



# BE TOGETHER

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy






“ Badminton is such an inclusive game. It lends itself so well to inclusivity and to providing for a variety of players - it's something we really should be using to our own advantage as a sport and encouraging people to get involved. ”

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“ We aspire to be a more welcoming, equal, diverse, and inclusive sport. ”





# Foreword

**We believe that everyone should be able to access and enjoy badminton regardless of their gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, background, or circumstances.**

Despite this, we recognise that some people's experience or perception of badminton is that it is not as welcoming or inclusive as we would like. Some communities do not access the game to the degree others do, some feel excluded from the decision making of the sport and that their voice is not heard, some groups are under-represented in our paid and volunteer workforce and there are gaps in our understanding across a variety of communities and their experiences and perceptions of badminton.

Consequently, there remains much to do if we are to fulfil our aspiration of an equal, diverse, and inclusive sport. Badminton England has a key leadership role to play, but success in this area can only be achieved through commitment, collaboration, and support from the whole badminton community. We recognise that this will be a challenging journey and we cannot do it all at once, but we want to unlock the advantages of badminton for everyone, grow badminton at all levels and be part of a bigger movement that helps to address some of society's biggest challenges.

This strategy sets out how the sport of badminton can come together to be more equal, diverse, and inclusive. We will publish an annual action plan and progress against the strategy. We very much hope that you will join us on this exciting journey. #BETOGETHER

**Jackie Newcombe and Tosin Akinluyi**  
Badminton England Board Inclusion Champions



# Our Journey

By its nature, badminton is inclusive for many and attracts players, coaches, volunteers and officials from a diverse range of communities. We are proud of our many achievements to enhance badminton's diversity and inclusivity, including equal prize money in our events for male and female players, our Para Badminton success, electing a female President, improving the diversity of the Board, achieving the Intermediate Level of the Equality Standard for Sport and being one of the first sports to adopt a transgender policy.

Badminton Has Many Strengths To Build On:

## 40%

Of Our Players Are  
**Female**

40% of our players are female. Female participation is even stronger amongst young people who play badminton outside school than amongst adults, with girls making up just under half (47.5%) of participants.

## 17.6%

Of Players Are From  
**Asian Communities**

Participation is strong amongst some diverse ethnic communities - 17.6% of players are from Asian communities and 1.7% from Chinese communities. It is even stronger amongst young people - 19.2% of those who play badminton outside school are from Asian communities.



Diverse  
**Talent Pathway**

The talent pathway (England Junior Programme covering up to age 19) is relatively diverse in terms of gender and ethnicity.





## But There Remains Much To Do:

# 8.9%

### Of Players Have A Disability

Although we are very strong as a nation in Para Badminton, disability participation is low.

Badminton reflects national patterns with activity levels falling as we move from managerial, administrative and professional occupations (NS-SEC 1-2) to routine/semi-routine jobs and those who are long-term unemployed or have never worked (NS-SEC 6-8).

# 1.6%

### Overall Participation Rate

There is a similar pattern for deprivation – The overall participation rate in badminton is 1.6%; in the 10% most deprived communities it is 1.2% but rises to 2.5% in the 10% most affluent communities.



Access to the talent pathway is limited for many by geography and the cost of coaching, equipment, travel and competition.



The proportion of our workforce, which is female, is well below both the playing proportion and general population figures - 28.2% of registered coaches are female.



## But There Remains Much To Do: Cont.

# 40%

### Of Female Representation On The Board

Females are under-represented in staffing and advisory boards. The pattern is exacerbated at senior management level, where there is presently just one female member.



Whilst the Board has 20% representation from diverse ethnic communities, this group is under-represented amongst both staff and the advisory boards.



There are no disabled staff, advisory board or Board members.



Common key issues are lack of awareness/visibility, lack of opportunities, lack of role models/coaches and a lack of competitive opportunities.



# Vision

We Aspire To Be A More Welcoming, Equal, Diverse And Inclusive Sport Where:

The nation's most accessible, diverse, and inclusive sport through an unrelenting focus on equality, diversity, and inclusion.

✓ **Participation has increased and better reflects the makeup of both national and local populations**

✓ **All groups feel included as having a voice in the decision making of the sport, nationally and locally**

✓ **Levels of participation that reflect the population are sustained through all aspects of the game**

✓ **There is a larger and more diverse coaching, volunteering, and officiating workforce**

✓ **The governance and staffing structures of Badminton England and stakeholders across the sport better represent the playing population**

✓ **Barriers to entry in all parts of the sport have been lowered**



# Principles

Our principles for achieving this are:



Equality, diversity and inclusion is a 'lens' through which all decisions and actions should be considered – It is not an add-on, but integral to the whole badminton community and all its work.



The emphasis remains on the growth and success of English badminton and ensuring everyone has access to the game – Work to increase the diversity and inclusivity of badminton will not be at the expense of those already engaged and involved.



The approach of the strategy is to deliver direct impact in those areas where Badminton England has direct control and influence and inspire the badminton community to drive change.



Becoming a more equal, diverse and inclusive sport is a journey that takes time and requires clear prioritisation – It is not possible to tackle all areas and inequalities at the same time.



## Provide Leadership

Badminton England will be the lead for inclusion in badminton

**Developing a more equal, diverse, and inclusive sport requires the commitment and support of the whole badminton community. However, as the National Governing Body for badminton in England, we recognise the importance of leading by example and providing direction and support – We will lead with credibility, represent the change we wish to see in the sport, embed inclusion into our governance and management structures to provide strong leadership and be recognised as a force for inclusion and as an inclusive and diverse employer.**

To provide leadership, we will:

### **Ensure inclusion is at the heart of our organisational vision, strategy, culture and decision making**

A clear commitment to inclusion within the vision and strategy for badminton in England, our culture, our values and our decision making.

### **Modernise the composition of the Badminton England governance structure to reflect the playing population and provide leadership to the sport on equality, diversity and inclusion**

Ensuring recruitment reflects best practice and attracts a wider pool of candidates; increasing understanding, appointing inclusion champions; establishing an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee; ensuring that the voice of the badminton community and of players is heard at all levels.

### **Develop Badminton England as an inclusive employer that, at all levels, has a diverse workforce, represents the community it serves and is recognised as a force for inclusion**

Systematic programme of education and training for staff; creating an inclusive culture within the organisation driven by inclusion champions in each team; diversifying our workforce and senior management; appointing a lead role for inclusion.

### **Drive change and demonstrate our commitment to leadership for the sport by adopting and achieving nationally recognised benchmarks**



## Raise Awareness

### Increase visibility and awareness of badminton as an inclusive sport

**Badminton is already an inclusive and diverse sport in many areas, with good levels of participation and engagement amongst, for example, female and Asian populations. This should be celebrated and highlighted, whilst recognising the scope for further growth and engagement. At the same time, many do not always see badminton as inclusive and diverse and there is a need to change perceptions – To better reflect diversity within the sport, but also to demonstrate more widely the inclusive nature of badminton and to encourage more people to engage with and play the sport.**

**To increase visibility and awareness of badminton as an inclusive sport, we will:**

#### **Present badminton as an inclusive sport and activity appropriate for all**

Develop an Inclusive Communications Strategy that utilises and develops our players, advocates and role models, increases media coverage and promotes available opportunities.

#### **Communicate in a way that reflects our aspirations and the needs of our community**

A simple message that encapsulates and anchors inclusion work; improved data collection and audience understanding to tailor communication; increasing consultation and engagement with key communities and use of non-traditional routes of communication.

#### **Voice of the community – Develop and support advocates for the inclusiveness of badminton**

Creating and supporting a network of role models and voices (Inclusion Champions and Ambassadors) locally and nationally within our badminton community to listen and learn, embed inclusion and open that communication channel with different communities.

Use our major events to showcase the inclusivity and diversity of badminton. Ensuring our major events are inclusive and reflect best practice in all aspects of delivery.



## Drive Diversity and Inclusion

### Badminton a welcoming sport for all

For the vast majority of people, their first engagement with our sport will be through a club, school, coach, volunteer or local leisure centre. Badminton England has a key role to play in inspiring and influencing the badminton community to ensure that there is a place for everyone who wants to play or be involved. We will help build partnerships and provide the right support, training and resources, but the key role in ensuring that badminton is a welcoming sport for all lies with those who deliver our game up and down the Country. The commitment of the whole badminton community to delivering high quality, inclusive and welcoming experiences for everyone regardless of background and circumstance will increase the inclusivity and diversity of badminton.

To help badminton be a welcoming sport for all:

#### The badminton community will offer welcoming and inclusive environments

Enhancing existing provision and ensuring there is a place for everyone by building greater understanding of what makes badminton inclusive through training, education and resources.

#### Develop a more diverse and inclusive workforce

Diversifying the workforce by working with and investing in local community partners to increase local leadership and placing a greater emphasis in workforce recruitment on the ability to inspire and engage key communities; enhancing inclusion by upskilling current workforce.





### **Partnership working – Work in partnership with national and local partners to enhance equality, diversity and inclusion across all areas of the sport**

Working with and investing in the leadership capacity and capability of community and national organisations such as clubs and charities, who know their area and its needs best.

### **Products and programmes are easy to access and adapt to local need**

Adapting all products and programmes so they are inclusive by nature, easily accessible to national and local partners to adapt and use in delivery and that barriers to entry are reduced.

### **Decision making at all levels of the sport represents the playing population**

Building a greater understanding of the makeup of decision makers at club, league and county level and identifying ways of supporting all our stakeholders to work towards enhancing representation of their playing population.





## Tackle Inequalities

### Reduce inequalities at all levels of badminton

**There remain many stubborn inequalities across badminton, from low levels of participation amongst some communities to a decreasing proportion of female players in competitive and league play and from under-representation of some communities in our workforce and talent pathway to those involved in decision making not always reflecting their playing population.**

Specific interventions, over and above our focus on diversity and inclusion, are needed to drive more rapid changes in diversity where they are most needed. Whilst many of the actions highlighted earlier will support in this area, we also recognise that, to tackle inequalities, we will need to provide more direct support and take direct action. Our focus will be on listening to those communities with low levels of engagement, understanding their needs, investing in the capacity and capability of local organisations and people and developing local, needs-led solutions.

“ Our focus will be on listening to those communities with low levels of engagement, understanding their needs, investing in the capacity and capability of local organisations and people and developing local, needs-led solutions. ”

## **In the first instance, the focus will be on two key areas:**

It is simply not possible to tackle all inequalities at the same time and consequently some prioritisation is required.



# 1

### **Disability**

Building on the successes at World and Paralympic level to address the low levels of participation and engagement across the sport amongst disabled people.

# 2

### **Place Based Approach**

Using the legacy opportunities provided by major events to tackle inequalities in collaboration with key partners – This will focus on local need, but the nature of the areas means there will be significant focus on addressing engagement and participation amongst lower socio-economic groups.



## To tackle inequalities, we will:

### **Co-create initiatives and plans to tackle inequalities in participation with different and / or new communities – Understanding needs and motivations, breaking down barriers and designing localised, needs-led solutions around this**

Identifying priorities, building partnerships with national and local partners to understand the barriers to participation and engagement, utilising that insight and engagement to develop specific plans and local solutions to tackle inequalities; developing workforce in conjunction with local communities to engage and inspire communities we do not traditionally reach and supporting employability of that workforce.

### **Place-based development – Tackling inequalities in specific locations across the country**

Strategic partnerships with partners in key locations, developing legacy plans to tackle local inequalities, initially in cities where we stage major events and expanding that approach to other large cities where capacity and capability to tackle inequalities is strong.

### **Increase access to badminton**

Developing innovative approaches to enable access to facilities to deliver badminton, focused on areas and communities with low levels of engagement, including opening up unused venues in areas where participation is under-represented.

### **Build an accessible and inclusive talent pathway**

Removing barriers to accessing the talent pathway; increase the inclusivity of the talent pathway, including a greater player voice, to enable players to maximise their potential; creating an integrated pathway that supports disabled players and developing a more diverse pathway coaching workforce.





# Demonstrating Change

## Measuring success, being accountable

**The success of this strategy will only be demonstrated via a genuine shift towards the population being able to access and enjoy our sport regardless of their gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, background or circumstance.**

Badminton England will, therefore, track progress, improve the collection of data and hold ourselves and the sport as a whole accountable for progress by:

- Establishing a dashboard of key measures which will be an integral element of our performance reporting. This will demonstrate progress towards, initially, being more representative of the playing population and, over time, the wider population as benchmarks against which we will assess success.
- Publishing an annual report demonstrating progress against this strategy, including the dashboard identified above and an annual action plan outlining how we intend to deliver the Strategy – This plan will be developed by the newly formed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee in conjunction with the badminton community and key partners.
- Annual survey of the badminton community and stakeholders/partners to understand perceptions of diversity and inclusivity within the sport.
- As we improve our ability to report against agreed characteristics, we will seek to benchmark the sport of badminton against other sports and organisations.
- Evolving the measures over time to reflect better understanding of the challenges and opportunities, changing priorities and increasing alignment with the strategies of Sport England and UK Sport.



# During 2022

We will develop, in conjunction with our newly established EDI Committee, and publish our first Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan setting out specific actions on how we intend to work with the badminton community to fulfil the ambition of this strategy.







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ENGLAND 