

LET'S TALK ABOUT RACE IN RACING



Introduction

Given the current climate world-wide with regards to race relations and racism and the effects being felt here in the UK, the Diversity in Racing Steering Group (DiRSG) believes this is an opportune time to remind everyone that British racing has already acknowledged that there is an issue.

This paper aims to start the conversation across the sport. To raise awareness of these issues and how they relate to British racing, provoke difficult discussions, and encourage those in the sport to consider what actions they could take.



What is the problem?

Across the UK economy, Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) people continue to be under-employed and, despite a clear desire for progression, continue to be underrepresented at senior levels.

Sport is no different, Sport England's, Sport for All Report, released in January 2020, highlighted the deep-rooted inequalities that mean people from BAME backgrounds are far less likely to be physically active.

Research by the Sport and Recreation Alliance (2018) showed that 40% of BAME participants have endured a negative experience in sport or physical activity settings, more than double that of white participants.



WATCH: This thought-provoking film called 'Life of Privilege', demonstrates the impact of privilege, or lack of, and the inequalities that play out in our everyday lives.



READ: [Khadijah Mellah, 'I love going to the races, but for my family it has a strange intensity'](#)

Is racing doing enough?

The Diversity in Racing Steering Group (DiRSG) acknowledge the racial injustices experienced by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people and the suffering it causes. These recent events have prompted us to ask, are we doing enough? The answer is simply, no.

There are some fantastic pockets of diversity in some areas of the sport, and undeniably some impactful initiatives addressing some of the inequalities, but more can be done. The lack of ethnic diversity amongst racegoers is apparent and other areas of the sport also have progress to make:

- There are **no BAME members** on any of racing's key stakeholder Boards which lead the sport.
- 1 in 8 of the working age population are from a BAME background, yet of the 59 racecourses in the UK there is **only one BAME executive** in the position of General Manager or Clerk of the Course and only one BAME Board member.
- If you go into racing yards across the country, you will meet a huge range of people with different heritage and ethnic backgrounds, yet how many are there amongst the 600 Racehorse Trainers or 450 Jockeys?

Why is this important for racing?

- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities make up an **ever-growing part of the UK population, 13.8%** across the UK and 40% in London.
- The **potential benefit to the UK economy** from full representation of BME individuals across the labour market, through improved participation and progression, is estimated to be **£24 billion a year**, which represents 1.3% of GDP.
- Employers with more diverse teams also have **35% better financial results**. Group-think policy ideas are ineffective and very costly to review and put right.
- **One in four** children in primary and secondary education in the UK are from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background; that is the future talent pipeline for the UK, and racing's future customers.



READ: [BHA Chair, Annamarie Phelps recently outlined why diversity needs to be at the heart of racing's recovery plan](#)



What has racing done and what more can we do?

The Diversity in Racing's Steering Group's Action Plan, published in July 2018 set out our goal to be 'a diverse and inclusive sport in which everyone has the opportunity to achieve their potential... and where fans of all communities feel welcome.'

We've seen real positives already. Racing is increasingly recognised as a sport where all genders compete on equal terms and successful women are celebrated for their achievements.

Like many other sports, the current debate about race and racism is prompting the DiRSG to focus specifically on how we are addressing discrimination and prejudice as they affect Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities.

The Group has asked itself, *how best can we support horseracing?*

Some answers are clear – we must actively demonstrate our commitment to anti-racism at every level; in our workplace, in our yards and on our racecourses.

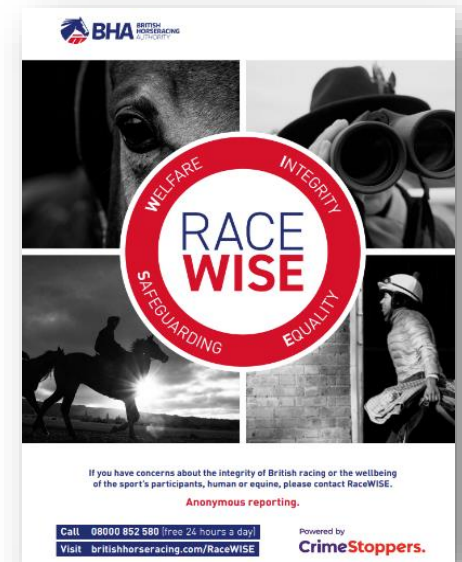
Others are less so – it's not always obvious what the answers are to the questions *how come there are few BAME people in our organisation?* or *why do few BAME people come racing?*

A framework for making a difference

The DiRSG thinks the best way it can help employers and all of us in racing is by offering a framework for identifying how best you can make a difference. We don't think a 'one-size-fits-all' approach works, but here's a number of ways in which different organisations address race.

- **The role of leaders is critical.** The evidence suggests that where leaders take ownership of all the issues associated with race, their organisations are more likely to progress. The best ones do so proactively and consistently, create an action plan for addressing diversity and inclusion and regularly monitor the outcomes.
- **Make your commitment public.** One way to do this on racial equality is to sign the Business in the Community (BITC) Race at Work Charter and deliver on its five calls to action. For example, measuring and monitoring ethnicity data.
- **Reach out to local ethnic communities.** Listen to them, learn from them and work with them. Take racing to them. You will best know what minority groups are in your community, by reaching out to them you will then be able to consider how your workplace, racecourse, yard or stud, can make a positive impact.
- **Understand your organisational culture.** Every business or workplace is different. Ask yourself, what behaviours are allowed, what behaviours are encouraged, and what behaviours are forbidden? BITC has published a guide to help workplaces open up the conversations about race.
- **Be an everyday advocate or role model.** Racism happens every day. If you really want to make a difference, take action at all times. However big, small or insignificant you may feel the incident is, call out and report inappropriate behaviour to ensure everyone feels welcome in our sport.

Call it out confidentially through **RaceWISE** (Welfare, Integrity, Safeguarding, Equality).



[Download your own RaceWISE posters here.](#)

Taking action together today

Making a difference in this specific area of diversity and inclusion is not easy.

The DiRSG acknowledge there is much progress to be made and is committed to increasing its focus on this topic. It wants to support employers in racing with help and advice.

We will lead by example and reflect on how we can play our role in taking the sport forward to be as diverse, fair and inclusive as possible. We will look to collaborate with other sports and share ideas and best practice. We will build on our plans in the coming months and develop further guidance for the industry.

Other bodies in racing are doing the same. Developing new Action Plans. Putting this on the agenda for their next, and ongoing, Board and staff meetings.

This is not a one-time conversation. We can all learn from and support this new wave of awareness and solidarity and acknowledge that real change requires a long-term commitment from everyone.

If we can work together to maintain the current momentum, we will see positive change.



To update the Diversity in Racing Steering Group on your actions, please contact diversity@britishhorseracing.com.