

# Wonderfully you

Diversity and  
Inclusion Plan

WONDERFUL ON TAP



# Wonderfully you



## How boring would it be, if we were all cut from the same cloth? And how ill-equipped would we be, to serve the communities who trust us to do right by them?

That's why I couldn't be more excited to share with you, how we're building a wonderfully diverse and inclusive workforce. One that mirrors the customers in our region.

Where all our employees, bar none, have an equal chance to succeed. Regardless of their background or personal circumstances.

## A diverse and inclusive organisation is a more talented one.

Diversity for us, is employing talented people that truly represent the customers in our communities. After all, we serve everyone. So, we want to reflect and understand everyone too.

We want to tap into the very best talent from across our geographical patch. As a regional business, we feel it's our duty to create meaningful opportunities for individuals from all walks of life, who live in the communities we serve. We believe that our journey to being truly representative will create more opportunities for some of our under-represented communities and will set the bar high for the next generation too.

Once we've attracted talented people to our business, we want their experience at Severn Trent to be a brilliant one.

For us, an inclusive workplace, is one where all our people are treated fairly every day, and feel fully able to bring their entire selves to work.

## We're committed to the journey.

You'll see we've made some bold commitments that will take time to bear fruit. However, we're making great strides and we're super-proud of all the external recognition we're getting.

The true test for me though, is how our people feel. Lots of our employees tell us they love working here and that we treat people from all backgrounds fairly. We're also seeing more diversity in our workforce. And newcomers say they trust us enough to be their true selves at work.

But, just like everything we set our hearts and minds to at Severn Trent, we're determined to get even better. Every day we'll put in the hard yards, to push ourselves further.

And so, this document lays out our diversity and inclusion ambitions and progress. I hope you enjoy reading it.

**Liv, Chief Executive**

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# It's anchored in our social purpose

The glue that binds us together and motivates us to get out of bed each morning is our purpose. And that's to **take care of one of life's essentials**. Not just today, but for generations to come.

Whether it's making sure we all have the hot brew to wake us up each morning, or the relaxing bath before bed, we know just how important water is to everyday life.

It's a big job requiring bold ambitions. All of which we spell out in our [sustainability framework](#).

We're one of the largest employers across our region, which makes our diversity and inclusion efforts even more important.

Our actions are guided by our values, and diversity and inclusion run through the core of these.





# D&I strategy on a page

## The big commitment

### 1. We're creating a workplace that's fair for all.

We're building a fair working environment, where everyone has the opportunity to succeed. Regardless of their age, ethnicity, gender, physical or mental wellbeing, religion, sexual orientation, or socio-economic background.

We want our people to trust that they can feel safe to speak and act freely; to look around and see themselves in others. This is what creates happier and higher performing employees.

### 2. We're building a workforce that reflects the communities we serve.

The Severn Trent patch is a wonderful assortment of diversity. And we serve everyone. People from every walk of life, all with different needs. They're our neighbours, our friends, and our family.

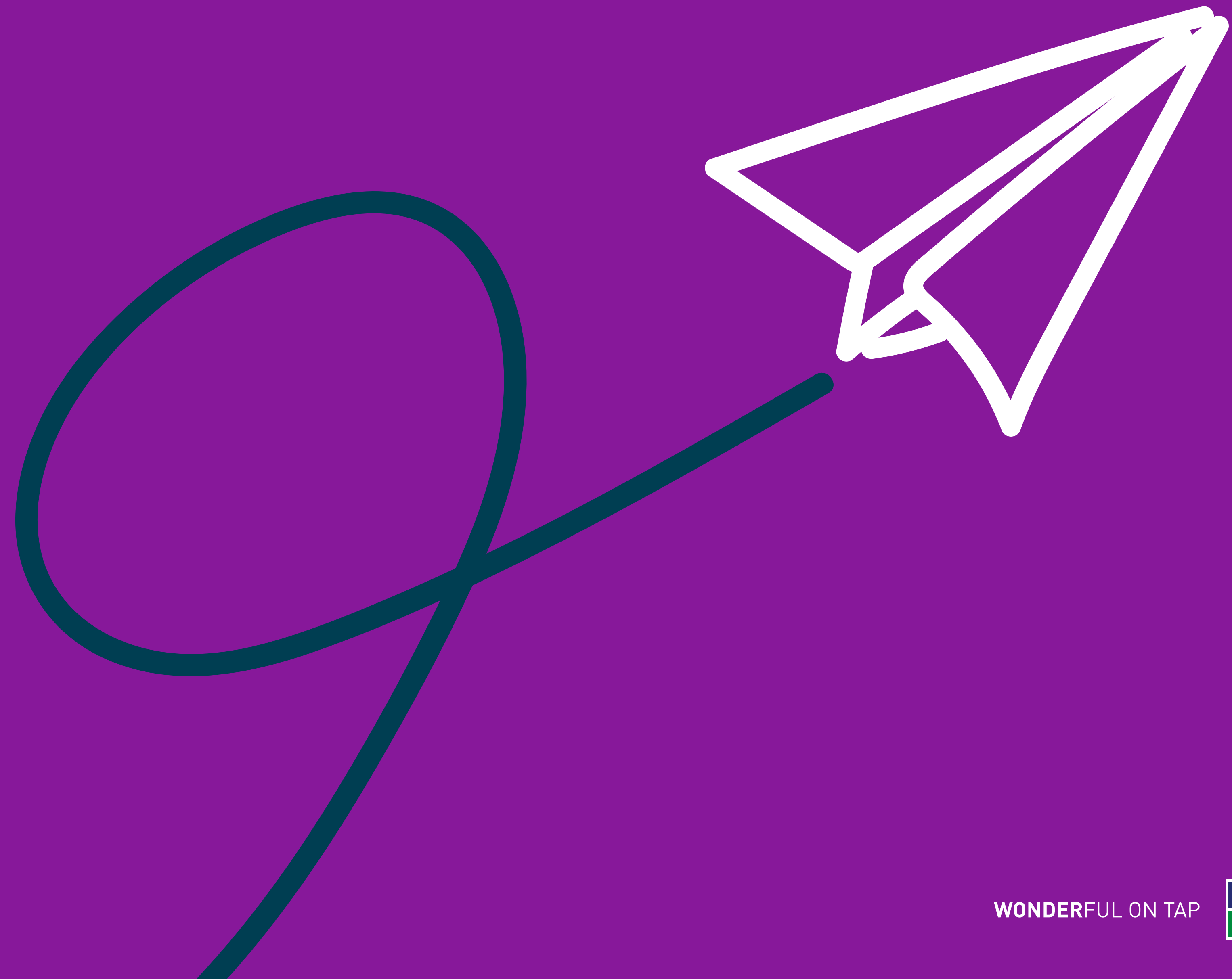
Only when we have a range of backgrounds, experiences, opinions, and value sets in our organisation – can we comfortably put ourselves in the shoes of our customers. So, our diversity ambition is to have a workforce that reflects the communities we serve.

### Making a positive difference in our local communities

Throughout our plan, we also want to make a positive difference in our local communities. We're one of the biggest employers in our region, investing in skills and careers.

We want to be a force for good, breaking down myths, stereotypes and barriers so that we can influence the life chances of future generations.

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# Our plan

# 1. How we’re creating a workplace that’s fair for all

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## Our inclusion targets – How will we know when we get there?

Our efforts to create an inclusive workplace will be judged primarily by our people. Only they can tell us how it really feels to work at Severn Trent. We measure this through our employee engagement survey called ‘Quest’. The picture below shows you how we’re doing.

	Our inclusion targets	Today’s picture
<b>Quest</b> Employee engagement score	<b>8.1 out of 10</b> (based on global benchmark)	<b>8.3 out of 10</b>
<b>Quest equality question</b> People from different backgrounds are treated fairly at Severn Trent	<b>8.1 out of 10</b> (based on global benchmark)	<b>8.9 out of 10</b> All employees
<b>Quest equality question</b> People from different backgrounds are treated fairly at Severn Trent	<b>Parity between ethnicities and genders</b>	<b>Men 8.9 Women 8.9 Ethnic Minorities 8.2</b>

## The numbers explained

We’re thrilled that our **employee engagement score is 8.3** placing us in the **top 5% of utility companies in the world**.

Men and women score this question equally but we can see we have more work to do when you look at different ethnic groups, where there are some small differences, despite all being above benchmark.

We’re really proud that we’re currently exceeding our engagement and equality targets, but as we raise awareness of the issues and challenges that some minority groups face, we anticipate that our equality score will dip. We accept that and believe it is part of the journey to achieving sustainable change. At the same time we would be disappointed if our scores fell too far, so we are still targeting to outperform the global best practice benchmarks.



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# Our inclusion plan

How fairly people feel they're treated, is driven by the everyday words and actions of all of us. Our company values will guide our behaviours, but we're also putting in place actions to create a culture of inclusivity for everyone.



## We're starting at the top

Our Executive team have all been partnered with D&I employee reverse mentors, from an under-represented group at Severn Trent. They meet regularly and vow to speak with complete candour. This is to make sure our most senior leaders get genuine insight into what life is like for all our colleagues at Severn Trent. And more importantly, what needs to change.



## Everyone has a voice through our Employee Advisory Groups

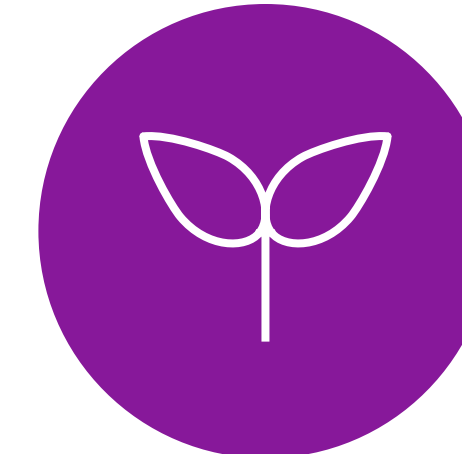
We have Employee Advisory Groups for LGBTQ+, Ethnicity, Disability and Women in STEM\* and Ops. Each has an Executive Sponsor and a voluntary employee Chair. These groups are empowered to raise awareness, educate our workforce, and work with external bodies to help us create the right policies and interventions to drive out intentional and unintentional discrimination.

\*Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths



## We're all getting curious

Curiosity is one of our values and we're embracing getting curious about diversity and inclusion through our state-of-the-art Severn Trent Academy. Our management community have all been invited to attend diversity and inclusion awareness sessions. There's plenty of formal training interventions available. And, our Employee Advisory Groups run fantastic curiosity sessions for their colleagues, where they get to find out more about the people they work with – who often have different backgrounds to them.



## We're breathing new life into our policies

Like most companies, what and how we do things, is to some degree, guided by our HR policies. We're making sure our existing policies better reflect the society we now live in. And, we're writing new ones to support the changing way we live and work. For example, in many families grandparents are involved in providing childcare. Our grandparental leave allows our employees to fulfil their caring responsibilities.



## We're improving our buildings

How people feel at work is often shaped by their physical environment. We're upgrading our sites to improve how people feel about their workplace, for example, improving access and use of facilities for disabled people, gender neutral toilets, faith facilities, breast feeding rooms, and wellbeing spaces.

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# 2. How we’re building a workforce that reflects our communities

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## Our diversity targets – How will we know when we get there?

The profile of our organisation will change as we continue to hire new and diverse talent. We’re thrilled about the progress we’ve made, but we know it’s not enough. In true Severn Trent fashion, we’re setting ourselves ambitious targets. However, our colleagues tell us they love working here at Severn Trent and our engagement scores are strong. This means that employee attrition is low. This is a lovely situation to be in. But, it does mean it’ll take longer to change our diversity profile. This picture below shows how our region is made up, and the stretching numbers we’re shooting for.

	Our communities*	Today’s picture (all employees)	Our diversity targets
Ethnic minorities	14.1%	9.1%	14.1%
• Asian background	8.7%	6.1%	8.7%
• Black background	2.6%	1.7%	2.6%
• Mixed background	2.2%	1.2%	2.2%
• Others	0.8%	0.1%	0.8%
Gender (% of females)	51%	29%	35%

All numbers are rounded to one decimal point and any addition discrepancies are due to rounding.  
[31 March 2021 data]  
\*Average of East and West Midlands data from 2011 Census. Will be updated once 2021 Census data is available.

## The numbers explained

We use a combination of Census and internal data to create our D&I targets. You’ll notice we have some gaps though.

The 2021 Census results, which are released in 2022, will help us to update and fill in some of those and we’ve just launched a new HR system to give our colleagues the option to share more of their information with us. That will help us to look at sexual orientation, social mobility, disability and wellness in more depth, and we will use this in due course.

### Specifically, on gender

We’re completely committed to increasing the number of women we have working for us, but we’re equally realistic that a good proportion of our roles are operational. Some of these are extremely physically demanding and we have always found these harder to fill with women. We’re committed to helping to evolve technology, shift perceptions and work with educational establishments to break down stereotypes. We’re determined to help bring about change and feel 35% is a bold target for right now that will help us achieve that.

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# Our diversity plan

Our people do an incredible job of welcoming the new talent that comes through our doors. Most applicants in our region already know someone who works for Severn Trent. This ambassadorship is great, but at the same time, we want to tap into lots of new pools of talent too.

We’re knocking down the barriers that stop people from joining our organisation, like not having a degree. Especially in areas where social mobility is low. We’re also ramping up the engagement in our communities, and spreading the word about who we are, and what we can offer.

Here’s some of the things we are doing to improve diversity:



Offer around 500 young people valuable and interesting work experience for six months via the government **Kickstart Scheme**. We’ve worked hard to make sure our candidates mirror the communities we serve.



Support the **#10000BlackInterns** programme, providing paid work experience for 100 black students in higher education. Around 50 will be in our operational teams.



Promote our **graduate, intern and apprentice schemes** so that our annual intakes match the profile of the communities we serve.



Give our hiring managers **diverse candidate shortlists**, so they get to meet and interview the diverse talent in our region.



Continue with our **outreach programme**, working closely with educational establishments in social mobility cold spots, so that young people are more likely to hear about the opportunities we can offer them.



Become **active role-models** in our communities to inspire others from the same background as us in to similar career paths.

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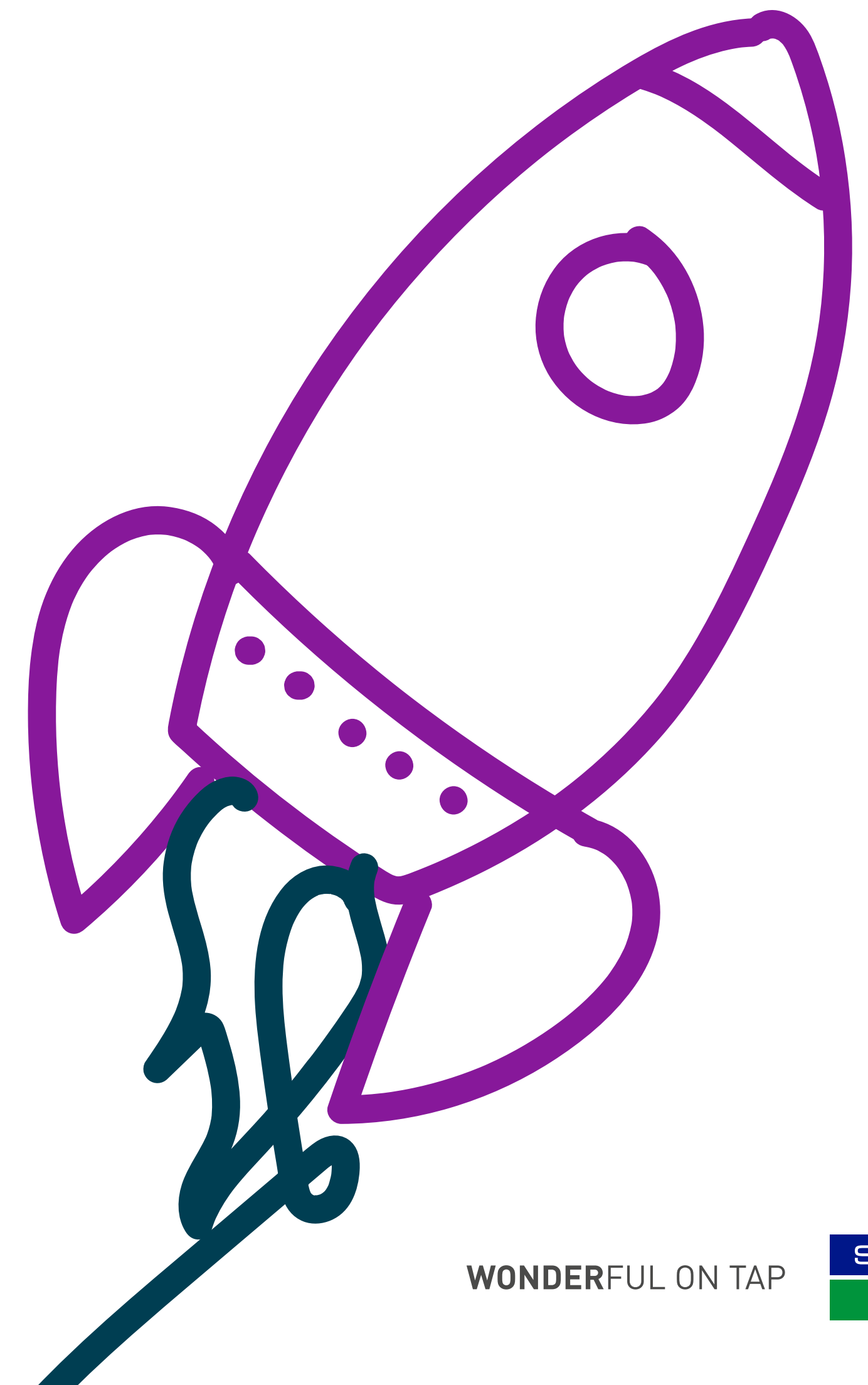
# It's a life's work

We're under no illusion that **building a workforce that reflects the communities we serve, and a workplace that's fair for all is going to be easy.**

But, it's a big and bold commitment that we couldn't be more excited about. Especially as we've already started to make our ambitions a reality with some really exciting progress.

We're a regional business, and almost 95% of our people live in our geographical patch. So, our goal is entirely personal.

That's why, it's only our people and communities that will tell us when we've fully met our diversity and inclusion commitments.



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# We're making great strides

**The progress we've made hasn't happened by accident.**

We know there is still much more we want to do, but that doesn't distract from how proud we are of the progress we have made. It's the result of lots of deliberate action, and we couldn't be more passionate about getting this right. Here's some examples of our work to date...



# ...on gender equality

**We're thrilled that women play a big role at Severn Trent. Especially as we work in a traditionally male dominated industry.**

We were one of the first FTSE100 companies to have a female Chair and CEO. Today, 55.6% of our board, and 43.2% of our senior managers are female. Our amazing efforts to tip the gender balance are being recognised externally too:

- In the 2021 Hampton-Alexander Review, we rank second place in the FTSE100 for the representation of women on our board and in leadership.
- In Equileap's 2021 Gender Equality Global Report, we rank fifth in the whole of the UK for gender equality, and 31st in Europe. That's out of a massive 4,000 organisations
- In the Bloomberg Gender-Equality Index (GEI), we score 71% for gender equality. Up from 53% the year before

Each year, we publish our Gender Pay Gap Report. In 2020, we saw our performance improve for the fourth consecutive year. We're intentionally having more conversations and training about perceived taboo topics like menopause, and we've also signed up to become an Endometriosis Friendly Employer.

Our HR policies are continually being updated to make sure women are better supported when they're trying to become pregnant, or when they become mums. For example, by introducing family friendly policies that allow our female employees to take more paid time off when they're undergoing fertility treatment, or when their baby needs neonatal care.

We still have much more to do though. Including increasing female representation in operational and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths) roles.

## Being me: Sunil Purba

**"Until I became a dad, I didn't fully understand what it meant to have dependants. And how much juggling parents and carers have to do, to manage their work and home life."**



Sunil Purba is an Employee Relations Manager. He's boundlessly campaigning to make sure we have the right HR policies and practices in place, when our people go through big life events. From becoming parents and grandparents, to coping with ill health.

His recent triumph, has been to introduce increased flexibility for employees having fertility treatment; new parents of babies receiving neonatal care; and grandparents who care for their grandchildren.

He's also making sure we give our people choices, when life events mean they can no longer do the role they're in. For example, by retraining them to do alternative work.

Sunil said: "We're creating a workplace that's fair for all. Modern life throws up modern challenges. Sometimes they're planned, but often they're unexpected. We're striking the balance between supporting our people when they need us, and making sure we can still serve our communities."

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# ...on LGBTQ+

We're super-proud to have moved up a staggering 239 places in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index.

We're working hard to make sure everyone treats our LGBTQ+ community fairly, and our HR policies support that.

Our LGBTQ+ network was set up in 2017 and is still going strong – educating our workforce and generating important conversations on real issues that affect our LGBTQ+ employees. Employee Carl Edwards, is Stonewall's 2020 Gay Role Model of the Year, for his contribution to LGBTQ+ inclusion within our business and the local community.

## Being me: Carl Edwards

**"Nobody should ever feel alone. You should be able to look around the company you work for, and see yourself reflected somewhere. That's why I'm flying the flag for unseen minorities."**



Carl Edwards is a design technician, and proud founder of our LGBTQ+ network. He's also Stonewall's Gay Role Model of the Year 2020.

He invests time and energy into educating our workforce, generating important conversations, and making tangible improvements to the way we work. This helps our people to feel they can bring their whole selves to work, regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation.

He's the driving force behind 'lunch and learn' educational sessions, recruiting LGBTQ+ champions, our Allies programme, policy changes, training interventions, and representation at our region's Pride events.

Fuelled by his own personal situation, he's tackling topics head-on. Subjects like LGBTQ+ history, mental health, microaggressions, office banter, pronouns, and intersectionality.

He said: "From where we were four years ago, we've come on leaps and bounds. From the top down, we're embracing diversity and I'm so proud to work for Severn Trent."



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# ...on ethnicity

**Our representation of colleagues from ethnic backgrounds (9.1%) is better than the industry average of 6.5%.**

But, it doesn't yet mirror the communities we serve 14.1%. Although, there are promising signs, 69% of our 2021 graduate intake are from an ethnic minority background. We're also excited to be a Business in the Community's (BITC) Race at Work Charter signatory highlighting our commitment to taking steps to improve race equality in our workplace.

And our Ethnicity Employee Advisory Group is busy helping us create an inclusive place to work for everyone. For example, through celebrating important events like Black History Month. This is where we recognise and celebrate the awesome contributions black people have made in history, and within our own organisation too.

## Being me: Teresa Campbell



**"I want to see bravery at every level of leadership. This is so that all leaders are able to set the right example and challenge non-inclusive behaviours."**

Teresa Campbell is a scheduling manager at Severn Trent. She's also the deputy chair of our Ethnicity Employee Advisory Group, and a reverse mentor for our CEO, Liv Garfield.

Through sharing her own life experiences, Teresa is helping us to understand how the everyday things that people say and do – in and outside of work – can make a person feel. For example, the curiosity people have about Teresa's hair, and how that reinforces how different she feels.

Teresa has recently been involved in focus groups with Apprentices of ethnic backgrounds. This gives our newcomers a voice, and provides another lens for our leaders.

Tapping into the experiences of Black, Asian, and minority groups in Severn Trent, is the key to unlocking diversity and inclusion. That's what Teresa believes.

She said: "To attract more ethnic minorities, we must speak to the people who are already here. The experiences they're having today, should define the experiences that people have tomorrow."

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# ...on social mobility

**A third of the UK's most deprived areas are in our patch, so we're very conscious of the role we play in helping people get onto the career ladder.**

We're opening up more ways for people from all walks of life to come through our doors, including apprenticeships, the Government's Kickstart Scheme and the Andy Duff Bursary Fund. We've also removed the need for degrees unless it's absolutely necessary.

Today, around 34% of our new hires and 30% of promotions are people from areas with low social mobility.

We are founder members of the Social Mobility Pledge, and rank eighth in the 2020 Social Mobility Index, having been in the top ten for the last two years.

We're also proud to provide meaningful employment for young, white, working class males – who are also a disadvantaged group.

## Being me: Marylson Cariata



**"I am so grateful for the opportunity at Severn Trent. Not only will the funding support me, so I can learn to drive and buy the resources that I need, but it will also help me gain real-life experiences within industry that will help when I look to begin my career."**

Marylson is studying Civil Engineering at Nottingham University and and being supported by Severn Trent's Andrew Duff Bursary Fund.

The Andy Duff Bursary, named after Severn Trent's previous Chair, is managed in partnership with the Social Mobility Foundation. It offers financial support to students in further education as well as the opportunity of paid work experience each summer, a business mentor, a Severn Trent career coach and free skills training at the Severn Trent Academy throughout their studies.

Marylson joined the programme in 2020 and has recently been completing work experience in the hydraulics team at Severn Trent.



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# ...on physical and mental wellbeing

Our goal is that no one gets hurt or is made unwell by what we do. We know that on a day to day basis, some of our colleagues will be living with disabilities or health conditions. And so, we're working hard to make sure everyone can still reach their potential.



Our teams are trained in mental health awareness and senior managers have shared their mental health personal stories to support others.

We also work with Hereward College, to offer internships to students with disabilities and learning difficulties, and we support the hidden disabilities scheme throughout the business.

We're also part of Disability Confident which is designed to help us recruit and retain disabled people, and those with health conditions.

If colleagues are unable to work because of ill-health we can support them through interventions like our income protection scheme and we've signed up to the Dying to Work charter, that gives terminally ill employees more control over how they spend their final months. We also provide support for carers and those with unwell or disabled family members.

## Being me: Jeff Wood

**"Spending so much time in hospital, I saw other parents lose their jobs, simply because they had to be at their child's bedside."**



Jeff Wood is a delivery practice lead at Severn Trent. He works compressed hours that allow him to care for his three-year-old daughter Dolly, who has medical needs.

In August 2018, Dolly was born at just 28 weeks following an emergency C-section. Having developed multiple medical complications, Dolly spent her first months in various hospitals across the UK – including Gloucester, Bristol, and London.

Despite this, Jeff was able to be by his daughter's side, without having to worry whether he had a job to come back to.

Jeff said: "Days before Dolly was born, I'd just been promoted to business leader. But, there was never any pressure from Severn Trent to get back to work."

"Today, I continue to attend hospital appointments with Dolly. And one day a week, I'm her carer, allowing my wife to continue with her career too. Family friendly policies make very challenging life events, that little bit easier to navigate."

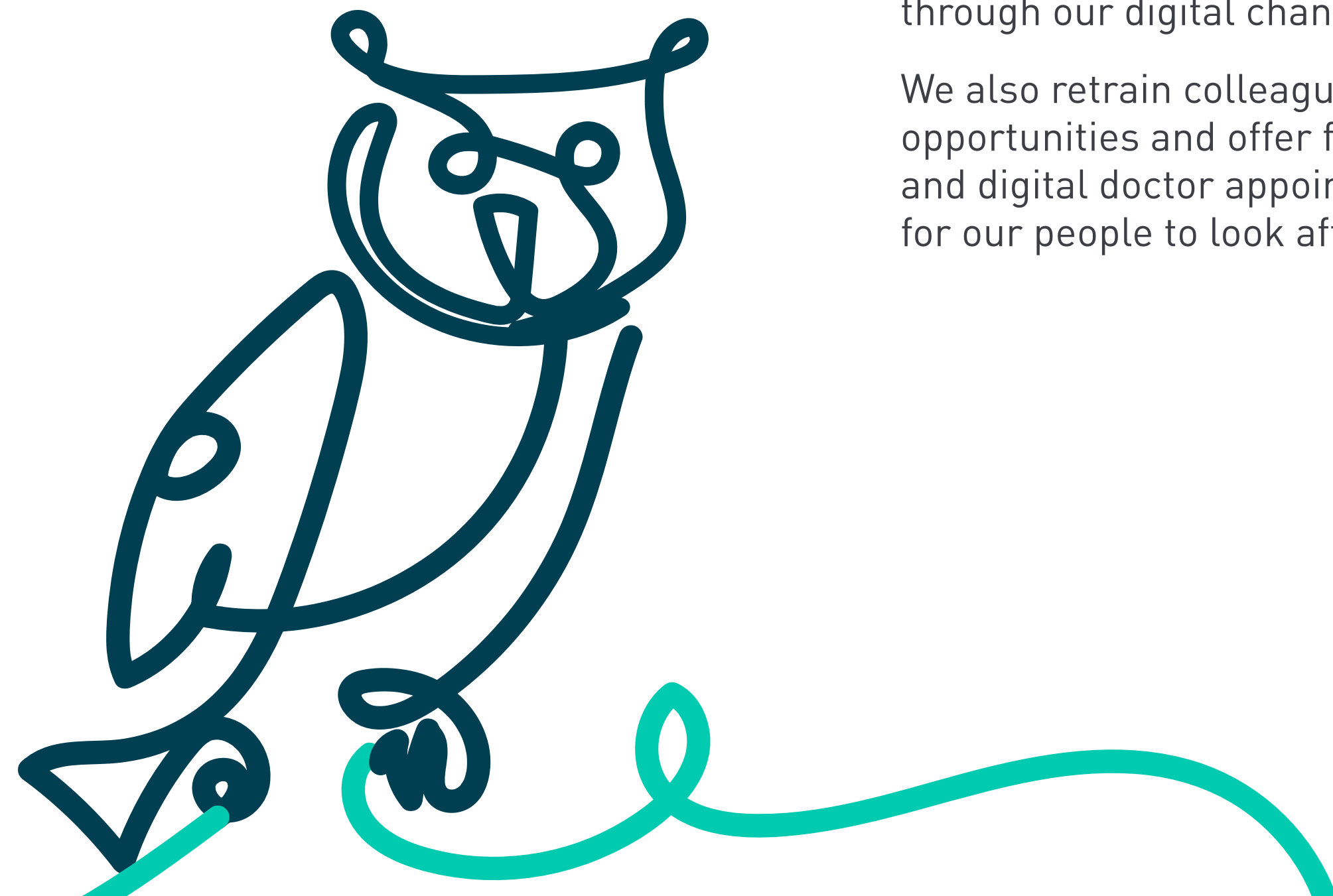
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# ...on age

**The age of our workforce ranges from 16 to 74. This cross-generational diversity gives us a wonderful spectrum of experience and perspectives to tap into.**

Our own workforce is steadily increasing in age, and we believe in supporting employees to make their own career choices. We will adjust people's roles to suit their physical abilities if they want to continue working longer. One example is our virtual Distribution Service Technician team that allows colleagues to step away from manually demanding roles and provide advice to their onsite colleagues through our digital channels.

We also retrain colleagues to open up new career opportunities and offer free flu jabs, health checks, and digital doctor appointments to make it easier for our people to look after themselves.



## Being me: Emma Knott

**“The skills and experience of our employees is really important and we believe employees should be able to continue working for us as long as they wish to.”**



Emma Knott has worked for Severn Trent as a HR Business Partner since August 2019. She works closely with our Central Functions, supporting employees and managers by giving advice on a range of employment areas. She is also a member of our Diversity & Inclusion working group. Part of her role is to help drive a more inclusive working environment, ensuring that our workforce feel supported throughout their career.

There are a number of tools and options in place to support our ageing workforce in their roles, helping to make decisions that are right for them. Whether this is by moving into a job share, reducing working hours as employees approach retirement, or exploring other career opportunities within the business.

“By understanding the needs of our older employees, we can create a healthier, happier workplace where our employees feel supported and continue to have access to our wonderful career opportunities”.



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