

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Charter

May 2026

Introduction

The Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT) is committed to promoting a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) across its membership and beyond.

As the representative body for local authority place directors and their teams, we recognise the inherent value of embracing EDI principles in all aspects of our work. The place sector lacks diversity, and we understand there is a journey ahead, during which we need to remain realistic but also strive to create real and lasting change.

Local authorities are organisations that represent their places. It is crucial they reflect the diversity of their communities to effectively fulfil their responsibilities and deliver the best outcomes for all their residents.

Our vision

ADEPT will lead by example and champion inclusive place leadership where decision-making reflects the diversity of local communities, improves outcomes for residents, and builds long-term trust in public services. As set out in our [Strategic Plan 2026-29](#), inclusion is one of our fundamental values – a core belief and principle that underpins what we do and how we behave.

Our commitment

- **Promoting diversity**

We will actively support and promote diversity across ADEPT's membership, leadership and decision-making processes, ensuring that people feel respected, valued and able to contribute their perspectives. We recognise that a breadth of experience and viewpoints strengthens leadership and supports more informed decision-making.

We expect our members, as place leaders, to promote diversity within their organisations and leadership teams, including developing more diverse pipelines into senior roles.

- **Preventing discrimination**

We are committed to preventing all forms of discrimination, including in relation to race, ethnicity, sex, age, sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief, and socioeconomic background.

We expect our members to demonstrate behaviours that are inclusive, respectful and free from discrimination, and to challenge behaviours that do not align with these principles.

- **Ensuring equal opportunities**

We will seek to ensure fair and equitable access to ADEPT's programmes, networks and development opportunities.

We expect our members to consider how opportunity, progression and access are experienced within their own organisations, particularly in relation to leadership roles.

- **Promoting accessibility**

We will continue to improve accessibility for individuals with disabilities or additional needs and work to remove barriers to participation across ADEPT activities, events and resources. Accessibility will be considered as a core part of how we design and deliver our work.

- **Collaborating for inclusivity**

We will continue to build partnerships and collaborate with organisations and initiatives that share our ambition to advance equality, diversity and inclusion across the place sector, using our collective voice where appropriate to support progress.

- **Burden awareness**

We recognise that EDI work must be approached thoughtfully to avoid placing disproportionate expectations or burdens on individuals from underrepresented groups.

We emphasise that responsibility for advancing EDI sits across all leaders and organisations and is not the role of any one group alone.

Speaking Up

We encourage all members to speak up about behaviours or practices that are inconsistent with the values of equality, diversity and inclusion, and to create cultures where constructive challenge is welcomed and supported.

- **Community engagement**

We expect our members to recognise the importance of engaging with and listening to the diverse communities and workforces they serve. This includes actively seeking input to inform decision-making, policy development and service design, ensuring that outcomes reflect local needs and experiences.

Progress and activity since our 2024 EDI charter

- Delivered the 'A Place for All' programme, creating space for sharing lived experience, insight and practical learning across the place sector.
- Piloted the 'Find Your Path' Gen Z recruitment campaign, broadening awareness of place-based careers and supporting more diverse entry routes into the sector.
- Strengthened partnership working with organisations and initiatives aligned to ADEPT's EDI ambitions.
- Undertaken initial data collection on member diversity, identifying low response rates and the need to strengthen our approach.
- Committed to further action through a Leadership Development Programme alumni session (June 2026) focused on overcoming barriers to diversity and building a more diverse senior leadership pipeline.
- Sought to have diverse panels and speakers at our events.

Our actions

- We will continue to increase the visibility of EDI across ADEPT events and conferences, including more diverse speakers, perspectives and content.
- We will embed EDI considerations within our leadership development programmes, strengthening understanding of inclusive leadership among current and future place leaders.
- We will expand opportunities for peer learning and discussion on EDI through our boards, networks and events.
- We will continue to strengthen partnership working with organisations and initiatives aligned to ADEPT's EDI ambitions.
- We will develop a more consistent and engaging approach to EDI data collation and insight, recognising the need for a proportionate and practical approach.
- We will review progress against this charter every three years and share learning with members to support continuous improvement.
- We will support our members to ensure that all LAs meet their statutory responsibilities in respect of EDI and remain committed to fairness and community cohesion.
- We will continue to reflect EDI in ADEPT's own governance, events and programmes, leading by example as a membership organisation.