



## Our Inclusion Journey

**Patrick Ismond**  
**Head of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**

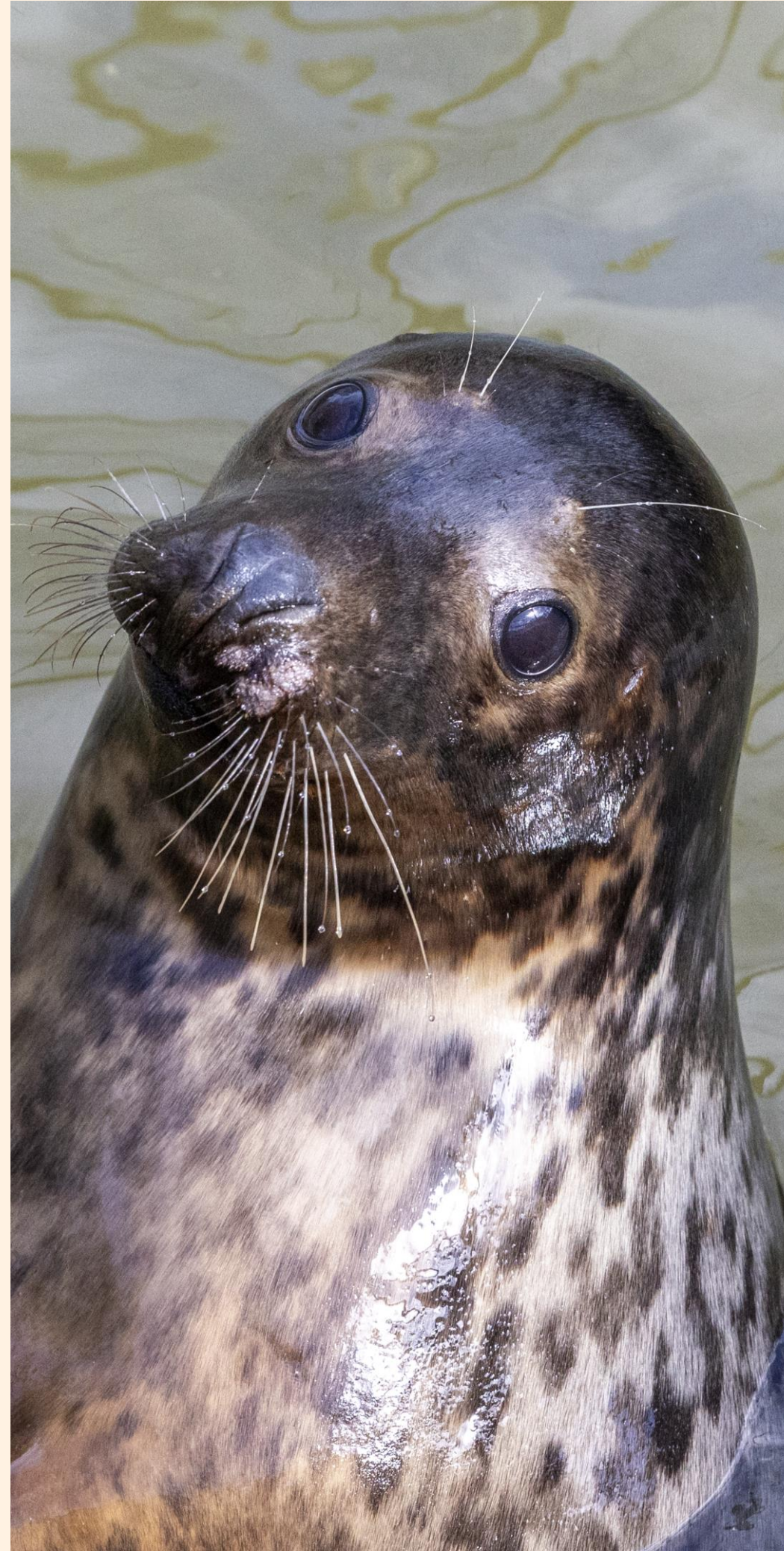
Registered charity in England and Wales. Charity no. 219099.

# About Me

**Patrick Ismond**

Head of Equity, Diversity  
and Inclusion

# RSPCA.



# Advancing EDI at the RSPCA

## A journey towards inclusivity

- Leadership commitment
- Measuring impact
- Articulating the benefits



## Background and Context

### RSPCA

- World's oldest and largest animal charity
- Celebrated a special anniversary, in 2024
- Rebrand: external view and how we achieve our mission
- No specific EDI Plan or strategy until last year (2023)
- Our focus has influenced who we attract



## Developing an EDI Plan

### Key principles

- Engaging with different communities across England and Wales.
- Being a more 'inclusive' organisation
- Retaining our expert people
- Making the RSPCA a great place to work



## OUR THREE EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION GOALS

### HEART



#### HAVE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT OUR HEART

We believe diversity and inclusion are essential to driving transformational change. That's why our movement for animal welfare will be built of widely diverse people from across all communities of England and Wales.

### CULTURE



#### BUILD A MORE INCLUSIVE CULTURE

We will create a culture built on the foundations of openness, inclusivity and trust, enabling us to attract and develop talented and empowered people from a broad cross-section of society, all committed to making a positive difference to animal welfare.

### GOVERNANCE



#### DEVELOP MORE INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

We will seek to increase diversity and inclusivity within the senior management team, senior leadership team, our trustees, the regional boards and branch affairs committees.



# Internal Context

WHERE WE ARE	WHERE WE WANT TO BE
There is a mixed understanding of EDI and its importance to our mission	A more widely held understanding of our EDI aims, and our values and mission
The workforce does not represent the full diversity of England and Wales	Able to benefit from the expertise, insights and reach of a wider range of people
There is a lack of diversity at senior levels and on the Board of Trustees	Our leadership and Board of Trustees are more diverse and benefit from the skills and insights of people from more diverse backgrounds
There are issues with psychological safety (the sense that everyone can feel valued and supported to share their honest views, without fear of punishment or humiliation)	An inclusive, safe, collaborative culture where everyone can offer their best
Drive and accountability for EDI are held only at leadership level	A strong thread of EDI throughout the organisation, with equally strong systems for accountability
Some areas of the RSPCA are addressing colleague diversity more than others	More areas playing a pivotal role in building links with more diverse communities



# External Context

WHERE WE ARE	WHERE WE WANT TO BE
Social inequalities are linked to animal mistreatment, as well as being barriers to people engaging with the RSPCA's cause	Acknowledging, and accounting for, the inextricable link between humans and animals
We have a customer base that does not reflect the diversity of England and Wales	A million-strong movement, benefiting from the skills, insights and reach of a diverse coalition of people
There is a cycle of limiting assumptions and ambitions around who our customers are	Ambitious targets feeding into a positive cycle of diversity and inclusion
We have a lack of partner organisations linking us to diverse communities	A range of equitable partnerships with diverse organisations, helping to reach a broader range of customers, volunteers and potential employees



## Leadership Commitment

### EDI listening events

- Engaging with leaders to outline our EDI Plan;
- A 'safe space', with no presumptions of knowledge;
- Importance of EDI to our animal welfare mission;
- Recognise key work being done
- Chance to identify informal champions of EDI!





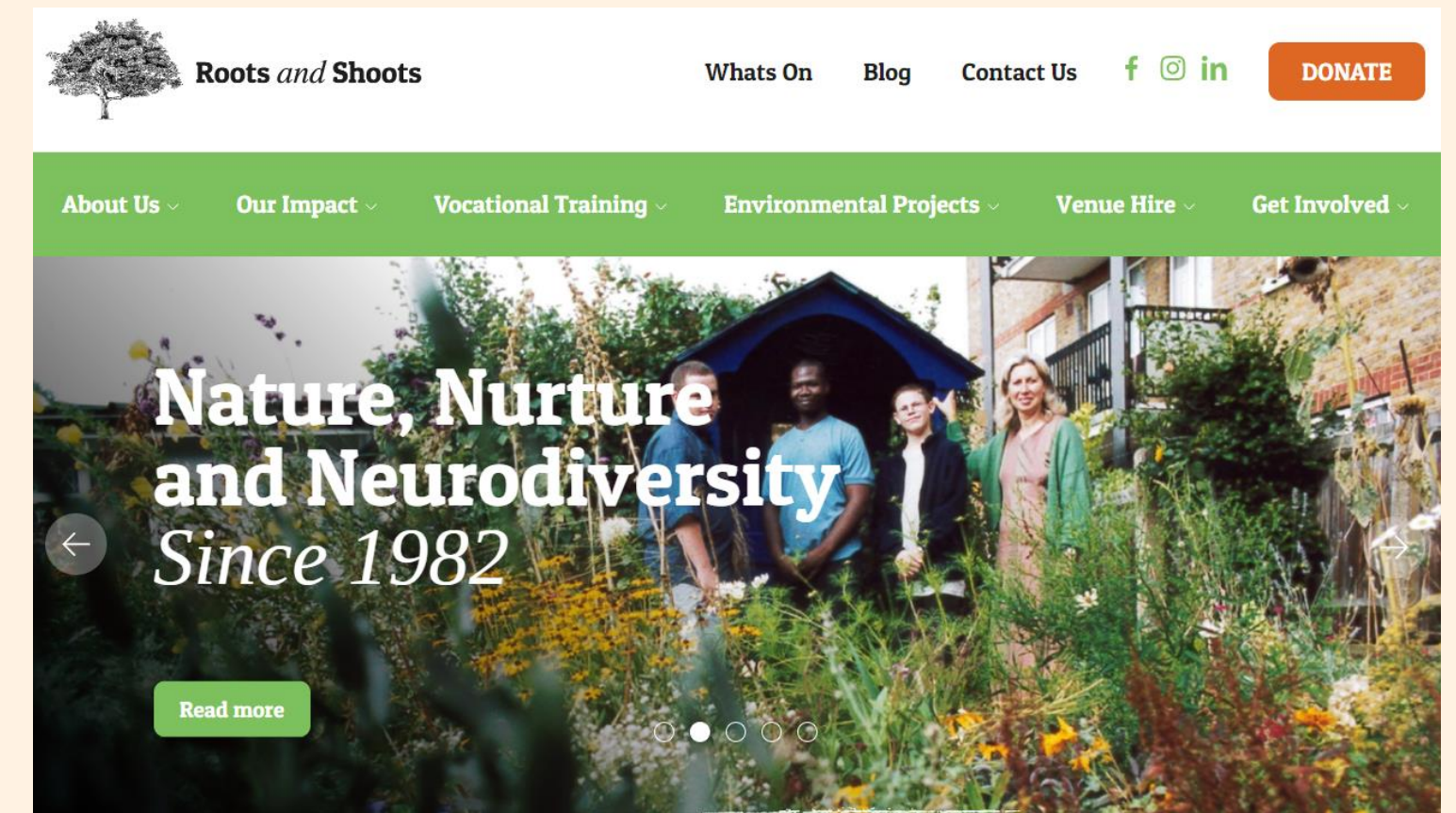


**EDI is important to  
animal welfare because...**



## Key takeaways aligning with our EDI Plan

- Community engagement
- Collaboration
- Widening supporter base
- Benefits of inclusivity
- Challenging stereotypes



## **Avoiding EDI Fatigue**

- Flexibility
- Manage pace of change
- Keep expectations realistic
- Self-care important
- Reminders about the 'why'
- Celebrate/action awareness days



**Think... Progression, not Perfection!**



## **Accountability**

- **'Ownership' document**
- **Don't assume shared understanding**
- **Consultation platforms**
- **EDI is everyone's business**
- **Responsibility for shared improvement**
- **An atmosphere of learn, not blame**



## Measuring Impact

- Aim to ensure EDI goals are actionable
- Things that you can demonstrate
- Things you can 'feel'
- Is EDI budgeted in all business areas?



## Articulating Benefits

- Celebrate and acknowledge
- Reassurance about validity
- EDI involves everyone
- Accountability without finger-pointing
- Champions & cheerleaders!



# Thank you and Questions

