

# Diversity Matters: Inspiring Inclusion in the Workplace

## Meet the Speakers

Wednesday 12th February



@richb0510

**Richard Beaven**  
Chief Operating Officer, Brightside Group



Richard is COO of the Brightside Group and a highly experienced executive with a successful track record in a number of blue chip companies. He was most recently the Distribution Director of Swinton Group and prior to that, he has had an extensive career in Financial Services including senior roles at Lloyds Banking Group, Reuters, Bank of New York and Barclays. He is a leading advocate for Diversity and Inclusion, was a trustee of Stonewall (the UK's largest LGBT charity) and speaks regularly on the topic. He was a founder member of LINK (LGBT insurance network) and the Insurance Super Club.



@KhakanQureshi

**Khakan Qureshi**  
Support Worker at Midland Heart, LGBT Activist, Writer, Speaker and  
Founder of Birmingham South Asians LGBT - Finding A Voice



Finding A Voice is Birmingham's first independent, volunteer-led organisation for South Asians who identify as LGBTIQ+ regardless of faith and culture. Khakan is also co-administrator for British Asians LGBTI, which attempts to support those within the UK via online interaction, Administrator for Gay Muslims United, an international online support group, and has sat on the multi-faith advisory panel for the National "Impact on Faith and Sexuality" survey created by The Ozanne Foundation. He is also a Stonewall LGBT School Role Model and Diversity Role Model.

Listed on The Independent Rainbow List 2015, Khakan was shortlisted for the European Diversity Awards 2016, the National Diversity Awards (NDA) 2018, the British LGBT Awards 2019, and nominated for the NDA 2019. He has written articles about his personal experiences, homophobia within South Asian communities and Islamophobia within the wider community for Attitude, Gay Times, The Gay UK, Gay Star News and other digital magazines. Khakan is passionate about social injustices, and disrupting the mainstream narrative, centring on BAME LGBT+ and the intersections of human identity and relationships, with the focus on mental health.



@thealexmanners  
www.thealexmanners.com

**Alex Manners**  
Birmingham-based Asperger's Champion and Campaigner for Inclusivity

Alex is 23 and has Asperger's. He presents talks all over the country about 'My Life Living with Asperger's' to companies, universities and schools and last year published his first book called 'That's Not Right! My Life Living with Asperger's'. He also works with a number of football clubs through the 'Autism & Football' campaign as well as train companies and airports through his 'Travelling with a Hidden Disability' campaign. In addition to delivering talks, he presents a children's radio show every Sunday on Solihull Radio.



@CyberGoGiver  
www.nicolawhiting.com

**Nicola Whiting MBE**  
Chief Strategy Officer, Titania Ltd



Titania is one of the UK's most successful cyber security firms. Nicola's specialist areas include autonomous mitigation and A.I. driven self-defending / self-healing systems. An award-winning mentor, writer, and Amazon bestselling author, she regularly contributes to magazines such as Huffington Post, Defence Contracts Bulletin, Defence News Online and SIGNAL. Neurodiverse, she advocates for Diversity in all forms and was awarded an MBE in 2020 for Services to International Trade and Diversity.

# Diversity Matters: Inspiring Inclusion in the Workplace

## Meet the Speakers



@JulieMcElroy

### Dr Julie McElroy

Dr. Julie McElroy is a Scottish woman. She epitomizes drive, motivation, and passion. Throughout her life, she has succeeded in so many challenges. Julie is a woman who has so much to offer in terms of possessing ideas and concepts in every aspect of any project she undertakes. She possesses the self-leadership, determination, and fortitude required for success. Julie is a 'Assistive Technology' expert, who researches & develops advanced products, services & devices, for disabled or less abled people, to enable them to live a dynamic, independent life to the full, anywhere, in an era of growing & ageing populations who need and want more assistance. Julie is a person of focus, ambition and together, you could achieve great steps to increasing inclusion in the organisation.



### Ed Pashley

Analyst, Virgin Money and Chair of Vets@Virgin Group



Ed has held a number of roles within Virgin Money. He currently works as an operational continuity analyst. Ed served a full career in the Armed Forces and was the first Ex-Forces colleague to join Virgin Money. In 2014, Ed formed an Ex-Forces support group, this group has developed over the years and is now known as Vets@Virgin, focusing on supporting veterans and people currently serving in the forces in many different ways.

[www.virgin.com/careers/how-virgin-money-supports-military-veterans](http://www.virgin.com/careers/how-virgin-money-supports-military-veterans)



[www.belong2.co.uk](http://www.belong2.co.uk)

### Lisa Stevenson

Founder, Belong2



Lisa brings a creative approach within talent, learning, and leadership. Balancing wellbeing, energy, challenge and fun to help shift expectations of what is possible, she specialises in creating innovative learning environments and programmes. Most recently, she has built a new Academy, team, and programmes within QinetiQ.

Working internationally she has built career within technology, telecommunications, utility, hospitality, defence, charity and consulting sectors (inc. BAE, RWE, Thames Water, 3, QinetiQ). The heart of Lisa's thinking is around harnessing and building innovation, performance, and learning through creating psychological safety, wellbeing, and great mental health. Lisa champions the importance of open conversations around mental health, stress, and anxiety as essential for organisations if they truly wish to learn, innovate and perform in today's complex world.



### Pamela McInroy

Inclusive Health & Safety Manager, HS2



Pamela started her career at Crossrail in 2012 where she pioneered an approach to linking Health, Safety & Wellbeing to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion. Never done before, it was a way to ensure our construction were inclusive, interdependent, and respectful, which would help improve operative engagement, wellbeing and overall better health & safety performance.

After completing her role at Crossrail in 2017, Pamela joined High Speed Two (HS2) to manage Equality, Diversity & Inclusion throughout the Health & Safety supply chain. Although there, the challenges come with innovation and cultural change, Pamela is eager to show the importance of "Inclusive Health, Safety & Wellbeing" and demonstrate the ways in which would can look at our sites to be safer by inclusion.



@KathrynDowns\_

### Kathryn Downs

Director of IT, whg, Chairperson - Chase Pride, Diversity Champion & Spokesperson

Kathryn is a distinguished IT leader in the social housing sector, working with peers across the industry to drive opportunities for collaboration and to share best practice. Digital transformation has become Kathryn's technical area of speciality, working with customers and colleagues to understand their needs and translate this into sound digital solutions. With years of experience leading highly diverse teams, Kathryn has learned how to get the very best from them by creating an engaging and enjoyable work environment. Concerned about Diversity and Inclusion in her hometown, Kathryn has recently established Chase Pride, a new registered charity that aims to raise awareness of the issues facing the LGBT+ community and to celebrate its culture. She is also a town councillor and politician, passionate about effecting the changes needed in our society to tackle poverty, inequality, hate crime & climate change.