



The end of Q3 has come round at a rate of knots and it's once again been a great quarter for diversity and inclusion across Paragon.

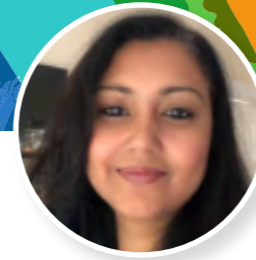
A highlight has to be our presence at the Birmingham Pride Parade in September, where we had an amazing day with our very own Paragon float. It was fantastic to see the city come together and I'm so pleased Paragon was able to play such a big role in the day.

Our work with the City of London's Socio-economic taskforce has continued and in August, the taskforce published its first baseline report, which highlighted the stark lack of socio-economic diversity across senior leadership in the UK financial services sector. I'm really proud that Paragon was able to contribute to the report with the diversity data we have collected so far and it once again highlighted how important measurement is in actioning change and monitoring progress.

I look forward to sharing our next update with you after Christmas.

Richard Rowntree

Managing Director of Mortgages and Executive Sponsor of the EDI Network



INSPIRATIONAL FIGURES ACROSS EDI

Rina Pabari, Customer Assurance Manager and EDI Network Member, shares her inspirational EDI-related figure...

Harnaam Kaur was born and raised in England and is of Sikh heritage. Harnaam has battled with affects of Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (POS) and at the age of 11, started to notice that she was growing facial hair, which can be a symptom of POS due to the increased testosterone levels it causes.

Harnaam spent a lot of time during her youth removing body and facial hair to avoid the horrible comments and bullying that drove her to self-harm.

A big turning point for Harnaam, was when she travelled to New York and spoke of her experience in front of thousands of people at WorldPride NYC. The crowd encouraged her to embrace her individuality and to help inspire others to do the same. At the age of 16, the feeling of self-love brought a positive change to her life. Since then, she has raised awareness with many campaigns, including speaking in the Houses of Parliament and being featured in publications all over the world talking about diversity and self-acceptance.

On this year's International Women's Day, Guinness World Records gave her one of the most inspirational female recognitions, as she became the 'youngest female with a full beard' at the age of 24.

Harnaam's message of self-love doesn't just apply to women, but she inspires people to find beauty in themselves, whatever form it may come in. She is now known as: "Harnaam Kaur... a positive warrior, motivational speaker, world record holder and activist".



In the news

Desrie Asomuyide, 29, from Hornchurch, has launched Little Omo, a more inclusive toy brand to positively represent her son.

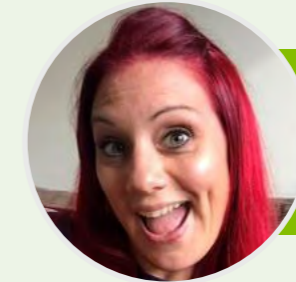
It originally launched in September 2020, but has since grown its range to include puzzles, books and posters.

The toys aim to represent people from different backgrounds, including people who wear head coverings or may have different skin textures.

You can check out Little OMO, [here](#).



FIVE MINUTES WITH...



Lucy Clarke

Lease Administrator, SME Lending and EDI Network member

What made you want to join the EDI Network?

I feel it's now time to accept that we live and operate in increasingly diverse societies, globally, and that diversity and inclusion concerns us all. There should be no place for racism, discrimination and the so many forms of prejudice in our society or workplace. I am passionate about always standing against them and making sure everyone's voices are heard and considered...and the EDI network sounded like the perfect place to contribute!

What do you enjoy most about being part of the network?

I love that the network aims to treat everyone fairly and celebrates diversity, so that all Paragon employees feel valued. The awareness raised is unlike any other company I've worked for! The passion and enthusiasm for it is infectious and even small differences made can be huge for some.

Outside of work, what do you enjoy doing?

I enjoy meeting up with friends and family for girlie catch-ups over dinner and bubbles, to family BBQs with all the kids. I also love watching TV, doing jigsaw puzzles, looking after the hedgehogs that visit my garden, and playing with my cat, Mista Grey.

Who is your biggest inspiration?

There are many people who inspire me, but my biggest inspiration would be my mum! She brought me up to be kind and to not judge others, teaching me how to be happy, to live life and make wise choices, even in the most uncertain situations. She is my best friend, sound board and role model.

WHAT'S COMING UP?

- October** Black History Month
- 24 October** Diwali
- 24 November** Thanksgiving
- 16 November – 16 December** Disability History Month
- 18 – 26 December** Hannukah
- 25 December** Christmas Day



HIGHLIGHTS

South Asian History Month: 18 July– 17 August

This year was an extra special year as it marked two important anniversaries in the South Asian community. It celebrated the 75th anniversary of the independence of India, Partition, and the creation of Pakistan (later known as East and West Pakistan), along with the 50th anniversary of the expulsion of Ugandan Asians by Idi Amin.

We spoke with Rina Pabari, Customer Assurance Manager, about her family's experience of having just 90 days to leave all they knew behind in Uganda and move to Britain and how Rina is proud of her mixed heritage.

Birmingham Pride Parade: September

On Saturday 24 September, Paragon joined thousands of people celebrating the return of Birmingham Pride. Co-ordinated by the EDI Network as part of Paragon's Pride celebrations, this year we went even bigger and better, entering our very own Pride float into the Parade.

Aga Wilson, Senior Insight Manager and EDI Network Member, led on organising Paragon's participation in the parade. She said:

"It was a real privilege to organise Paragon's Birmingham Pride Parade entry on Saturday...especially that I could share this experience with my five-year-old daughter, Amelia and show our support of the LGBTQ+ community. Nothing brings me more joy than fantastic people coming together for a great cause. Thank you everyone for your time, energy and laughter!"

Emma Taylor, Customer Services Officer and EDI Network Member, said:

"After a lot of hard work, the Pride parade was an amazing success. Thank you to everyone who took part. I had a fantastic time and everything about the day was perfect. It was an honour to be able to take part."



Recommended watching

Disclosure
Netflix

Trans creatives share their perspectives about trans inclusive filmmaking and Hollywood's deception of transgender people.



Recommended reading

The Culture Map
Erin Meyer

International business expert, Erin Meyer, helps readers understand and navigate cultural differences in this insightful and practical guide, which is perfect for both work and personal life.



Get in touch

Send your feedback, ideas and stories to
edi@paragonbank.co.uk

We'd love to hear from you!

Would you like to invite a member of the EDI Network to a team meeting to discuss a particular topic or provide an update from the network? Just email the mailbox to arrange a date.



E-learning

Check out our Imposter Syndrome e-learning on Learn Amp, looking at what imposter syndrome is and how it can be combatted, along with why it's more prevalent in women.