

WMADASS EDI Network Social Cohesion Report

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EDI is central to national stability, community resilience and effective social care. The unrest of 20254 and 2025 has exposed weaknesses in social trust, leadership, consistency and inclusion. However, we have a road map for:

- Stronger leadership
- More cohesive and psychologically safe organisations
- Inclusive community engagement
- A workforce empowered to challenge racism and inequality
- A social care system better able to prevent, withstand, and recover from future crises.

1.Introduction

This report is a fourth update, it includes insights from the WMADASS Post-Riots Britain lessons learned work, the ongoing work of the WMADASS EDI Network and the UK Social Cohesion Strategy, highlighting implications for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) leadership and the activities of the EDI network post-riots sub-group, across adult social care. It identifies areas of alignment, gaps, and opportunities to strengthen system-wide cohesion, psychological safety, and inclusive leadership.

ADASS will shortly be publishing Top Tips guidance.

2.Understanding the 2024 Unrest: Root Causes and System Failures

2.1 Drivers of the Riots

National analysis found no evidence of organised or premeditated orchestration; instead, the unrest was led by disaffected individuals, shaped by multiple social influences, and significantly amplified by digital platforms that escalated tensions.

These findings underscore the structural vulnerability of communities already experiencing:

- Precarious social trust
- Fragmented local engagement
- Perceived marginalisation
- Limited psychological safety among staff and communities

2.2 Impact on the Adult Social Care Workforce

Workshops highlighted:

- Emotional strain and trauma among marginalised staff

- Experiences of organisational inconsistency and racism
- A clear need for stronger accountability, visible leadership, and sustainable cultural change

These insights frame EDI not as a compliance exercise but as a precondition for stability, cohesion and crisis resilience.

3.WM ADASS EDI network and Post-riots Learning Themes

Four foundational PACT principles (Power, Accountability, Connection, Trust) informed the WMADASS post-riots work:

3.1 Power:

Centring Lived Experience

- Direct involvement in crisis planning and policy
- Peer-led leadership and reverse mentoring models

3.2 Accountability:

Becoming a Trustworthy System

- Continuous engagement, not episodic crises responses
- Trauma-informed organisational communication
- Reflective practice and structured staff wellbeing mechanisms

3.3 Connection:

Building Meaningful Cross-System Networks

- Regular, structured, multi-stakeholder networks
- Stronger operational partnerships with police, health, community and voluntary sectors. The Regional Safeguarding Information Sharing Process is a model to build upon.
- Resources to sustain cross-organisational dialogue

3.4 Trust:

Embedding Inclusive Leadership

- Leadership visibility, empathy and follow-through

- Showcasing successful local EDI initiatives, recorded at our quarterly meetings and interim ad hoc communications.
- Sharing learning with regional and national bodies (ADASS, LGA, etc.)

Collectively, these principles frame an EDI approach that is:

- Network-led
- Grounded in lived experience
- Sustained and relational rather than transactional
- Focused on long-term cultural transformation

4. Alignment with the National Social Cohesion Strategy

The UK Social Cohesion Strategy introduces three major shifts:

4.1 Building Confident Communities

This aligns with WMADASS’s call for:

- Safe spaces
- Community-led problem solving
- Investment in local identity and belonging

Supporting evidence:

The strategy prioritises Pride in Place, revitalising local spaces, improving neighbourhood safety, and enhancing opportunities for shared community activity.

4.2 Strengthening Cohesion (Integration, Discrimination Reduction, Shared Values)

This pillar connects directly to WMADASS’s PACT principles:

Social Cohesion Strategy Commitment	WMADASS Contribution
Tackling discrimination and hate crime	Anti-racism, trauma-informed leadership, staff psychological safety
Setting expectations for integration & participation	Lived experience leadership & cross-group collaboration
Supporting underrepresented groups in education & employment	Peer networks and capacity building across ASC workforce

4.3 Protecting Resilience (Extremism, Online Harms, Institutional Strengthening)

The Social Cohesion Strategy emphasises combating:

- Extremism
- Online radicalisation
- Digital harms
- Weak governance structures

This precisely mirrors lessons from the riots where online content amplified tensions and where institutional responses appeared uneven.

5. Specific Local Authority Duties Relevant to WMADASS

Local authorities must now:

- Establish neighbourhood governance structures
- Strengthen safeguarding and home education oversight
- Tackle discrimination, hate crime and extremist risks locally
- Lead high street renewal, community asset protection and cultural investment

These duties create clear new touchpoints for the WMADASS EDI network, particularly around:

- Community engagement
- Workforce preparedness
- Governance and accountability
- Systems for preventing marginalisation

6. Strategic Approach

6.1 Shared Themes

- Belonging and psychological safety
- Trust in institutions
- Local leadership and community-level decision-making
- Cross-sector partnership working
- Reducing inequalities and preventing discrimination
- Embedding lived experience

6.2 Opportunities for WMADASS

WMADASS is well positioned to:

- Lead regionally on cohesive, inclusive leadership
- Create a regional model for neighbourhood governance engagement
- Develop ASC-focused anti-extremism & digital harm awareness
- Expand lived-experience-led training and reverse mentoring
- Support councils with EDI-aligned duties embedded in the strategy

6.3 Where WMADASS Adds Value Beyond National Strategy

- Adult social care-specific trauma-informed approaches
- Long-term culture change methodology (PACT)
- Direct connection to workforce emotional wellbeing
- Unique ability to bridge professional, community and lived-experience voices

7. Conclusion

The WMADASS post-riots lessons, the ongoing work of the WMADASS EDI and ADASS EEDI networks, and the national Social Cohesion Strategy strongly reinforce one another: both call for confident, cohesive and resilient communities built through inclusive leadership, accountability, trust and meaningful community participation.

The WMADASS EDI network is uniquely placed to support operationalising these national expectations into practical, trauma-informed, culturally intelligent adult social care practice.