



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION FRAMEWORK

THE SECOND YEAR

2024



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ENGLAND  
HOCKEY

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# INTRODUCTION

## THE ENGLAND HOCKEY EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION FRAMEWORK CONTINUES TO UNDERPIN THE STRATEGIC FOCUS OF ENGLAND HOCKEY'S WORK IN MAKING THE SPORT MORE VISIBLE, RELEVANT AND ACCESSIBLE.

This report, which covers moments from April 2023 to March 2024, celebrates the successes of clubs, leagues, counties and Areas as we worked together through the second year of the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework](#).

After spending year one listening to participants, we've spent the second year building on that valuable knowledge and awareness.

The stories we are celebrating in this report are from every aspect of the sport, which includes junior, senior, international competition and first-time participants. The report this year showcases more of the activity that has been happening at clubs up and down the country.

It is important that England Hockey leads on setting the Framework for ED&I by ensuring that the systems and structures in the game are providing opportunities for everyone to access and enjoy the game. Everyone in the game, at every level has a role to play in making sure people feel welcome and included, valued and respected and this report aims to showcase some of the inclusive local activities that we hope will inspire others.

The independent ED&I Advisory Group has continued to support the central ED&I planning and delivery; providing good challenge and advice in equal measure. They have identified which are the key stories to report on this year and kept the England Hockey plans and discussions on track with the original outcomes of the Framework which are:

- We want our sport to be reflective of society in England. We want to be relevant to everyone in the 21st century.
- We want people within our sport regardless of their role and participation level to feel safe, valued, respected, welcomed. Hockey will generate a sense of belonging and engagement
- We want to break down any barriers to access enabling everyone to take part.
- We want hockey to be positively regarded as an inclusive, diverse and welcoming sport.

We hope you enjoy reflecting on the progress that hockey is making to ensure the sport is achieving the above.



# ACTIONS FROM ACROSS THE SPORT



# STATE SCHOOL FESTIVALS

In the latter stages of the 2022/23 season, there were two Area level state school festivals, hosted by Queen Elizabeth High School in Hexham and RGS Worcester. These were followed up by an inaugural National State School Festival hosted at Nottingham in May 2023.

The competitions collectively provided opportunities for 86 different teams from 60 schools. The competition was seven-a-side playing to In2Hockey regulations for the under 14 age group with schools travelling to the National Festival from as far as the Isle of Wight, Hexham and Bury St Edmunds to take part.

Our special thanks go to the volunteers who made these events happen in the umpire team, including many from Nottingham University, who kept the games flowing at the National Festival and the Hockey Makers who helped the days run smoothly in many different ways. Nottingham Hockey Centre was a brilliant venue for the National Festival with eight mini pitches in almost constant use and we thank Ellie Rayer from the women's international squad for spending time with the young players.

During 2023/24, the Areas built on this success and seven Areas ran Festivals for almost 50% more teams and schools - there were 127 teams and 88 schools taking part. Thanks to Queen Elizabeth High School, Dean Close School, Millfield School, Marden Russets HC, Timperley HC, Reading HC, Herts and Essex High School, Loughborough University and University of Leeds for hosting these competitions.

The second National State Schools Festival is due to be held in May 2024 with entries expected to be up on the first Festival in 2023.



# CHANGING KIT REGULATIONS ON A WIDER SCALE



Following the success of changing the domestic hockey regulations to ensure that players could wear kit that made them feel comfortable and able to play, whether that be Hijabs, or shorts alongside teammates in skorts, the women's international squad asked England Hockey to support them in contacting FIH about their kit regulations.

Athlete feedback from the Great Britain women's team was clear on what they feel comfortable to play in, so Nick Pink, England and Great Britain Hockey CEO and Hollie Pearne-Webb, England and Great Britain women's captain, wrote to the FIH requesting that they review their kit regulations which at the time allowed skorts or shorts but not a combination of both in one team.

The FIH responded positively to the letter and the decision was made at the FIH Executive Board on 6 June 2023 that, effective immediately, female athletes will be able to make individual choices to wear shorts, skorts or skirts as long as they collectively retain the identity of the team's kit through uniformed colours and designs.



*We are really pleased with today's news that we will have freedom of choice over the kit we wear in international competitions. We really appreciate the support of England and Great Britain Hockey, the FIH and the speed at which they have made this decision. This is a big milestone for female sport, and we can all be proud that we, as well as the next generation of athletes, will have the choice for what makes them most comfortable.*

Hollie Pearne-Webb, England and Great Britain Women's team captain

# CHANGING KIT REGULATIONS ON A WIDER SCALE

None of the kit regulation changes in hockey in the last couple of seasons could have been done without the research evidence undertaken by Tess Howard from the England and GB Hockey women's team. Tess undertook the research as part of her undergraduate studies at Durham University where for her final year dissertation she looked at whether female school sports kit was 'practical, professional or patriarchal?' Her research found that from those respondents to her survey over 70% of women have seen girls drop out of sport because of sports kit concerns, 60% of respondents wanted to be able to wear shorts, and every woman wanted choice on what they wore.

Tess' approach to this and the subsequent success she has had in changing not just hockey, but other sports' approaches to kit, resulted in her winning the Changemaker Award at the The Sunday Times Sportswomen of the Year Awards 2023. Tess' research was referenced by the Women and Equalities Select Committee in their report on Health Barriers for girls and women in Sport published in March 2024.



*What an absolute honour, it is overwhelming and wonderful. Thank you to our hockey community for all their support, I'm so proud of how we have evolved our game to be more inclusive and we must stand by that as a marker of the future of our sport. A huge thank you to my teammates and England Hockey, we did something incredibly special in the summer, choice is everything.*

*A last thank you to the Women's Sports Trust for empowering my athlete voice, and to my professors at Durham University who encouraged me to publish my undergrad research. This is for everyone who's ever felt uncomfortable or dropped out because of sports kit: the movement for inclusive sportswear has arrived.*

Tess Howard - England and Great Britain





# COACHING

## SUPPORTING WORK WITH ETHNICALLY & CULTURALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

As reported last year, England Hockey were successful in securing funding from Sport England to support coaches from ethnically and culturally diverse communities, and during summer 2023 the first wave of a bespoke programme got underway, the Talent Inclusion Project.

The Talent Inclusion Project helps our intention to make hockey coaching reflect our current society. It aims to support coaches in creating environments that attract a greater diversity of players from ethnically and culturally diverse communities into the game. This in turn will support more players which over time will lead to our international players and coaches being more diverse, reflect society, and be role models for future generations.

A key aim of the Talent Inclusion programme has been to co-create an inclusive coaching pathway accessible to all, from coaching novices to aspiring high-performance coaches from diverse backgrounds. This has involved engaging individuals currently outside of hockey to foster a connection with the sport and develop them into role models.

This project has been set up to create opportunities for more diverse coaching. Being part of the project allows coaches to:

- Access a tailor-made England Hockey coaching programme to help support them on their future coaching journey.
- Work with, and be supported by, England Hockey coaches, players, coach developers, personal mentor and an extended network of experienced people providing a range of perspectives for that support.
- Support their desire to coach in a variety of environments and at any level.

The Talent Inclusion Project was developed after a period of learning from, and with other sports, on providing tailored and appropriate support to coaches from underserved communities. In addition, as part of the co-creation, England Hockey listened to the collective knowledge and the lived experience of a dedicated forum of ethnically and culturally diverse coaches from hockey and from other sports organisations. This forum was a respected and valued space that provide a robust challenge to the planning and early development stages.

The next phase of the Project will launch two new coaching programmes: Involved and Ambitions. The Involved programme will target individuals aspiring to coach any sport, with a hockey focus, providing comprehensive support and development opportunities. The Ambitions programme will cater for Level 2 coaches seeking to advance their careers, offering specialized support, mentorship, and immersive learning experiences.



# COACHING

## MAKING CLUB SESSIONS MORE EFFECTIVE AT ENGAGING & RETAINING PLAYERS

Work with the Commonwealth Games Legacy Fund is also helping to identify the types of coaches and leaders that new community groups respond positively to. The Talent Inclusion Project and the Commonwealth Games Legacy Fund are working together to pilot new training programmes for existing leaders in community activities to develop hockey delivery skills.

To achieve this, we have collaborated with StreetGames to create an Activator program, providing accessible entry points to hockey coaching. This project is anticipated to complete by mid-2025. Additionally, partnerships have been developed with Coach Core and Lifetime which will enable England Hockey to employ apprentices in the future, delivering hockey to culturally diverse communities within schools and clubs.

In addition to the specific Sport England funded interventions for ethnically and culturally diverse communities, the coaching team has been working with many coaches across the country.

Aimed at making the sport more visible, relevant and accessible, the coaching team took tailored learning into over 50 clubs, schools and counties, engaging over 550 coaches.



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*The feedback from the tailored programme was very positive. Even more pleasing was seeing the coaches looking to implement changes in their sessions. Children have definitely been more ‘engaged’ since. For example, a club member said, while walking to the pitch, he could see and hear the great atmosphere and energetic vibe from the children participating.*

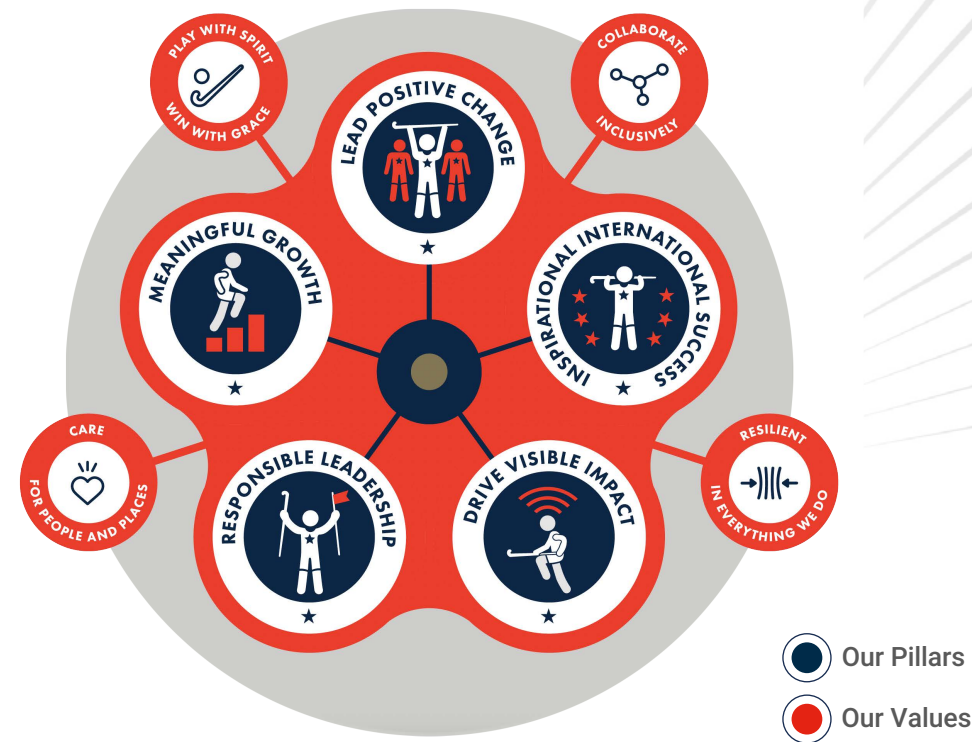
Barford Tigers Hockey Club

# DEVELOPING A NEW STRATEGY FOR HOCKEY

In October 2023, England Hockey launched a new strategy to take the sport to 2028... **CREATING A FUTURE FOR OUR GAME TOGETHER**

The purpose of the strategy is to share a love of the game with a clear mission to work together to make hockey more visible, relevant and accessible to all. England Hockey has embedded our continued commitment to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework throughout this strategy. That way it stays central to all our decision making.

This five-year strategy engages with the hockey community to share the love of the game and bring new people into the sport in the future. The strategy promises to amplify the hockey story to ensure the sport continues to bring together generations of people regardless of age, ability, or background.



The four values that underpin the strategy which has been agreed with the Sport: **Collaborate Inclusively, Care for People and Places, Play with Spirit Win with Grace and Resilient in Everything We Do**

The 5 pillars of the strategy are:

**Lead Positive Change | Meaningful Growth | Drive Visible Impact  
Responsible Leadership | Inspirational International Success**

These pillars will help the game connect with more of the community and share our love for the sport more widely. The strategy aims to do this by taking a compassionate and considerate approach to leading and including people which will enable people to thrive and the game to grow.



# HOCKEY ID

## CONTINUED SUCCESS FOR THE BRITISH AND ENGLISH TEAMS

A Hockey ID GB Team was selected for the inaugural hockey event at the Special Olympics World Games in Berlin June 2023.

June 24, 2023, will be etched forever in the history of Great Britain Hockey as the Special Olympics GB Hockey Team clinched a gold medal on their Special Olympics World Games debut, which was held in Berlin from 17 – 25 June. The 10-member squad registered five wins and a loss in the preliminary round before defeating Paraguay in the Semi-final and Bulgaria in the Final to clinch the historic gold.

The Special Olympics in Berlin was the first time that Hockey ID had gender balancing requirements - there had to be a player from the underrepresented gender on the pitch at all times. The event was 12 nights away which was a huge undertaking for the players and staff as well as the parents who may not have supported their children in this way before. The squad had two training sessions on consecutive days on arrival, so we were able to see the venue, work out how long travel would take to and from the venue. After trial and error, the squad enjoyed travelling on public transport to the Olympic Stadium. The squad then played for six days with just one day rest in between the semifinal and the final.



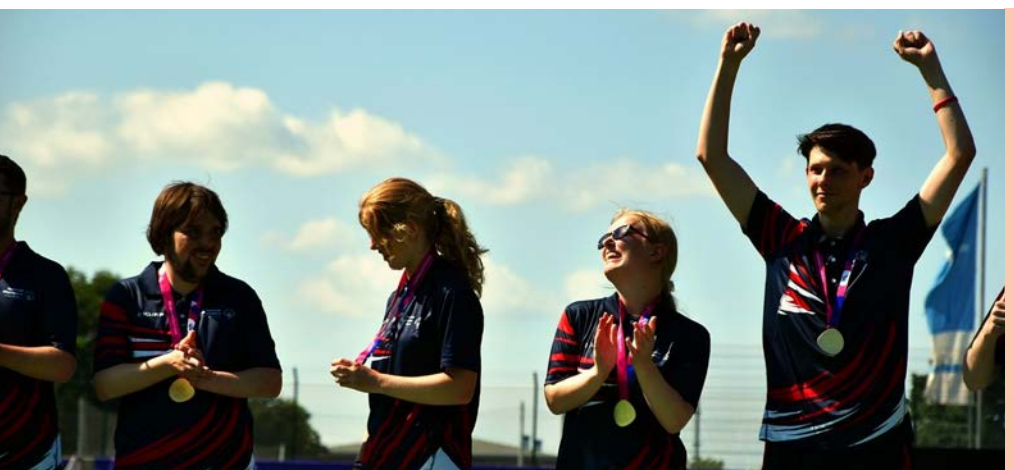
*I was a bit on the edge in the Final, with what was at stake, but did whatever needed to do in the end. I am really happy, over the moon. I just enjoyed being part of the whole thing, just having a great time with everyone. I feel very proud to represent my country, and with the amazing team I've got, it was an honour to do it with them. Hockey means a lot, just a social side, having fun, winning competitions like we've done here.*

Jacob Fairweather, Special Olympics GB team captain



# HOCKEY ID

## CONTINUED SUCCESS FOR THE BRITISH AND ENGLISH TEAMS



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On returning to the UK, the team attended a reception at 10 Downing Street as part of the Special Olympics World Games team. Team Manager Steve Bradley wrote a blog piece about the experience and said:

*The whole experience felt like a real celebration for the athletes and that their experiences and achievements were really being recognised. There were chats with coaches about the improvements in players confidence and the people that arrived home being different to those that parents and loved ones waved off in June. At the start of Berlin, some players were nervous about getting food from the hotel, at No 10 they were sampling all the food they could and telling everyone how good it was. What a change.*

*Throughout the few hours that we were at No 10, the squad seemed so happy to be there, in an unknown environment which a few weeks ago may have been very different to manage. Athletes of course rekindled friendships that they had made during Berlin, the warmth and friendliness from across sports, staff and government officials was clear to see. Some players parents attended from across different sports, and all were overjoyed that the people they had accompanied were being recognised at the very highest level.*

*It was so clear standing in the garden of No10 exactly what the power of sport is and how it has allowed people with so many different challenges to find something so special to them that has enabled them to achieve so much, whether that is on or off the pitch.*

*Right from the first Flyerz session our local hockey club was incredibly positive and inclusive and this has continued into our England/GB hockey journey. Ellen had never spent any time away from her family before she went to Berlin but not only did you make it possible for her to participate but she came back with all sorts of new life skills. She has started managing her own medication, taking it unprompted twice a day and sorting out her week's tablets on a Sunday night. She will go on the bus to meet a friend which she'd never done before. At home she is much happier and chats to the friends she made on both trips. She has been away on two trips with college which she wouldn't have been able to do if she hadn't been away with hockey. Other sports should definitely look at the hockey model for encouraging people with intellectual disabilities.*

Michelle Greenall, Ellen's mum

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# HOCKEY ID

## CONTINUED SUCCESS FOR THE BRITISH AND ENGLISH TEAMS

England Hockey worked with the International Federation, FIH, to jointly deliver a Hockey ID training course at Oundle School near Peterborough. There were seven different active Flyerz section clubs attending the event which was enjoyed by both existing Flyerz coaches and other coaches looking to develop their knowledge and skills.

FIH expect to increase the gender balancing requirements for Hockey ID teams over the coming seasons to lead to gender balanced teams in the future.

In August 2023, Euro Hockey continued to develop the opportunities for international Hockey ID and the European Championships was run for a second time. An England team was selected following a series of trials with two debutants breaking through for these Championships.

The team registered three wins and a loss to finish second in the opening stage of the competition. They started their campaign with a 3-0 win over Ireland but lost to Germany 2-9 before securing wins over France (3-1) and Czech Republic (2-0). They faced Germany in the Gold Medal match.

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*We are incredibly proud of all of the players who have given so much over the course of this tournament. We had played the Germans earlier in the tournament and they are a top team. They played with passion, pride and took the lead against the tournament winners. They come away with silver and again the team carry on improving.*

Steve Bradley, Head Coach

It has been a highly successful second year for the Hockey ID programme and the programme itself, as well as everyone involved, has grown and developed in every sense.



# FLYERZ HOCKEY



September 2023 was Festival time for established Flyerz sections across the country, with Wakefield HC hosting a Northern Flyerz Festival at their sports club pitches and then Forest Flyerz and Falcon Flyerz jointly hosting the Southern Festival at Lee Valley Hockey Centre.

The Northern event had many of its attendees coming to play after hearing about it through disability networks as the profile of hockey's inclusive sports offer continues to grow.

The Southern event had over 80 players registered with 15 different clubs attending the day.

Both days were popular and very enjoyable for all of the participants. Interest in running Flyerz sections continue to increase, with new sections starting across the year, not just at the start of the season.

Harleston Magpies are one such club that has started a new Flyerz section. Their Flyerz group started in Autumn 2023.

England Hockey is planning a Club Forum for April 2024 to help clubs interested in setting up a new Flyerz section and Harleston have been invited to be one of the speakers at the forum to talk about their recent experiences in setting up a section.



# CHAMPIONING ED&I IN THE GAME

The England Hockey Awards in 2023 introduced a new category for a Diversity and Inclusion Champion.

The award was for an individual or group of people at a club or partner organisation that during the season of 2022/2023 or the summer of 2023:

- Have identified people within their local community who are underserved by sport and looked to connect them to hockey.
- Understood what could make a real difference and bring hockey to more people.
- Have worked to make hockey fit into people's lives so they feel able to join in.
- Used their profile or standing to promote hockey and encourage underrepresented people to take part.
- Have arranged activities and events that have reached new people and made them feel welcomed, valued and part of the hockey family.

There were some great entries into the Awards and the shortlist was: Hockey Hotshots; Hockey Mentors; London Royals HC; Tower Hamlets HC and Spencer Lynx who were the overall winner.





# CHAMPIONING ED&I IN THE GAME

SPENCER LYNX



The Spencer Lynx club was born to address a lack of diversity at Spencer Hockey Club, with a separate charity being established by five Spencer parents. They offer a free two year programme, bringing together children from 15 local schools every Sunday – there is no membership fee, kit and equipment is free, thereby addressing a key barrier to entry into our sport.

Participating schools are selected on the basis of their high pupil premium levels, and Lynx has developed trusted relationships with those schools. Children are recruited by delivering in-school hockey sessions and working with teachers to identify children not already benefitting from extra-curricular activity.

Training is delivered in Lambeth, a diverse, densely-populated London borough where 70% of the population lives in 40% of the most deprived areas in England. Lynx identified the 10 - 11 year old age group as being particularly likely to benefit from higher levels of physical activity, knowing that more than a third (37%) of 10 - 11 year olds in Lambeth are classified as overweight.

By offering a two year programme, children are given enough time to establish a sporting habit and have the skills and confidence to continue into mainstream hockey clubs. Attendance awards encourage members to keep returning each week, including their own stick after 10 weeks - a much-valued prize to work towards. Attendance levels are high, with some children attending every week of the programme!



# CHAMPIONING ED&I IN THE GAME

SPENCER LYNX



Training is readily accessed by public transport, and a travel fund assists families in need, addressing another barrier to participation. Regular communications with families are inclusive, and a Trustee is present at every session, to provide an approachable contact point. Spencer Lynx is sensitive to the needs of its multi-ethnic membership, eg. providing sports hijabs to female Muslim members; ensuring snacks are halal; and taking extra breaks during Ramadan.

Four cohorts of children have been recruited to Lynx to date, involving over 300 children, and Lynx has delivered in-school sessions to almost 3000 children. Lynx has consulted with schools and families involved in earlier projects to ensure their offer meets their targeted audience's needs, and their established Youth Council enables the programme to be youth-led and focused. International players provide inspirational role models for the members.

Over 60 children have "graduated" from Lynx into a mainstream club to continue their hockey journeys. Bursaries are available to ensure there are no barriers to their continued participation, and the Trustees maintain regular contact with former members, to ensure they feel accepted in the wider hockey family. Graduating into Spencer as part of a large Lynx cohort means that the children immediately feel comfortable in the larger club, as they are surrounded by lots of their former Lynx teammates. Past members have represented their boroughs in London-wide competitions, and one plays London County Hockey.



# GIVING PLAYERS A VOICE

Building on the learning from feedback surveys reported last year, the Talent Academies invited players to be part of feedback forums that were facilitated by the EH coach education team. These forums were designed to follow up on the themes that the surveys had established and provide an opportunity to explore topics a bit further and to hear the players' first-hand stories.

The forums provided players with an opportunity to talk about their experiences in the Talent Academy (TA) environments and discuss as a collective peer group from across the country.



There were two player forums across the season and two further feedback surveys for players, coaches and parents to complete.

The first survey recommended improving communication between players, parents and the TAs and by the second survey later in the year, the feedback indicated that this had started to improve. The players were keen to have a sense of belonging with their TA and to be more supported with their individual development including understanding their wider life context such as exams. Parents workshops have run after each survey and in February 2024 an online parent module was released which parents have been accessing and completing.

A coaches' forum was also run for the Talent Academy coaches in early 2024 to hear about their experiences in more detail. Again, this was based on following up on themes from the satisfaction surveys which continue to run as part of the development of the programmes.

Each TA was provided with a mentor to support the TA with developmental practice.

The individual Talent Academy programmes continue to grow and develop. There is a strong emphasis across the programmes on learning from each other and listening to their players and coaches to make the programmes better for every individual taking part.

# ELECTING A FEMALE PRESIDENT

England Hockey elected a female President at the 2024 Annual General Meeting.

With an illustrious career spanning over two decades, Alex Danson-Bennett MBE has been announced as England Hockey's new President and will help guide the sport with her unparalleled expertise, leadership and passion. As one of the most decorated athletes in the history of British hockey, Alex Danson-Bennett's impact on the sport is immeasurable. Her journey from grassroots to the international stage has inspired countless individuals and transformed the landscape of hockey in England and beyond.

Danson-Bennett's exceptional achievements as a player include an Olympic gold medal at the Rio 2016 Games, where she played a pivotal role in securing victory for Team GB. Her leadership qualities were evident throughout her career, serving as captain of both the England and Great Britain women's hockey teams.

In addition to her on-field prowess, Danson-Bennett's commitment to the growth and development of hockey is unwavering. She has been an ambassador for the sport, tirelessly advocating for increased participation, accessibility, and inclusivity at all levels.

As President of England Hockey, Danson-Bennett will continue to champion these values while providing strategic direction and support to the organisation. Her vision for the future of hockey aligns with England Hockey's mission to be more visible, relevant, and accessible.



*It's an absolute privilege to become the England Hockey President. Hockey has been a part of my DNA for as long as I can remember, and it has given me some of my greatest joys in life. I understand how important it is to influence at both national and international level and I hope to bring this to the role. I am deeply passionate about the opportunities it offers for individuals of all ages and backgrounds. I look forward to working alongside the dedicated team at England Hockey to further enhance the game and its impact on communities across the country.*

Alex Danson-Bennett MBE



# MAGIC BREAKFAST CHARITY PARTNERSHIP

Magic Breakfast was announced as official charity partner for England teams at EuroHockey Championships 2023. Magic Breakfast and England Hockey teamed up for the EuroHockey Championships to raise awareness of the impact hunger has on school-age children.

Magic Breakfast were the official charity partner of the men's and women's teams who travelled to Germany to take on the very best in Europe from 18 – 27 August with the charity also having their logo featured on the men's official shirts.

Sadly, the number of children at risk of hunger in the UK has increased since the outbreak of the pandemic and the latest research from The Food Foundation shows that four million children are currently facing food insecurity. Magic Breakfast provides free, nutritious school breakfasts every day to children and young people in disadvantaged areas of England and Scotland. A hungry child cannot concentrate, so could miss out on half a day of lessons every school day if not given anything nutritious to eat in the morning.



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*The whole squad is incredibly proud to represent such a fantastic charity like Magic Breakfast. We were all blown away by the work they do to help so many children who are missing out on breakfast each day. Getting behind this charity as a team is so important to us, and we would encourage every member of the hockey community to support them in any way they can.*

James Gall, Tokyo 2020 Olympian

*We are delighted to be working alongside England Hockey to raise national awareness of Magic Breakfast's impact at a time when 1 in 4 children in the UK are at risk of hunger. We know that a healthy and nutritious breakfast not only fuels success on the pitch but also in the classroom. No child or young person should be too hungry to learn, play or thrive.*

Lindsey McDonald, CEO Magic Breakfast

*We're incredible proud to be supporting such a fantastic charity in Magic Breakfast. A year ago, after the Commonwealth Games, we called on the Government to commit to extending sport provision in state schools. Our open letter backed by the players, cemented their commitment to this cause, and this partnership with Magic Breakfast furthers our aim to support children in state schools. I would urge everyone in the hockey community to donate as much as they can to support Magic Breakfast as we work together to help children that are going hungry while at school.*

Nick Pink, England Hockey CEO

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# COMMONWEALTH GAMES LEGACY PROJECT

As reported last year, using funding from Sport England's Birmingham 2022 NGB Innovation & Digital Fund, England Hockey began by working in Birmingham and the West Midlands with plans to roll out the programme across the country.

One of the key elements of the legacy project was adapting hockey to fit around a community's or delivery partners needs by taking into account the nature of their facilities, access needs and by training delivery partners to add hockey to their existing activity programmes. The project is now rolling out on a larger scale across the country as England Hockey look to redress the balance around EDI.



*Of the delivery that we've done so far, we've done it in two different ways. We've worked directly with hockey clubs to reach new underserved groups and audiences within their local community that they don't currently reach as effectively as they might do.*

*We've also worked with a whole range of new delivery partners because they understand the audiences that they work with day to day. Sharing their expertise and insight into the key audiences that they serve has really helped us as they've got access into those communities and into those groups where we previously didn't. Our wider EDI framework we set out 18 months ago said quite clearly that we recognised that collectively as a sport, we needed to get better at reaching some of these communities we weren't currently reaching.*

*From the Commonwealth Games legacy work initially, we said we were going to try and specifically target three of those audiences we recognised were underrepresented in the sport. A lot of the work we've done has been to try and help us understand how we need to shape that delivery. We want to make it as successful as possible, in order to redress the balance a little bit and make hockey as a sport a bit more reflective of the wider community and the population more generally.*

Jo Duff, England Hockey's Head of Development

## CONNECTING CLUBS & THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITIES



ENGLAND  
HOCKEY

### DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE LINKS

16

CLUBS

2098

PARTICIPANTS

HOCKEY HEROES - QUICKSTICKS - FLYERZ  
BACK TO HOCKEY - WALKING HOCKEY  
SOCIAL - FAMILY - IN2 - FESTIVALS

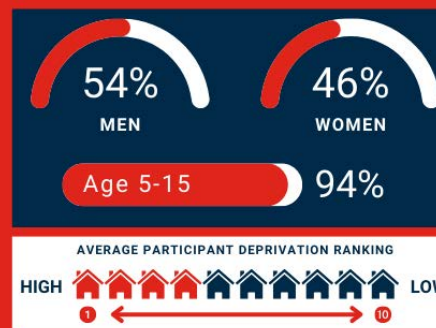
53

SCHOOLS

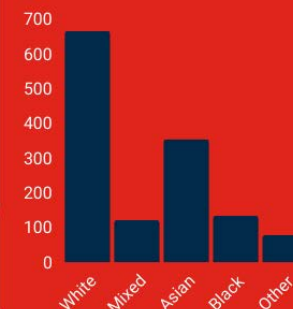
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COMMUNITY ADULT  
PROJECTS

STATE SCHOOLS - INNER CITY - INACTIVE  
ADULTS & CHILDREN - LONG TERM HEALTH  
CONDITIONS - HIGH DEPRIVATION



### PARTICIPANT BY ETHNICITY



# COMMONWEALTH GAMES LEGACY PROJECT

England Hockey brought hockey back to Birmingham in Summer 2023, with a pop-up, participatory experience at the official one-year anniversary festival for the Commonwealth Games.

Free-to-access, the festival aimed to echo the city-centre experience of the Games, taking over Centenary Square with live music and performance, creative and participatory activities, to recreate the magic and memories of 2022. Attracting people from all over the city and beyond, Hockey proved to be popular with over 200 people of all ages, picking up a stick and giving a hockey a try and many more having conversations with England Hockey representatives and volunteers from local club Barford Tigers about how to access and play hockey in the future.

Additional work with clubs in the region carried on during 2023 and here are a number of videos of the activities supported by the funding.

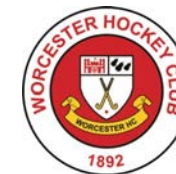
REDDITCH HOCKEY CLUB



KHALSA LEAMINGTON HOCKEY CLUB



WORCESTER HOCKEY CLUB



# COMMONWEALTH GAMES LEGACY PROJECT

## LEICESTER CITY HOCKEY CLUB

Since getting ownership of their playing pitch in recent years, the club has been keen to keep the pitch in use every day with the local community. The club has been offering care groups and charities a base to support their residents as well as partnering with a local school. Plans are in place to expand the provision, while the club is also in the process of launching its own charity to create an opportunities fund. They have also formed partnerships with four local schools including Castle Mead Academy thanks to the Commonwealth Games legacy fund, allowing children to pick from a range of after school activities including hockey. While the six-time winners of the Women's Premier Division are vying for promotion back to the top-flight, Sarah Treanor, Leicester's first team manager, suspects diversifying is key to success across the board.



*The big thing we really want to do is make sure that the venue is used during the day because there's a lot of charities that are very keen on daytime interventions and projects. Castle Mead is a new secondary school in the city and their enthusiasm is boundless. The after-school hockey provision is a delivery to energetic students who may have never otherwise played or seen hockey and it's great that we can engage them in something different and give them the chance to learn a new sport. In time we hope we can excite the students by holding a festival and some fixtures and show them our venue and our pitch eventually leading to players choosing hockey as their hobby and something they want to pursue on weekends.*

*If you look at the hockey provision, there's a lot of people competing purely to get the same players in their club. Growing the club and growing the offer is publicity. Sustainability isn't just about one particular group of people, it's about who uses your venue, who feels that it caters to them and who finds a use for it. I think people moan about hockey being for a very particular group of people or a thin section of the population and I don't think that will change until you get more participation in different ways.*

Sarah Treanor, Leicester City's first team manager





# MASTERS HOCKEY

## DOMESTIC CONTINUES TO GROW AND EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS ARE BACK



The domestic Masters hockey scene is growing year on year and there are more leagues and teams appearing across the country at Area level. It is fantastic to see people keen to continue their hockey playing with their friends and to compete on a regular basis across the season. The England Hockey Masters Championships grew again for the 2023/24 season with 176 women's teams and 219 men's teams.

For national teams, the European Championships were held for the first time since 2019.

England held the men's and women's over 35s, 40s, 45s and 50s competitions at Nottingham Hockey Centre in July 2023 and 50 teams across the eight competitions enjoyed a fantastic event, brilliantly run by the local organising committee with the support of the venue. England enjoyed great success with each team winning a medal and five claiming gold.

The higher age groups – over 55s, 60s, 65s and 70s and men's over 75s – travelled to Valencia for their tournaments and each team again secured podium finishes. There were seven further gold medals – a superb haul for the year which reflected the continued strength of masters hockey in the country.

The England Masters' squads have completed their season with a remarkable haul of 26 gold medals in two major World Masters' Hockey events.



# ENSURING HOCKEY HAS A STRONG REPUTATION FOR ED&I WORK

## CODE OF SPORTS GOVERNANCE – DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

For the Code of Sports Governance, England Hockey was required to produce and submit a Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) for independent assessment by March 2024. The current ED&I Framework provided the foundations for the DIAP. England Hockey's management team and the ED&I Advisory Group identified new actions and activities for 2024 and early 2025 for the DIAP.

These mainly relate to the structures/processes supporting the wider game and are managed centrally by England Hockey, e.g. Board recruitment plans as terms end to improve diversity.

These actions will enable England Hockey and the sport to be in a stronger position to create the next ED&I Framework / Action Plan from 2025. As the current Framework comes to an end at the end of 2024, the next version will combine the DIAP requirements, and the documents will be one plan.

## PERFORMANCE PLAYERS PREGNANCY SUPPORT & GUIDANCE

In Autumn 2023 UK Sport updated its support and guidance for lottery funded athletes who were considering pregnancy. This was produced collaboratively with sports and Hockey had a key role in its development.

International hockey player Jo Pinner said:

*"Before the first maternity guidance was introduced in November 2021 I thought my only options were to retire early from international hockey or keep playing and delay starting a family. Without this policy, I would have chosen the former and missed my opportunity to go for selection for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. There is a huge amount of amazing resources as part of this policy to help women navigate pregnancy and parenthood. This is helpful not just for athletes but for staff at the national governing bodies to help support their athletes."*



## MEMBERSHIP OF INCLUSIVE EMPLOYERS

England Hockey has maintained membership of Inclusive Employers and draws on their resources and training materials for staff, contractors, volunteers and the wider game.

We also have access to consultancy support for helping with our long-term actions and planning.

## ED&I ADVISORY GROUP

As noted last year, the EH Board has valued the contribution of the independent ED&I Advisory Group and committed to the Group becoming a standing committee. The existing members have started to roll off and the recruitment process for new members was started in January 2024.

Five new members have been recruited in early 2024 and they will join the Group in the coming months. There will be a further round of recruitment later in 2024. All appointments to the Group will be for 3 years.

# ENSURING HOCKEY HAS A STRONG REPUTATION FOR ED&I WORK

## CLUB SUPPORT & FORUMS

EH has created a regular club support forums calendar providing a mix of guidance and support with real life experience from other clubs. Some sessions are run by EH and some are run by partners such as buddle from Sport England or Access Sport who support the roll out of Flyerz.

The calendar is available on the club support section of the EH website including booking links for every session. Regular topics include community engagement, inclusive environments and creating Flyerz sections. Clubs share the delivery of the sessions or provide case study stories to tell, inspiring other clubs to consider what they may be able to do.

## INCREASING THE PROFILE & REACH OF MAJOR MATCH EVENTS

At the 2023 summer Pro League, we had over 25,000 fans attend the matches over 12 days. The event not only delivered outstanding international hockey but also provided a fantastic day out for families through partner and on pitch activations. In addition, 1000 children from multiple schools in the local area had the chance to experience hockey as part of a dedicated day for schools which lays good foundations to build on for future years.

In keeping with EH's commitment to host major matches across the country, Super 6s 2024 was held at Derby Arena on 28 January, packing it out with 2100 spectators. The finals were live streamed by Film My Match on a free to watch basis through England Hockey TV YouTube channel with 17k views, a significant uplift on the previous year.



## RACE REPRESENTATION INDEX

We have submitted our aggregated demographic data to scrutiny in the Sporting Equals Race Representation Index for the 3<sup>rd</sup> successive year, and as part of our Code of Governance work with our funding partners. We retained Grade As for our senior leadership team and our elite coaching teams but moved down to a Grade C overall.

The change in Grade overall was influenced in part by the change to census 2021 data for benchmarking, a change in the reporting of Board statistics to align with other Governance work to ensure consistency, and a lower response rate from players compared with previous years. We will work with players to raise awareness of why this data is important to collect and we have actions to look at Board recruitment for our new Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan.

# CONCLUSION

Following on from the work undertaken in the first year of the Framework, the actions from the second year are helping to create a stronger and better experience for participants across the game of hockey. They have helped to shape a new strategy for the sport which launched in October 2023.

Different aspects of the game have been empowered to lead in their own way, but with a common theme of listening and responding to feedback. The equity-based approach used by the sport has enabled new projects to develop in the right way for the people trying the game for the first time as a coach or a player. People have been open to testing new ideas and have engaged with England Hockey and the Areas in providing new opportunities to take part. The differences for people in their local club and community are now starting to be felt and celebrated. Whilst it only provides a snapshot of the activities that have been undertaken, we hope that this report provides inspiration for others to follow.

There is much work still to be done, both centrally at England Hockey to support the sport, and locally to meet the needs of existing, and yet to join, members whether they want to play, coach, or officiate. England Hockey has a key role to play co-ordinating how Areas, clubs, and locally trusted organisations in the community can work together more effectively and efficiently.

Thank you to all the clubs and individuals who have contributed to the excellent work in the game in the second year of the Framework. The current Framework has one final year to run, and it is key that we continue to learn collectively by listening to people, making them feel valued and welcomed by responding to their needs, and making their experience in the game better.



ENGLAND  
HOCKEY



# APPENDIX



REFLECT

YEAR 1

Audit Data and identify Gaps
Identify key participants to track
Review all benchmarking and survey data and report to Board

YEAR 2

Close Gaps, collect and use data insight
Collect data and improve response rates
Review all benchmarking and survey data and report to Board

YEAR 3

Collect and use data insight
Collect data, review and report progress
Review all benchmarking and survey data and report to Board

CULTURES

Recruitment to target underrepresented groups, pilot new advertising
Staff training cohort 1

Use diverse recruitment methods and implement learning from pilot
Staff training cohort 2

Monitor reach and staff representation
Staff training cohort 3

Joined external reverse mentoring scheme
Cohort 1
Workshops run for Talent Centres
Learning from existing networks in hockey coaching

ED&I Objectives set
Identify new opportunities and support staff to apply
Cohort 2

ED&I Objectives reviewed and refined
Review and refine potential opportunities
Cohort 3

Coaches Advisory Group for England Hockey Women in Hockey Officiating Network started by London Area Coaching Forum piloted
EHO Survey Coaches Advisory Group

Workshops run for Talent Centres New Club Workshops
Creation of network of deliverers who are ED&I trained and supported
Develop guidance and support for our tutors and trainers

Workshops for Clubs and Talent Centres
Creation of network of deliverers who are ED&I trained and supported
Review feedback on delivery

Talent Academy Survey - results published
Clubs with best practice regularly identified and publicised

Develop guidance and workshops for Talent System at Academies and above
More forums to be established and promoted

Deliver workshops
Forums regularly providing feedback into planning

Regular game wide learning through conferences, webinars and forums
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Develop support based on feedback
Talent Academies, England Age Group and Performance Programmes annual feedback process

Monitor response to support
Talent Academies, England Age Group and Performance Programmes annual feedback process

Sport England support for Area recruitment plans
ED&I Pulse Survey

Talent Academies, England Age Group and Performance Programmes annual feedback process
Clubs with best practice regularly identified and publicised
Development of support on engaging and listening to members

Clubs with best practice regularly identified and publicised
Review and refine support based on feedback from game
Regular game wide learning through conferences, webinars and forums

ED&I demographics added to all major surveys
Areas supported to understand demographics of their locality and opportunities to attract new participants

Clubs with best practice regularly identified and publicised
Development of support on engaging and listening to members
Regular game wide learning through conferences, webinars and forums

Regular game wide learning through conferences, webinars and forums
Develop guidance and support on increasing diversity and representation in volunteering
Game wide surveys twice a year

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Fan Survey Feedback Reviewed
All surveys reporting to include demographic variations where statistically relevant

Fan Survey Feedback Reviewed
Revisit More Inclusive Sport Survey and detailed analysis of Pulse Surveys

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ACTION COMPLETED

ACTION PARTIALLY COMPLETED

ACTION PLANNED/NOT YET STARTED

ACTION MOVED/ADJUSTED

ACTION NOT DUE

# YEAR 1

# YEAR 2

# YEAR 3

## ACCESS

## REPUTATION

Birmingham centric offers for Flyerz, Hockey Heroes and other formats
DiSE programme supporting approx 130 state school players in talent development
Create Hockey ID team
Amend kit regulations to make game more inclusive
Event and pricing strategy opening up more opportunities to see international hockey across the country
National government influencing with partners to increase the provision of physical activity and sport in state schools

UK Sports Code for Sports Governance Compliance Review
Benchmark the sport against 2 external Frameworks
Communications step change in diversity content and imagery
Increased player engagement with local communities around the Commonwealth Games and Durham 2022

Develop and build on learning from Birmingham opportunities where funding allows
Form connections between clubs and more state schools
Focused State School Programme connected with Talent Centres and Academies
DiSE programme supporting approx 130 state school players in talent development
Trans Policy review
Code of Ethics review
Work with Sporting Equals' members to understand the barriers to the game
Develop and promote Walking Hockey and increase Flyerz sections and Festivals
Create a Children and Young People's Framework
Event and pricing strategy opening up more opportunities to see international hockey across the country
National government influencing with partners to increase the provision of physical activity and sport in state schools

UK Sports Code for Sports Governance Compliance Review
Benchmark the sport against 2 external Frameworks
Communications step change in diversity content and imagery
Increased and balanced domestic live streaming across gender, formats and ages
Post event surveying of local non - attendees

Develop and build on learning from Birmingham opportunities where funding allows
Form connections between clubs and more state schools
Focused State School Programme connected with Talent Centres and Academies
DiSE programme supporting approx 130 state school players in talent development
Work with Sporting Equals' members to understand the barriers to the game
Develop and promote Walking Hockey and increase Flyerz sections and Festivals
Develop and embed Children and Young People's Framework
Event and pricing strategy opening up more opportunities to see international hockey across the country
National government influencing with partners to increase the provision of physical activity and sport in state schools

UK Sports Code for Sports Governance Compliance Review
Benchmark the sport against 2 external Frameworks
Communications reflecting the diversity of the game
Balanced domestic live streaming across gender, formats and ages
Post event surveying of local non - attendees

ACTION COMPLETED

ACTION PARTIALLY COMPLETED

ACTION PLANNED/NOT YET STARTED

ACTION MOVED/ADJUSTED

ACTION NOT DUE



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