

# Equity for all

By Theodore Dalrymple

With a self-satisfaction that makes Mr Pecksniff seem almost as self-doubting as Hamlet, Aviva – once known as the Norwich Union – tells us, under the rubric of diversity, equity and inclusion, that “we are committed to ensuring our people are a reflection of the customers and communities we serve.”

It goes on to say that it is a signatory of the Women in Finance Charter, the 30 per cent Club and the Race at Work Charter. It “works with” Diversity Practice, which asks us to “imagine a world where we all truly connect and seamlessly cross the borders of difference that all too often separate us” – from, for example, North Korean prison guards.



Photo by John Lamb

Aviva has recently published a UK Pay Gap Report, indulges in “Diversity data gathering” and is “working in partnership with a number of different organisations to drive positive change and help raise awareness around (sic) diversity and inclusion”.

The organisations include Business in the Community, Career Ready, Change the Race Ratio, Dive In (“a global diversity & inclusion insurance festival”), Employers for Carers, Group

for Autism, Insurance, Investment and Neurodiversity, Compassionate Employers, iCan (“a multicultural insurance network driving change across the industry” in order to “influence more ethnicity-focused conversations in the insurance market”), Progress Together (“to create initiatives to ensure greater progression for colleagues from a lower socioeconomic background”), Social Mobility Foundation, Diversity Practice (“that specialises in delivering inclusion through leadership, organisational development and executive coaching”), The Valuable 500 (“the global CEO community revolutionising disability inclusion”), The Women of the Future Awards, upReach and Stonewall (“Acceptance without exception”).

Acceptance without exception? Fred West? Ted Bundy? Dominique Pelicot? With all this do-goodery, it is a wonder that anyone in the company has time for anything else, though obviously at least some employees do: for how else to explain that the chief executive is paid £6,630,000 a year, of which 84 per cent is bonuses, and has been given £6,000,000 in shares? This, of course, is only part of the company’s commitment to equity.

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