2025 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Report

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

Statement

At Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, we believe that the future of nature's recovery depends on the people working to make it happen. People from every background, community and lived experience.

This year's EDI report reflects both our progress and our responsibility. We've made strides in disability inclusion and supporting families with caring responsibilities, yet we know there's still more to do to ensure our workforce and leadership truly reflect the diversity of the communities we serve.

Equity, diversity and inclusion are not side projects; they are fundamental to our mission and the way we work. We're committed to creating a culture where everyone feels welcome, respected and empowered to make a difference. Real change takes courage, consistency and collaboration and I'm proud of the steps we're taking together.

Dr. Jo Smith
Chief Executive Officer

This report is more than a set of numbers, it's a reflection of people's experiences, opportunities and voices. It highlights where we're making an impact, and where we still need to push further to make our organisation, and the wider environmental sector, more equitable and inclusive.

Our focus on *positive action* is about opening doors creating real pathways for underrepresented communities to enter and thrive in green careers. Through partnerships, early talent programmes and systemic change, we're building a more accessible sector that values lived experience as much as qualifications.

I'm grateful to everyone who's shared their time, stories and feedback to help us learn and grow. Together, we're creating an organisation where belonging is more than a word, it's the way we work.

Flavia Ojok
Deputy Director of Equity and Green Skills

Executive Summary

This report outlines our ongoing commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI), with a focus on creating a more representative, inclusive and equitable environment across our work, employees, volunteer base, and leadership.

<u>Key Findings</u>

Gender: 65% of employees were women and 33% men.

Sexual Orientation: 17% identified as LGBTQ+.

Disability: 25% of employees declared they have a disability

Age Distribution:
- 21% aged 16–29
- 42% aged 30–39
- 23% aged 40–49
- 13% aged 50–59
- 0% aged 60+

Data Gaps: Due to low survey participation, the report could not provide reliable data on ethnicity or socio-economic background representation.

Strategic Commitments

Our strategic commitments are based on three core pillars:

Positive Action: Increase representation, remove barriers, and create inclusive career pathways through early talent development and partnerships.

Diversity & Inclusion: Ensure diverse voices are reflected in communications and partnerships; foster spaces where everyone feels welcome and heard.

Anti-Racism: Zero tolerance for racism, mandatory equity training, and systemic policy reviews to dismantle racial inequities.

Progress will be tracked through representation data, feedback, and equity impact assessments.

Results

These results are representative of 60% of our employees that shared their data in the federation-wide EDI survey in 2025.

Gender, gender identity and sexual orientation

Our staff is predominantly female, with women comprising 65% of employees, men 33%, and fewer than 5% identifying as non-binary.

Male representation has increased from 25% in 2023, reflecting an 8% rise over the past three years.

No employees identified as transgender. In terms of sexual orientation, 75% of employees identified as straight, 17% as LGBTQ+, and 5% preferred not to disclose.

Ethnicity, Disability and Education

Our workforce is currently predominantly white, with 95% of staff identifying as white. While response rates limit our ability to fully understand wider ethnic representation, our data consistently shows low ethnic diversity, reflecting wider patterns across the environment sector. This remains a key area of focus for us.

25% of our colleagues identify as having a disability, which has strongly shaped our approach to inclusion and helped lay the foundations of our EDI journey. Creating a workplace where everyone feels included and able to belong continues to sit at the heart of what we do.

Most of our employees are degree educated (92%), highlighting opportunities to broaden access and pathways into our work.

Together, this gives us a strong starting point to take the next step in building equity and justice more intentionally, particularly by focusing on racialised and marginalised communities.

Age, Carers and Religion and Beliefs

Our staff team is relatively young, with the largest proportion of employees aged 30–39 (42%). A further 21% are aged 16–29, meaning nearly two-thirds of staff are under 40. Employees aged 40–49 account for 23%, while those aged 50–59 represent the smallest group at 13%, indicating lower representation in older age brackets. We have no representation of those aged 60+. Our goal is to break down access to work in the environment sector; therefore our focus is to open opportunities to those under the age of 25.

29% had caring responsibilities, 69% did not and 2% preferred not to say. Over the last few years, about a third of our staff team are carers and we have worked hard to ensure the work-life balance of our teams through our flexible working and fair pay principles with the Living Wage foundation.

The workforce is largely non-religious, with 46% reporting no religion or belief and a further 21% identifying as atheist, agnostic or humanist. Religious affiliation is diverse but smaller in proportion, with 15% identifying as Christian and 13% as other religions or beliefs. A small proportion (4%) preferred not to disclose their religion or beliefs, indicating generally high levels of disclosure across this area.

Comparison Highlights

Comparison of the 2023 – 2025 data highlights four key areas of focus:

- Age

- Ethnicity

- Caring responsibilities

- Education

Age

Our data suggests that there has been a reduction in the youngest age bracket (16 – 29) representation across the trust since 2023.
The latest ONS figures in January – March 2025 showed that young people not in education, employment or training was at 12.5% (923,000 people) due to cost of living, economic activity and health challenges in the 16 – 24 age group.

Ethnicity

Due to low survey participation, ethnicity representation data was unavailable for 2023 and 2025. In contrast, 2024 data showed that only 6% of respondents identified as being from ethnic minority backgrounds. This persistent lack of data reinforces the need to maintain our focus on improving representation. Notably, the environment sector remains the second least diverse sector in the UK, highlighting the urgency of addressing equity and inclusion within our field.

Caring Responsibilities

The proportion of individuals identifying as having caring responsibilities has declined year-on-year, dropping by 2% in 2024 and reaching 9% in 2025. While the reasons behind this reduction remain unclear, we remain committed to supporting carers and will continue our efforts to ensure inclusivity in this area.

Education

Since 2024, the number of individuals reporting that they attended university has increased by 35%. This places us significantly above the Derbyshire census benchmark of 29.4%, suggesting that access to the environment sector may be disproportionately limited to those with higher education backgrounds. We recognise this as a barrier to entry and are committed to making the sector more accessible and inclusive for all.

Our EDI Vision
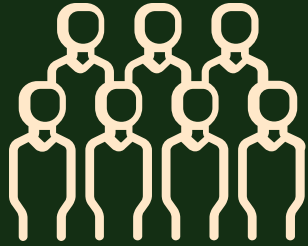
Participation

A workforce and volunteer base that reflects and represents the diversity of our communities
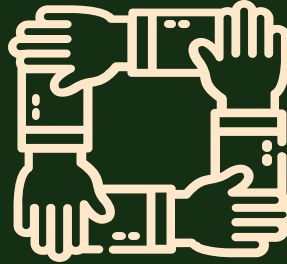
Inclusivity

Environmental spaces where everyone feels welcome and valued

Systemic Change

Systemic change to remove barriers and promote equity

Our Commitment

Diversity & Inclusion

Diversity encompasses the full range of human differences including, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, visible and non-visible disability, socio-economic status, religion, and life experience.

For DWT, diversity means actively seeking and valuing different perspectives, backgrounds, cultures and welcome, respect and learn to honor the varying ways of knowing and connecting to the natural world.

Positive Action

Taking positive action means taking intentional steps to address the lack of representation and the historical disadvantages that underserved and marginalised communities have faced. We believe it is the right thing to do to create real equity of opportunities.

DWT will focus on targeted approaches that create fairer pathways into nature and green careers, particularly for communities that have been historically underrepresented.

Anti-Racism

We recognise racism operates at individual, institutional and systemic levels that creates barriers preventing many communities from accessing, benefiting and participating in natures recovery.

At DWT, we stand firmly against racism in all its forms and commit to being actively anti-racist. We will take bold and purposeful steps to challenge discrimination, dismantle barriers, and create systems that foster equity and inclusion within our organisation and beyond.

Our 3-Year Plan

Radically Inclusive Access

One of our sites, locations or hubs has met radically inclusive standards enabling the reduction of physical, financial and cultural barriers to nature by 2029.

Green Skills Career Pathways

Pathway to employment schemes that attract, develop and retain talent for a green future.

Fair Green Economy

Co-created frameworks for justice-led nature recovery grounded in local knowledge and lived experience

Community Governance & Power

Develop sustainable ways for communities to hold real power and play a leading role in governance and decision-making and support communities to lead and deliver advocacy on the environmental justice issues that matter most to them
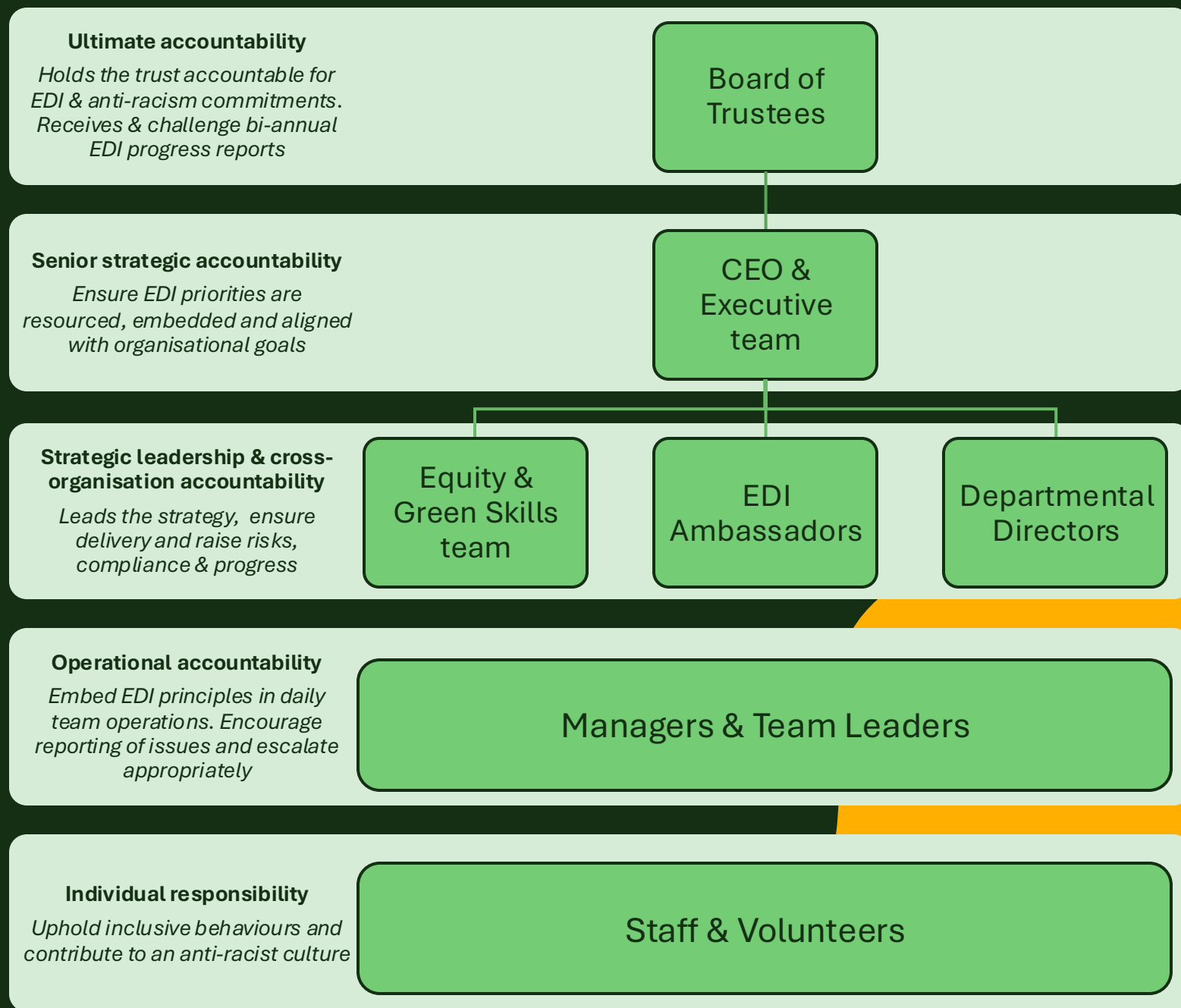
Anti-Racist & Radically Inclusive Culture

Reformed policies, training and improved employee voice and feedback mechanism.

Green skills pathways created that specifically use positive action to target racialised and marginalised groups

Governance & Ownership

Accountability Framework

Our accountability framework establishes a clear structure for how equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism responsibilities flow through the organisation. It outlines who is responsible for delivering actions but also who holds whom accountable at each level.

This ensures that accountability is distributed and transparent where no single person or department "owns" EDI but responsibility is shared, embedded and supported at every level.

Ultimate accountability

Holds the trust accountable for EDI & anti-racism commitments. Receives & challenge bi-annual EDI progress reports

Board of Trustees

Senior strategic accountability

Ensure EDI priorities are resourced, embedded and aligned with organisational goals

CEO & Executive team

Strategic leadership & cross-organisation accountability

Leads the strategy, ensure delivery and raise risks, compliance & progress

Equity & Green Skills team

EDI Ambassadors

Departmental Directors

Operational accountability

Embed EDI principles in daily team operations. Encourage reporting of issues and escalate appropriately

Managers & Team Leaders

Individual responsibility

Uphold inclusive behaviours and contribute to an anti-racist culture

Staff & Volunteers

Turning Commitment into Action

Next, we will move from commitment to delivery by developing a Nature Equity and Green Skills Index to use data and lived experience to target action where it is most needed. This will guide positive action to reduce barriers to nature, create inclusive green skills pathways for racialised and marginalised communities, and support fair, community-led approaches to nature recovery.

Alongside this, we will strengthen community power, enable advocacy on environmental justice, and embed an anti-racist, radically inclusive culture through reformed policies, training and improved employee voice, ensuring our impact is equitable, measurable and lasting.

Thank You

Thank you to our colleagues, partners and communities who shared their time, experiences and insight to shape this report.

The data and reflections here mark an important step in our ongoing journey toward equity, inclusion and environmental justice.

Appendix

Inclusive Language Glossary

Core Terms

Marginalised communities

These are groups of people who have been excluded from society because of discrimination or other disadvantages. They often face barriers that make it harder to access resources, opportunities or have a say in decisions that affect them.

Racialised

This term refers to people who face racism because of how society sees their race. It acknowledges that race is a social concept, not a biological fact, and highlights how some groups are treated differently based on racial labels.

Underrepresented

Groups whose presence in particular spaces, roles, or decision-making positions is significantly lower than their proportion in the general population or relevant community. This term is about the numbers - who's missing or undercounted.

Underserved

Communities that receive inadequate access to services, resources, or opportunities compared to their needs. This term emphasises the gap between community needs and what is actually provided.

Additional Terms

People of Color/Persons of Color - inclusive term for people who are not white, recognising shared experiences of racism while acknowledging diversity within non-white communities.

Systemic/Structural Racism - racism embedded in organisational systems, policies, and practices that create and maintain racial inequities, often operating independently of individual intent.

Intersectionality - the interconnected nature of social identities (race, gender, socioeconomic status, disability, etc.) and how overlapping systems of discrimination create unique experiences for individuals with multiple marginalised identities.

Equality - treating everyone exactly the same

Equity - providing different levels of support based on need to achieve fair outcomes

Accessibility - the design of environments, programs, and services to be usable by people with diverse abilities

Allyship - active, ongoing effort by people with privilege to support marginalised communities through advocacy, education, and systemic change work.

Bias - conscious or unconscious preferences or prejudices that influence decisions and behavior, often based on stereotypes or limited experience.

Privilege - unearned advantages or benefits that certain groups receive based on their identity, often invisible to those who have them.

Microaggressions - brief, everyday exchanges that send demeaning messages to members of marginalised groups, often unintentional but cumulatively harmful.