



CIRENCESTER FRIENDLY

INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY REPORT

OCTOBER 2022

CIRENCESTER FRIENDLY

At Cirencester Friendly, we believe the diversity of our employees, including our Board, is a strength. We want to use that strength to grow and innovate as a business, by continuing to foster an inclusive environment where people feel they can be themselves and are empowered to share their personal insights and perspectives.

Contributions from all our people will improve the effectiveness of the Society, in every area, through the variety of skills, experience and knowledge a diverse workforce brings.

As a Mutual business, we value the transparent relationship we have with our Members and recognise how important it is to reflect this in our organisation. We're committed to building a workforce that truly represents our values and to helping everyone reach their highest potential. To deliver this aspiration, we'll continue to attract, retain, and develop our people within an inclusive culture where everyone feels valued.



SENIOR LEADERSHIP

Our Executive Committee recognises the importance of inclusion and diversity (I&D) within the business and champions it. I&D is a permanent, distinct part of the agenda and our action plan is discussed regularly.

Demonstrating our commitment to I&D, Chief Operating Officer, Shirley Fell has been appointed as our I&D figurehead.



Shirley said, "I feel excited and privileged to be leading the Society's work on inclusion and diversity. It's something I'm hugely passionate about, and while the Society is in a good place culturally, we're early on in our I&D journey with work to do. My aim is for the Society to be a leader in our sector on I&D and we're putting together an action plan to achieve just that."



TREATING ALL CUSTOMERS AND
EMPLOYEES WITH RESPECT,
DIGNITY AND COURTESY



EMPLOYEES

For the Society to succeed, we appreciate the importance of treating all our employees with dignity and respect. It's vital that everyone feels valued as an individual and like they belong.

All of us are committed to the Society's HEART values and are continuously encouraged to demonstrate this in everything we do .

The Society has enlisted RedArc and Aviva who offer advice and professional counselling to all employees, alongside YourHalo which focuses on food & nutrition and sleep & physical health. All levels of management have also been offered mental health training courses, which helps them to recognise and approach colleagues who may be struggling. This has been supported by our Human Resources Team who throughout the pandemic held regular care calls with our people.

The Society's initial focus has been on training and recruitment and what action can be taken to encourage I&D. For example, we introduced a specific module focusing on I&D in our Manager Development Programme. We're now working on an I&D action plan, which focuses on the core elements of inclusion: belonging and uniqueness.

We've recently circulated a survey to all our people to help us determine, for example, their sense of belonging, trust and psychological safety within the workplace.

The results of this survey have shown that we're in a good place culturally, with positive feedback overall on trust, belonging, psychological safety and decision making. The path forward for us will be focused on how we can embed this culture and make further positive I&D developments across the Society as a whole.

Following this, I&D will become a permanent, standalone item on the Executive Committee agenda.



CUSTOMERS

The Society has a history of great customer service. According to the Institute of Customer Service (ICS), in 2021 we received a satisfaction rating of 87.2, compared to the industry average of 79.

A survey of our people by the ICS in the same year reinforced this, with an overall ServCheck index score of 82.15, compared to an all-sector average of 75.5.

Our commitment to offering the best service to all our customers forms an important part of our holistic approach to I&D. We're passionate about delivering the best service possible, which this year has led to us rolling out training to all our people on working with vulnerable customers.

SCORE OF

82.15

ALL SECTOR
AVERAGE

75.5



APPROPRIATE WORKING ENVIROMENT

We're opposed to all forms of discrimination. All job applicants, employees and others who work for the Society will be treated fairly and not discriminated against on any grounds, especially those outlined in the Equalities Act:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion and Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

In December 2021, we refreshed our I&D policy which outlines what our goals are as a Society:

- Attract and retain a variety of diverse individuals with differing backgrounds and perspectives.
- Foster an inclusive environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued which is endorsed and led by the Executive Committee.
- Enhance the training, development, and progression opportunities available to all employees regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion, social class, or background.

The capacity for agile working for our people has been a key area of focus, especially since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. We've implemented a hybrid working policy which encourages employees to consider hybrid working and/or flexible working arrangements. This hasn't only resulted in the Society being able to hire new members of staff from other parts of the UK, but has also given more flexibility to our people blending home and office working. This has allowed some working parents to increase their hours for example.



MAINTAINING AN EFFECTIVE CULTURE VIA OUR BOARD

The Society recognises the importance of a diverse Board that encourages and champions I&D. This has been embedded as a key Board objective.

OCTOBER 2022

WORKING WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE ALLIANCE

Since joining the Mutual Diversity Alliance (MDA), the Society has regularly attended MDA forums. By gaining alternative perspectives of others within the Alliance, we've been able to take key steps in our journey of creating a more inclusive and diverse working environment for all.

