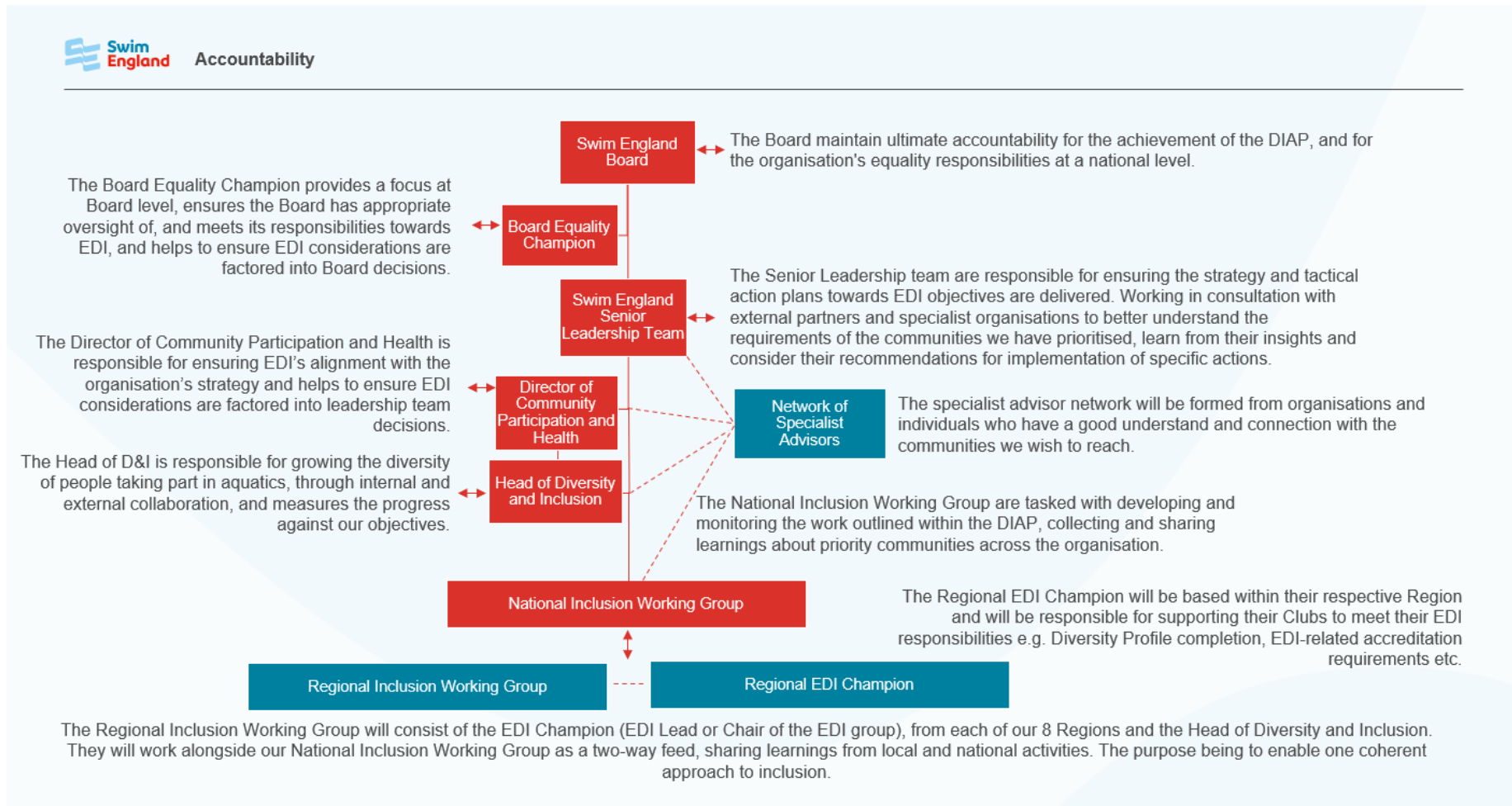
Term	What it means	Where to find more information
One Swim England	Swim England's strategy.	https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/swim-england-strategy/
Active Lives	Sport England's Active Lives surveys measure the activity levels of people across England. In areas where Swim England has no method for measuring activity levels, we utilise the data provided by Active Lives to measure progress.	https://www.sportengland.org/research-and-data/data/active-lives
England Swims	In 2022, working alongside key partners, Swim England gathered the views and experiences from ethnically diverse communities in a bid to break down long-standing barriers which prevent participation. This research has been published in a headline findings report, and further analysis is available from our Insight team. We plan to use this insight to underpin our actions in this area.	https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/england-swims-research-findings/
Pride in Water	Pride in Water is an independent network aiming to enhance the support, visibility and engagement of the LGBTQ+ community within the aquatic disciplines.	https://www.britishswimming.org/members-resources/prideinwater/
Inclusion 360	Initially working in the North East Region. Swim England team members with lived experience of disability will work with clubs to identify and remove barriers to their provision.	To get involved please contact equality@swimming.org

Definitions

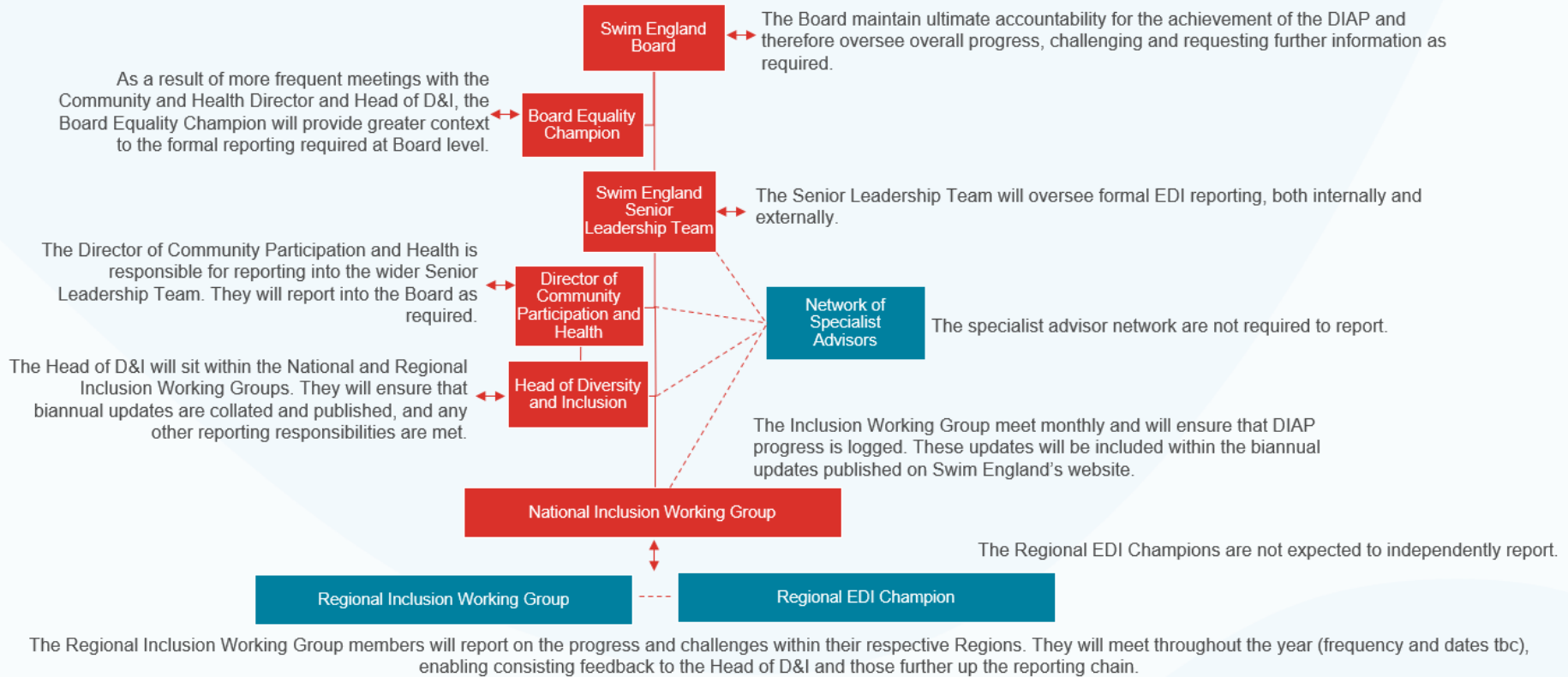
Term	Definition
Disabled People	People who consider themselves to have a disability. The Equality Act 2010 defines disabled people as those who 'have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on the ability to do normal daily activities'.
Para-Swimming Community	Para-swimming is a sport that has a function-based classification system designed to allow for fair competition amongst disabled athletes. The community therefore refers to the specific segment of the athlete population competing within this pathway.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Matrix of Accountability



Established groups/roles To be established as set out in the plan



Established groups/roles To be established as set out in the plan