

**Date & Time:** Thursday, 27th February 2025 | 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

**Location:** Virtual Teams meeting

**Attendees:** Belinda Blake (National Highways), Paul Aldridge (WJ Group), Hollie Cregan (Graham), Christina Scant (Core Highways), Rebecca Young (HS2), Shelley Caton (BAM UK&I), Nabeelah Uddin (TfL), Stephen Cole (CITB) and Ella Anderson (Mace Group).

**School Staff:** Ian Heptonstall, Dana James-Edwards, Saira Khan, Sara Gouveia and Nezer Vondee.

**Apologies:** Lorna Brown-Owens (Network Rail), Sarina Mitchell (Network Rail) and Peter Ball (VGC Group).

## ACTIONS:

- **Action 328:** Steering Group members to share [upcoming events](#) and the [Diversity Survey Benchmarking Report](#) within their networks.
- **Action 329:** FIR team to discuss clarifications required around Tier 1 and Tier 2 terminology with the Diversity Tool team ahead of the next Diversity Data Survey.
- **Action 330:** Steering Group members to share the annual [FIR Culture Impact Survey](#) within their networks.
- **Action 331:** FIR team to review how we can best utilise relevant insights from the Diversity Survey Benchmarking Report and the Annual FIR Culture Survey. Recommendations welcome from the group to inform and shape future FIR activities around this.
- **Action 332:** Steering Group to distribute the new [Inclusive Recruitment for SMEs eLearning module](#) with SMEs to help increase the use of this new resource. Also highlighting that there is a case study opportunity after the completion of the module.
- **Action 333:** FIR Team to identify speakers and panel moderators for the SME conference with the help of Steering Group members.
- **Action 334:** FIR team to hold Steering Group recruitment process to increase participation from 15 to 20 members.
- **Action 335:** Steering Group members to suggest any potential internal event spaces fit to host the Inspiring Change Conferences (100+ attendees) and advise if you'd like to be involved in planning this initiative.
- **Action 336:** Additional Steering Group members to contact Dana if they're interested in representing FIR in the AGM video alongside Christina.
- **Action 337:** FIR Team to arrange an in-person Steering Group meeting and communicate arrangements with the group.
- **Action 338:** FIR team to take away reflections from breakout room discussions and progress with identifying site standards, determining 5 key languages for use on the micro-learning and the development of the first 12 video modules.
- **Action 339:** Steering Group members to circulate the [registration page](#) for the virtual conference (8<sup>th</sup> May) 'Secrets to Success - Building your Smaller Business with FIR?'
- **Action 340:** FIR team to consider breakout room discussions and implement ideas when creating the new EDI flyers. These will be circulated with Steering Group once refined.
- **Action 341:** Develop a high-level webinar to present findings from the Diversity Data Benchmarking Report. This will be incorporated into the event schedule for the next quarter.

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## 1. Welcome & Introductions

Ian welcomed attendees, noted apologies, and outlined the agenda for the meeting. Ian introduced the new Head of FIR, Dana James-Edwards and the new FIR Project Coordinator, Nezer Vondee.

## 2. Thanks & Acknowledgements

Dana thanked Steering Group members for their dedication and for successfully achieving specific tasks set between the last meeting to date. Special thanks went out to these members of the group for their helpful contributions:

- Paul, Christina and Belinda for stepping up to review the Inclusive Recruitment module.
- Ella, Belinda, Peter, Emer, Sarina and Shelley for providing SMEs for review.
- Paul, Belinda, Rebecca, Ambrose and Shelley for reviewing and shaping the Diversity Data Benchmarking Report.

## 3. Updates & Asks

### CITB Contract: Numbers Update

The current CITB contract is exceeding targets across these key metrics:

- 1,777 unique companies trained (944 above target).
- 1,226 SME/Micro companies trained (646 above target).
- 10,726 training interventions delivered (4,560 above target).

### Upcoming Events

Please take note of the following upcoming events and share these with your networks:

- Tuesday, 25 March 2025 (12:00am-1:00pm): [Sexual Harassment: Know the New Law \(Webinar\)](#) – developed in response to the ‘Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023.’
- Thursday, 27 March 2025 (9:30am-1:00pm): [Becoming a Fairness, Inclusion & Respect \(FIR\) Ambassador \(Workshop\)](#)
- Thursday, 8 May 2025 (10:00am-12:00pm): [Secrets to Success - Building your Smaller Business with FIR?](#)

### Diversity Survey Benchmarking Report

The [Diversity Survey Benchmarking Report](#) is now live. Steering Group members are encouraged to share it within their networks. A session will be hosted to walk through the report and highlight the key insights. Additionally, further clarity is required in identifying Tier 1 and Tier 2 contractors, with a potential review or revision of the terminology to ensure clear understanding throughout the report. The FIR team will address this with the Diversity Tool team who lead on this.

- **Action 328:** Steering Group members to share [upcoming events](#) and the [Diversity Survey Benchmarking Report](#) within their networks.
- **Action 329:** FIR team to discuss clarifications required around Tier 1 and Tier 2 terminology with the Diversity Tool team ahead of the next Diversity Data Survey.

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## FIR Culture Survey

The [Annual FIR Culture Survey](#) is now live and serves as a key benchmarking tool for the programme. Steering Group members are encouraged to share the survey within their networks and help to amplify its reach by engaging with the launch post on the [FIR LinkedIn page](#) (reposting and adding comments to drive participation).

- **Action 330:** Steering Group members to share the annual [FIR Culture Impact Survey](#) within their networks.
- **Action 331:** FIR team to review how we can best utilise relevant insights from the Diversity Survey Benchmarking Report and the Annual FIR Culture Survey. Recommendations welcome from the group to inform and shape future FIR activities around this.

## Case Studies: Inclusive Recruitment for SMEs

We are seeking SMEs to participate in 18 case studies based on their engagement with the new [Inclusive Recruitment for SMEs eLearning module](#), including 5 video-based and 13 text-based case studies. To be eligible, SMEs must have fewer than 250 employees and must have completed the 45-minute module. The upcoming [virtual SME conference on May 8th](#) will help to showcase SME resources, such as the [SME Community Hub](#) and Inclusive Recruitment for SMEs module, with discussions on diversity data and EDI best practices. Speakers, panel moderators, and case study presenters are also being sought to contribute to the event. Belinda has kindly recommended 2 SME speakers.

- **Action 332:** Steering Group to distribute the new [Inclusive Recruitment for SMEs eLearning module](#) with SMEs to help increase the use of this new resource. Also highlighting that there is a case study opportunity after the completion of the module.
- **Action 333:** FIR Team to identify speakers and panel moderators for the SME conference with the help of Steering Group members.

## Recruitment of New Steering Group Members

Christina, Belinda, and Shelley (including Peter and Lorna from the previous meeting) have volunteered to assist in recruiting new Steering Group members. Poll results supported the decision to expand the Steering Group to 20 members.

- **Action 334:** FIR team to hold Steering Group recruitment process to increase participation from 15 to 20 members.

## Inspiring Change Conference & Awards

The Inspiring Change Conference and Awards will take place on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July this year and the awards will be refined to better recognise desired industry behaviours, with categories and structure reshaped for greater impact. Members interested in contributing are encouraged to express interest, and Christina has kindly volunteered to support the initiative.

- **Action 335:** Steering Group members to suggest any potential internal event spaces fit to host the Inspiring Change Conferences (100+ attendees) and advise if you'd like to be involved in planning this initiative.

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## 2025 Annual General Meeting – FIR Update

Christina has kindly agreed to participate in the AGM video on behalf of the FIR Steering Group and a recording date will be scheduled in with Dana.

- **Action 336:** Additional Steering Group members to contact Dana if they're interested in representing FIR in the AGM video alongside Christina.

## In-Person Steering Group Meeting

From the results of the poll, the Steering Group would like to have an in-person meeting for a chance to network. Preferably based in London.

- **Action 337:** FIR Team to arrange an in-person Steering Group meeting and communicate arrangements with the group.

## 4. Working Sessions

### A. The Black Hats Project

There is a new project called 'The Black Hats Project' in collaboration with *Morgan Sindall*. The project focuses on improving training accessibility and engagement on construction sites, addressing long-standing challenges in the sector, such as behavioural resistance, time constraints, device access, financial issues, and site constraints. The initiative involves collaborating with clients, contractors, and subcontractors to implement inclusive site standards and meet contractual training requirements.

Key contract elements include a five-minute multilingual induction video, 12 microlearning courses, and a mobile app for easy access and feedback. Over 18 months, training will be rolled out across 24 sites, reaching 250 site managers, 2,000 operatives, and achieving 9,000 video module completions.

### Breakout Room Discussions

- Belinda suggested introducing a control group and establishing clear site standards.
- The team walked through the 16 potential topics proposed in the bid and got advice on considerations for narrowing the topics down to 12.
- Discussion on selecting five languages for the app, with Romanian, Bulgarian, and Moldavian as top languages. Proposal to conduct site visits and surveys to identify the most spoken languages, with potential use of local council or ONS data.
- Consideration of literacy levels for choosing between spoken or written content.
- Nabeelah offered to reach out to TFL London colleagues for additional insights.
- Emphasis on fostering positivity, including rephrasing terms like "banter" to avoid negative connotations.
- Gathering feedback from site workers on interactions, values, and behaviours to inform training material.
- More on-site research is needed for effective training, with surveys being essential for both DEI topics and site dynamics.

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- **Action 338:** FIR team to take away reflections from breakout room discussions and progress with identifying site standards, determining 5 key languages for use on the micro-learning and the development of the first 12 video modules.

### B. SME Conference Planning

On the 8th of May 2025, a virtual conference for SMEs will be held. A poll was conducted to decide on the conference title, with the winning option being "*Creating Inclusive Workplaces: Challenges & Solutions for Smaller Businesses*." However, following additional feedback from the group on shaping the conference, the title has been further revised to "*Secrets to Success – Building your Smaller Business with FIR*." This change ensures alignment with the latest input and enhances the overall messaging of the event.

- **Action 339:** Steering Group members to circulate the [registration page](#) for the virtual conference (8<sup>th</sup> May) 'Secrets to Success - Building your Smaller Business with FIR?'

### Breakout Room Discussions

The session emphasised making the event solution and outcome oriented, with the aim of providing participants an easy-to-follow toolkit for applying what they learn. Feedback suggested shortening the SME success duration and featuring two case studies instead of one, with another SME facilitating the Q&A session.

Following discussions with both working groups, it was suggested that we remove the panel/change the conference agenda and instead run a workshop focused on the new government Procurement Policy Notes (PPNs). The proposed session, titled "*Supporting FIR in the Procurement Process*" will explore how businesses can embed EDI within procurement, align policies and frameworks with the EDI Act, and provide evidence of compliance.

As a result, we've now added a workshop titled "*How SMEs Can Meet FIR & Procurement Requirements*" to the agenda for the SME conference. This session will provide practical insights and guidance tailored to SMEs navigating FIR expectations in procurement. Please refer to the [updated agenda](#) for full details.

### C. On-Site Flyers & QR Code Engagement

As part of the EDI commission, there's a focus on creating new FIR/EDI flyers designed for the distribution across construction sites. Flyers need to be eye-catching, effective, and encourage workers to scan the QR code that will link back to FIR.

### Breakout Room Discussions

The breakout sessions drew out a range of suggestions for headlines for the flyers using prompts like "*Worried about...?*" or "*Preparing for a tough conversation?*" to help capture attention and drive engagement. The group advised that titles like, "*No Offence: How to Manage Difficult Conversations*" or "*10 Ways to...*" could also enhance interest and accessibility.

QR code engagement was also a topic of discussion with the point clearly made that QR codes should be intentional and direct people to relevant content rather than generic landing pages, reducing the number of clicks needed to get to the content being advertised.

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- **Action 340:** FIR team to consider breakout room discussions and implement ideas when creating the new EDI flyers. These will be circulated with Steering Group once refined.

### 6. AOB & Next Meetings

- FIR resources page to be reviewed and updated where content is outdated. This was discussed and the FIR team will build this into our regular webpage review process.
- **Action 341:** Develop a high-level webinar to present findings from the Diversity Data Benchmarking Report. This will be incorporated into the event schedule for the next quarter.
- CITB Strategic Plan 2025-2029: CITB has pledged to continue supporting FIR initiatives for the next 4 years. [Read more here.](#)

### 7. Upcoming Meetings

- Wednesday, 21 May 2025 - 9:30 to 11:30.
- Tuesday, 26 August 2025 - 11:00 to 13:00.
- Wednesday, 26 November 2025 - 9:30 to 11:30.