



'Spotlight on...' learning toolkits aim to raise awareness and drive change. The toolkits provide resources including guidance, case studies and best practice examples from across the industry and beyond to help the construction industry to address these issues and raise their standards in these important areas of concern.



**CONSIDERATE
CONSTRUCTORS
SCHEME**

Spotlight on...

equality, diversity
and inclusion

**BEST PRACTICE
HUB**



Spotlight on...

equality, diversity and inclusion

'Spotlight on... equality, diversity and inclusion' provides information and resources to highlight the importance of a diverse and inclusive workforce and the benefits to employers, individuals and the wider community.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are some of the biggest challenges faced by the construction industry. The industry should ensure that individuals from all backgrounds feel valued and supported as well as making those from outside the industry feel they are being welcomed into it. This will help to engage and recruit a more diverse workforce as well as helping to retain talent which will help with the industry's skills shortage. Access to information and understanding can help drive behaviour change for the better, allowing for a far more inclusive working environment and workplace for all.

WHAT IS EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION?

Equality is defined as "Ensuring fair treatment and opportunity for all. It aims to eradicate prejudice and discrimination of an individual or group of individuals protected characteristics". Basically, equality of opportunity is about creating a level playing field on which everyone is treated fairly, purely based on their relevant abilities and needs. Diversity is closely related to equality, but it is a much broader concept; It's about recognising all forms of difference in individuals. Inclusion then is about the ways we can embrace differences in order to create effective workplaces.

Increasingly comprehensive legislation has been introduced to help top people being treated unfairly based on a range of specific factors, known as protected characteristics. The 2010 Equality Act consists of nine legally protected characteristics which are the key focus in both the 'Spotlight on...' awareness learning toolkit and this e-learning course. These protected characteristics are:

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

CONSIDERATE CONSTRUCTORS SCHEME

The Scheme's Code of Considerate Practice states that all registered organisations should value their workforce and provide a workplace where everyone is respected, treated fairly, encouraged and supported. The checklist used by Scheme Monitors asks the following questions:

- Q5.1 - Does the site demonstrate a commitment to respect, fair treatment, encouragement and support?
- Q5.8 - What is being done to help encourage more equality, diversity and inclusion on site?

An additional question of "Is there someone on site who champions equality, diversity and inclusion?" is also asked.

To support this learning toolkit, the Scheme issued an industrywide survey in January 2021 which received more than 800 responses to gauge attitudes on this topic. Key findings include:

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- **86.3%** believe that at least one of the protected characteristics could be a barrier to someone working in the construction industry.
- **Disability** is seen as the protected characteristic with the biggest lack of diversity in the industry.
- **73.1%** have witnessed or been aware of someone being discriminated against due to their protected characteristic.
- **45.1%** of respondents said they believe there is a lack of inclusion in the industry.
- **66.8%** of respondents said the industry has got better at reaching out to and recruiting a more diverse workforce.
- **72.4%** of respondents said the industry would benefit from a more diverse workforce, however **59.1%** do not believe there should be quotas for hiring a more balanced and diverse workforce.
- **32.3%** of respondents believed they were not successful for job applications due to their protected characteristic.

Considerate Constructors Scheme Chief Executive, Amanda Long said:



As a sector with a looming skills shortage, construction companies should be considering ways to encourage more people than ever to pursue a career in the industry.

People are the centre of the success of our industry and a more diverse workforce will ultimately lead to a more successful construction industry.



The Considerate Constructors Scheme works to raise awareness and share best practice across the entire industry and I would encourage everyone to read the learning toolkit and utilise the resources available within it.

Thank you to all organisations which have contributed so far, and we look forward to continuing to grow the Best Practice Hub's suite of resources on this critical subject to help to continue to raise standards across our industry.



It is evident that although the industry is working towards supporting those with these protected characteristics, there is still more work to do to encourage a more equal, diverse and inclusive workforce. The following sections showcase examples of best practice and in-depth case studies, while the resources section brings together organisations that are addressing this within the construction industry.

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Law and legislation

The following law and legislation establishes policies and regulations which have been put in place to ensure an equal, diverse and inclusive workforce exists.

EQUALITY ACT 2010

This act supersedes earlier legislation including the Equal Pay Act 1970, Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976, Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and three major statutory instruments protecting discrimination in employment on grounds of religion or belief, sexual orientation and age. The act requires equal treatment in access to employment, as well as private and public services regardless of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

Under the Equality Act 2010, there are four types of discrimination listed:

- **Direct discrimination** – When someone is treated less favourably because of a protected characteristic.
- **Indirect discrimination** – When a rule, practice or policy disadvantages a person with a protected characteristic.
- **Harassment** – Persistent unwanted conduct, unsolicited behaviour or attention of a sexual nature, or less favourable treatment which violates a person's dignity or creates a hostile, uncomfortable environment. It is important to remember that it is a victim's perception of behaviour which defines harassment, not the perpetrator's intentions.
- **Victimisation** – When an individual is treated less favourably than others because they made, tried to make or supported a complaint of discrimination.

For government guidance on the act, visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

HUMAN RIGHTS ACT 1998

This act sets out the rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to affirming the prohibition of discrimination on grounds such as sex, race, colour, language and religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

For government guidance on the act, visit <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents>

GENDER PAY GAP REPORTING

From April 2017, UK employers with more than 250 staff are required to publish statistics on the gender pay gap in their organisation. This provision of the Equality Act will apply to a large number of UK construction organisations.

For government guidance on the act, visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/gender-pay-gap-reporting>

For ACAS guidance on pay gap reporting, visit <https://www.acas.org.uk/gender-pay-gap-reporting>

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External resources

There are a number of organisations and resources available to help the construction industry understand the issue of equality, diversity and inclusion.

ORGANISATIONS

ACAS as part of their **discrimination, bullying and harassment** piece have provided information on improving equality, diversity and inclusion.

<https://www.acas.org.uk/improving-equality-diversity-and-inclusion>

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) have created a number of resources, factsheets and guides for employers to learn how to promote equal opportunities and manage diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

<https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/relations/diversity#64113>

Constructing Equality offers training and workshops to guide employers on creating a diverse workforce

<https://www.constructingequality.co.uk/>

Equality and Human Rights Commission have provided guidance on the Equality Act 2010 as well as each of its protected characteristics. They have also produced a report titled '**Equality and Diversity: Good practice for the construction sector**' to highlight the benefits of having an equal and diverse workforce.

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act>

Equally Ours (previously the Equality and Diversity Forum) have created an equality and human rights framework which gives a framework for using equality and human rights more effectively in the workplace.

<https://www.equallyours.org.uk/equality-and-human-rights-in-practice/>

UK Government have provided guidance on the 2010 Equality Act, as well as **information** on how it may affect everyone.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

Hays have produced an Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Report which explains how employers and employees can reap the equality, diversity and inclusion rewards of flexible working

<https://www.hays.co.uk/diversity/diversity-inclusion-report>

In-equilibrium have provided a selection of links and resources on a number of the issues related to equality, diversity and inclusion.

<https://www.in-equilibrium.co.uk/equality-diversity-resources/>

National Centre for Diversity have produced an article on why we need better diversity in the construction industry.

<https://nationalcentrefordiversity.com/three-reasons-need-better-diversity-construction-industry/>

Scottish Parliament have created a 'Building Greater Diversity and Inclusion in the Construction Sector' report to better understand the barriers to greater diversity and inclusion within the Scottish Construction sector.

https://archive2021.parliament.scot/S5-EconomyJobsFairWork/Inquiries/GenAnalytics-Diversity_Construction_Supply_Chain.pdf



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Stonewall have designed a programme titled '**Creating inclusive workplaces**' to promote an LGBT-inclusive workplace with a number of resources including toolkits and best practices.

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/best-practice-toolkits-and-resources>

WHAT IS THE INDUSTRY DOING?

Building Equality have provided a number of resources, toolbox talks and webinars to help those in the industry make construction more inclusive for all.

<https://www.buildingequalityuk.com/resources>

Building People as part of their **Designing Building Wiki** initiative have created a section with various links and guidance on diversity and inclusion in the construction industry.

https://www.designingbuildings.co.uk/wiki/Diversity_and_inclusion

Construction Industry Federation commissioned the **Irish Centre for Diversity** to produce equality, diversity and inclusion guidance for organisations and professionals looking to improve diversity and inclusion within the workplace and the wider industry.

<https://cif.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/CIF-Equality-Diversity-and-Inclusion-Report-2.pdf>

Construction Industry Training Board's (CITB) Be Fair framework gives employers a structured way to develop and embed fairness, inclusion and respect (FIR) in their company and provides modules and supporting resources including templates, policies, posters and leaflets which cover all the protected characteristics listed in the 2010 Equality Act.

<https://www.citb.co.uk/standards-and-delivering-training/be-fair-framework/modules-supporting-resources/>

Construction Industry Training Board's (CITB) Go Construct initiatives provides a range of resources and information to promote diversity in the

construction industry.

<https://www.goconstruct.org/why-choose-construction/diversity-in-construction/>

RIBA have produced a range of resources to support their vision of a diverse profession representative of society as a whole.

<https://www.architecture.com/about/equality-diversity-and-inclusion>

Royal Academy of Engineering have developed their 'Routes to Diversity & Inclusion' toolkit to help employers recruit, retain and develop a diverse workforce

<https://www.raeng.org.uk/publications/reports/routes-to-diversity-inclusion-toolkit>

SOBEN are a quantity surveying and commercial management consultancy and have produced a report titled 'Diversity and inclusion in construction – Are we making progress?' to investigate the progress being made in this area throughout the industry.

<https://www.sobenc.com/diversity-and-inclusion-in-construction-are-we-making-progress/>

Supply Chain Sustainability School have created a Fairness, Inclusion and Respect (FIR) programme as an industry-wide initiative that aims to make workplaces better for everyone. The FIR Toolkit includes a number of resources for those in the industry including:

<https://www.supplychainschool.co.uk/topics/fairness-inclusion-respect/fir-toolkit/>

Women into Construction is an independent not-for-profit organisation that promotes gender equality in construction. WiC provides bespoke support to women wishing to work in the construction industry. WiC also assists contractors through membership, employment programmes, D&I training and seconded project managers to help reduce skills gaps and create a more gender-equal workforce.

<https://www.women-into-construction.org/>

Examples of best practice

The Scheme aims to raise standards in the construction industry by sharing examples of best practice with the industry. Below are a number of examples of best practice that have been witnessed by Scheme Monitors on their visits, or have been submitted directly to the Hub by registered organisations.

- A contractor has implemented an inclusion workshop featuring the interactive board game 'Equally Yours' on their projects. The game required participation from 24 volunteers which were split into two groups of 12 with the session held on Microsoft Teams. Participants included staff from various disciplines to ensure that the participants accurately represented the team.
- A contractor as part of their efforts to embrace diversity delivered an everyday sexism presentation to the workforce.
- A contractor adopted educational teaching methodology for construction trainees using Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural (SMSC) drivers as a guiding principle for the training framework developed with liaison with teaching professionals.
- A project team have signed up to the Fairness, Inclusion and Respect commitments and embedded the FIR culture through their inductions, toolbox talks, videos and information all around the site
- All site and office based staff complete a monthly toolbox talk about equality, diversity and inclusion with themes have included disability, LGBT+ and religion.
- A gender neutral toilet as well as a squat toilet was installed to provide a safer and more welcoming space for those in the industry.
- As part of promotion for National Inclusion Week the contractor published a video to share staff views on what inclusion means to them.

To view over fifty Best Practice Hub entries relating to the 'Spotlight on... equality, diversity and inclusion' learning toolkit visit: <https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/tag/equality-diversity-inclusion/>

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Case Studies







The Scheme collaborated with a variety of contractors which are leading the way in tackling worker fatigue to produce case studies outlining their approaches to this issue.

	<p>Canary Wharf Contractors are attempting to create a more diverse and inclusive workforce through regular visits from a chaplain.</p> <p>https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Canary-Wharf-Contractors.pdf</p>
	<p>Costain have taken significant proactive action in recent years to address the lack of diversity and inherent poor culture of inclusion in the industry. They have improved gender balance in their recruitment through their equality, diversity and inclusion strategy.</p> <p>https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Costain-Race.pdf</p>
	<p>Costain have established its Religion, Ethnicity and Cultural Heritage (REACH) Network which focuses on supporting, educating and connecting employees on the matters of religion, ethnicity and culture.</p> <p>https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Costain-REACH.pdf</p>
	<p>Farrans 'Ban the Box' initiative aims to give people with convictions a fairer chance at securing employment, by encouraging companies to ask the conviction question at a later point in the application process to reduce the risk of unfair discrimination and the overlooking of talent.</p> <p>https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Farrans-Ban-the-Box.pdf</p>
	<p>Farrans DNA initiative is an internal network set up to support underrepresented and minority groups within their business by providing them with training, guidance, advice, and a toolkit to deal with possible challenges they face.</p> <p>ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Farrans-DNA-APPROVED.pdf</p>

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	<p>Highways England's On-Road Traffic Officer and EDI Champion Stewart Fox talks about learning British Sign Language and providing training on this for other traffic officers within the business.</p> <p>https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Highways-England.pdf</p>
	<p>Women Into Construction and Hill Partnerships have worked in partnership to improve gender diversity in Cambridgeshire's construction workforce.</p> <p>https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Morgan-Sindall.pdf</p>
	<p>Women Into Construction and Hill Partnerships have worked in partnership to support women to gain site experience and develop their careers in construction.</p> <p>https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Munnelly.pdf</p>
	<p>Kier Highways have delivered a range of initiatives to encourage and support their diverse workforce by celebrating a range of festivities and awareness days.</p> <p>https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Kier-Highways.pdf</p>
	<p>Lovell have supported people from a variety of backgrounds to flourish in the construction industry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joseph Chukwuadinula is a Regional Sustainability Coordinator and talks about how he was supported from the start by Lovell with their open conversation culture and an ethos of constant communication.• Sam Goodbody is an Electrician Apprentice for Lovell and is profoundly Deaf and a British Sign Language user and Lovell have made appropriate workplace adjustments to support him in his role.• Ivy Jankowska is a HR & Training Coordinator and speaks about how Lovell welcomed her into the industry and then through their Enhanced Maternity Scheme supported her through Motherhood. <p>https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Lovell-Joseph.pdf https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Lovell-Sam.pdf https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Lovell-Ivy.pdf</p>
	<p>Morgan Sindall as part of their journey to addressing gender imbalance in construction, have created a 'Target 50:50' work experience programme.</p> <p>https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/VolkerWessels.pdf</p>

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	<p>Morgan Sindall have supported people from a variety of backgrounds to flourish in the construction industry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daniel Sherlock gained work experience and subsequent full time contract through Buildforce, who are a construction industry initiative, looking to attract the best military talent into the construction industry.• Harmoni, an Apprentice Quantity Surveyor talks about how accommodating Morgan Sindall have been on her journey into the construction industry.• Kye, an Apprentice Quantity Surveyor speaks about his journey from speaking to Morgan Sindall at a Careers Fair to getting real world work experience with the company and encountering the variety of aspects to the role.• Lucie, an Assistant Site Manager talks about how she was offered an apprenticeship with Morgan Sindall following a mock interview and how the company have provided support and guidance throughout the process. <p>https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Morgan-Sindall-Daniel.pdf https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Morgan-Sindall-Harmoni.pdf https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Morgan-Sindall-Kye.pdf https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Morgan-Sindall-Lucie.pdf</p>
	<p>Skanska have designed and implemented an 'equipping leaders to have conversations about race' workshop. The focus is to help them understand the complex issues surrounding race inequality and how to proactively be anti-racist.</p> <p>https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Skanska.pdf</p>
	<p>Sir Robert McAlpine have implemented a culture that is truly inclusive and where everyone feels welcome with engagement starting at grassroots level.</p> <p>https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/SRM.pdf</p>
	<p>Willmott Dixon have supported people from a variety of backgrounds to flourish in the construction industry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eoin Burns, a Bid Coordinator is a British Sign Language user and speaks about how accommodating and supportive the contractor have been with him.• Jeny Shrestha, a Design Coordinator talks about how the contractor supported her throughout her pregnancy/ <p>https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Willmott-Dixon-Eoin.pdf https://ccsbestpractice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Willmott-Dixon-Jeny.pdf</p>



What can you do?

People are the most important resource to the construction industry, therefore it is imperative that the industry reconsiders the way it recruits new individuals as well as supporting and retaining those already in the industry.

Sites, companies and suppliers of all sizes can play their part to ensure the industry is an equal, diverse and inclusive place to work. Although some guidance may apply to larger organisations, there are suggestions applicable to all constructors which can be modified for their own purposes.

In this next section the learning toolkit aims to highlight the barriers for those represented by each protected characteristic and explains how the industry can improve and break down these barriers to become a more equal, diverse and inclusive industry.

AGE

Definition: A person belonging to a particular age or range of ages.

The Schemes' equality, diversity and inclusion survey to construction industry professionals revealed that age was the biggest factor of the 2010 Equality Act's protected characteristics as to why respondents felt they hadn't got a job.

Barriers related to this protected characteristic:

- Perception that there is little value in training older workers.
- Bias that older individuals are not open to new approaches and learning new skills.
- Employers not being willing to spend the time to train younger people to be high performing employees.

How can the industry improve?

- Encouraging returnships for older workers which will help to stop the loss of vital talent from the industry.
- Ensure the company has an Equality and Diversity Policy to ensure requirements of the 2010 Equality Act are implemented including providing equal and transparent recruitment, training and provision.

- Providing adequate training on the job for employers to ensure those new to the industry or those in the latter stages of their career are brought up to speed with others to have an equal opportunity to succeed in the role.
- As part of the recruitment process use blind CV's which do not include any personal details such as gender, age or ethnicity so that those making recruitment decisions will only see the person's work capabilities.

For advice and guidance on this protected characteristic, visit <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/age-discrimination>

DISABILITY

Definition: A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

The Scheme's survey to construction industry professionals revealed that disability is seen as the protected characteristic that is the biggest barrier

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to someone working in the industry, as well as being seen as the protected characteristics with the least diversity in the industry.

Barriers related to this protected characteristic:

- Employment opportunities only being advertised in formats that are not accessible to all.
- Workplaces not being designed to accommodate disabled individuals.
- Employers believing that disabled individuals are less productive, more likely to take long term sick leave or not stay in the job.
- Employers believing disabled individuals are more expensive to recruit and train.
- Employers being unaware of how to accommodate disabled people in the workplace.

How can the industry improve?

- Encourage the workplace to be a supportive environment so employees feel able to speak up to receive the help and support they may need.
- As far as is reasonably possible, ensure the workplace is accessible for those with disabilities such as wheelchair users.
- Ensure job opportunities are advertised in formats that are accessible to all.
- Ensure the company has an Equality and Diversity Policy to ensure requirements of the 2010 Equality Act are implemented including providing equal and transparent recruitment, training and provision.

The 2010 Equality Act includes a reasonable adjustment duty with three main requirements for employers to consider which are:

1. The first requirement involves changing the way things are done for instance ensuring a disabled worker isn't put at a substantial disadvantage by a provision, criterion or practice of the employer.
2. The second requirement involves making changes to overcome barriers created by physical features of the workplace.
3. The third requirement involves providing extra equipment or having someone to do something to assist a disabled person.

When deciding whether an adjustment is reasonable, employers should consider how effective the change will be in avoiding the disadvantage the disabled

worker would otherwise experience, as well as the practicality, cost, the organisation's resources and size and the availability of financial support.

However due to the variety of disabilities and the physical nature of some construction roles, it will not be possible for some disabled individuals to carry out certain roles in the construction industry.

For advice and guidance on this protected characteristic, visit www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/disability-advice-and-guidance

PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY

Definition: Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after birth. Protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth. What's more, it's unlawful for someone to be given less favourable terms of employment on returning to work after taking statutory maternity leave.

The Scheme's survey to construction industry professionals revealed that pregnancy and maternity are the second biggest barrier after disability to someone working in the construction industry.

Barriers related to this protected characteristic:

- Pregnant women often require additional support to carry out their role such as additional time off for appointments as well as a reduction in the physical aspect of the job which may not be afforded to them.
- Some employers perceive pregnant women as not being dedicated to the role, which can lead to employers being less accommodating to pregnant staff.
- Health and safety risks aren't fully considered for those that are pregnant.
- Individuals may not be considered for roles or promotions due to them being pregnant or due to go on maternity leave.

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How can the industry improve?

- Whilst an employee is pregnant as far as is reasonably possible the employee should be offered flexibility in their working hours to attend appointments.
- Remain in regular contact with the individual while they are on maternity leave, to keep them up to date which will help with the transition back to work.
- Have a company procedure for returning mothers to ensure they feel valued and welcomed back whilst also having processes in place to aid their return.
- Involve the pregnant individual in the process of finding the appropriate person to cover their workload while they are on maternity leave.
- Implement a return to work plan, which can help the employee to reintegrate following maternity leave allowing them to establish a new routine and get up to speed with changes that may have occurred while they were on maternity leave.
- As far as is reasonably possible the partner of a pregnant individual should be offered flexibility in their working hours to attend appointments with their pregnant partner.
- Encouraging an 'open door' policy to ensure those that may need support feel comfortable speaking about issues, without the fear of discrimination.

For advice and guidance on this protected characteristic, visit <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/pregnancy-and-maternity-workplace>

RACE

Definition: Race refers to a group of people with shared colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic origin or national origin. This includes Gypsy and Traveller groups.

The Scheme's survey to construction industry professionals revealed that someone's race is the second biggest reason after someone's sex that individuals have witnessed or been aware of discrimination in the construction industry.

Barriers related to this protected characteristic:

- Ethnic minority groups are underrepresented in the industry therefore individuals from these backgrounds find it difficult to see themselves in a role they don't see others like them doing.
- Those carrying out the recruitment are accustomed to a certain type of person carrying out construction roles and therefore unconscious bias may lead them to continue recruiting those from the traditional construction workforce's background.
- Recruitment can often be done by word of mouth in the industry which is at the detriment of employing a diverse workforce.
- Those from ethnic minority backgrounds having a preconception that the construction industry is not welcoming to them.

How can the industry improve?

- Use of a standardised interviewing approach with pre-planned questions and a marking system.
- Ensure the recruitment process is carried out by a diverse recruitment panel and that those in these positions have been adequately trained.
- As part of the recruitment process use blind CV's which do not include any personal details such as gender, age or ethnicity so that those making recruitment decisions will only see the person's work capabilities.
- If using a recruitment organisation ensure that they are one which promotes diversity.
- Encourage teambuilding events amongst the workforce to aid integration into the team, to help retain the best talent.
- Champion those from ethnic minority backgrounds to show others from these backgrounds that the construction industry is an inclusive place to work.
- Encouraging an 'open door' policy to ensure those that may need support feel comfortable speaking about issues, without the fear of discrimination.

For advice and guidance on this protected characteristic, visit <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/race-discrimination>



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RELIGION AND BELIEF

Definition: Religion refers to any religion, including a lack of religion. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief. Generally a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

The Scheme's survey to construction industry professionals revealed that of the nine protected characteristics, religion or belief was the fifth highest reason individuals feel they haven't got a job in the industry as well as being the fifth highest reason that respondents had witnessed or been aware of discrimination in the workplace.

Barriers related to this protected characteristic:

- Employers not allowing individuals leave for religious reasons.
- Religious dress not being seen as meeting the dress code requirements of a construction site.
- Individuals feeling unable to participate in social events due to their religious beliefs for instance if alcohol is involved.
- Nowhere for individuals to practice religious prayer at the workplace.
- Physical jobs can be more difficult for those fasting due to their religion.

How can the industry improve?

- As far as is reasonably possible, employees should be accommodating to an individual's religious dress as long as it isn't a health and safety risk.
- Provide a quiet area or room for individuals to pray and practice their religion.
- Ensure all employees are educated on the religions and beliefs of others on the project to ensure ignorance is minimised and understanding is improved.
- Monitor and adjust if necessary the workloads of those carrying out physical work whilst they are fasting due to their religious beliefs.
- Arrange social events that are inclusive to all to promote inclusivity and to fully integrate those with religious beliefs into the team.
- Encouraging an 'open door' policy to ensure those that may need support feel comfortable speaking about issues, without the fear of discrimination.

For advice and guidance on this protected characteristic, visit <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/religion-or-belief-workplace>

SEX

Definition: This is defined as a man or woman. Everyone has the right to be treated fairly and not to suffer any form of less favourable treatment on the basis of their sex.

The Scheme's survey to construction industry professionals revealed that sex was the biggest reason for discrimination they have witnessed or been aware of, sex was also the second highest reason respondents felt they haven't got a job in the construction industry.

Barriers related to this protected characteristic:

- The preconception that the construction industry is an all-male environment where the only jobs involve manual labour.
- Inadequate working conditions without separate and equal welfare facilities.
- Inflexible and long working hours.
- Lack of promotion of the industry to women as a career choice from a young age.

How can the industry improve?

- Ensure that all projects have adequate separate and equal welfare facilities for both men and women as well as providing appropriate PPE for women.
- As far as is reasonably possible enable flexible working hours for those with childcare and caring responsibilities.
- Engage with the younger generation to promote the industry to young women and inform them of the wide variety of roles available in the industry.

How can the industry improve?

- Ensure the organisation has a zero tolerance policy on sexism and harassment as well as an 'open door' policy to encourage all workers to report inappropriate behaviour.

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- Ensure the recruitment process does not create barriers through unconscious bias by using traditionally masculine words such as 'strong' in job descriptions.
- Read the Scheme's 'Spotlight on... women in construction' learning toolkit whilst also encouraging those in the industry to take the Scheme's 'Women in construction' e-learning course.
- Encouraging an 'open door' policy to ensure those that may need support feel comfortable speaking about issues, without the fear of discrimination.

For advice and guidance on this protected characteristic, visit <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/sex-discrimination>

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Definition: This is defined as to whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes. The law protects people from being treated less favourable on grounds of their sexual orientation, whether that's because they are heterosexual, gay, lesbian or bisexual.

The Scheme's survey to construction industry professionals revealed that sexual orientation is the protected characteristic with the fourth biggest lack of diversity in the construction industry and the fourth biggest reason for discrimination respondents have witnessed or been aware of.

Barriers related to this protected characteristic:

- The perception that the construction industry is not an inclusive workplace due to offensive language that may be heard.
- Lack of education of appropriate language in the industry and information on what is acceptable.
- Individuals not feeling comfortable to be open about their sexual orientation on site.

How can the industry improve?

- Provide training for those in leadership positions to facilitate awareness and understanding as well as providing tools to ensure an inclusive

environment, with a focus on language and how to challenge problematic behaviour.

- Education on appropriate language amongst the workforce to promote inclusion.
- Ensuring sexual orientation topics are more visible around the workplace through involvement with events such as Pride LGBT as well as displaying informative materials such as posters and leaflets.
- Communicate and enforce a code of conduct with policies being reinforced by sanctions on offending individuals.
- Communicating with LGBT+ individuals to understand their experiences and issues they may face and how, if necessary, support can be provided.
- Encouraging an 'open door' policy to ensure those that may need support feel comfortable speaking about issues, without the fear of discrimination.

For advice and guidance on this protected characteristic, visit <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/sexual-orientation-discrimination>

This learning toolkit has shown that the construction industry is making progress towards becoming a more equal, diverse and inclusive place to work through the case studies and best practice examples featured. However, the industry must now continue to make a long term commitment to tackle perceptions and change industry practices to ensure construction becomes a truly inclusive industry.

As well as the information above, it is also advised to use resources provided in the 'External Resources' section which identify information from other organisations and companies.

The Scheme will continue to update this learning toolkit as new case studies and examples of how the industry is tackling this issue are identified. To share how your organisation helps to encourage a more equal, diverse and inclusive industry, please contact the Scheme by emailing enquiries@ccsbestpractice.org.uk.