

# Role Models for Inclusion in Retail Index

The inaugural edition from Diversity  
in Retail and The MBS Group



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# Forewords

I am delighted to launch our inaugural Role Models for Inclusion in Retail Index in partnership with The MBS Group.

Role Models lend empathy, their own lived experiences and invaluable perspectives to help guide others through career challenges and inspire them to go as far as their talents and aspirations will take them. They also pave the way for profound and lasting change, challenging the status quo, promoting inclusive initiatives and practices that level the playing field for all. In collaboration with The MBS Group, we have identified a group of inspirational individuals and teams who have made it their personal mission to ensure that everybody is given the same opportunities in the work environment while remaining true to themselves.

The Role Models we have featured in this Index work across the broad reaches of the retail sector and have made it their priority to advocate positive change and to commit to robust diverse and inclusive practices within their organisations. In leading by example – showing how not only telling how – those included in these pages have already initiated and promoted the processes needed to achieve an equitable environment. The living proof is their own success and importantly, in how they share that success to inspire those following behind on a similar path.

I would like to thank Elliott Goldstein and all The MBS Team as well as the DiR Team for shining a spotlight on the profiles of the extraordinary people who are included in this Index. We look forward to learning about the ambitions attained by others in the future as a consequence of learning from these Role Models and their dedication to advancing diversity and inclusion for the benefit of all.



**Tea Colaianni**  
Founder & Chair  
Diversity in Retail

The MBS Group is delighted to partner with Diversity in Retail for this report, which celebrates individuals in the retail sector who are driving progress on diversity and inclusion.

Role modelling has been identified as one of the most successful tools for promoting D&I in the workplace, by inspiring action from existing employees and encouraging diverse candidates to enter and progress through the sector. This report builds on similar reports in the hospitality, travel and leisure sector. Through Women to Watch and Advocates for Change in Hospitality, Travel and Leisure, which we produce annually with WiHTL, we have seen the deep and lasting impact of sharing stories and celebrating role models.

With this in mind, we have identified more than thirty role models from right across UK retail, with the view to demonstrate the ways in which individuals are advocating for change in their organisations and communities, and the depth and breadth of inspiring talent. These role models were nominated and selected because of their inspiring leadership, their wider contribution to the sector or society, their success as a mentor or sponsor of D&I issues and their track record of supporting and publicly committing to D&I initiatives.

This publication has been a truly inclusive exercise that has encompassed all aspects of diversity including gender, ethnicity, social mobility, nationality, sexual orientation, age and disability. We are thrilled to share stories from leaders and employees who reflect the full spectrum of diversity that exists in the industry and the communities it serves.

This report also includes people from all levels of retail organisations, from employees on the shop floor leading grassroots movements to group chief executives using

their influence to bring about wholesale change. At a time when the sector is going through significant changes, it is more important than ever that D&I is prioritised at the top levels of a business. The Executive and Non-Executive Role Models section of this publication highlights some of our sector's senior leaders who are driving real and lasting progress, showcasing their career journeys and their philosophies on inclusion.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Tea Colaianni, Jo Aunon and all the team at Diversity in Retail for their continued partnership on this critical issue. We'd also like to acknowledge the team at The MBS Group – including Moira Benigson (Founder and Chair), Simon More, Rosanna Royds, Imogen Sewell, Mary Baxter and Krystyna Robbins – for their invaluable contribution to the production of this report.

Finally, thank you to all the role models who generously gave up their time to be included in this report. We know that publications such as these have a significant and broad-reaching impact, and we're confident that Role Models for Inclusion in Retail will play some part in driving positive change in the retail community.



**Elliott Goldstein**  
Managing Partner  
The MBS Group



**Aelf Hewitson**  
Associate Consultant, Retail Practice  
The MBS Group



# Michelle Bellamy

Lead Talent Acquisition  
Business Partner  
Currys



As a teenager in the seventies, being barely 5ft tall and lacking in any real talent, I gave up my dream of being a dancer. So, after qualifying and working for a time with young offenders, I “fell into” recruitment and started a long career that has opened up to so many challenges and experiences along the way. I began by working in recruitment agencies, moving through the ranks to senior account director positions. After many years, with redundancy looming, I took the plunge and moved to the south of France recruiting staff for the

mega yachts. A fascinating four-year insight into the world of the rich and famous – but this was never a long-term ambition and I returned to the UK to become Recruitment Services Director for Capita working within the public sector. Five years ago, I joined Dixons (now Currys) and have never looked back as, even into my sixties, I continue to learn and grow every day.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

For me diversity and inclusion is about learning. Challenging myself and

those around me not just to listen, but to hear, to discover and accept our physical, emotional and spiritual differences and ensuring everyone is treated equally in every aspect of our working and personal lives.

It is about being brave, not only in our words and actions but also in our thinking. It is not always easy to ‘unlearn’ the teachings and beliefs of our childhood. We must challenge ourselves to question these teachings and cultural differences if we are ever going to truly embrace diversity and inclusion not only in the workplace but in wider society.

“Progress and support are my greatest motivators.”

### What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

As an older female, in a civil partnership with a mixed-race son and living with a disability it

is important for me to work in a company that has a clear D&I policy and agenda that goes beyond policies and process by challenging behaviours and attitudes.

I have never required an adjustment or suffered any great discrimination, but I needed to be sure everyone had a voice and would be heard.

Seeing the progress within Currys and witnessing how this is impacting both my colleagues and our customers is a big motivation for me.

Seeing the LGBTQ+ employee resource group develop; reading thank you letters from disabled colleagues who have been employed based on their merits alone; hearing how colleagues are being supported through Mental Health First Aid training and seeing attitudes and behaviours slowly change – progress and support are my greatest motivators.

“It is only when we talk can we educate, explain, and promote a truly inclusive society.”

### Why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of D&I?

We have never had a greater opportunity to say the words “this is me” and to be true to ourselves. Sadly, this also means there has never been a greater opportunity for misunderstanding, bias and prejudice. Each one of us is unique with our own beliefs, physical and mental ability. It takes time to know and understand ourselves. If we don’t talk, listen, and learn, then how

are we to know and understand the world from another’s perspective? How are we going to understand ourselves if we don’t understand all the alternative thoughts and feelings of others and the challenges people face? It is essential that we have safe conversations where everyone can express themselves openly and honestly without fear of prejudice or reprisal. Often misunderstandings occur through ignorance rather than malice and it is only when we talk can we educate, explain, and promote a truly inclusive society.

### What does being a good role model mean to you?

It means holding myself and those around me accountable for ensuring everyone is treated equally and with respect. Inspiring others to be themselves and ensuring they have the tools and environment to fulfil their potential.





# Anuradha Chopra

Deputy Manager  
The Watches of Switzerland Group

I am an experienced retail leader who is driven by a desire to build upon my own personal brand through the art of self-reflection, networking and being authentic.

Having left university within my first year, I started my career journey working full-time as a sales consultant



for La Senza. Although this was supposed to be temporary, until I had decided on the career path I wanted to take, it developed into my long-standing career within retail, working across various retail sectors in several leadership roles before getting the opportunity to work for the Watches of Switzerland Group.

I joined the company almost three years ago as Branch Manager for one of our smaller showrooms but progressed within the company to Deputy Manager in our flagship showroom in Leicester. Here I am focused on driving commercial, operational and team performance.

Recently, I have had the amazing opportunity to take part in the Ethnic Future Leaders programme and, as a result, I have joined our organisation's Diversity Council which looks at ways in which we can build a more diverse and inclusive workforce as part of the organisation's People Strategy.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

Inclusion and diversity, to me, is empowering individuals to share and celebrate their differences with

regards to gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, and disability. It is ensuring that those from diverse communities are recognised and given the same opportunities to progress within organisations as their over-represented counterparts. For this to be achieved, organisations need to fully embrace the importance of a diverse workforce and develop a culture where everyone can feel respected, valued, and supported.

### What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?

Ensure your organisation has an environment whereby employees feel empowered to voice their

“As a woman of colour, I know how important it is to see representation within business, especially at a senior level.”



ideas, opinions, and experiences. It is only by listening to employees' stories and experiences will we educate ourselves and gain a better understanding of what needs to change from a D&I perspective.

Acknowledge religious celebrations and awareness days by creating a calendar and sharing this throughout the organisation to encourage all employees to embrace and celebrate diversity.

Most importantly, as leaders we need to ensure that we lead by example in fostering a culture where everyone feels equal. Therefore, include yourself in all parts of the diversity and inclusion process to set the tone for the rest of the organisation. Everyone has a part to play in creating a diverse and inclusive culture, but it starts with visible leadership.

### What are the biggest barriers to progress on D&I in the retail sector?

In retail, leadership plays a vital role in championing diversity and inclusion. But to really make an impact, D&I should be embedded into the organisation as a whole. Areas including, but not limited to,

“Too often job descriptions for managerial roles focus on 'must-have' skills, when a lot of the time these skills can be learnt through training.”

HR, learning and development, and recruitment, should all play a part in supporting the organisation's D&I agenda.

Recruitment is undoubtedly a huge area for organisations to review especially when recruiting for senior managerial roles in retail. Too often job descriptions for managerial roles focus on 'must-have' skills, when a lot of the time these skills can be learnt through training. Recruitment advertisements should focus on the necessary skills needed to perform for the role and look for candidates with different skills and education levels.

Organisations should also think about the language used in job titles and descriptions, ensuring they include inclusive keywords to attract more diverse applicants. Integrating D&I within recruitment and all other areas of the business is critical to driving change and increasing representation across all areas of retail. Organisations today cannot solely be seen to be talking about D&I but need to take a more proactive approach to drive the D&I strategy.

Nevertheless, more and more retail organisations are increasingly focusing on their D&I agenda. Organisations, like the Watches of Switzerland Group, have joined the Diversity in Retail community which aims to 'create diverse and inclusive environments and positively impact one million employees globally by 2025.'

### What does being a good role model mean to you?

I am humbled and extremely honoured to be considered a role model. I have been very lucky to meet many incredible role models throughout my career who have mentored and continue to mentor and inspire me, which in turn has motivated me to do the same for others. As a woman of colour, I personally know how important it is to see representation within business especially at a senior level.

“You can't be what you can't see” are words that resonate with us all and we all look for role models and leaders to show us our potential and what we can achieve. Without these role models and leaders, whether that is women, people of colour, or others from the diverse communities, we are left unaware and unable to be that which we cannot see. Therefore, I have a responsibility to be an advocate for change within my own organisation and influence diversity and inclusion to allow people like me, from diverse communities, to unlock their full potential and progress within these organisations.



# Melisa Clotney

Head of Food Technical  
Selfridges



I joined Selfridges in 2011 supporting the Food, Restaurants and Beauty divisions. It's not often that a career in food science spans such a breadth of experience; this proved invaluable when, in 2020, I was elected as Selfridges' founding chair of the Diversity Board.

### In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

Building an inclusive workplace culture is difficult; and open, authentic conversations about lived experiences can help foster understanding. A psychological phenomenon 'the mere exposure effect' suggests that repeated exposure to someone can lead to more positive feelings about them. Conversations can connect. We use Cultural Identity Storytelling where individuals from across our organisation share two or three things about themselves that have impacted and shaped them. It helps to build rapport and see people through new or different lenses. We also introduced A Chat for Change – facilitated conversations to encourage discussion around difficult

I loved science at school, so it was no surprise when I became a Food Scientist. I am a fourth-generation foodie; my mum, grandma and great grandma all owned their own food and beverage businesses in the UK and Ghana. Food is most definitely in my DNA.

BSc and Masters' degrees in Food Science & Nutrition secured my first role as Quality Assurance Technologist at General Mills;

working on brands such as Häagen-Dazs. A product development role followed where I created starters, mains, and desserts for Pizza Hut. I then moved to Heinz as Head of R&D bringing together global teams to deliver product innovation, working collaboratively with different functions, across regions in Europe and North America. I travelled constantly, learning about different people, cultures, and experiences along the way.

topics. Having open dialogue takes practice but conversations can help us recognise our similarities, celebrate our differences and be an ally for those with differing lived experiences.

### What are the biggest barriers to progress on D&I in the retail sector?

There is so much to do. It is difficult to balance the requirement to create inclusive cultures, attract and retain diverse talent, deliver inclusive training, embed inclusive practices, collate data, and simultaneously deliver creative competitive advantage for customers. The broad nature of these commitments can yield insufficient, diluted results and may do little to address long-standing, structural inequalities. Moreover, the retail environment is complex so taking a multi-dimensional approach to D&I is understandable. If you look through an intersectional lens of gender with ethnicity, age, socio-economic background, sexuality, religion, neurodiversity, or the differently abled, particular groups of women face exclusion from progression opportunities or face other discriminatory penalties. Yet the assumption is that all women should thrive in the 'feminised' retail environment, right? To progress D&I

“ Having open dialogue takes practice but conversations can help us recognised our similarities, celebrate our differences and be an ally for those with differing lived experiences.

effectively perhaps start small, be clear on your goals, have simple, understandable metrics and targets derived from robust baseline data, and regularly monitor progress.

### When it comes to advocating for D&I, is there anything you can share that you're doing outside of retail?

I am an ambassador for Centrepoint; they help homeless, young people to access brighter, more inclusive futures. I fundraise and have been an active participant in Centrepoint's Works programme; helping young people develop practical skills to overcome barriers to obtaining employment. I have delivered learning sessions at Centrepoint. I support events, share workplace insights, and offer work placements to help ensure Centrepoint's young people are better prepared for the work environment after they leave the service. I am also a registered STEM Ambassador and use my volunteer days to talk to young students about the importance of diversity of thought in science & technology.

### What are you doing to ensure D&I remains a priority in your organisation?

I am making three personal commitments to role-model inclusive leadership behaviours: i) by asking

“ To progress D&I effectively perhaps start small, be clear on your goals, have simple, understandable metrics and targets derived from robust baseline data, and regularly monitor progress.

questions to encourage wider participation; especially from 'the invisible' ones, ii) by taking positive action to address misunderstandings and iii) to deliberately examine my own assumptions and biases, and include input from new places. At an organisational level, I continue to build my D&I networks, bringing the 'outside-in' to share experiences, challenges, and solutions. Lastly, I am forming a new internal community (Employee Resource Group) to help foster a fun, dynamic and inclusive environment.





# Hannah Gallimore

Social Change Manager  
Central England Co-operative

I gained a degree and post-graduate qualification in law before deciding that although the academic aspects of a career in law were appealing, I was less thrilled about the personal sacrifices I perceived necessary to succeed in the corporate legal world. I spent a fun and exhausting few years in customer facing roles for Bass Breweries and 16 years at KPMG in various resource management roles before looking to work closer to home in 2014. This was my opportunity to re-balance myself and it was honestly the best decision for me.

I joined Central England Co-operative in 2015 as Corporate Responsibility Manager. We are a Co-op guided by strong values and principles and it's a privilege to work with people that see value beyond profit and are more likely to ask, "why not" rather than "why"?

In 2019 we launched our new purpose to create a sustainable Society for all. And inclusion was added to my list of focus areas.

## What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

I had a lightbulb moment recently. Equality, equity, and inclusion were unconsciously interchangeable in my everyday diversity vocabulary. But of course, they are separate and important components of a healthy diverse workplace.

Being specific about what the challenge is, ensures we drive the right changes. So doing a great job ensuring equality of opportunity is nothing if there's no equity and therefore no way of accessing those opportunities.

## In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

Where I've lived and worked for the most part hasn't been particularly diverse and I've come to realise I have surrounded myself with a "type" and I am a "type".

How I got there was passive and

unconscious, but regrettable all the same.

Being able to start honest conversations and express respectful curiosity enables me to learn and move forward. Our inclusion workgroup has given me the opportunity to meet wonderful people I might not have otherwise got to know. I've shared experiences that make me happy, sad, sometimes angry and give me hope.

I would say if you can do one thing to encourage a more inclusive workplace is to start, join and maintain those conversations with an open mind and a kind heart.

## What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?

Don't assume you know what needs fixing. Have brave, grown up conversations to find out.

There may be themes shared with other peer organisations as a result of geography, talent demographics

“ I had a lightbulb moment recently. Equality, equity, and inclusion were unconsciously interchangeable in my everyday diversity vocabulary. But of course, they are separate and important components of a healthy diverse workplace.

or operational requirements. But our teams are a just a group of intersectionally unique individuals that deserve a fair and welcoming place to thrive.

## When it comes to advocating for D&I, is there anything you can share that you're doing outside of retail?

As a parent and a School Governor, I have an opportunity to enable future generations to make more inclusive choices. Schools and youth organisations are raising awareness and giving voices to those historically facing exclusion. My daughters and their peers believe that a more inclusive world is happier, more creative and definitely more fun.

As Governor for careers, I'm determined students be equipped to access the job market equitably where diversity of background, educational achievement or learning

preferences is encouraged and valued by employers. Over-reliance on traditional academic talent pipelines, means schools continue to value achievement based on those measures, by default excluding diversity of experience, thought and skill in workplaces.

## What does being a good role model mean to you?

I want to look at someone and think, they are doing a great job, I can do that. But what that means will be different for everyone.

It may be their academic or scientific approach that resonates, their ability to connect and empathise that I know I share, or the way they use their role or resources to make things happen.

A good role model inspires activity and changes behaviours in a way that feels accessible to others.





# Chloe Howe

Head of Trading & Implementation  
Wickes

I've been in retail all of my working life. It was an accidental career for me, as it is for so many others. When I left school I was unsure of my future – I'd tried both Sixth Form and College and neither was for me – so I started working at Wickes.

I've now been here for 15 years. Half of this time has been working in shops and the other half within our Support Centre, where I am currently.

As my career progressed in stores I realised that I didn't want to continue the progression path I was on. At that time my regional leadership team was not diverse and if that meant becoming what I saw, it didn't sit comfortably with me.

At that point, I decided to explore other opportunities within Wickes. A two-month secondment became available within Marketing and I leapt at the chance. This is when I joined the Support Centre.

My career has seen me go from Customer Assistant to Head of Trading & Implementation. One of my proudest job titles is Balance for Better Network Chair (our internal gender network) which I've held for 2.5 years.

## What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

For me, it's the feeling of being accepted for who you truly are. It's seeking to understand everyone's differences and not only embracing them but celebrating them too. It's creating an environment that is conducive to self-expression and honesty, the sharing of new ideas and them being welcomed.

## What does being a good role model mean to you?

I don't think anybody sets out to become a role model. But I believe role models are passionate individuals who inspire imitation, lead by example and petition for positive change.

As a white, heterosexual woman, I personally have an innate sense of responsibility to use my privilege for positive change for everyone less privileged than me.

Having a strong sense of who you are and what you believe in will set you in good stead as a role model. This will allow you to challenge the status quo whilst being authentic, humble and curious. Many people will be receptive to this approach.

“ I believe role models are passionate individuals who inspire imitation, lead by example and petition for positive change.

And if you act on the confidence that what you're doing is truly the right thing for others, others will want to support in driving change too because not only do they believe in the cause, they believe in you.

## In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

Talking openly and honestly about experiences is such a powerful tool.

It's really refreshing to hear someone share their story so honestly. It helps the listener to relate and connect to different situations. It can also inspire action for change.

Each experience, thought and feeling is individual. Sharing stories may help someone else to grow or understand a different perspective.

It's also important that D&I is intersectional and that many stories are shared and heard. For example, a white woman's experience will be very different to a black woman's experience. So listen to as many people as possible.

## What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

It's really humbling to see the passion that all of our D&I networks have to support their fellow colleagues and make Wickes an even greater place to work.

I'm motivated by the amazing events, stories and level of change our D&I networks drive to support others.

Seeing the number of colleagues who turn up and participate and those who want to learn more makes me proud to be involved.

I'm also motivated to make these events bigger and support our D&I teams to have a further reach. To support reaching colleagues who are not yet aware or engaged in the benefits of D&I.

I'm also motivated by our colleagues questioning us and challenging us to do more, to go harder and faster.

## What are the biggest barriers to progress on D&I in the retail sector?

Our competitive nature holds us back from sharing best practices across a whole host of subjects and this comes at a detriment to D&I.

If something is working, it's regarded

as an insider secret, especially when it comes to people and culture.

Being unable to share best practices on D&I holds everyone back from creating diverse and inclusive workplaces.

We should strive to connect with each other, learn more from each other and share as much as we can, for we all want our people to succeed.

“ Not sharing best practices on D&I holds everyone back from creative diverse and inclusive workplaces.





# Ben Jackson

Head of Store Operations  
Wickes

Drawn to retail as a school leaver, I worked at Tesco part time to see me through further education. Having loved it so much, I stayed on beyond education and quickly started my first management role. After a brilliant 8 years in various management roles, I decided to follow another passion (beyond food) into DIY, and joined Wickes.

In the early days, now almost 20 years ago, I managed a number of stores across the South Coast and in London. Back then, I was hard pushed to find anybody 'like me' in our business, and as a very trade-focused retailer at the time, our customer base and colleague base were almost identical in terms of their diversity, or lack of it.

I've never hidden my sexuality at work, but back then, I was definitely more guarded, and more thoughtful about what I was prepared to discuss and who with.

After 10 years in our stores, I moved into our support centre, first as a Project Manager, and now as Head of Store Operations – Projects.

Five years ago, I was asked about setting up an LGBTQ+ employee

“ I'm motivated every day when I hear stories about the difference our business and our network is making for our LGBTQ+ colleagues, and how more and more people in our business feel comfortable to be 'out' in the workplace.

network, and having having reflected on what it was like for me when I joined the business, I jumped at the chance to make a difference and to ensure that all LGBTQ+ colleagues could bring their whole selves to work.

### What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

Everyone needs to feel a sense of belonging at work – after all, we spend a third of our lives doing it. I'm motivated every day when I hear stories about the difference our business and our network is making for our LGBTQ+ colleagues, and how more and more people in our business feel comfortable to be 'out' in the workplace. I'm equally motivated when I hear where we get it wrong. And in fact, it's these moments that keep me grounded in reality and push me even harder to drive up progress. Our mission at Wickes is to make sure that 'everyone feels at home' and through our six Employee Network Groups, I really believe we'll get there.

### In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

As an individual, I know that sharing my lived experiences and the challenges I have faced are incredibly important. Without this candid, open and honest approach, others will never be able to truly empathise.

We encourage all of our colleagues to share their stories through profiles if only to help others become better allies. The LGBTQ+ umbrella carries a beautifully rich set of identities, each with their own unique challenges. The more we share, the greater chance we have of driving inclusion for all.

### What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?

Everyone will be at different stages of their journey, but no one will deny the importance of D&I in business and in everyday life. My top tips would always be about education. Take time to learn the issues, whether that's through a Race and Ethnicity lens, ability, LGBTQ+, or gender. People will help you with your learning – but don't rely on others: watch Ted Talks, listen to podcasts, read books or articles. And then listen to your employees. Get under the skin about how they're feeling in your organisation, what barriers they

come across, what stops them being their authentic selves. Reflect and respect, accept what you are being told is true. If it's their perception, then it's their truth. And finally, keep the dialogue going, whether that's through new or existing ENG's or through other means. It's important you find a way to enable feedback on both your setting of targets and plan creation, and of course, how it is landing. If the plan isn't making a material difference to the people it was designed to affect, then don't be afraid to change course.

### What does being a good role model mean to you?

For me, it's a number of things. Having a firm set of personal values and beliefs in this space is a great place to start. If they're the right beliefs, you'll rarely ever need to compromise them. Be genuine and authentic, people will quickly see if you're not being you and you'll lose credibility. A role model is someone

you look up to for inspiration, but role models also exist at the opposite end – people who show you how something should not be done! Whether you know it or not, you are already likely to be or have been someone's role model in either your personal or working life, so

“ The more we share, the greater chance we have of driving inclusion for all.

you already have a responsibility to do the right thing. Visibility is also so key, in my case it's about being open and overt about my LGBTQ+ status and my own journey so that others (like me) can see a future for themselves in our business.





# Sharlene John

Head of Recruitment  
Selfridges

If you had told me that at the age of 18, as a single mum to a beautiful daughter, that I would build a successful career within recruitment and be where I am today both professionally and personally, I think I would have belly laughed out loud!

I began my career in recruitment over 20 years ago, juggling full time work whilst being a single mum. I spent 18 years within the Social Care sector supporting Social Services, Local Authorities and Charities across the UK.

As a woman of colour in business, I know first-hand how critical representation is at all levels and I have used my lived experience to influence, educate and develop inclusive hiring strategies with the candidate experience at the core.

I am a dedicated recruitment leader who believes now more than ever

recruitment best practices need to be displayed along with honest, open and transparent communication with our candidates, stakeholders and clients.

My daughter is now 25 and my greatest achievement in life, she continues to be my constant motivation!



“As a woman of colour in business, I know first-hand how critical representation is at all levels.

I have progressed throughout my career and held senior appointments ranging from Senior Manager, Director to my current position, Head of Recruitment here at Selfridges.



exposed to the same or who have a different view of life helps to break down barriers and allows colleagues to understand the journeys others may have taken to get to where they are in their careers. I find this very powerful when highlighting the challenges people may have experienced in reaching the same career milestones as their contemporaries, who may not be from underrepresented groups.

### What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?

Listen, be an activist and be authentic.

Listen to your employees, they are best placed to tell you what life is like when you are from an underrepresented group.

Champion your employees, whether this be through sponsorship, mentoring or career mobility. Show your employees that if there were barriers in your organisation, as leaders you are at the front of the charge to knock them down – don't leave it to your employees to always drive the change!

Finally, be authentic. Embrace your employees but don't use them as tokens to prove how diverse you are, consider their feelings but be true to where you are on your journey and how you want to change it for them.

### When it comes to advocating for D&I, is there anything you can share that you're doing outside of retail?

I am an active member of my community and have supported local authorities in London providing career advice, supporting young people into work, and I currently coach and mentor several women from ethnic minorities who are at the start of their career journeys, promoting empowerment and self-belief.

I have also facilitated conversations which have included interviewing Social Work practitioners and Charity owners from London who work with young people impacted by various social economic issues.

“For many years I have always been either the only woman in a leadership team or the only woman of colour in the room and I don't believe in 2022 that should be the case anymore.

### What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

For many years I have always been either the only woman in a leadership team or the only woman of colour in the room and I don't believe in 2022 that should be the case anymore.

Studies tell us a diverse work force brings diverse thought and the more diverse your organisation, the more successful it is. Increasing your workforce with more ethnic minorities or people from socially marginalised backgrounds allows you to increase the diversity thought within your organisation, surely that's a WIN WIN for all!

### In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

Selfridges is known as a business that is famous for its storytelling, and I find this refreshing and empowering. Sharing lived experiences through storytelling in a safe and non-judgmental way is a powerful way to educate others. As the saying goes: knowledge is power!

By sharing your lived experiences with those who may not have been



# Kerry Johnson

Store Manager  
Sainsbury's

I have worked for Sainsbury's for 23 years. I am the Store Manager of one of our largest supermarkets and I'm proud to be the chair of our Gender Balance Colleague Network, Inspire.

I was the first in my family to go to university where I gained a degree in business.

I joined Sainsbury's as a part-time student working as a cashier whilst I was at university. After university I became a department manager and I've progressed my career within Sainsbury's in various roles across the business.

I'm now the Store Manager of our Kiln Lane supermarket store. I'm the first female to be the Store Manager there (the store has been open for 28 years), and the only female Store Manager at a top-five taking supermarket.

“ I am driven by a desire to improve – for myself, my family, my community and the next generation.



I am a founding member of Sainsbury's Gender Balance network, Inspire, and I'm hugely passionate about gender equality. I've worked with the business in my role as Chair for the last year to make real change happen.

I am driven by a desire to improve – for myself, my family, my community and the next generation.

Outside of work, I'm the proud Mum to my son, who has additional needs and I'm the Deputy Chair of my son's school PTA, making a difference to the future of the school and the pupil's experience. The PTA has raised £10k since September 2021 to provide a minibus for the children to travel in, and a sensory garden for the children, which is something I'm so proud of.



### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

Inclusion to me means that everyone has a voice and feels welcome when they work or shop with us.

Diversity to me means that there is difference and that difference is recognised and celebrated.

We want to be a truly inclusive retailer, where all of our colleagues can fulfil their potential and where every single one of our customers feel welcome when they shop with us. In order for us to fulfil this aim, it's so important that we have diversity and that everyone feels like they belong.

### What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

I am motivated by making a difference – whether that's a tiny difference to an individual or more wholesale change to the organisation.

I want the world to be better, more equal and balanced when my son grows up, so that he knows that he – alongside all his class mates – can achieve anything he wants, and that he will always be treated fairly.

### When it comes to advocating for D&I, is there anything you can share that you're doing outside of retail?

I volunteer with Inspiring the Future. It is a great organisation that believes that every young person in our country – wherever they live, whatever the circumstances of their parents/carers, whatever school they go to – should have the opportunity to hear first-hand about jobs and the world of work.

The organisation shows young people exciting futures, giving them the opportunity to meet a wide range of role models doing interesting, exciting jobs which inspire and motivate.

I always try to encourage the students to aim high, work hard and make an effort in school or college so that they can realise their dreams.

retail management in the past has been very male dominated, and so I believe that it's important to be a visible role model to others – and also to show that there are great careers available in retail.

“ I believe that it's important to be a visible role model to others.

I enjoy going into schools to support with holding mock interviews, helping with CV writing and hosting career insight talks.

I've also spoken externally about my passion for D&I.

### What are you doing to ensure D&I remains a priority in your organisation?

As the Chair of our Inspire Network I have a real opportunity and responsibility to agitate change in our business.

I have to continue to be the voice of our colleagues and work with stakeholders across our business to ensure my colleagues have the best possible experience that they can at Sainsbury's.



# Mandip Kaur

Regional Manager  
Currys

I have worked for Currys for nearly 28 years and have experienced various full time/part time management roles, starting in stores and then venturing out into field roles, which included HR Business Partnering for three years and now working as a Regional Manager for five years. Whatever role I have been in I have always strived to create a culture where engagement is high and colleagues love coming to work, along with creating an exciting environment that is a great place to shop for the latest technology for our customers.

In September 2020, Currys established a Leadership Inclusion Forum, chaired by our CEO and made up of senior directors representing our business areas. I was very honoured to be given the opportunity to join this forum and represent retail, which is enabling me to help shape and champion key elements of our inclusion plans. From a personal perspective, I am very proud of my Sikh heritage and being the eldest of six sisters (no brothers), gender has always played a key role in my life. I was very blessed to have a very strong role model in my mum growing up, who always encouraged us and

enabled us to strive to be the best we could be. Now that I have a daughter of my own, I hope to follow suit.

“ A culturally-rich environment enables real diversity of thought and the ability to better communicate with one another.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

To me, diversity and inclusion means creating a culture where everyone feels like they belong and has the confidence to be their true self without feeling judged. Where people feel they have a voice and want to be heard and feel empowered to make a real difference. Giving people the space and freedom to feel at home and not made to feel like a stranger in their own environment. Allowing everyone the same opportunities and

continuously working to understand the barriers that might be getting in the way. A culturally-rich environment enables real diversity of thought and the ability to better communicate with one another.

### What motivates you to help drive progress in your organisation?

What really motivates me to drive up progress in my organisation is knowing the difference it can make to the lives of our colleagues and our organisation. Progress starts from the top – it’s about the way in which the values and strategies of the business are built.

If I can support the diversity and inclusion plans in any way, it will change how we operate and view things. Training and development in areas like recruitment and understanding unconscious bias can make a real difference. This also plays a crucial role in colleague wellbeing, whether it is mental, physical or environmental.

With regards to my own personal experience, when I joined as a graduate trainee all those years ago, I always wanted to be a Regional Manager, however I could not see

anyone who looked like me in this role, so was not sure how possible it was going to be to reach my ambition. Luckily, later in my career I had a good leader who not only supported my development but also gave me the confidence and belief that I could do it. What motivates me is that I want to help make this ambition achievable to all who want it and not just the lucky few.

### What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?

The advice I would give leaders is to create an environment where all people feel safe and feel they matter. Understanding the starting point and what they want to achieve as a business in this area and then incorporating it into their core strategy. Investing in leadership skills, knowledge, and training that incorporates inclusion and diversity for an even deeper awareness is also essential in bringing this to life and showcasing the value it holds.



Creating safe platforms to discuss sensitive and challenging topics openly and creating an evolving culture that continues to progress is also key. Looking at how other organisations incorporate this into their business is another great learning tool. It is also important to keep diversity and inclusion alive through various platforms and campaigns throughout the year, making it part of the organisation’s DNA.

### What does being a good role model mean to you?

A good role model is someone who is true to themselves and to you; someone who is willing to invest time in their people and is not afraid to challenge the status quo. Someone who commits to achieving a desired goal and does not give up when faced with adversity but is willing to invest their effort to achieve success. A role model is also approachable, relatable and inspirational to others.





# Rutendo Mashiri

Project Analyst  
Sainsbury's



“I want to live in a world where my kids and their kids belong, and their inclusion is a given, not a privilege.”

I am a Black woman and have spent most of my life trying to blend in. I am accustomed to walking into a room and not seeing anyone who looks like me.

The last two years allowed me to pause, reflect and reset. A profound moment was George Floyd's eight minute and forty-six seconds ordeal that screamed to me, "we still have

a way to go". It motivated me to be the change I want to see.

I've worked at Sainsbury's for eight years and have helped to launch various initiatives including a Reverse Mentoring scheme, where junior colleagues mentor senior colleagues on topics such as race, disability, and LGBTQ+. I am also an Enable disability network lead.

Progressing the D&I agenda within my company and community is my goal. I want to take action and take up space, to ensure no one has to shrink themselves to fit in. I want to live in a world where my kids and their kids belong, and their inclusion is a given, not a privilege.

I am a Black woman, but I am so much more than that. I now realise that my differences are what set me apart and are my superpower.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

Simply, everyone gets the opportunity to have a level playing field. However, to achieve this we need to recognise that it's not just about equality, but there is a need for equity to achieve an equal and fair outcome for all.

### What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

My values drive me. I am a true believer in: "be the change you want to see". Therefore, if I spot an opportunity to make it better, I do everything within me to pursue it. I own it and won't leave it for the next person. It means being human and considering others. Sainsbury's aims to be a truly inclusive retailer, and I want to contribute to this by continually improving our diversity and inclusion and setting a standard for the company. I want to keep building a truly inclusive culture, where all my colleagues and those who come after us feel like they belong and are setup to succeed. If we all do our part, we can create a better tomorrow. I do this knowing I have the support of some amazing colleagues and managers.

### In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

The beauty of life is that we all come from different backgrounds and have a story to tell – we all can learn from each other. Open and honest

“If we all do our part, we can create a better tomorrow.”

conversations allow for growth and curiosity to thrive, they encourage self-transcendent emotions such as empathy which helps us to build common ground and trust, as we come to see the world is bigger than ourselves and our current viewpoint. This is the first step to creating longer lasting change within our lives, community, and organisations.

### What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?

You have power and influence – what you do matters more than what you say, and you must hold yourself accountable. As a leader you have an opportunity to use your platform and voice to make a tangible change. You can make the lives of those you lead better, after all, most of us spend most of our lives at work.

Before you act, learn, listen actively and don't be afraid to ask questions.

When you see something wrong, raise awareness of it and teach others using your experiences. Do not let the fear of getting it wrong stop you from acting, as people are open to learning.

### When it comes to advocating for D&I, is there anything you can share that you're doing outside of retail?

Community is incredibly important to me, and I am passionate about making a difference. Over the years I have volunteered with various charities. I have been a motivational speaker to a virtual audience of 200 people, talking about having a vision and turning it into action.

I am also proud to lead a youth group of over 35 teenagers. My goal is to guide and inspire them to take up space, in every aspect of their lives whether that be in their community, careers or whatever they dream or aspire to be. To motivate them to dream bigger, instill confidence in them, and to encourage them to look past their current situation. I aim to give them tools and the support they need to get them started and keep them going.



# Daniel Matthews

Print Designer  
Joules



I have been a Print Designer at Joules for the last 8 years, and I'm a member of Joules' Diversity & Inclusion Action Group. As a proud member of the LGBTQ+ community myself, I have challenged and strived for change ever since joining Joules. This has included proposing, presenting and designing Joules' Pride 2022 collection, which was one of my proudest achievements to date.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

There's so much I could say here, but ultimately, it's about giving equal chances and ensuring a level playing field for everyone.

### What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

Over the years that I've been at Joules, I've seen us hire more and

more diverse colleagues with different styles, views and experiences, who have made a huge success of their careers here.

It's about driving change and helping get more voices heard, or being a voice for people where needed, so we can ensure we support a more level playing field at work.

Every day, I listen to the concerns of colleagues, and I'm in the position to voice those concerns on their behalf as part of the Inclusively Joules Action Group. This means I can escalate problems and issues to those who need to know about them.

### In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

Everyone has different experiences, and we are all affected differently and to different extents by inequality. Some people might feel overlooked at work, but the broader range of people might not see it or understand what this feels like until they're clearly told. Sharing real life, emotional and first-hand accounts makes issues hit home harder, and helps people to

learn and understand their impacts.

I also think sharing learned experiences in an open and honest way is an important part of learning for everyone – we don't always know what damage our words or actions can do, even when done with the best intentions. When someone shares their experiences we can see how our words, actions or beliefs might need to change in order to help encourage a more diverse and inclusive workplace moving forward.

### What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?

I think it's really important that leaders properly listen to their people/teams and are genuinely willing to learn, listen and take feedback on board – the change often needs to come from the top.

Leaders should push themselves to learn every day, especially from those who have experienced or struggled with inequality or discrimination.

It's a journey, with more improvement and learning always to be done. Leaders mustn't be scared about getting it wrong – we all make mistakes. Speaking up, owning mistakes and learning from them is almost always a better course of action than staying silent or waiting for things to be perfect.

“When someone shares their experiences we can see how our words, actions or beliefs might need to change in order to help encourage a more diverse and inclusive workplace moving forward.”

### What does being a good role model mean to you?

I'm not sure about whether I'm a role model – the most important thing for me is that I am doing my best every day and trying to make D&I a central part of every conversation at Joules. Listening and doing your own learning and sharing is vital, and we should never stop doing this when it comes to D&I.

I am also constantly asking questions of my colleagues across the business – how can I be the best and most helpful ally possible? How can I support you? Being open to constructive criticism and new ideas and conversations is a crucial part of this.

Finally, getting it wrong occasionally is a fundamental part of the learning process. It helps us to understand why, see the consequences and the impact our actions or words have, and appreciate the best way to move forward.

### What are you doing to ensure D&I remains a priority in your organisation?

As a member of the Inclusively Joules D&I Action Group, I have been involved in pushing forward multiple workstreams relating to D&I over the course of the last year. These have included developing our inclusion charter, becoming BRC D&I charter signatories and becoming members of DiR where we have secured places on the Female Leaders Programme for two members of our Senior Leaders Group.

We'll continue to work towards the goals we're setting ourselves, making these increasingly ambitious as we go, and will continue to challenge the group's sponsors – CEO Nick Jones and Retail and People Director Lyn Warren – to make sure we are pushing ourselves and to ensure D&I remains front and centre of Joules' wider corporate strategy.





# Conrad Mckenzie

Security Manager  
Selfridges

I've been part of the Selfridges Security team for 18 years now, working my way from Store Detective to Security Manager of our flagship Oxford Street store.

Throughout this time, it's been one of my passions advocating for a safer and more inclusive environment for both our customers and team members, whether that's through training programmes for management teams on how to facilitate conversations on diversity and inclusion, or leading a mission which resulted in increasing the number of women in the Selfridges Security team by 10% in 2021.

Growing up, I was inspired by some very strong Black women in my family, which has motivated me to work hard and help others, and not let personal barriers I've faced such as Learning Disabilities define my ability to succeed in my chosen professional career.

My grandmother came to the United Kingdom from the Caribbean in the early sixties and had a strong work ethic which she instilled in my mother and me. As a single parent, my mother has taught

me some incredible life skills and qualities which inspire me in my work practices today, such as integrity, honesty, respect, fairness and taking responsibility.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

To me, diversity and inclusion is all about empowering the staff I work with to respect and appreciate each other by teaching them to embrace and celebrate their differences, whether this be age, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, education, or country of origin. The workplace should be a safe haven for people's diversity to flourish, and these differences should be a platform to generate change and versatility, not a stumbling block. True diversity and inclusion is all about

actively encouraging mutual respect and open-mindedness and creating the space for all individuals to be valued and accepted, whether this is within the workforce or the wider community. Having an inclusive and diverse environment allows wider perspectives to be integrated when brainstorming, problem solving and developing new ideas.

### What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

I am driven by my passion to create a great working culture and community



within Selfridges, whilst facilitating a safer and more inclusive environment for both our customers and team members. I truly believe in creating meaningful change for under-represented and disadvantaged groups, whether this be through team member training on inclusive leadership or increasing our drive to employ more female security guards and create better opportunities for women wanting to start a career in a traditionally male-dominated job role.

Working with a management team that actively listens to feedback, acknowledges achievements, and encourages independence and growth inspires me daily to continue to drive progress in this area. Selfridges is taking a proactive stance on employing a diverse workforce that reflects the globalisation of society today, and I believe this will really enhance our workforce and enable us to pool our collective experiences and skills to really drive the business forward in a meaningful way.

### In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

Openly sharing stories and experiences helps us all to build empathy and promote diversity awareness. Whilst every story is unique, there are often similarities in bias behaviours people experience and openly having these discussions brings these to the forefront so we can all act on them effectively. Gaining a better understanding of each other's diverse backgrounds is a knowledge base that will help us take the first step in creating a positively integrated future.

### What does being a good role model mean to you?

Being a good role model starts with empathy and having the ability to accept the unique qualities of others, then working with them to really cultivate and celebrate these traits. This means empowering others by

“ A good role model needs to be non-judgemental, respectful and lead by example, inspiring others with their own hard work and paving the way for others to do the same.

giving them the tools to succeed and the space to grow and learn. Throughout this, a good role model needs to be non-judgemental, respectful and lead by example, inspiring others with their own hard work and paving the way for others to do the same.



# Jonty Parry

Customer & Trading Manager  
Sainsbury's

I joined Sainsbury's in 2005 and have been a Customer Trading Manager for 3.5 years in Sainsbury's Dronfield store leading a team of 40 colleagues. I'm profoundly Deaf and receive valuable support through Access to Work to help effectively communicate and engage with others.

I'm a role model and driving force, making positive differences every day. I joined Sainsbury's EnAble Disability

network two years ago supporting accessibility projects to ensure Sainsbury's communicates to all its colleagues in a way that supports them to fulfil their potential.

Outside of work, I volunteer in my local community, speaking in educational establishments to inspire future generations. In January 2022 I appeared as the Deaf role model on the Deaf Unity website.

## What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

Diversity and inclusion is a critical part of belonging, and for me relates to the organisation I work for and wider society. There's been lots of progress, but there's more to do to ensure equality for all, where everyone is accepted for being their true selves. This includes providing everyone the right opportunities to be their best and thrive. Likewise, no one should feel they have to change who they are to 'fit in' due to their background or life experiences.

## What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

Sainsbury's aims to be a truly inclusive retailer for both colleagues and customers alike, and to have a strong D&I strategy to support. During my time at Sainsbury's I've seen the D&I programme continue to evolve. As a colleague who is Deaf, I'm incredibly proud to work for a progressive employer, as I've been made to feel comfortable to be myself without judgement. I also have positive colleagues who make me feel empowered to be myself every day. As cliché as it sounds, I really do



believe that everyone has an active role to play in making our working environments inclusive. This is why I openly share my own experience to help improve awareness and encourage open and honest conversations with others. I'm excited about the future of Sainsbury's D&I progress and am proud to be a part of it.

## In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

Roughly 87,000 d/Deaf people live in UK, which is less than 1% of population. Mindful of this statistic, I appreciate that those I work with may have never met a Deaf person previously. I understand that by openly sharing my experience as a Deaf colleague, we can connect better. Also, being approachable and open-minded to any questions is key to helping increase awareness. Over time, we've built good relationships, learnt more about each other, and learnt how to better communicate with one another. For example, I seek opportunities to talk about

my experience as a Deaf colleague (including the communication tools available at Sainsbury's) when new managers visit the store I work at. I've seen positive results from sharing my knowledge, which has created a better working environment for us all.

## What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?

Continue learning, changing, and listening. It's essential to be mindful about tokenism, and understand that D&I is about making a difference and valuing each person and their benefit to the business. Always be open-minded about how you can help your colleagues to develop and thrive in their role.

## What are the biggest barriers to progress on D&I in the retail sector?

The retail sector's incredibly fast paced, which presents various challenges. In particular, increasing the knowledge and awareness of D&I topics to front-line colleagues, which is key to ensuring D&I is part of a company's culture at all

“As a colleague who is Deaf, I'm incredibly proud to work for a progressive employer, as I've been made to feel comfortable to be myself without judgement.”

levels. Another factor is employee receptiveness, which may vary due to age and attitude. Similarly, this links to customer attitudes and stereotypes – we want all of our customers to feel welcome when shopping with us, and likewise be welcoming to all of our colleagues.

Another barrier includes the size of organisations (e.g., smaller independent vs publicly listed). This difference could result in a variation of how robust policies are, and how holistic their approach is.





# Parmesh Rajani

Head of Transfer Pricing  
Kingfisher

“ People ultimately want to be respected and valued for who they are and the values they believe in.

After completing my MSc in Economics, my professional career kicked off in London with Arthur Andersen, one of the “Big 5” professional services firms, which was subsequently taken over by Deloitte. It was an exciting time to be a graduate in the big smoke; the economy was booming and there was a real buzz. I liked having a peer network of likeminded individuals to go on this journey with, and the work was stimulating, with exposure to big businesses. At the junior ranks, there was a rich cultural diversity that was reflective of the capital city.

After 15 years with Deloitte across different UK offices, I decided to take the leap to industry with Kingfisher plc, a stalwart of the retail scene and owner of home improvement businesses in Europe. I moved

into a newly created role in Group Finance as Head of Transfer Pricing. It also gave me the opportunity to really understand in depth the full end-to-end operations of a business. It was clear from an early stage that customers from different countries had different wants and needs and you couldn’t roll out the same template. Listening and understanding your audience was crucial.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

I have had the privilege of meeting a diverse group of individuals at Kingfisher who are talented, hard-working and have a rich cultural heritage. A business that realises and captures the full potential of all these individuals can do wonders, bringing freshness and innovation along with engagement, drive and commitment to go that extra mile.

Societally, there are still too many cases of injustice or unfairness based on stereotyped preconceptions, which need to be addressed. People ultimately want to be respected and valued for who they are and the values they believe in, and not



feel they have to “code switch” or compromise who they are to fit into a mould that never quite fits.

It’s about embracing and celebrating our differences and feeling comfortable talking about these with others rather than pretending they do not exist and do not impact us.

Ignoring these will only make our jobs harder. D&I recognises that we are all humans who want to do good, work with integrity and have the ambition to succeed. Certainly, you don’t want to be a business that is part of

the problem! The workplace culture needs to be embracing, supportive and flexible, allowing employees to be themselves in achieving these ambitions. Culture trumps strategy hands down.

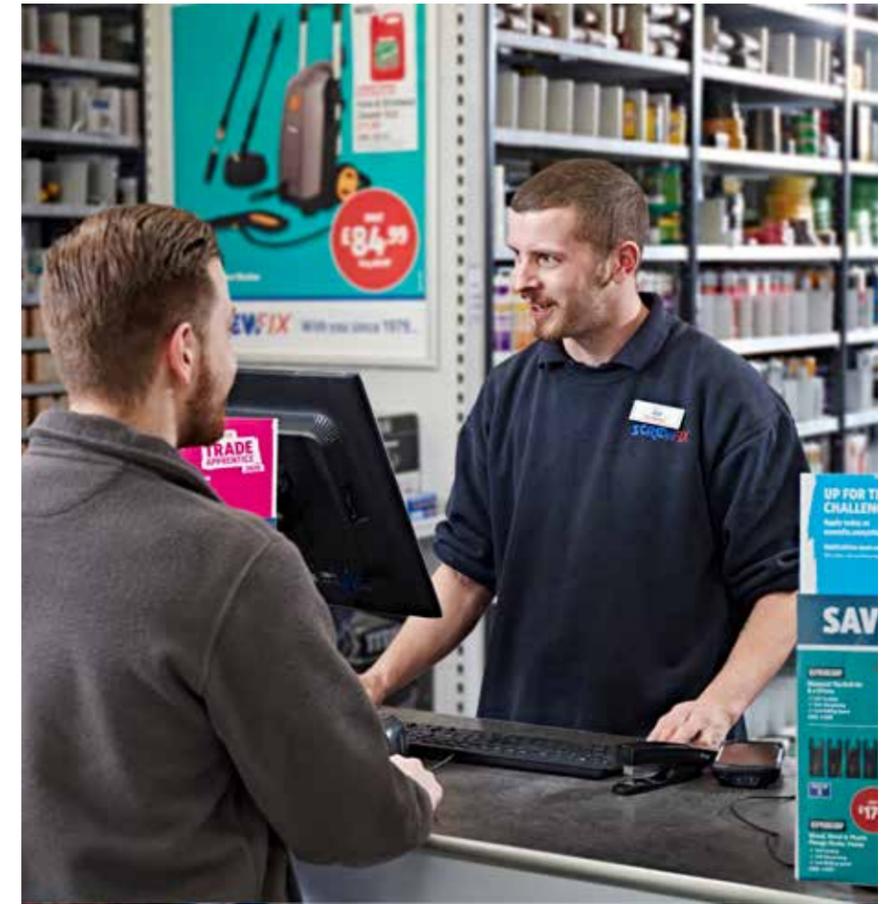
### In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

Sharing experiences and having open conversations is hugely valuable in making D&I initiatives authentic and relevant to the business. One of the biggest anxieties regarding D&I initiatives is they could come across as a “tick the box” exercise, without any meaning and substance behind them. Having real engagement from all colleagues will provide businesses with the best chance of generating impactful change that is specific and relevant to the features of that business. I have been really moved by hearing people’s lived experiences of prejudices in the workplace, which created a drive and passion to change things for the better. If businesses don’t have this dialogue at the outset, it will be a struggle to identify the issues and, ultimately, the solutions to fix those issues.

### What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?

Being really genuine about improving D&I is the first step in ensuring a successful outcome. Without this genuine drive, which needs to be from the top, it could cause more damage to the business in the long run, as employees can spot inauthenticity pretty quickly. Businesses may not know all the answers at the outset and the prospect of improving D&I may be daunting. But having the humility to acknowledge that weaknesses exist in the business and that leaders are committed to changing these will be a positive step in instigating successful change.

Too many businesses have just ignored or not acknowledged there are issues. Finally giving businesses



“ Having the humility to acknowledge that weaknesses exist in the business and that leaders are committed to changing these will be a positive step in instigating successful change.

time and space to focus on D&I is crucial. Historically, D&I objectives have not been met because other business issues have taken priority and D&I never got to the top of the list. If the business’ leaders are

genuine and serious about improving on D&I, they could build in D&I targets into bonusable objectives across all functions. There’s nothing like a cash reward to focus the mind!

### What does being good role model mean to you?

Being a good role means a number of things and being a dad has really helped me in this area. You clearly need to lead by example and behave in a way that you expect others to behave. If you don’t practice what you preach you’re not even in the draw for being a role model. You also need to acknowledge and call out difficult truths, which may be lonely, but you need to stick with your convictions. Doing the ‘right thing’ may not be convenient and could even be costly at times, but it will illustrate the conviction of your principles. Finally, showing warmth, kindness and a genuine smile do wonders for being looked up to.



# Nathan Robinson

Transport Operator  
Waitrose



I left School at 16 and joined Waitrose in 2004. I worked in the warehouse for 17 years until last year when I applied for a position in Transport. My Line Manager encouraged me to apply and supported me through the process.

At the same time I underwent a bit of a turning point in my career following an incident with another Black Partner who I felt had been treated differently because of his race. I understood what he was going through and had the opportunity to speak out about this and share some of my experiences. This progressed to discussions with my Managers. I felt listened to, which gave me more confidence and I started to feel more myself.

In September last year I helped create a video for Black History Month in the Partnership. As part of that I shared my childhood experiences and what it feels like to be a Black Partner in Waitrose. I talked about my life experiences and who I looked up to as a child. When I was young I had never seen a Black person on TV until I saw Trevor McDonald presenting the news and my Dad used to call us in to watch him. I understand why he

did that now, to give me another role model to look up to.

I've been married for 11 years, with two daughters (aged 10 and 7) who are growing up fast. Everything that I'm doing now is to try and make a difference for them. They're the future and if I don't try to make it better, what example am I setting? I am learning so much from them just by listening to what they have to say and how they feel. It makes such a difference for them and for me.

When I spoke up and people heard what I had to say, I felt more like myself. So I no longer felt like I had to hide who I really am and felt more accepted. I hope to do the same for others in the Partnership.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

It means being inclusive of everybody, understanding who a person is and where they're from. It's about getting to know their background so they feel accepted and welcomed within the work community they're in. It's really important to me that people

understand who I am and where I'm from. If they don't how will I ever feel a part of things?

### What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

Previously, people didn't understand who I really was – and I felt I didn't get opportunities to progress. I don't want others to experience that. Events like Black History Month have given me the confidence to drive progression, making others feel less isolated and educating everyone on how to make a difference for the future. I've recently gained the confidence to speak out and I've been involved in making changes which gives me a sense of pride and achievement.

### In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

It's massively important to get people to share their experiences so others can understand them better. If people are given the opportunity to share what they've been through, without

being victimised for it, they'll feel more confident because they've been listened to. Being part of the D&I progression at our Bracknell head office enables me to share my voice and my experiences and this has encouraged others to do the same.

### What are you doing to ensure D&I remains a priority in your organisation?

I'm part of the Bracknell D&I squad and I'm helping to progress change through conversations and events in our D&I calendar. I want to make an impact that is left behind if I move on. I'm keen to set up more meetings with Partners to encourage them to share their experiences. I want to get more people involved in BHM this year, giving them a chance to show who they are in the same way I've been able to. I've been working with the Partnership's Black Partner Advisory Group to set up a similar group for Supply Chain. This group will be there to offer support and sense check plans within the business, ensuring that inclusion is always prioritised.



# Jade Starrett

Group Talent and Organisation Effectiveness Director  
Kingfisher



After completing my degree in Psychology and Sociology, I decided that my interest in what motivates people, and what impact environment has on people's behaviour and performance was what I wanted to take forward in my career. I've spent the past 33 years working for global organisations helping them maximise performance through people. I've had the great privilege of working across all continents of the world and have relished the cultural diversity I've experienced. After 22

years at Diageo in the FMCG sector, I ventured into information services and technology with Experian for seven years, followed by two years in advertising and media with Dentsu, before joining Kingfisher in 2021. My experience is broad across business partnering, talent strategy, leadership development, learning, organisation development, employee engagement and culture, as well as inclusion and diversity. My purpose is to shape and nurture lasting change for the better.

**What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?**

For me, diversity is all about representation, it's about having a colleague base that mirrors the community, at all levels, so that we stay connected with and attuned to the needs of our diverse customers, and also that we access the very best talent from the broadest talent pool. I also strongly believe that diversity brings better innovation, better decision making and better business performance. Inclusion is all having a culture where diverse talent can flourish. It's not about integration, it's not about having different people fit in, it's about the culture

“ It's not about integration, it's not about having different people fit in, it's about the culture being open and flexible enough to include different perspectives and experiences and value that for the strength it brings.

being open and flexible enough to include different perspectives and experiences and value that for the strength it brings.

**What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?**

As a values and purpose driven leader, being able to fulfil my purpose



at work is a key motivator for me. Kingfisher is absolutely committed to creating a more diverse and inclusive

organisation and this is central to its business strategy and its cultural ambition. Being a part of helping to activate that genuine commitment is a great privilege and allows me to help shape and nurture lasting change for the better. We have lots to do, and in some areas we are behind the curve, but energy for change is tangible. The possibility of harnessing that energy excites me.

**In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?**

It's critical in my view. Not until we create the conditions for people to feel safe to share their experiences, good and bad, can we hope to build the trust that is essential for psychological safety. We need to be curious and courageous as we learn more about each other – the things we have in common as well

as our differences, to learn to value those differences for the strengths they inevitably bring. This starts with us talking with and listening to each other, openly and with respect.

**What advice would you give leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?**

Be curious – educate yourself, there are so many resources available, talk to colleagues from different backgrounds, get a reverse mentor.

Understand your impact – explore your own biases and seek to be more inclusive. Ask your colleagues for examples of where your leadership helps to foster inclusion and where it doesn't.

Be courageous – don't let fear of saying the wrong thing hold you back. If your intent is positive and that's understood, people will support you. Better to make mistakes than not try.





# Sundeeep Stewart

Store Manager  
Central England Co-operative



If you had asked me when I was 18 what I wanted to be when I was older, I would have said a stewardess. I went on to do a degree at the University of Birmingham in Business & Science Management and successfully completed the course with first class honours.

I was working part-time at Central England Co-op and I loved it – I thrived off the fast pace of retail and the satisfaction of making the shop look great and helping our customers.

When I graduated, I looked at jobs within my degree fields but never wanted to let go of Co-op. So I completed the Duty Management Programme which made me want to become a leader and a manager. After a couple of years training and gaining experience at different stores I became a store manager. I felt honoured to be part of a sustainable, ethical Society. Today, I'm at the peak of my career as a store manager of one of our largest local supermarkets

in the East region. The Society recently invited me to step up as the retail lead inclusion role. I was passionate about D&I and when the Society had a new working group for inclusion, I jumped at the chance to be part of it. I am currently the retail lead and I'm responsible for bringing to the table key strategies and objectives which will support our Society's key values.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

Diversity is incorporating all groups of society into one group regardless of colour, gender, sexuality or race. A diverse society should naturally be a norm with no place for discrimination.

### What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

I'm extremely proud to work for a Society that puts D&I at the forefront of its values and supports groups which are naturally vulnerable. During my time at Central England Co-op, I have endeavored to attend events which highlight social issues such as the Business Women in Retail campaign.

“ A good role model also takes accountability for their team; gets involved in tasks at every level; is fair and consistent; and provides emotional as well as commercial support.

### In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

I think sharing experiences in relation to D&I is a perfect way to provide knowledge and educate others. It is so important that, in a world defined by differing values and beliefs, we work hard to incorporate D&I. Having conversations which allow people to understand what it feels like to be discriminated against helps us all to develop as human beings.

### What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?

I would always encourage leaders to create an open and honest space. It is so important to foster an atmosphere in which colleagues feel comfortable talking about issues, and are encouraged to get involved with awareness days. For example, pride month is a great opportunity to celebrate how far we've come on LGBTQ+ inclusion.

Reading is also essential. If a colleague comes to you with an issue, read up on it and make yourself a more rounded person in terms of topical issues. In turn this will help you to better support your colleague.

### When it comes to advocating for D&I, is there anything you can share that you're doing outside of retail?

During my time at Central England Co-op, I've worked with several local community groups such as our local foodbank to provide for those who are facing hardship. I've worked with groups for people with learning disabilities to provide them an insight into a retail career and I have also attended a local primary school (which has lots of pupils from an ethnic minority background) to give talks on racism.

### What are the biggest barriers to progress on D&I in the retail sector?

For me, being a good role model means being someone who your colleagues can always count on. You should be there to support and coach – that way you'll get the best out of your teams.

“ The fact that I'm seen as a role model fills me with enormous pride. It's something I take very seriously, and I'm determined to be the best I can be for my team.

A good role model also takes accountability for their team; gets involved in tasks at every level; is fair and consistent; and provides emotional as well as commercial support.

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# Louise Taylor

Senior Brand Manager  
EG Group

I started my career as a Subway Store Manager and loved the buzz of working as part of a team. Working with people from all lifestyles inspired me, I got a kick out of watching others grow and achieve what they thought was impossible!

I moved over to EG Group and after 2 years got promoted to an Area Manager. I was given the autonomy to invest in my teams through training



and team building activities. We came together and the results spoke for themselves. Following this, I stepped into a Regional Manager's role for approximately 18 months. In November 2018 I took over EG Group Subway as Head of Brand, being the first female Head of Brand made me extremely proud. I knew the journey would be tough, and that I would have to prove myself. After a successful period in this role, I was promoted to Senior Brand Manager for Cinnabon, Sbarro, Pizza Hut & Subway. This is my current role within EG Group. I love it, being able to empower those who support me, and growing a great culture is always top of my agenda.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

I strongly believe that inclusion and diversity need to be embedded into the DNA of any strong organisation and practised by all leaders. Creating an inclusive work environment means creating a place where everyone feels welcomed and accepted – and able to speak up for what they believe in and share personal insights without fear of retribution or ridicule. Only

“Creating an inclusive work environment means creating a place where everyone feels welcomed and accepted – and able to speak up for what they believe in.

when this is modelled by all leaders will you see the powerful results of people having that sense of belonging that we all crave.

### What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

In short: my team. I have been very lucky to be surrounded by some of the most capable and passionate people I know, we have a shared belief in pushing boundaries and exploring the unknown. Seeing the growth they deliver and the personal growth they have achieved is like my shot of coffee in the morning, but



also seeing the way they lead the next generation is truly inspiring.

### In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

Being politically correct is about looking good to others. Being inclusive is about being good.

By sharing experiences, you begin to understand the damage that can be made without intention and only by highlighting and having an awareness of these micro-aggressions can we hope to avoid them. By being able to have open conversations teams are providing knowledge around what is acceptable, as well as understanding the impact it can have on others.

“Being politically correct is about looking good to others. Being inclusive is about being good.

### What does being a good role model mean to you?

As a role model, you have to be kind and passionate whilst staying true to your beliefs, it's important to have integrity and lead from the front even in times of conflict. The way we act

now will influence future generations. I am fortunate enough to be in a role where I can inspire and motivate people to be the best version of themselves. I would like to think that I make a difference to people that I cross paths with and that I positively impact their lives in some way.





# Ceira Thom

Head of Learning  
John Lewis Partnership

I studied History at university and am still a passionate scholar of the stories of our past – I love making connections and creating new lines of thought. Leaving university with very little idea of what I wanted to do, I looked to the people around me for inspiration. My parents worked in the public sector and I was proud of the difference they made through their work. This powerful

“ I am constantly motivated by the people I work with, the passion and determination they bring and I am determined to support their ambitions to make a true and lasting difference.

combination drew me to the John Lewis Partnership Graduate scheme because of everything it stood for: the UK's largest employee-owned business with incredible heritage and a real legacy of innovation.

The Partnership is driven by purpose which strongly aligns with my own values – the ‘why’ really matters. The Partnership has taught me the importance of respect, humility and how to excel in customer service. I have held many roles including working in our Waitrose supermarkets, creating new John Lewis shops in Exeter and Leeds, leading our Customer Experience team and now as Head of Learning. Every one of these roles has revolved around maximising the contribution of our amazing Partners and creating value in our communities. My current role allows me to focus on social mobility, especially through our Care Experienced programme, which provides support for young people who have been living in care.

### What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

I am proud to work in a progressive, purpose-led organisation that



encourages its Partners to think about the difference they can make and how they can support others to succeed. I am driven to make a difference and help support people to change their lives.

As I develop my understanding of the circumstances of Care Experienced people I have become ever more determined to use the power and

reputation of the Partnership to support their growth and enhance their ease of access to more and different opportunities. The stories of what has to be overcome by people in care inspire me daily and our work with charities and local councils highlights that so many people want to help. I am constantly motivated by the people I work with, the passion and determination they bring and I am determined to support their ambitions to make a true and lasting difference.

### When it comes to advocating for D&I, is there anything you can share that you're doing outside of retail?

Being alive to inclusion opportunities and causes is part of who I am. It is really important to me to use my voice for good outside and inside my organisation. I have recently been accepted as an Independent visitor with Action for Children. Volunteering is a fantastic way to give back and to understand your community better.

In work, I support councils with employability schemes and their training. We are working with the incredible Care Covenant and learn from them as well as giving them the benefit of our expertise. It has been a wonderful collaboration which is helping us grow our focus on helping those who have been in care. Almost 25% of the prison population has been in care – so more businesses beyond retail getting involved and supporting early intervention will contribute to the reduction in that number.

### In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

I truly believe that only by talking about who we are, where we come from and what has shaped us can we live our authentic life. I think the braver people are, the more they can be role models for others. I believe it is important to share where we are learning and not pretending that anyone can ever know it all. Creating space for people to share, and to talk



about how it feels for them, ensures that we see people as individuals rather than as part of a collective. Every Care Experienced person is different and we must recognise that. Only by listening can we learn and improve our understanding and therefore our support and compassion.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

For me, in the organisation it means that:

- Everyone has a voice
- They see themselves represented across all levels and roles

- They feel included for the person they really are and
- We represent the communities in which we work and the people who we serve.

And, in the work I am so passionate about, it means Care Experienced people feel valued and that their individual skills are recognised and respected. I am so passionate about this work and I'm always learning – my determination to make a difference and to truly build an inclusive business will not waiver.



# Paul Turner

Regional Manager  
Currys

I started my retail journey at a very young age, helping my family at the outdoor markets. This saw me out in the early hours of the morning, setting up and getting ready for the day ahead. This early experience gave me a great grounding of the importance of hard work, dedication, working collaboratively and of being at our very best for our customers who could enjoy a wide range of products from jewellery, fruit and veg and clothing. Working in this environment gave me early exposure to a diverse range of people from

different ethnicities, ages, and sexual orientations.

I started my career at Currys as a temp in the late nineties whilst studying IT at university. I loved technology and loved being around people, so quickly fell in love with the culture of the business, the team I worked in and the diverse range of customers who visited the store. Technology and people coming together... what's not to love? Despite graduating from university in a sector I loved, my heart was very much

embedded in retail. We are in a fast-paced, ever-evolving sector and I was at a company which was more than up to the challenge. 22 years on, after working across multiple sites and in varying roles, I thoroughly enjoy the role I play in leading teams, facilitating change and creating a more inclusive and diverse workforce.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

Diversity and inclusion for me is about acknowledging, understanding and respecting everybody's individual uniqueness so that everyone feels welcomed, trusted and accepted. We are all conditioned by our environments which are formed from a combination of our different backgrounds, unconscious bias, beliefs and life experiences. D&I encourages us to be aware of our climates and the people within them, and to continually seek multiple viewpoints.

With ever-competing priorities in retail, we need to continually remind ourselves how important it is to get D&I right: it's critical for colleague engagement, the type of service we offer the customer, and the



attractiveness of our business.

### What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

We must welcome and include a wide range of people from different backgrounds, ethnic groups, genders, disabilities, and sexual orientations. In doing so, we consider wider viewpoints and stimulate more creative environments where everyone can bring their different perspectives to the table and provide a unique contribution to the business. This also allows colleagues to reach their full potential.

We have around 15,000 colleagues across multiple areas of the business, who are all brilliant in their own unique way. We win together when

“ I thoroughly enjoy the role I play in leading teams, facilitating change and creating a more inclusive and diverse workforce.

every one of those colleagues feels valued and that their contribution matters and is making a difference.

If everyone plays their part in their respective business areas, we can make even bigger differences to our working environment, our overall personal success and the success of the company. Inclusion complements collaborative working, which in turn makes what we do stronger, longer lasting and more impactful.

### What does being a good role model mean to you?

Our colleagues are our magic ingredient to success. We can all play a part in creating an inclusive environment where everyone can contribute and prosper. Role modelling this should be a continuous journey – not a destination. A good role model sets an example by underpinning the importance of inclusion to as many people as possible in different parts of the business and in wider society.

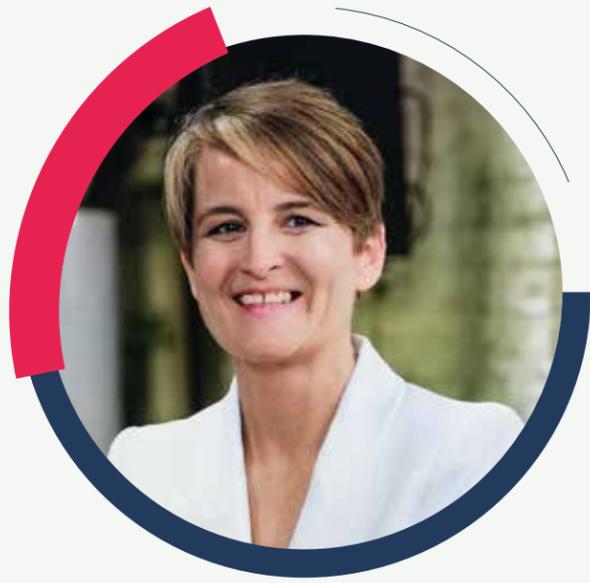
### What are you doing to ensure D&I remains a priority in your organisation?

We have over 150,000 customers visit our stores every day, who are a pretty diverse bunch. It's important

we continue to evolve with our ever-demanding colleague and customer base so that we can service them in the best possible way.

I think there are three ways we can make a real difference:

- 1) Treat our existing colleagues well. Our last two engagement surveys showed that we are doing this more and more. Our colleagues – of all ages and backgrounds – are our biggest assets, and they are wonderful advocates. Who better to help support our drive for building a great place to belong?
- 2) Living, breathing our values and vision by further helping our colleagues know they all have a unique voice and that they are all critically important in the success of our business.
- 3) If we deliver on the first two points, we will be an employer of choice when it comes to talent acquisition. We want to attract a diverse range of candidates, who feel they belong and can call Currys home no matter their age, gender, identity, ethnicity or sexual orientation. We want to be a company who will not just say the right things but do the right things.



# Ashleigh Vinall

Head of Content and Design  
Waitrose



I have over 30 years' experience in the design industry, having completed a Masters in Design at Central St Martins in the late 1980s. My career started in Publishing Design at Time Out, followed by a few years at Wolff Ollins, a large branding design agency.

But for the last 25 plus years I have worked in retail: five years at Debenhams, followed by 16 at Selfridges. It was at Selfridges where I was promoted to a Director of Design role and my time there was

truly stimulating and inspiring – it was a very hard decision to leave. However, six years ago I left the world of luxury retail for the world of food at Waitrose. The responsibilities and scope of my role are huge, covering everything from packaging, publications, marketing campaigns and the design of our store environments. I own the overall 'look and feel' of our brand across all customer touch points, which means my role is incredibly varied and hugely rewarding.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

D&I means being truly engaged and open to all people and all cultures in our society and to embrace the wonderful opportunities this brings. As a leader of a large team, it is vital to be aware of the world around you and welcome ALL opinions and ideas. And of course, D&I has to be presented authentically – internally and externally. It has to be part of our DNA. We are not just a profit-making business. We have a social purpose. As a food retailer we have a responsibility to bring broad and diverse cuisines and cultures to all our

customers. We need to support this with inspiring and culturally relevant content that truly reflects the many voices and opinions that represent a diverse and inclusive Britain. I am very proud of the work we create.

### When it comes to advocating for D&I, is there anything you can share that you're doing outside of retail?

Last year we engaged with Create Not Hate, a charitable organisation set up by Trevor Robinson, founder of Quiet Storm advertising agency. Together we launched a programme to offer creative opportunities to young people with little or no access to the creative industries or our business: young people without marketing or creative degrees, but with great abilities. We included external candidates and Partners within our organisation and their brief was to reframe the meaning of 'Made in the UK'. We wanted ideas that truly reflected the diversity and ethnicity of UK culture today – expressed in any medium. We are now developing some of those ideas into reality, and offering work placements in the Partnership design teams. It is one of the most rewarding and exciting

programmes I have ever had the privilege to work on.

### What are you doing to ensure D&I remains a priority in your organisation?

We are always interrogating our approach to delivering content. Our mission is to ensure that everything we create is diverse, inclusive and respectful of all the communities we serve – now and in the future. We continually strive to connect with leading chefs, writers and industry professionals from all backgrounds and cultures as well as, of course, ensuring we give voice to all our internal Partners. This is at the heart of our approach. It underpins our Purpose and what we all we stand for.

### What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?

As a leader within the Partnership I have a responsibility to champion D&I and challenge my peers if I witness a narrow-minded attitude that does not fit with our Purpose. This is something I feel very passionately about. Developing senior managers and building future leaders is the key to being a good leader yourself and therefore ensuring your senior team are as engaged as you are from a D&I perspective is crucial. Clearly set the vision for D&I; give clarity of what you want to achieve and what you believe in; keep all channels of communication open for interesting discussion and ideas sharing. And then go for it.

“ Developing senior managers and building future leaders is the key to being a good leader yourself and therefore ensuring your senior team are as engaged as you are from a D&I perspective is crucial.





IN MEMORIAM

# Crispin Burridge

Director of Workplace Delivery Services  
Kingfisher

*We never imagined when we nominated Crispin for the Role Model Index, that it would be his colleagues completing his bio on his behalf. But shortly after the nomination, Crispin sadly passed away. His loss is felt keenly by all that knew and loved him. His warmth, kindness and dynamism touched all who he came into contact with. This bio has been written by his friends and colleagues at Kingfisher Plc, who miss him every day and hope to shine a light on his incredible legacy.*

Crispin read Three-Dimensional Design at Bristol University where he was also elected Student Union President. He started his career at Marks & Spencer, where he held various roles in retail for over 15 years, eventually specialising in property and the workplace. Whilst at M&S, Crispin exercised his passion for ensuring that the built environment recognises its part in reducing the impact on climate change and greater wellbeing by becoming a founding member of the UKGBC.

Crispin joined Kingfisher in 2010 where he held roles across Workplace Delivery Services and also served as

a Trustee on the Kingfisher Pension Board. He was an active champion of inclusive environments and experiences and the founder and much-loved Chair of the Kingfisher LGBTQ+ Affinity Network, he was a mentor on the Mission Include programme and governor of Bedales School, a school he felt shaped his life and was proud to be shaping its future.

During a full and thriving career, Crispin met and married his soulmate

Andrew, and had three wonderful daughters.

### **In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?**

As an openly gay leader, Crispin would often talk about how motivating he found younger LGBTQ+ employees talking about their experience, especially about the lack of visibility of “people like me”



in the places where big decisions are made. He heard too many stories of people struggling to be their true selves and the significant impact that was having on mental health.

Crispin vowed to be loud and unapologetic about his life and love. In doing so, he gave permission to countless others to live as their most authentic selves and be out at work for the very first time in their careers.

It was Crispin’s courage and vulnerability in doing this which paved the way for so many others. He sparked a movement and was incredibly generous with his time to the many colleagues who reached out to him about their own personal journeys. When you talked to Crispin, you were the only person in the room. Your story mattered, your struggle was important and you knew you were never alone.

Crispin showed time and time again that through personal connection and empathy you can make inclusion personal. A shared experience that others will strive to share once they experience its joy.

### **What does being a good role model mean to you?**

Crispin was a role model every day in the way he championed LGBTQ+ rights and a more inclusive culture and working environment for all.

We will share some of the things he did that were particularly impactful for those around him.

Crispin was always the first to canvas the room (virtual or otherwise), seeking ideas and opinions from others at all levels of the organisation. This authentic approach to valuing what everyone had to say and creating safe spaces in which people could speak is a critical aspect of being a role model.

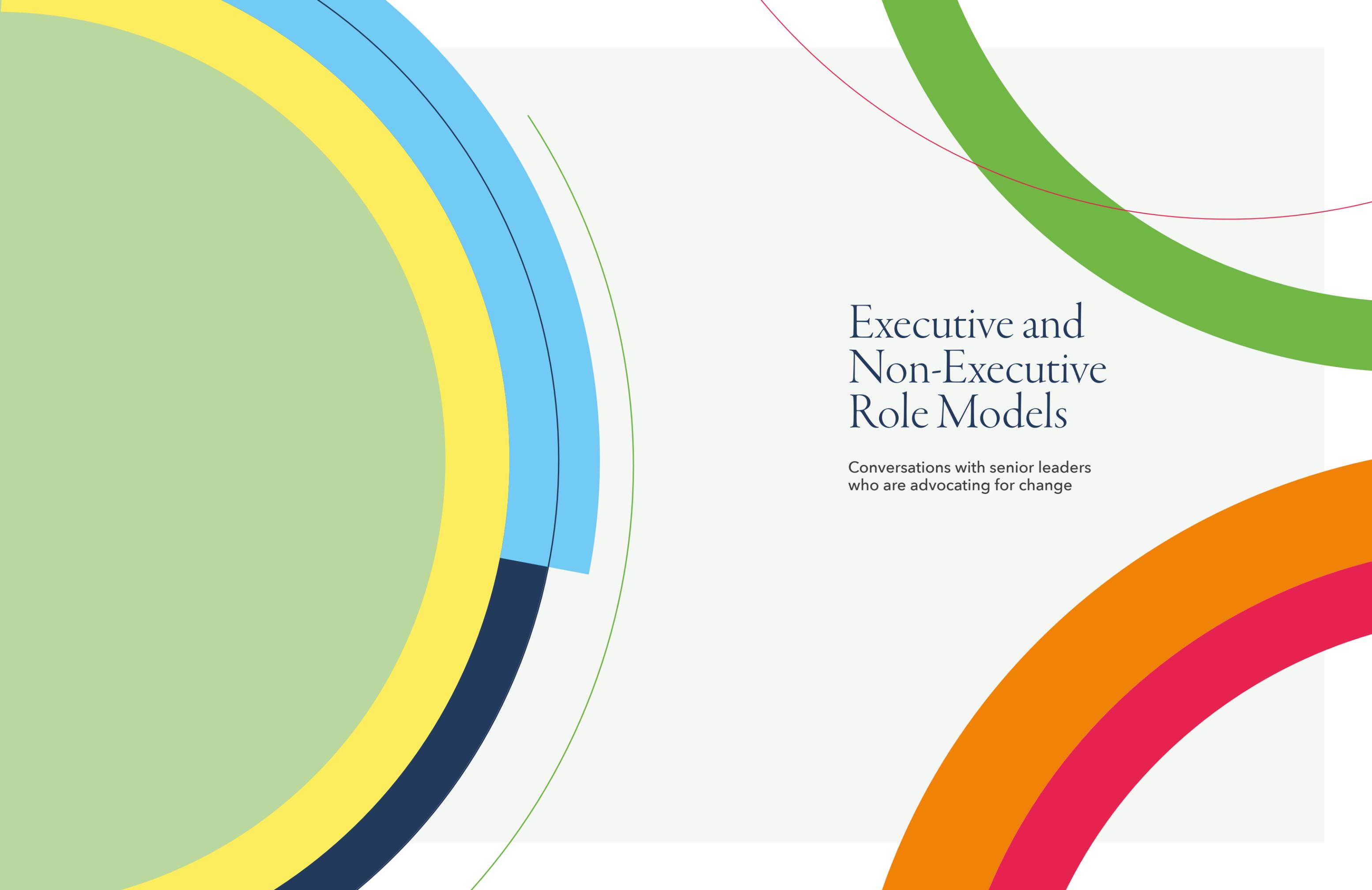
Crispin was a man of action. For him, it was not only about the words, and this is what made him so credible as a leader and role model. He would ask the tough questions and follow through with action.

### **What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?**

Crispin often spoke passionately about how other leaders can be authentic allies. Through both his actions and his words he encouraged others to:

1. Challenge yourself and others to think about the tough things and have the tough conversations
2. Bring people with you – the voices of many make the messages more impactful
3. Be vulnerable, be authentic – you can’t expect it of others and not do the same yourself
4. By-standing is not enough. Ask yourself what does advocacy look like to the people around you? How will they notice a change in you from what they’ve seen before?
5. Measure your impact and improvement – inclusion is never ‘done’. Persistence is key and our efforts must be relentless.





# Executive and Non-Executive Role Models

Conversations with senior leaders  
who are advocating for change



# Liz Evans

Managing Director  
George at Asda



I joined Asda in January 2022 to lead its George Business. Prior to that I was CEO of family lifestyle brand Fat Face. I spent my early career at M&S in roles across Retail, Womenswear and its International business.

I'm a passionate advocate for the development of female leaders in retail and am a non-executive director on the Prince's Trust Trading Board

as well as an active supporter of the Speakers for Schools Charter and an Honorary Professor of Business of Fashion at the Glasgow Caledonian University.

I live in London with my husband and enjoy nothing more than spending family time in France skiing. As well as being a keen supporter of Welsh Rugby and a fan of Arsenal Football Club.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

Whilst the words are often used interchangeably, I think it's important to consider just how different they actually are. For me, inclusion is about the culture we create as an organisation where everyone is able to bring their best and true self to work every single day.

If we get that right, then diversity will naturally follow. We'll not only attract more diverse talent into the business, we'll also see more colleagues from all backgrounds feeling more confident they can be themselves and progress within the business.

In my experience, diverse teams come up with new ideas and fresh

perspectives. They also help us to think differently, challenging the status-quo so we can make our workplaces and communities a better place.

### In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

We all have a very different starting point in life, and for many reasons throughout our early lives and careers, we'll either be progressed or penalised based on some of those starting points.

As a female leader, I can relate to the barriers that women can face throughout their careers, but gender is just one facet of diversity and I appreciate that's not enough. I need to be able to learn from others about their backgrounds by having open conversations with colleagues and peers about their life experiences.

I find, if we create a safe environment where we're able to be vulnerable and share our experiences with each other, then we can all better understand and appreciate everyone's different viewpoints. It's also a great

way to keep up to date with the issues and topics that are relevant and important right now.

### What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?

The culture of any team is shaped by the worst behaviour the leaders are willing to tolerate. That's why as leaders, we have a personal responsibility to not only be inclusive and support diversity but call it out when it isn't happening. To help with this, it's important that we continue to educate ourselves. This doesn't need to be through formal learning interventions; just finding a way to connect with people who have different voices to your own is a great way to do this.

And let's make sure we celebrate our colleagues who bring their authentic self to work, find ways to get to know

every member of your team, and be humble. As leaders, we aren't always used to sharing the chinks in our armor, but by opening up and sharing our experiences, we give permission to those around us to do the same.

### What does being a good role model mean to you?

A good role model is someone who understands that their starting point and experiences in life are not the same as others – so they need to ensure they're an active ally for all areas of inclusion. They are not afraid to challenge the status quo and are quick to apologise and re-assess their behaviour on the occasions when they don't quite get it right.

A good role model is someone who isn't afraid to be their authentic self and actively encourages their teams to adopt the same outlook. They celebrate those who champion

an inclusive culture and encourage all their colleagues to be allies.

“ In my experience, diverse teams come up with new ideas and fresh perspectives. They also help us to think differently, challenging the status-quo so we can make our workplaces and communities a better place.





# Tim Followfield OBE

Company Secretary and Corporate Services Director  
Sainsbury's

I was appointed to Sainsbury's Operating Board in 2004. I joined Sainsbury's in 2001 as Company Secretary, having previously held the position of Company Secretary and General Counsel at Exel plc, the global logistics company, now part of DHL.

In addition to my role as Company Secretary, I am responsible for the Corporate Services Division comprising Legal Services, Data Governance and Information Security, Safety, Shareholder Services, Insurance and Central Security.

I am the Chair of the Disability Confident Business Leaders Group, which works with Government in shaping the disability employment agenda and in raising awareness of the benefits of employing disabled people.

I am proud to be the Board Sponsor for Disability and Carers at Sainsbury's and I work closely with our EnAble Network to improve the experience of our colleagues and customers with disabilities.

It was an honour to be awarded an OBE for my services to disability awareness in 2020.

## What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

For me, inclusion and diversity go hand in hand.

Diversity means that there is difference – different views, different experiences and different voices. We will only succeed as a business when we take the time to listen to

and understand these differences among our 180,000 colleagues. In turn this will allow us to provide an environment where all our customers feel comfortable shopping with us.

Inclusion is about how it feels, how well people feel listened to and involved. It's about how our culture, processes and practices feel.



“ We will only succeed as a business when we take the time to listen to and understand these differences among our 180,000 colleagues.

## What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?

Sustainable change can only be led by the Board, authentically driving the agenda from the top. If leaders want to increase their focus on diversity and inclusion, they need to really lean into it. They need to take the time to listen, understand, and be willing to hear hard truths. Then they need to be able to go on and ask probing and challenging questions to make a difference.

It's also important they create a clear set of actions to hold themselves and their business to account. This might include targets so that improvements can be measured.

## When it comes to advocating for D&I, is there anything you can share that you're doing outside of retail?

I am the Chair of the Disability Confident Business Leaders Group. The group is made up of passionate and influential leaders from some of the UK's largest businesses, who want to work with Government to shape the disability employment agenda. I am proud of the work we have achieved since I became Chair and established the group in 2016.

This gives me a great opportunity to drive change at the highest level and really make a difference.

It also allows me to work with and learn from other organisations who are making real change happen. And it makes me excited about the future although there are significant hurdles still to overcome.

It is my ambition that through the work of this group, more employers will feel able to provide opportunities for people with a disability, helping them to realise their full potential for the benefit of their organisations.

## What are you doing to ensure D&I remains a priority in your organisation?

As leaders at Sainsbury's, the Board have a real responsibility to ensure that the inclusion of others remains a priority.

I can do this by making sure that disability inclusion remains high on the board agenda, and that we continue to listen and learn from others.

I shall use my platform to champion and drive change to improve the experiences that our colleagues and customers have. This includes working closely with our EnAble network in helping to drive their agenda forward.





# Emma Fox

CEO  
Berry Bros. & Rudd

After university, I always knew that I'd like to get into some sort of retail world as I found watching people's behaviour in shops fascinating. I joined the graduate scheme at Bass and started in Augustus Barnett, a national chain of off licences that they owned. My time there was incredibly formative and I found my niche as a wine buyer, as well as being an international brand manager and

Marketing Director for the Leisure Entertainments division. After ten years, I joined Asda, in the Beers, Wines and Spirits department. I spent a terrific 14 years with Asda/Walmart and took advantage of the many opportunities a company of that size has to offer. My most 'out of comfort zone' role was as Logistics Operations Director which was my first director appointment, and I really

had to dig deep to understand the detail of how a complex supply chain worked. I didn't think I had the skills to do the job but was advised by a very supportive boss at the time, that I was not being promoted because of my technical skills (which were limited in that area!) but because of my transferable skills. That was a real life lesson for me.

During my time as Asda, I moved the family out to Toronto to become CMO for Walmart Canada which was a tremendous experience personally and professionally. I also had the honour of being appointed Chair of Walmart's Global Diversity and Inclusion council, which involved setting the strategy to drive D&I in 28 countries and across 2.2 million employees.

I then moved back to the UK to join the executive team at Halfords to work on the turnaround strategy before becoming CEO of a private equity backed retail business, The Original Factory Shop, again to drive a turnaround strategy. That all culminated in where I am today, as CEO of BB&R, having been a NED on their board for three years prior to that.



## What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

I'm a real believer in the philosophy that if you put the customer at the heart of your business and you do the right thing by your colleagues, underpinned with strong values, then commercial outperformance will follow. This has been a proven

formula for me in my career. It's like a fly wheel affect: everyone becomes more aligned, confident and proud to work together as a team, which in turn drives momentum and progress.

## What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?

Having had the privilege of being part of Walmart's inaugural global D&I council, my key piece of advice is to be really clear across your organisation about why it's critical – do not pay lip service to it, you will be found out! You need clarity on rationale (a more diverse team has been statistically proven to deliver better results); you need clarity on the three or four tangible things you're going to action; and you need to be the champion of it. Own it and communicate at every opportunity – there is much value in repetition.

## What are the biggest barriers to progress on D&I in the retail sector?

A couple of things spring to mind. Having a large enough talent pool within your organisation is key, which means starting development

and succession planning early on in a colleague's career. This is often overlooked as day-to-day events get in the way of longer-term people planning. I also think that women are very often susceptible to imposter syndrome and feel that they are not ready, qualified or good enough, which is why encouragement and support are crucial.

## What does a good role model mean for you?

I think a good role model, irrespective of gender, must be authentic and honest first and foremost. Good role models show genuine concern for their colleagues, through getting to know them and understanding what makes them tick. Praise and encouragement are also key, it's often the small things we do that makes a real difference.

“ Having had the privilege of being part of Walmart's inaugural global D&I council, my key piece of advice is to be really clear across your organisation about why it's critical – do not pay lip service to it, you will be found out!



# Daksh Gupta

Group CEO  
Marshall Motor Holdings

When I was just six months old, my birth parents both died in a car crash and I was adopted by East African Asians. We came to the UK in 1974. Typically, if you're from an Asian background you are expected to be a lawyer, a doctor, a dentist or take up another similar profession. But, like a lot of people in this industry, I sort of stumbled into automotive retail after university. What I found is that it is a fantastic space which is exciting and fast-paced. I've now been CEO at Marshall Motor Holdings for 14 years.

Throughout my career, I have experienced racism – not a lot but it was definitely there. I'm passionate about D&I because it can't be right

that, in a sector with several hundred companies operating in it, I'm the only person of an ethnic minority to run a major group. Similarly, I can only think of one woman who leads a major company in the industry. That does not reflect society.

### What does being a role model mean to you?

I never set out to be a role model. I probably didn't start talking about D&I until five or six years ago, when the topic really gained momentum. But today I take the responsibility very seriously. I'm passionate about being a role model because I know that people look up to me. I want to show

others that if you're good enough you can seize any opportunity that comes your way.

I'm also trying to set an example when it comes to talking openly about mental health and disability. I've got ADHD – and when I shared this information with people they were shocked. Partly because it was a surprise to them, and partly because I'd spoken so openly about it. I don't think as a society we've done a very good job at being transparent and prepared to talk about these things. It's been fantastic to see the progress we've made on this over the last few years.



“ It's taken time to make diversity part of our culture, but now it's commonplace that women make up a significant number of our senior management population.

### What does D&I mean in your organisation?

First of all, focusing on diversity and inclusion is just the right thing to do to.

But there is also a clear business case. We started focusing on D&I probably eight or nine years ago, after receiving customer feedback from our female customers. While our customer base is fairly evenly split, automotive retail has historically been a very male-dominated industry.

We were hearing comments that our female customers at times didn't feel comfortable in the sales showrooms, which could be very male spaces.

So for us it made perfect commercial sense to ensure greater diversity in the business.

We started putting in foundations, and looking at some of the reasons why women weren't joining the industry. It's taken time to make diversity part of our culture, but now it's commonplace that women make up a significant number of our senior management population.

### What have you done to embed D&I into your business?

As a starting point, we looked at every single touchpoint that we have with our people. How do we market to hire people? How do we onboard? How do we train? How do we remunerate them? What's the career path? What's the creative element? Who's mentoring them?

Then about two years into the process we focused on leadership training. We realised that the step up between the sales floor and a management role, for example, was pretty big – and we couldn't just expect people to become leaders of our organisation without appropriate training. So we started a future leaders programme, which has been brilliant.

When I started, probably 80% of our hires were external, and now the

vast majority are internal. I'm really proud of that.

### What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?

I'd say be patient. Building a truly inclusive platform where everyone can be themselves takes time – but you will get there. Don't try and do everything at once because you just won't be able to. And I'd also say don't abandon your core beliefs.

### What are you doing outside of the sector?

I'm proud to be Vice Chair at our industry charity Ben, and I'm also involved as one of the patrons for [M]enable, which is a mental health charity.

“ When I started, probably 80% of our hires were external, and now the vast majority are internal. I'm really proud of that.



# Nikki Humphrey

Executive Director, People  
John Lewis Partnership

I am a pragmatic and commercial People Director with executive board level experience in retail, aviation, banking, insurance, asset management, media, manufacturing and engineering.

I thrive in environments where ambition, people and transformation are at the heart of the business, and am renowned for my expertise in leading large-scale organisation and culture change; building organisational capability and aligning talent, reward and succession plans with strategic business goals. I am a passionate people leader, motivated by unlocking the potential of individuals, teams and businesses. In my current role at John Lewis Partnership, I focus is on developing Partners, providing exceptional health and wellbeing support, and improving their diversity and inclusion strategy; and truly reflecting the communities they serve.

## What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

I'm passionate about creating working environments that are truly inclusive to everyone. Bringing diversity of thought, experience and skills

together can produce magical results both for businesses and importantly for individuals. Quite simply, it is about creating the opportunity for everyone to flourish.

“ True change can only be sustained if our teams truly believe our leaders get it and believe in it. At a fundamental human level, our colleagues can easily spot when it isn't authentic!

## In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

Sharing experiences and having open conversations removes the

barriers and creates a sense of safety and permission for it to be ok to talk about things. It helps people connect to each others' stories and experiences; it encourages more people to be brave and share more openly than they might have previously been comfortable to do; and importantly it starts to reveal some uncomfortable truths which we all need to listen to. I always enjoy the conversations as I come from a place of learning and curiosity, and try to walk in others' shoes and really listen to understand more than I know. It helps us to be more tolerant, open and empathetic to those around us. I'm never disappointed with any of the conversations I have.

## What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?

It is an absolute must to be curious as a leader if you really want to progress diversity and inclusion across your business. You need to think about other viewpoints; their experiences; hidden barriers or biases that may exist; and importantly be open minded to see things in a different way. This will enable you

“ Quite simply, it is about creating the opportunity for everyone to flourish.

to enact change and do things differently. True change can only be sustained if our teams truly believe our leaders get it and believe in it. At a fundamental human level, our colleagues can easily spot when it isn't authentic!

On a very practical level, there needs to be a clear plan and measurable outcomes, otherwise good intentions just won't drive the required change. Importantly, it also needs to have senior sponsorship which is visible and tangible for our teams.

## What are the biggest barriers to progress on D&I in the retail sector?

I'm not sure there are particular barriers to progressing diversity and inclusion in retail more than any other sector, as I think we face very similar challenges across industries. There is a huge need to make conscious and purposeful decisions on the actions



and interventions to drive progress; ensuring there is full leadership advocacy is critical; creating a movement across teams will achieve results quicker. It is incredibly powerful to show commitment to be an inclusive business with visible action and a real restlessness for change. Everyone has a part to play to achieve the desired change.

## What does being a good role model mean to you?

For me, it is about being open, honest and showing your own

vulnerability. Sharing our own experiences will help others open up and share theirs. If I can help someone to feel supported or take one small positive action, then I feel I've made a difference in some way. Importantly, being consistent in what you say and how you are is a critical part of being a role model. It creates the stories that are shared and retold to others – this ripple effect is unmeasurable yet incredibly impactful.



# Fiona Lambert

Managing Director, Jaeger  
Marks and Spencer

I joined M&S as Jaeger's Managing Director on 22nd February 2021. Leading the repositioning of Jaeger, as an independent brand within the M&S Family, my objective is to develop a unique contemporary handwriting and reinvigorate Jaeger's heritage into a compelling and inspiring omni-channel British brand. I have vast experience in defining and transforming brands; previous roles include the launch of George at

ASDA – and its revival further down the line – along with the creation of its Home brand from scratch, from the product and packaging to the customer profile. Other notable industry experience includes my time at brands Next, Dunelm & River Island. I'm a proud Ambassador of Retail Week's 'Be Inspired' Campaign, breaking down barriers and driving inclusivity in retail.

**What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?**

Diversity and inclusion means equality. It's the importance of respecting and valuing each other's differences and helping each other to be the best version of ourselves.

**What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?**

I take the example that almost 40% of UK FTSE 100 board positions are now held by women – up from just 12.5% ten years ago. Although there is still much work to do in all areas of inclusion and diversity, this example motivates me that in time, with a mindset to make a difference, change is possible.

**In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?**

Our careers are big parts of our lives. For many of us, we might spend as much time at work with our colleagues as we do with our friends and family, so it's important we communicate. I know that when a team bring their whole selves to work, without fear of discrimination, they feel better and perform better – which is good for all of us. I am always willing to admit challenges I've faced, whether I've overcome them or learnt from them and I believe this enables more open conversations within our business.

**What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?**

Diversity and inclusion is not about ticking a box – it needs to be fully embedded into the way we do business. In retail, this means the teams we employ, the suppliers we work with and the customers we communicate with – whether that be through the ranges we sell or how we choose to market them.

“No business can change overnight, but it starts with people. It is not until you understand their lives and experiences, that you can build a roadmap for your journey with actionable goals and targets.”



No business can change overnight, but it starts with people. It is not until you understand their lives and experiences, that you can build a roadmap for your journey with actionable goals and targets.

**When it comes to advocating for D&I, is there anything you can share that you're doing outside of retail?**

I actively support Age UK with befriending calls, and I have learnt a huge amount from my 85-year-old friend who I now speak to on a regular basis – these calls reinforce

my respect for what his experience adds to my knowledge and that age should not be a barrier.

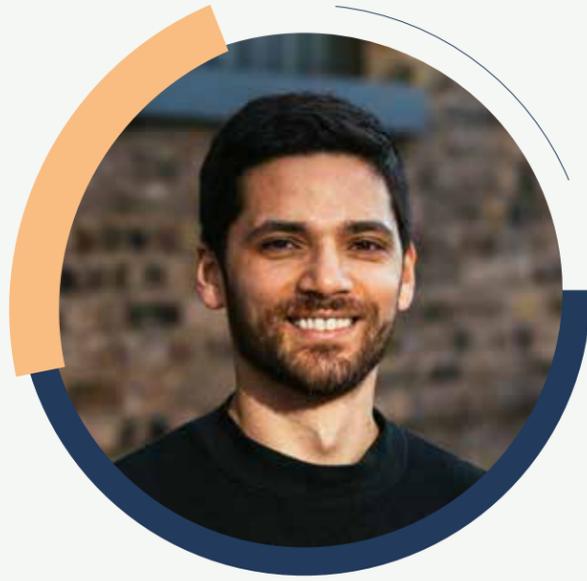
**What does being a good role model mean to you?**

For me it's about making sure every colleague has an experience that makes them feel more than part of a team – part of a family. Just as Jaeger has been welcomed into the M&S family, as MD it is essential that I create a culture where everyone feels empowered and clear on the part they play in the success of the

business. I have a huge respect for everyone's contribution, and I truly believe that we will only be successful with a diverse team; in experience, in skill set, in share of voice – and trust each other in the value that it brings.

**What are you doing to ensure D&I remains a priority in your organisation?**

Although we operate independently, Jaeger is part of the M&S family sharing the same values on inclusion and diversity.



# Alex Loizou

Co-founder, CEO  
Trouva



I was born in France to Cypriot-German parents and spent most of my childhood in Cyprus, before studying in Cologne and then London, before founding my businesses there. My upbringing taught me first-hand what it means to blend cultures, rituals and mindsets. When I moved countries

to go to university, and then spent much of my time on extremely international courses, I realised how my background and experience of the stereotypes and realities as a German-Cypriot had deeply influenced my way of interacting with people and understanding of what makes people tick. During my studies, I happened to listen to a guest lecture at the LSE by a young man talking about “startups” and “entrepreneurship”. While I didn’t know much about what that meant, his talk had piqued my interest and I reached out to learn more. This led me to win a place on the first cohort of Entrepreneur First, a scheme that connects graduates with each other as potential cofounders to start technology businesses. That’s when I co-founded Trouva, which, nine years later, is a growing business supporting independent boutiques across Europe.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

Learning how to listen. And then practicing it, actively. We often think we’re doing this but it’s easy to selectively hear or misinterpret.

“ To achieve the best results, you need multiple perspectives around you.

It takes effort to do it such that you can put aside your biases and preconceptions in order to really hear. Too often, our default is to listen only for when we need to start talking. Once you focus on listening to hear what others are trying to say, you start understanding that to achieve



“ For me, a key part of building long term value is being able to understand the future and how the proposition today translates into the behaviours of tomorrow.

the best results both personally and as a company, you need multiple perspectives around you, united by the same core values. For me, diversity and inclusion means exactly that: listening to multiple different perspectives, voiced by individuals from different backgrounds who each contribute to capturing the breadth of a given subject.

### What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

When founding a business, one of the goals I set myself was to build

long term value. This permeates every decision you make, from the vision and strategy to the hiring and culture you create. For me, a key part of building long term value is being able to understand the future and how the proposition today translates into the behaviours of tomorrow. To achieve this, diversity and inclusion is a fundamental piece to the puzzle as it helps us capture a more complete view of what the future will look like.

### What are the biggest barriers to progress on D&I in the retail sector?

Retail should be a cornerstone for promoting diversity and inclusion. Every product out there has a story that’s fundamentally about people: the creator, the producer, the seller. In most cases though, our current shopping experience hides away the story behind what we’re buying. I believe this is one of the most exciting opportunities in retail today. People buy stories. They get intrigued by the background of what they’ve purchased. Brands have everything to gain from surfacing more of their background, their perspective and the story behind the products which

will help break down the barrier of D&I in retail.

### In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

There’s a saying that “You’re the average of the five people you spend the most time with”. Who you surround yourself with is a conscious choice. You can choose to remain in your comfort zone and surround yourself with people who will echo your way of thinking, your perspective, your ideology – that’s the path of least resistance, always. If you choose to surround yourself with people who bring new and different perspectives, you won’t always agree but it will help you understand the weaknesses and strengths of your own point of view and in doing so, you’ll refine your own beliefs while broadening your understanding. Creating a space where you can have open conversations, where you can share and listen to the experiences and perspectives of other people, is the way to beat your personal bias and understand the value of a diverse and inclusive space.



# Fraser Longden

Chief Operating Officer  
Wickes

My career has all been a bit squiggly! I fell in love with being part of a team and helping customers while working part time in retail. After a (difficult!) conversation with my parents, I decided to accept a position on the Homebase management training scheme rather than taking up my place at university.

Early on I realised how much I enjoyed creating teams, tracking

results and helping people grow. Moving to HR felt like a natural step.

In 1999 I joined B&Q where an amazing mentor helped me get a broad grounding in all things HR, before spending three years as Director of HR. In 2007 I moved back to Operations as the Director of Showrooms and then, with my family, moved to Shanghai to join B&Q China. I returned in 2011 to join

the Executive Board at B&Q as HR Director.

In 2014 I moved to Wickes, excited by the opportunity to modernise the business. I started as the HR Director, then I became the Chief Commercial Officer and for the last four years it has been my great pleasure to work with the Stores, Distribution, Installations and Property teams as Chief Operations Officer.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

It's hard to raise the playing field when there are holes all over it. The work we are doing on diversity and inclusion is all about filling those holes so that things are equitable and everyone can bring their brilliance to work. A team where difference exists, but everyone feels like they belong, is an unstoppable force.

### What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

This is real, important work and is no different to any other area of modernisation of the business, like refitting our stores, becoming more digital or refreshing our offer. It requires and deserves the same

level of leadership focus, otherwise the business will become irrelevant to future employees and customers. The stories I get to hear of the power that comes when people feel like they belong blows my mind and inspires me every day.

I am also very self-motivated on this topic, regularly asking myself questions like if not me, then who? If not now, then when?

“ This is real, important work and is no different to any other area of modernisation of the business, like refitting our stores, becoming more digital or refreshing our offer.

### In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

I am a white, heterosexual, cis man. My privilege dictates the way I experience life and the world. Open, sometimes uncomfortable conversations are my only real window to how others, who have less privilege than me, experience the world. This also means that to understand the truth I have to do two things. Really listen, listen to understand and suspend my judgment. On this topic, my views, my experiences are simply not relevant. My role is to amplify, share these stories, keep the conversation going and help galvanise change.

### What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?

Firstly, don't let a feeling of inauthenticity stop you. It's an easy excuse for people like me, but it is our job to use our privilege to create change.

Secondly, be prepared to be uncomfortable as you hear about things that have never happened to you. Remember – just because you haven't experienced them doesn't mean they are not true.

Thirdly, there are loads of resources and support available, use these to educate yourself and fuel open conversations in your organisation.

Finally, enjoy seeing the power that is delivered by a diverse team in which everyone feels like they belong!

### When it comes to advocating for D&I, is there anything you can share that you're doing outside of retail?

When I look back on my career, a couple of amazing mentors made all the difference. This has led me to work with the Youth Group in a couple of capacities, including mentoring young people from more diverse backgrounds and using my experiences and perspectives to help them navigate the early stages of their career. This is all very selfish as helping young people to join up the dots is very rewarding.





# Manju Malhotra

CEO  
Harvey Nichols

I am CEO at Harvey Nichols, the UK's premier luxury fashion retailer. After progressing through the ranks over a 24-year career at the retailer, I was appointed CEO in 2020, having previously been Chief Operating Officer. Outside of my executive career, I am a Non-Executive Director at Workspace Group Plc and a member of the Audit Committee. I am also Non-Executive Director of London & Partners. I am a Chartered Accountant and have a BSc in economics from the University of Warwick.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

For me, it is about creating an environment which gives everyone the confidence to openly be their true selves. For our employees, they should be able to believe there is no glass ceiling to their ambitions. For our customers, they should believe that they are genuinely welcome at Harvey Nichols and that there is something within our broad range of products and services that they can enjoy.

### What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

Watching Harvey Nichols develop into a continuously progressive environment gives me the motivation to keep doing what I'm doing. We work as a collective at Harvey Nichols and each member of the team is driving our business forward to be a place that we all want to be part of. As a company, we all hold a tremendous amount of pride working for Harvey Nichols and that is one of the biggest motivations for me, which I want to build on continuously.

Each section of the business adds something exciting and we're continuing to push our sustainability, diversity, and inclusion metrics so we can proudly say we're going above and beyond to create a Harvey Nichols for the future.

### In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

Being transparent is a guiding factor in the evolving topic of diversity and inclusion. Humans empathise with others and if you can be open about



your personal trials and tribulations with respect to diversity and inclusion – even when conversations are awkward – the recipient will gain a deeper understanding of why we need to make significant changes in the workplace, and the huge benefits of doing so. It also ensures no one feels uncomfortable about any perceived differences and that those differences in experience are recognised as bringing a valued broader perspective, which should be very much celebrated.

### When it comes to advocating for D&I, is there anything you can share that you're doing outside of retail?

I'm always on the search for new initiatives and ensuring I'm advocating for diversity and inclusion. I've been an ambassador for Spear Camden for the past 10 years – the charity works to improve the lives of

“ I think the term ‘role model’ is open to all of us and we all have the capacity to take a role in someone's life.

underprivileged young adults – and the ability to help someone achieve long-term education or employment is priceless.

As a woman, my work with The Women of the Future Programme is heartfelt and our mission is to unlock a strong and successful network of women. Along with this, I'm an Ambassador of Retail Week's 'Be Inspired' – supporting the next generation of female business leaders.

### What does being a good role model mean to you?

I think the term 'role model' is open to all of us and we all have the capacity to take a role in someone's life.

We can all achieve greatness and successfully achieving this is helped by guidance from those wanting to nurture your talent. That, along with providing motivation and encouraging people not to give up.

I like to think I facilitate opportunities for those who use me as a role model and inspire them to continuously push for their goals showing them what can be achieved whilst still being proud of who they are. Especially as a woman and being of Indian origin, I know how important it is to have visible role models in your life.



# Elizabeth Messud

Group General Counsel  
Kingfisher

I am a seasoned commercial lawyer and have significant international experience gained in a broad range of director of legal and compliance roles over the past 25 years. Originally qualified in Canada, I have worked in Russia, France, Spain, Switzerland and the UK in private practice, and heading legal departments in both the FMCG and asset management sectors.

I have been Group General Counsel with the Kingfisher Group since January 2017. My responsibilities include overseeing the Company Secretariat and management of the Group's legal and compliance affairs. I lead the development and implementation of legal work to support Kingfisher's 'Powered by Kingfisher' strategy, a role that draws on my cross-jurisdictional expertise both in practising law and in legal team management.

### What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

I am motivated to help drive progress on inclusion and diversity at Kingfisher because I believe passionately that teams that are diverse and inclusive are better,

stronger teams. By reflecting in our working teams, a diversity of opinions, experience, backgrounds and cultures, we introduce a creativity of thought and a range of actions that are completely different from those that are produced in a monolithic working context. We also better reflect the diverse customers and communities we serve, helping us to best understand and meet their needs.

Creating opportunity for a plurality of voices to come forward on a given topic and working together to refine that diversity of views into a single, consensual position is hugely motivating.

### In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

Sharing experiences and having open conversations with colleagues is an important part of seeing progress on D&I because it is a great equaliser. By sharing experiences and having open conversations, we make ourselves vulnerable as individuals, and that quality of vulnerability encourages others, in turn, to share

their own vulnerabilities. For me to feel included, I need to know that who I am and how I am are accepted by those with whom I work. If I share that with the team and I am accepted, I will be more engaged and motivated to do my best.

In the building of a truly diverse and inclusive culture, open conversations and sharing of individual experiences in a safe and engaged environment are key.

“Creating opportunity for a plurality of voices to come forward on a given topic and working together to refine that diversity of views into a single, consensual position is hugely motivating.”

### What does being a good role model mean for you?

For me, being a good role model means being values-led and very clear about what it is that I want to achieve, and how I am going to go about achieving it. Role-modelling requires putting words and beliefs into action; words are good, but they are not enough to effect change, least of all in the matter of diversity and inclusion.

To be a good role model requires that you be visible, reliable, constant and clear in what you stand for and what you communicate. You must understand clearly your own point of view on a particular topic, and you have to be prepared to stand up for it.

To be a good role model, you need to be ready to share openly and honestly about yourself. Even more importantly, you also must



be prepared actively to listen to the person with whom you are speaking and to try to understand the considerations and experiences that

are relevant and important for them. That open and active listening in turn helps to inform your own judgements and understanding.





# Andy Moat

People Director  
B&Q

I left university in 1993 with no clear idea of what I wanted to do. I drifted for a bit, travelling and working overseas and working in a sports centre before returning to my accountancy studies with Aviva where I qualified in 2001 before joining B&Q which is where my career really took off. I worked in their Strategy and Commercial finance teams before moving across to HR as Reward Manager. I moved roles several times in the subsequent years, learning loads before getting the opportunity to join Wagamama as their People Director in 2011, which was a great contrast (different sector, private equity, smaller London-based business with incredible diversity). I returned to the Kingfisher Group in 2016 at Screwfix before coming full circle and moving back to B&Q as their People Director in 2018.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

There are three parts to this for me. Fundamentally, as an organisation we want to represent the communities we serve at all levels – we'll be a better business when we achieve that. We'll attract and retain greater talent;

“ I feel incredibly lucky to be in my position and it gives me a platform to support change in our organisation. I feel a strong moral obligation to do everything I can to make a difference for all the colleagues who work here.

we are more likely to understand our customers' needs and we'll benefit from a far broader range of ideas and perspectives. It also means creating equal opportunity for everyone regardless of their ethnicity, gender or sexuality or any other characteristic. I want every colleague to feel a sense of belonging at B&Q and that they

can truly be themselves. Tolerance, curiosity, kindness, and fairness are all important behaviors that are too often not present in the world today. Finally, I would like the work we do at B&Q educating ourselves and learning more about diversity to help in every aspect of our lives, so not just at work but at home with friends and family too.

### What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

All of the reasons I've just outlined above. I feel incredibly lucky to be in my position and it gives me a platform to support change in our organisation. I feel a strong moral obligation to do everything I can to make a difference for all the colleagues who work here. It's also important to me that I do my bit to create a better society for my children and for them to know that you can make a difference.

### In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

I took part in an amazing conversation about ethnic diversity in one of



our London stores just last week, organised by one of our Black unit managers. It was such a powerful conversation because everyone shared their views and experiences and ideas openly and without fear of consequence or judgement – just united by the desire to make a difference for others. We all have so much to learn and share and the power of conversation and human relationships and connection never ceases to amaze and inspire me. It reminds me of one of my all-time favorite quotes by Margaret Mead: “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has”.

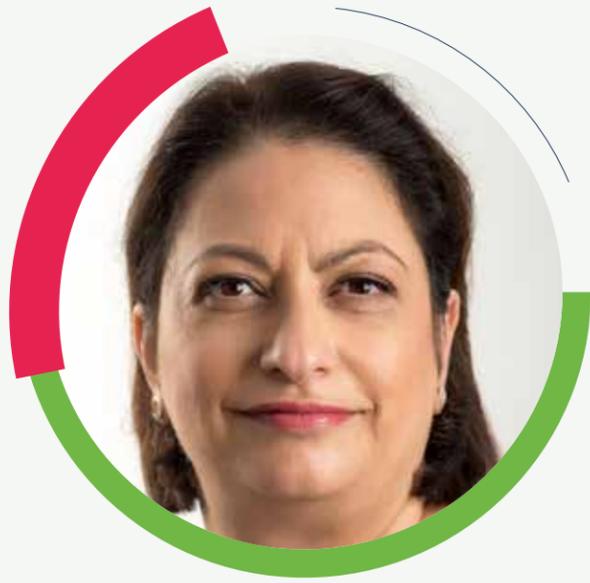
### What does being a good role model mean to you?

It means being as open as possible to learning new things. It frequently means being honest with myself and the mistakes I make as I try to support this work. It means reminding myself

to be brave and vulnerable and to speak out. It means listening to as wide a range of views and people as possible and then keeping this right

at the top of my agenda at a time when the world is busier than ever and it's so easy to forget what the most important things are.





# Zarin Patel

Non-Executive Director  
Pets at Home, Anglian Water, Post Office, HM Treasury and National Trust

I started my career as an accountant at KPMG which was the best training ground for a career in business, building your leadership and resilience. I was always curious about how the world worked and my 15 years at KPMG gave me experience of a wide variety of sectors and from audit to corporate finance and even receiverships. But in those days it was rare for a woman to become a partner at KPMG and almost unthinkable that it might be a woman of colour. So I made the best move of my career and joined the BBC and ended up as its CFO and on its board during a period of the most immense digital

transformation. The BBC made me the leader I am today and it encouraged and nurtured diversity in all its guises as part of a thoughtful long-term strategy led from the very top.

I am now a Non-executive Director and use my voice to encourage and support D&I activities on all my boards.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

It's about creating an organisation where everyone feels welcome and valued for what they bring.

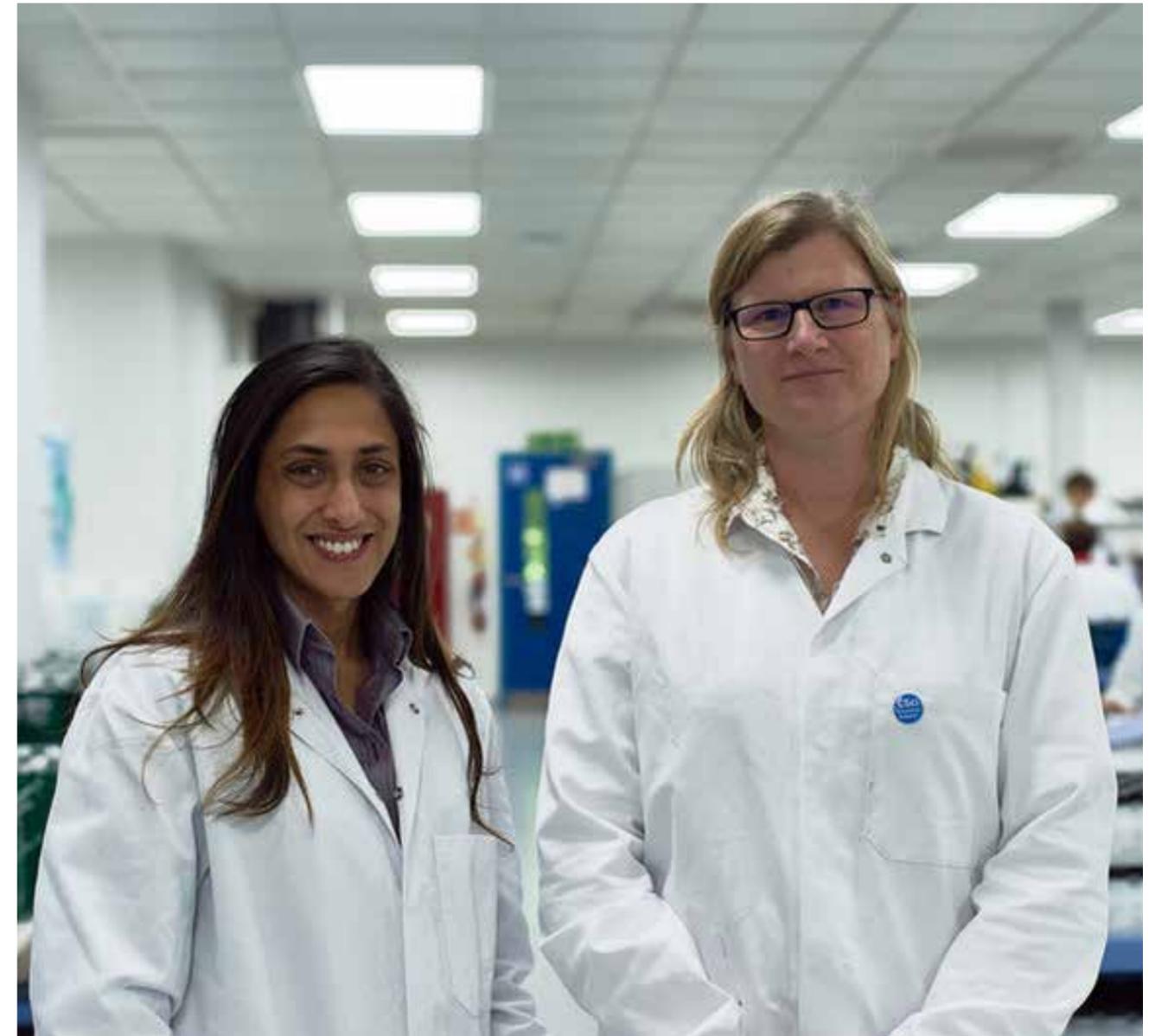
Companies make better decisions when they reflect the rich nature of our society, making for better engagement with customers, colleagues and stakeholders.

### In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

I see it as a process of education in fostering a genuine culture of inclusion. If you understand someone's perspective and they feel safe in sharing it with you, you start to create teams that can bring their whole selves to work and give their



“ Companies make better decisions when they reflect the rich nature of our society, making for better engagement with customers, colleagues and stakeholders.



best. I often share my story at D&I networks showing both the hurdles I faced and the truly great support I received.

### What does being a good role model mean to you?

I am a firm believer that role models matter. Which is why I am persistent in encouraging my boards to focus on creating a diverse leadership team so people can see that yours is a company where talented professionals can excel – whatever their background.

### What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?

The executive team leading a company is crucial to embedding a culture that values diversity and fosters inclusion. Walk a mile in another person's shoes and design your organisation to be truly inclusive, consistently support the D&I strategy and set some sensible long-term targets. I firmly believe that without the 33% target for women on boards we would simply not have substantial numbers of senior women at the helm of British business.

“ I firmly believe that without the 33% target for women on boards we would simply not have substantial numbers of senior women at the helm of British business.



# Deborah Proud

International Operations Director  
WHSmith

At secondary school, when arranging work experience, most of my friends went for nurseries and schools, but I wanted to do something different, and try to get a weekend job out of it too, so I approached the WHSmith in my local town. The team were lovely, the week flew by, and they were sufficiently impressed with my performance to offer me a weekend job! After that, I worked in-store throughout my time at school, college and in the university holidays. Once I graduated, I decided to go back to WHSmith.

Having been invited to complete management courses, I moved into various management roles in store before transferring to head office to work on projects to improve ways of working and store efficiency.

After 20 years working in WHSmith's High Street business, last year I applied for an opportunity in our International business as I wanted the chance to work in different countries and handle cross-cultural issues. I am now the International Operations Director and really enjoying the experience. I feel very lucky to lead such a great team of people.



## What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

Diversity is a workforce that at all levels reflects the wider society in which our business operates and a significant part of this is about representation. However, it also goes beyond the superficial of people looking different and focuses on people thinking differently.

Inclusion is ensuring that our environment, structures and ways of working make the most of all the diversity within teams and supports every individual to bring their best and most authentic selves to work.

Wellbeing and mental and physical safety play a major part in making every individual feel valued, and in recognising everyone's unique contributions.

As a minimum there should be no systemic barriers to any colleague wishing to grow in their role or progress in their careers; and no one should be held back or disadvantaged because of who they are. It is also important that we help everyone recognise difference and not be afraid of it. That's where awareness and celebrating our people comes in. The final element

“As a minimum there should be no systemic barriers to any colleague wishing to grow in their role or progress in their careers.”

is building everyone's 'cultural fluency' and confidence to talk about it; this means not being afraid of trying or making mistakes and supporting each other as allies.

The opportunities for businesses, including our own, are clear: recognising difference, valuing what it brings, and harnessing it will not only improve culture but benefit customers, drive innovation, and boost business.

## What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

Having experienced inequality first-hand in my daily life I want to build a culture at WHSmith where everyone feels included and where opportunities are fair and open to all. Representation is so important to me and really drives me to support

WHSmith on our journey to be a more inclusive workplace. Everybody wins by having a diverse and inclusive workforce. So much research confirms the commercial and social benefits. I know we can do better and I want to help.

## In your view, why is sharing experiences and having open conversations an important part of seeing progress on D&I?

Sharing experiences is both educational and empowering for both the storyteller and the listener. Being heard and seen is so powerful for the storyteller. Listening to others also helps individuals to reflect on their own experiences and appreciate the advantages they have enjoyed but may not have realised they had, and helps us appreciate other ways of solving the same or similar challenges. The learning is endless – and means we avoid repeating the mistakes of the past.

## What are you doing to ensure D&I remains a priority in your organisation?

I have been a member of WHSmith's D&I Committee since it was established two years ago, and I have supported the development of a calendar of diversity events over the year alongside our Head of Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing.

I have been a senior lead of our LGBTQ+ sub-committee – we helped to deliver our first significant Pride celebrations across the business last year, which included sponsorship of Swindon's local Pride celebrations. I have been involved in drafting guidance on LGBTQ+ related issues at work, including the use of pronouns and helping colleagues understand the significance of Pride.

With D&I Committee colleagues, I have helped teams across WHSmith develop products that reflect the LGBTQ+ community more authentically.

It is important to speak out and support change where I can and allyship is therefore important to me. Beyond supporting with dates like Black History Month, I try to support colleagues and my team day-to-day by working with customer services to respond to customer queries and creating opportunities within my teams to talk about inclusion.

This year as part of our Pride activity we want to build on the work we have done over the year and support our people by establishing a dedicated network to provide support, advice and networking opportunities to people in the community as well as those wishing to become allies.





# Liz Robson

Chief Technology Officer  
Central England Co-operative

as Chief Technology Officer for the Society, I have a fantastic opportunity to champion, support and influence inclusion and diversity across our family of businesses.

### What does being a good role model mean to you?

- Acting with integrity.
- Providing clarity and leadership in whatever you do.
- Having an open and friendly communication style – be willing and able to talk to anyone.
- Sharing your personal experiences and life lessons with others to find common ground.
- Being respectful of others and of their experiences.
- Being humble and willing to learn.

### What are you doing to ensure D&I remains a priority in your organisation?

Championing diversity and inclusion at the executive level of the Society provides the right visibility and sponsorship to make the difference we want to see.

Our purpose is 'Creating a sustainable Society for all' – we want our members, customers and colleagues to feel and see inclusion at the heart of everything we do.

We have signed up to the Race at Work Charter and have become a founding member of Diversity in Retail.

As a Co-operative Society, we are owned by our members and we support the communities in which we operate every day.

“Championing diversity and inclusion at the executive level of the Society provides the right visibility and sponsorship to make the difference we want to see.”

We also measure ourselves on being inclusive, as one of the four pillars of our balanced scorecard.



gender diversity in sectors and roles that have previously been challenging for women to join. I was proud to be part of the group supporting the Gender Diversity programme for the IT division at UBS.

In my current role as a member of the Society's Executive team, I am in a fortunate position to help influence and improve inclusion and accessibility for our members, customers and colleagues.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

It means living and working in a culture of recognition and respect where everyone feels included. To support the creation of sustainable environments that welcome and celebrate diversity.

### What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

Having the opportunity to make a real difference to the culture and environment for our colleagues. To be able to affect change through sharing my personal experiences and building a valuable network of collaboration across our co-operative and industry associations. In my role

My career spans 35 years in IT roles across a diverse set of industries – starting in retail at Safeway, moving into motoring services with the RAC and then onto automotive finance with General Motors Acceptance Corporation (GMAC), where I lead teams based in the UK, Europe, Asia Pacific and Latin America. This was a fantastic opportunity to travel and engage with different cultures and ways of working.

I then moved into investment banking with UBS, followed by a short time in telecoms with Siemens before returning to retail after 16 years when I joined Homebase in 2010. I've worked in the retail sector since then, at Shop Direct (Very Group), Halfords, the Post Office and most recently, Central England Co-operative.

Diversity and inclusion is important to me, particularly in the sponsorship of





# Louise Stonier

Chief People and Culture Officer  
Pets at Home

I am Chief People and Culture Officer at Pets at Home, the UK's leading pet care specialist. I've been lucky enough to be with the business since 2004 when I started as Group Legal Director and Company Secretary of the Plc Board before becoming Chief People and Legal Officer in 2017.

In 2019, my role changed to be the Group's Chief People and Culture

Officer and I've spent the last three years working hard to prioritise culture, ensuring it is at the heart of all decision making within the business.

I am also Chair and Trustee of the Pets at Home Foundation and have been incredibly proud to see the charity grow into one of the largest grant-giving organisations to animal rescue centres in the UK.

I'm passionate about what we do at Pets at Home to ensure that the nation's pets are cared for and I'm proud of our focus on fostering a diverse and inclusive working environment.

In addition to my roles at Pets at Home, I am a Non-Executive Director at Hostmore Plc where I also chair the Remuneration Committee.

## What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

At Pets at Home, D&I is integral to our business and is one of the guiding forces in the way we operate. There are several cases for the role of diversity and inclusion in the workplace and I believe that a diverse and well-rounded workforce leads to a more engaged, aware and adaptive working environment.

We take a broad approach to diversity, and as well as representation of diverse characteristics such as different genders, ethnic backgrounds, ages and religions, we welcome people with different perspectives, experiences, styles and backgrounds. Diversity is important, but inclusion is what we work hard at



to bring to life, so that everyone feels valued and respected. Pets just see people – they aren't biased and they love us for who we are. This is the approach we encourage throughout our business. Our culture is one of inclusivity and belonging, and we are lucky that all our colleagues share a unifying love of animals which brings us closer together as a team.

## What motivates you to help drive up progress in your organisation?

Our ambition is to be the best pet care business in the world, and we are always looking at ways in which we can better help and serve the UK's pets and the people who love them. To achieve these goals, I

“ Maintaining this open dialogue between our colleagues allows me to identify key areas in which we can progress and work hard to introduce or accelerate change.

feel passionate about creating an environment where everyone feels welcome and part of our Group. We want all our colleagues to feel valued and recognised for their unique contribution and we actively encourage feedback about how we can continue to improve. Maintaining this open dialogue between our colleagues allows me to identify key areas in which we can progress and work hard to introduce or accelerate change.

## What does being a good role model mean to you?

To me being a good role model means being an approachable leader who proactively works to implement positive change within the business. As our Chief People and Culture Officer I have worked hard to create a working environment in which people feel appreciated and supported, by the business and by their colleagues, so that they feel proud of the incredible work they are doing.

I am personally passionate about ensuring that progression opportunities exist for everyone within the company and that all our colleagues are proud of the policies and processes we have introduced to support those who might have typically encountered barriers. For example, by supporting colleagues

with caring responsibilities through opportunities for flexibility, looking for ways to help colleagues with disabilities carry out their roles, and enabling a wide range of people to take up entry-level roles with us.

By actively promoting a positive working environment and fostering an inclusive culture, I believe in encouraging all colleagues to uphold our values and role model our behaviours.

## What are you doing to ensure D&I remains a priority in your organisation?

At Pets at Home, I'm always looking for ways to ensure that our business is inclusive and supportive. This starts the moment a candidate shows interest in our business and continues through every step of a colleague's journey at Pets at Home. We aim to embed it into everything we do, and I believe it is also important that D&I remains a focus amongst senior leaders which is why we introduced a diversity and inclusion leadership forum. We have also recently launched our inclusion commitments across the business, which set out our expectations that everyone will contribute to our inclusive culture and how we will support them to achieve this.



# David Wood

CEO  
Wickes

I've had the pleasure of working in the retail and consumer space for three decades, nicely balanced with half my time in retail and the other half in branded manufacturing. I've been a marketer, a salesman, I've run factories, stores and business across the UK, Europe and the US.

So I'm extremely fortunate, having originally started off life as a chartered accountant. I've worked for some tremendous companies including Tesco, Unilever and Mondelez and for the past three years at Wickes. There is no straight line to success, I've had a rich and varied career gaining broad experience and have worked with, and learnt from, some truly great people and teams along the way.

### What does diversity and inclusion mean to you?

When I think about diversity and inclusion I think about the value of difference. There is far greater value in difference than there is in similarity and a business can reap the rewards by creating an environment where difference can excel and grow. For me, nurturing an inclusive and diverse workplace is simply the right thing to do, but more than that, I believe

it plays an important role in creating real competitive advantage. We all know that when we feel like we belong we simply just perform better and that will ultimately lead to a more successful business.

### What are the biggest barriers to progress on D&I in the retail sector?

As the UK's largest private sector employer, retail is blessed with a very diverse workforce and bucket loads of talent. Our single biggest challenge is that women and people from ethnic minorities are often not working in the more senior roles in our sector and we are not realising their full potential. The biggest barrier to progress on D&I is also our biggest opportunity. As an industry we need to create the conditions

where everyone, regardless of their individual characteristics, values, beliefs, and backgrounds is given equal opportunity. We need to focus on broadening the talent pool at junior and middle management levels, creating a strong pipeline of talent to fill the leadership roles. We need every business to take responsibility for championing change so that the retail sector gains the reputation as a diverse and inclusive employer where everyone has the opportunity to flourish.



### What does being a good role model mean to you?

As CEO, I naturally have a pastoral duty of care and service to the 8,500+ colleagues who work at Wickes. The success of any business is its people and it's my job to ensure they feel safe, nurtured, developed and valued when they walk into work every day. For us at Wickes, our ambition is that all colleagues 'feel at home' and I have an important part to play in creating the conditions where that can happen and to lead by example. I try to do that by listening generously, suspending my own beliefs, seeking to understand, being open to education and actively getting involved.

### What are you doing to ensure D&I remains a priority in your organisation?

At Wickes, the bedrock of our culture is the diversity of our team and we work very hard to build and nurture this. We want to create a culture where everyone can 'feel at home' and we do this through our six I&D employee network groups, each

focused on their own area of I&D: ethnicity, gender, wellbeing, LGBTQ+, ability and youth. We describe these networks as 'grassroots-fed, leader-led'. What do I mean by that? Each network was started by colleagues and over the past five years they have gathered pace and momentum as more and more colleagues have got involved. It's my role and the role of the Wickes leadership team to create the right environment and structures to enable these networks to flourish.

What we've found is that the networks and leadership team have connected in a symbiotic way to turn this momentum into a movement. It's now a core strength of our employee proposition and plays an important role in driving competitive advantage, ensuring we attract and retain the best people.

### What advice would you give to leaders wanting to increase their focus on D&I?

Firstly, have a clear ambition and set stretching targets. For us at Wickes our ambition is that all colleagues truly 'feel at home' when they come

“ I try to do that by listening generously, suspending my own beliefs, seeking to understand, being open to education and actively getting involved.

to work. Secondly, create the right environment and be organised around this; put in place the right structures to encourage and enable an inclusive and diverse workplace. At Wickes we have our six I&D networks which do a tremendous job in bringing this to life. And finally, make sure your leadership team is actively involved in your I&D programme. Not only will it help deliver great business performance, it also brings tremendous personal learning, value and reward.

# About Us

## About The MBS Group

For more than 30 years, The MBS Group has been a leading sector-specialist executive search firm advising all consumer-facing industries, with a particular focus on the retail sector. Clients consider us to be the partner of choice when searching for critical leadership roles that make a difference. We work at board level and on executive positions across all functions of strategic importance. For more information, visit [www.thembgroup.co.uk](http://www.thembgroup.co.uk)

## About DiR

At Diversity in Retail we believe that through collaboration we can amplify the impact of individual diversity initiatives, that together we can have a bigger, louder voice for the good of the retail sector. Our mission is to support companies across the retail industry to create diverse and inclusive environments and positively impact 1 million employees globally by 2025. For more information please visit [www.diversityinretail.com](http://www.diversityinretail.com)

Contact: [info@diversityinretail.com](mailto:info@diversityinretail.com)

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