



**South
Derbyshire**
District Council

Corporate Equalities & Safeguarding Annual Report 2014 -2015

June 2015

Corporate Services

1. Background

The Equality Act 2010 placed a duty on public bodies such as the Council to ensure they consider the needs of individuals in their day to day work when developing policies, delivering services and in relation to their own employees or when recruiting new staff.

Equality Duty

The Equality Duty has three aims or 'general duties.' It requires the Council to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- i. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- ii. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- iii. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The Equality Duty covers the following '*protected characteristics*':

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ▪ Race | ▪ Pregnancy and maternity |
| ▪ Disability | ▪ Religion (belief or non-belief) |
| ▪ Gender (sex) | ▪ Sexual orientation |
| ▪ Gender re-assignment | ▪ Age |

It also applies to marriage and civil partnership, but only in respect to having due regard to eliminate unlawful discrimination.

Having 'due regard' is an important part of the duty and means consciously thinking about the three aims of the Equality Duty as part of the decision making process.

The Equality Duty also recognises that some people's needs may be different from others, such as disabled people. Therefore, we must consider their needs when making decisions about policies and services. This will probably mean making 'reasonable adjustments' or treating disabled people more favourably than non-disabled people in order to meet their needs.

Specific Equality Duties

In addition to the general duties outlined above, a number of 'specific duties' have been introduced to help public bodies achieve the aims of the general duties. Under the specific duties, we must:

- Publish information to demonstrate compliance with Equality Duty annually commencing in January, and,
- Adopt and publish equality objectives that must be reviewed at least every four years. This was last undertaken in April 2012.

How this report is organised.

This report is designed to highlight what we are doing to meet the Equality Duty and demonstrate how we are playing our part in helping to make society fairer by tackling discrimination and providing equality for all.

The first section of this report focuses on the progress we are making in relation to meeting our equality objectives. The second demonstrates how we are meeting or have met the Equality Duty. Information in relation to our employees can be found in our [Workforce Profile](#).

2. Equality Objectives

Our Equality Objectives were identified through consultation with residents and Partners and are set out in the Council's [Sustainable Community Strategy 2009 - 2029](#), an overarching policy framework for our [Corporate Plan 2009/14](#).

Objective 1: Provide services which reflect the communities of South Derbyshire and are accessible to users

Area covered	Supporting information
Housing allocations and homelessness	<p>We have a statutory responsibility to manage and review the housing waiting list.</p> <p>We allocate all of our properties through a new government scheme called 'choice based lettings'. This allows people to apply for a home of their choice rather than having to wait for an offer of a property we think is suitable. Everyone applying for a place on our waiting list is positioned into a priority band depending on their need. If potential tenants see a property they are interested in, they can 'bid' for it. The 'bidder' with the highest housing need will be allocated the property.</p> <p>We work with partners to provide advice and assistance for a number of issues and prevent homelessness. There are a number of agencies within the district that also offer help,</p> <p>Our Homelessness Prevention Strategy sets out how we're working to reduce and prevent homelessness. One of the priorities was to reduce homelessness for young people aged between 16 and 35.</p>

Tenant participation

The number of people on the housing register at 31 March 2015 was 1,046 (1,980 in the previous year).

During the year we secured funding to implement a 12 month fixed term contract for a Homelessness Case Officer, whose main aim is to work specifically with young people between the ages of 18 and 25.

We have accommodated many applicants throughout the year in our own stock, which is brought to a 'fit to let' standard before offered to potential new tenants. Assistance is also provided to people in finding accommodation in the private sector through our [Housing options service](#) and [Home Swapper schemes](#).

The South Derbyshire Tenants' Panel meets with our senior Housing managers every two months to discuss areas of housing service delivery.

During the year, the following achievements have been made:

- Review of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan. This sets out a long term plan for our housing stock, ensuring that adequate financial planning is in place, including evidence on how we will manage our housing income, demand and stock condition in the future.
- Dreamscheme projects
- Working in partnership with Trent & Dove Housing Association to give their Input into new build projects.

Sports, leisure and recreational activities

We engage with community groups to ensure our sports and leisure provision reflects the needs of 'protected' groups. Our [Sport & Health Strategy](#) aims to support the delivery of local and national objectives, including:

- Young people participation and volunteering
- Adult participation and volunteering
- Facilities
- Reaching communities – addressing local needs

Case Study – Housing Tenancy Participation

Changes have been made to the way tenants of all ages can get involved with delivery of housing services. The South Derbyshire Tenants and Residents Forum, tenant panels and groups meet with our senior Housing managers every two months to discuss areas of housing service delivery.

A variety of topics are covered at the meetings, such as:

- Repairs and maintenance
- Supported housing
- Communications, marketing and recruitment
- Updates from area representatives on local issues.
- Updates about regional and national networking events, including the [Association of Retained Council Housing](#) (ARCH), the [Tenant Participation Advisory Service](#) (TPAS) and the Derbyshire Tenants Network (DTN)

The main change is that all involved tenants now meet together to discuss service delivery, while ad hoc meetings are held to look at specific Housing areas and issues.

However, the Community Events Group, the Publications and Performance and Scrutiny Panels continue to meet separately due to the nature of their work. A member from each of these groups will present an update at each of the main meetings to keep everyone informed.

This move is a result of the feedback from the former Forum about how to boost the number of tenants involved while driving improvement forward.

Tenants do not have to be a member of the Tenants' Panel to attend the meetings. Details of meetings are published in *Housing News*, which is distributed to all Council tenants.

Some achievements for the year include:

- The successful delivery of [Dreamscheme](#) projects
- Undertaking a review of housing performance data and identifying areas for improvement
- Producing a 'new look [Housing Annual Report](#) which was delivered to 3,050 households and leaseholders in October 2014. Panel member Derek Rogers said *"I'm really impressed with this year's Annual Report. I like the colour codes, which makes it easier to find things. It is a very informative document."*

Case Study – Housing Tenancy Participation

- Working with tenants to undertake training on how to ‘mystery shop’ parts of the Housing Repairs service, in a bid to improve the quality of work and increase tenant satisfaction.

We have set and published three equality objectives, derived from the key issues identified. Progress during the year is outlined below:

Case Study – Help with money and welfare reform

Moneyspider Credit Union

During the year, locality funding of £10,000 was secured by the South Derbyshire Partnership to build capacity in the District. A project manager has been recruited to support the volunteer management team to move towards achieving sustainability and grow the Credit Union to meet the demands of the local population in these economically challenging times.

Promotional material has been produced and distributed to inform the community about saving opportunities and crisis loans that offer an affordable alternative to high cost loans.

‘Improving Your Credit Rating’

Experian, one of the UK’s largest credit reference agencies, met with the South Derbyshire Tenants and Residents Forum to talk about the Rental Exchange and how it can help tenants with a history of little or no credit.

The initiative was run in conjunction with the social enterprise organisation Big Issue Invest, to enable tenants to enhance their credit report and create an ‘online’ proof of identity. This, in theory, will make it easier for them to access more affordable mainstream services and apply for goods and services such as utility suppliers and mobile phone contracts.

Despite those people who live in social housing paying their rent regularly, it is not currently taken into account when applying for credit. With this initiative, regular rental payments will be noted.

We administer the [Housing benefit and Council Tax benefits scheme](#) on behalf of the Department of Works & Pensions. These ‘means tested’ benefits help residents on low incomes pay their rent and council tax.

Tenancy Sustainment Service

This service is designed to support our tenants to manage their welfare and

Case Study – Help with money and welfare reform

tenancy effectively and ensure they are able to maximise any welfare benefits they may be entitled to:

Our Tenancy Sustainment Officer can help our tenants by:

- Managing their money and budgeting to ensure rent and other essential bills are paid
- Maximising income and ensuring they are in receipt of all benefits they may be entitled to
- Setting up utility services
- Helping to understand their Tenancy Agreement and how to keep to it
- Accessing affordable loans
- Making referrals to specialist services, such as Adult Care, P3 Mental Health etc., and other agencies, such as the debt counselling advice
- Support in accessing low cost furniture, in applying for Derbyshire Discretionary Fund and Discretionary Housing payments
- Setting up bank accounts and accessing a Credit Union

There are no specific periods for when these services are offered, they are tailored to meet individual needs.

Objective 2: Work with Partners to help younger people to access employment opportunities in South Derbyshire

Area covered	Supporting information
Providing opportunities for unemployed groups to access training, employment and entrepreneurship, in particular in the most deprived areas of the District.	<p>The unemployment rate for 16-18 year olds in the district who are also not in education or training is well below the national average.</p> <p>The South Derbyshire Partnership has drawn up an action plan to help young people into the world of work. For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jobs & Career Fairs ▪ Work Clubs ▪ Work experience placements

Case Study: Helping young people into the 'world of work'

In June, a **Jobs & Careers Fair** with over 1,000 jobs on offer was held at the Green Bank Leisure Centre in Swadlincote. The event attracted 60 exhibitors, including employers and training providers, and around 650 visitors (which is more than double that of the previous year). For the first time, the event offered advice workshops and presentations by employers from key sectors, coordinated by Swadlincote Jobcentre.

In September '**Work Clubs**' delivered by the Old Post Centre in Newhall were launched. The Clubs operated from the Old Post Centre, South Derbyshire Citizens' Advice Bureau and Oaklands Village in Swadlincote. Free, friendly, informal help and support is offered on a drop in basis to jobseekers. Typical assistance offered includes help with CV writing, covering letters, application forms, searching and applying for work and using Universal Jobmatch.

The Accessible Learning in Creative Environments (ALICE) Project

This project, funded by the South Derbyshire Partnership and led by South Derbyshire CVS, aims to assist those facing multiple barriers to entering the workforce. A non-traditional learning environment is used in working with, for example, lone parents, individuals relocated following domestic abuse, people accessing food banks and referrals from partner agencies that have identified a need for more intensive learner support. Learners taking part in the sessions aim to improve their self-esteem and confidence, improve their knowledge and skills to access other services including participation in training, volunteering and employment.

Some 60 people have participated in **work experience placements** arranged by the Jobcentre (25-30 hours per week for a minimum of four weeks). Seven people were taken on by the companies involved and a further 19 people found work within 13 weeks.

Objective 3: Enhance opportunities for vulnerable people to access suitable housing to live independently at home for longer

Area covered	Supporting information
Adapting homes	<p>We offer a range of locally determined 'discretionary' grants or provide assistance through loans and equity release products or a combination of both. Details on providing housing assistance are contained in our Private Sector Housing Policy documents.</p> <p>Residents who have problems managing their home because they have a disability can access various types of help, such as making minor adaptations to</p>

Objective 3: Enhance opportunities for vulnerable people to access suitable housing to live independently at home for longer

Area covered	Supporting information
	<p>their homes. For instance, grab rails, stair rails and lever taps can be fitted to help around the home.</p> <p>If the property is rented from us minor adaptations can be requested directly. Home owners or tenants who rent from private landlords need to contact the local Social Services office.</p> <p>For major adaptations, our residents can apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant to help pay for the works, such as installing a stair lift and widening doorways. However, if a home cannot be reasonably adapted, there is an option to consider moving to a more suitable property, where a Disabled Relocation Grant may be available to help with costs involved.</p>
Supported housing schemes	<p>Supported housing schemes consist of flats, bed sits and bungalows, which have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access to the services of an off-site Careline Support Coordinator ▪ Their own private facilities <p>Supported housing is designed for people who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Of pensionable age ▪ Nearing pensionable age and whose circumstances would benefit from the services offered within sheltered housing ▪ Able to live independently but would benefit from the services provided by the Scheme <p>Careline is located at Oakland Village.</p>

Case Study: Oakland Village

Oakland Village, in Swadlincote, is a £20 million development between South Derbyshire District Council, Derbyshire County Council and the Trident Group. Its aim is to provide a focal point for older people's services in the area.

Case Study: Oakland Village

Oakland Village consists of 88 one day and two-bedroom purpose built extra care apartments with 24/7 on site care available to rent or buy, giving people aged 55 years and over the opportunity to live independently.

It also has a specialist community care centre made up of 16 short term residential care beds for older people and 16 short term residential care beds for respite care and rehabilitation.

On site activities are available to promote health and well-being, such as chair based exercise classes; themed sessions for people with dementia and their carers; support for carers; walking and dancing groups; offering advice on diet, fitness and finance.

There are also a host of communal facilities, which can be used by both residents and members of the public, such as an IT suite, health treatment and clinic rooms; café/bistro; gym; shop, and a hairdressing salon.

Barbara, (a relative of someone who lives/lived here), said:

"This village has been the answer to all our prayers. Since moving there she has regained her independence and interest in life."

3. Meeting the aims of the Equality Duty

This section of the report will demonstrate how we are meeting or have met the Equality Duty.

Meeting the aims of the Equality Duty

Area covered	Supporting information
Corporate policies, vision and values	<p>Our Corporate Plan 2009/14 sets out plans and priorities for delivering local services. It describes how we will work with partners to achieve our vision of making 'South Derbyshire a better place to live, work and visit'. The Plan is the result of extensive consultation.</p> <p>We also have a set of values which provide a framework for the way we want to work as a Council in helping us deliver our vision. We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Put customers first ▪ Set clear targets ▪ Act decisively ▪ Lead for success ▪ Actively listen and resolve problems

Meeting the aims of the Equality Duty

Area covered	Supporting information
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop our people ▪ Maintain value for money through continuous improvement ▪ Treat people fairly <p>The Sustainable Community Strategy 2009 - 2029 sets out how the South Derbyshire Partnership (made up of the Council and other public, private, voluntary and community organisations) is committed to planning the kind of future our communities want. The Partnership's vision is to have '<i>a dynamic South Derbyshire, able to seize opportunities to develop successful communities whilst respecting and enhancing the varied character and environment of our fast growing district.</i>'</p>
Other policies, plans and strategies	<p>The Equalities Policy Statement sets out our commitment to advancing equalities and fairness while celebrating the diversity within South Derbyshire. Other policies, plans and strategies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Housing Strategy 2009-14 aims to ensure that existing and future housing stock offers affordable homes in safe, healthy and sustainable locations. ▪ Sport & Health Strategy aims to support the delivery of national and local objectives. ▪ Directorate Service Plans bring together our priorities in relation to our Corporate Plan and the Sustainable Community Strategy. ▪ Other policies, plans and strategies
Governance arrangements and local 'champions'	<p>In order to take forward issues within the Council and the local community we have appointed Elected Member champions for equalities and diversity and safeguarding.</p> <p>Corporate Equalities & Safeguarding Group – Chaired by the Director of Finance and Corporate Services, the group includes the Elected Member champions as well as service level and trade union representatives.</p> <p>Its aim is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ share best practice ▪ consider implications of new legislation and

Meeting the aims of the Equality Duty

Area covered	Supporting information
	<p>procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop and agree equality initiatives and procedures scrutinise corporate and service level performance monitor and review our action plan
Communities Forum	<p>Together with South Derbyshire CVS, we established a forum to address equality/diversity issues. Membership includes voluntary sector organisations and interest groups who represent individuals who are discriminated against because of their gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity, age, physical and mental disability.</p> <p>Its aim is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide advice consultation and encourage suggestions on the development of our plans, strategies and services Provide an opportunity for key voluntary sector groups to scrutinise, improve and influence equalities and diversity initiatives affecting our communities Highlight and discuss new legislation and national issues with regards to equalities and diversity Improve community cohesion
Comments, complaints and compliments	<p>We receive a wide variety of comments, complaints and compliments each year in relation to our services. We regularly monitor these to help improve our services and put right any mistakes we have made.</p> <p>During the year 2014/15, there was 1 (2) comment, 74 (60) complaints and 43 (51) compliments (previous year's figures shown in brackets).</p> <p>Analysis of the complaints shows that none allege unfair treatment or discrimination. All are in relation to the services provided.</p>

Case Study: Understanding our diverse communities

We access Census and other socio-economic demographic data to inform our work. For instance the [Derbyshire Observatory](#) is a website managed by

Case Study: Understanding our diverse communities

Derbyshire County Council. The website contains a wealth of information on social, health, economic, crime and environmental issues.

This local intelligence system is an interactive facility with maps, charts and tables, identifying key statistics to provide an overview of the county. In depth analysis on key topics such as unemployment and population are also available, giving a greater understanding of our communities, which in turn supports the development of our services, policies and strategies.

We publish information about the make-up of our communities, such as area profiles, plans and strategies, and highlight any inequalities or issues to be addressed. For instance, crime is more likely to occur in areas of deprivation.

We promote the use of undertaking equality assessments in order to improve our understanding of diverse communities.

Case Study: Assessing the impact of our services, policies and activities on our diverse communities.

We undertake equality monitoring to help us understand the impact of our services, policies and activities on people to ensure we do not discriminate against individuals or groups on the grounds of their 'protected characteristics'. For instance, we offer an assisted refuse collection scheme to elderly, infirm or disabled people who do not have any family members or friends who can help them put out their wheelie bins or recycling boxes.

Currently, we support more than 2,000 residents with this service. For instance, we provided a tailored service for a blind resident in Church Gresley, where each type of bin is left in a defined space near her home so that she knows which to use for waste and recyclables.

We support or commission research into the future needs of different people. We have an ongoing programme of [housing needs studies](#), which focus on key areas of activity. As a result our [Housing Strategy 2009-14](#) includes objectives aimed at meeting the needs of vulnerable groups and older people.

We also look at how other local authorities are managing aspects of equalities to identify best practice. For instance The Tenants Panel worked with Trent and Dove Housing to give input into their new build projects in Repton and Woodville. For more information see the [Housing Services Annual Report](#).

Case Study: Communicating and engaging with our communities to ensure that we deliver services appropriate to them

Our Annual Communications Report 2014/15 highlights our key achievements during the year and contains a work plan for 2015/16.

[Website Site Help & Accessibility](#) - We also try to ensure that our website can be accessed by everyone. The standard we aim for is AA Standard, set by the Web Accessibility Initiative. This makes sure that people using 'assistive technology' (such as screen readers) can read our site. It also means that the site is more user friendly to everyone. Regular independent testing is undertaken to ensure as many of our pages meet the standard as possible.

A link is also available to signpost computer users to make the most use of the Internet, whatever their disability, by signposting them to the BBC [My Web, my way](#) website. This contains features such as changing computer settings and receiving information in other formats. Assistance is also provided on how to use Google as a translation service.

We have embraced **social media** to enable people to engage with us. We have more than 5,000 people following us on Twitter. Following [@sddc](#) is an easy way to share opinions on different issues and raise customer service queries. Our Twitter channel provides access to important announcements and updates on events, services and initiatives. We are also working hard to make sure that social media is used in a way to assist our residents. For instance, we use Twitter to help raise awareness of our sports and health activities, such as the national 'This Girl Can' campaign supported by Sport England to encourage more girls to play football, while in depth coverage of events such as the Swadlincote Christmas Lights switch on also prove popular.

The Safer South Derbyshire Partnership has developed a Facebook page with access to Twitter. This has enabled the Partnership to provide and receive instant accessible information at people's fingertips. Communities Manager Chris Smith said: *"Social media offers such a varied platform to work from and our Facebook page is set to be a fantastic source of information for residents and partners. We also hope this will help us to engage more with local young people and we will be using it to promote any relevant activities run across the district."* Social Media Breakfasts are held with departments on a monthly basis to further enhance the service we offer.

Scrutiny adds a new dimension to our decision making process and makes an important contribution in making service improvements.

Case Study: Communicating and engaging with our communities to ensure that we deliver services appropriate to them

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee's role is externally focused, working with other Councillors, officers, partners, organisations and individuals. It reviews both the services we deliver and those services that are provided and delivered by other organisations that affect our residents. The role of scrutiny has been extended in recent years with the introduction of Councillor Call for Action, crime and disorder issues and public health.

Our Chief Executive Frank McArdle stated that: *"Overview and scrutiny reviews give us an opportunity to take a close look at issues of importance and make recommendations for change. We are keen to hear from our residents about the things that matter the most to help us decide on priorities to ensure they are relevant and make a real difference in communities."*

The Committee produces [annual reports](#) and these can be viewed along with other [public documents](#) on our website.

The [Housing Performance & Scrutiny Panel](#) was set up as part of our commitment to creating opportunities for tenant involvement in our services and promoting more ways for tenants to scrutinise what we do. In some instances, the Panel may request for our senior officers to explain matters within their remit, which may result in the initiation of a service based review.

Following approval of a revised Housing Tenancy Agreement in December 2014, we are now developing an **'easy read' version** of this document. The publication is being developed in consultation with our Tenants Publications Panel, which is made up of a cross section of tenants and other stakeholders.

Eliminating discrimination, victimisation and harassment

Area covered	Supporting information
Safer South Derbyshire Partnership	<p>The Safer South Derbyshire Partnership is a statutory partnership formed as part of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998. It is supported by the Safer Derbyshire Partnership, based at County Hall, Matlock.</p> <p>Although South Derbyshire has low levels of crime compared to the rest of the county and country, surveys have shown community safety to be a top priority. Therefore, the Partnership's aim is to reduce crime, disorder and the fear of crime in South Derbyshire by</p>

Eliminating discrimination, victimisation and harassment

Area covered	Supporting information
	<p>providing support, advice and leadership to its partners and communities.</p> <p>The main areas of focus at a local level are contained within its three-year Partnership Plan, which is reviewed annually to show progress and updated with new priorities and actions. Initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ educating young people on the consequences of committing crime and antisocial behaviour (ASB) ▪ working with partners to deliver diversionary activities in hotspot locations ▪ making public our commitment to eliminate discrimination, victimisation and harassment
<p>Promoting & maintaining high standards of conduct by Elected Members & employees</p>	<p>We require all:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ election candidates to sign a compact which includes a commitment to reject all forms of discriminatory violence, harassment and unlawful discrimination. ▪ employees to treat others with respect and not discriminate unlawfully against any person. <p>We have developed policies and procedures to tackle discrimination, victimisation and harassment. For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Updating our Bullying & Harassment Policy supported by staff training ▪ Putting in place links from this policy into our Disciplinary Procedure ▪ Recording and monitoring all reports of harassment, undertaking staff awareness surveys, offering training about harassment issues and raising awareness of supporting procedures ▪ Making clear to both our staff and Members the standards of behaviour we expect
<p>Safeguarding</p>	<p>Our responsibilities for 'safeguarding' are set out in our Safeguarding Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults Policy.</p> <p>An external audit review was undertaken in September 2014 to assess the effectiveness of our policy and</p>

Eliminating discrimination, victimisation and harassment

Area covered	Supporting information
	<p>procedures and partnership arrangements. Findings of the review have been fully implemented.</p> <p>During the year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding awareness training sessions, which attracted more than 150 attendees, were delivered by South Derbyshire CVS. • This has led to a marked increase in the number of incidents reported to the Safeguarding Officer, with 24 over the past 12 months. <p>Our Communities Manager has provided briefings to staff reminding them of their responsibilities to ensure any safeguarding concerns and issues are reported and the Council's Safeguarding Officer is kept informed.</p>

Case Study: Safer Communities

Educating young people on the consequences of committing crime and anti-social behaviour.

For the second year running, a series of **'Prison Me, No Way' (PMNW)** events were held at the four secondary schools in the District: Granville, John Port, William Allitt and Pingle. These events are jointly funded by the Safer South Derbyshire Partnership, the Police, PMNW and the Schools. The events are well received by both the schools and young people.

'Your Choice' events were held in three secondary schools in Newhall and Swadlincote to showcase four 'inspirational' speakers who tell their own stories about the choices they have made that have affected their lives, both in a negative and positive way. The speakers included a Gulf War veteran who was seriously injured in Iraq; a young woman who was a victim of sexual exploitation and a reformed football hooligan.

Positive feedback was received, with Simon Waller, Assistant Head at Pingle School, stating that: *"I can honestly say it's the most inspirational event I've ever been involved in at school. The pupils were blown away."*

Derbyshire Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Victims First Project

The aim of this project is to:

Case Study: Safer Communities

- Ensure the victim is at the heart of our approach to tackling ASB
- Provide multi agency approach to the identification of vulnerable and repeat ASB victims
- Improve the service for ASB victims, especially the most vulnerable
- Improve ASB case management for victims and offender through IT

Working with Partner agencies to deliver diversionary activities in hotspot locations

Following consultation with local user groups, the £50k refurbishment and extension to **Swadlincote Skate Park** has been completed and officially opened. Derbyshire County Council has funded an additional lighting column at the facility.

Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme – 13 young people between the ages of 14 and 16 years have now completed their bronze expedition after spending the weekend at an overnight camp in the Peak District.

Granville Friday Night Project- Funding secured by Granville School and the Youth Service has seen the continuation of this project, which has now entered its fifth year and attracts dozens of young people by offering sports and games activities, such as the use of a gym, chill out zone and dance sessions.

Making public our commitment to eliminate discrimination, victimisation and harassment

For instance:

- We promote the reporting of hate crime incidents using a third party reporting system operated by [Stop Hate UK](#). Hate crime awareness training was delivered to more than 40 local agencies.
- Holding [Liberation Day](#) for South Derbyshire residents aged 55 and over. The event offers light entertainment as well as providing advice on topics such as community safety, pensions, fire safety, health and social care.
- A number of events in the year have been held to raise awareness of domestic and sexual violence. For instance **A White Ribbon Campaign** was held in Swadlincote, where dozens of people put their names on a six-foot ribbon to provide support to this national campaign to end problems of domestic abuse. Other supporters were given a small white ribbon to show their support. Simultaneous candle lit vigils were held in four Derbyshire towns to raise awareness and the support services available to victims. Oakland Village hosted the Swadlincote event in December. At this event a

Case Study: Safer Communities

talk was given by Derbyshire Police Domestic Violence Unit. A video clip recorded by a local domestic abuse victim who had received support from local services was also shown.

- The celebration of **International Women's Day**, which promotes local services for women, saw 16 organisations offer advice and inspiration for local women, including adult education, police, domestic violence, stop smoking advice, free body MOTs and beauty therapy. 80 people attended.

Advancing equality of opportunity

Area covered	Supporting information
Better ways to make payments	Customers who come into the Council Offices to make a payment are provided with information on alternative methods of payment. This includes making payments by direct debit, debit/credit card, telephone, online or making a payment at other outlets in the district, such as the Post Office or a Pay Point location.
Reducing the number of vulnerable households experiencing fuel poverty	<p>We have published details about grants and discount schemes that could help residents pay for energy efficiency measures and renewable technology, such as Energy efficiency grants and Green Deal financing.</p> <p>We continue to progress a programme of works to replace inefficient heating systems and upgrade insulation measures to our properties. During the year, 50 new boilers and four new heating systems were installed, with 100 loft and cavity wall insulations completed. As well as helping our residents on low incomes to stay warm and well, these measures also help them save money on bills.</p>

Case Study: Affordable homes, homelessness support and housing advice

Building work has begun on the first council-owned housing development for a generation. The Coton Croft project, in Coton Park, Linton, will be made up of 23 affordable one, two, three and four-bedroom houses.

Yorkshire-based developer Keepmoat will build what will be predominantly

Case Study: Affordable homes, homelessness support and housing advice

family homes, with work expected to be completed in late December. That will take the council's current housing stock to around 3,000 as it seeks to reduce a waiting list which currently has around 1,000 applications.

A Council spokesman stated: *"The council is committed to providing high-quality but affordable housing, and Coton Croft satisfies those criteria."*

In March, Trent & Dove Housing celebrated the completion of 41 new social homes in Swadlincote, delivered in partnership with the District Council.

Built on the former Kwik Save site, which closed its doors in 2007, Majestic Place is made up of 18 one-bedroom apartments, 19 two-bedroom houses and four three-bedroom houses with parking.

Part-funded by the Government's Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and built by local contractor Maplevale, all of the homes have been built to Sustainable Level 3 standards with energy efficient boilers and LED lighting throughout, making them fuel efficient and less expensive to run.

Our Homelessness Case Worker has been working with younger adult clients aged between 18 and 35 in providing them with **homelessness support and housing advice**. This support also includes housing options advice across all tenures, and where appropriate signposting to external agencies for further assistance. We also work with each client and their support workers (if in place) to provide the most appropriate level of support to help them access and sustain a tenancy. This may include providing them with financial planning, meal planning, and food budgeting or other life skills.

[Applying for housing](#)

The increased demand for properties and changes to legislation have enabled us to reshape our Allocations Policy to help those most in need.

A review of applicants on the Housing Register who have been registered with the Council for more than six months was undertaken. As a result, we were able to remove more than 204 applications which had either moved addresses, changed circumstances or no longer wished to be considered for Social Rented Housing. Further changes from the Allocations Policy came into effect from July 1, 2014.

Tenancy sustainment

During the year, we have helped 90 introductory and secure tenants. Our Tenancy Sustainment Service helped 73 of these referrals to remain in their home. This includes preventing a possible 14 evictions from taking place. The type of support offered includes:

Case Study: Affordable homes, homelessness support and housing advice

- Applying for relevant benefits
- Progress chasing backdated benefit claims
- Making affordable agreements with housing officers
- Liaising with other services to try and reduce debts

“Tenant A got into rent arrears . . . We [assessed] the tenant’s financial situation, [and] arranged a manageable repayment plan. We managed to reduce direct debits to energy and water suppliers. Due to changes in circumstances we could provide evidence and request a backdated letter to see if Tenant A could receive backdated housing benefit - this fortunately was paid to the rent account, reducing arrears further. The tenant has almost paid all rent arrears and is seeing a difference in their financial situation, however, I am still checking in on this tenant to ensure they are still managing.” Tenancy Sustainment Officer

Any of our tenants can access this service either by contacting their housing officer or making a self- referral via the [website](#).

Case Study: – Community Partnership Scheme

Through the [Community Partnership Scheme](#) we provide support and advice to the voluntary and community sector in relation to funding (sources, bid writing, and funding strategy) and project development.

During 2014-15 the Council allocated an additional £300,000 to the Community Partnership Scheme to provide capital grants in support of projects within the voluntary and community sector. The first grant panel met in March. Grants will be made in 2015-16 and reported in the annual report for that year.

Case Study: Leisure and recreational activities

We work with our partners to deliver a range of [Summer holiday activities](#) and play schemes in various village venues for eight to 16 year olds.

Families are also invited to take time to complete navigational challenges at local parks or try something different at our leisure centres in Etwall and Swadlincote.

Activities in the villages were free, as parish councils paid for the schemes so

Case Study: Leisure and recreational activities

that young people have something to enjoy during the summer holidays.

In the urban areas in and around Swadlincote, where there are fewer parish councils, the funding came from the Positive Activities Group for Young People and the Safer South Derbyshire Partnership.

Positive Activities for Young People

Children's Disability swimming lessons delivered by Active Nation were also widely promoted. These sessions were made available to parents/carers and children from the age of five months.

Junior parkrun

Working in partnership with Parkrun UK, we invested £3,000 of locality funding to initiate weekly junior parkrun sessions at Maurice Lea Memorial Park. These sessions provide a free weekly run for young people aged 4 -14 years. There is a specific emphasis on encouraging vulnerable families to take part.

A fully trained cohort of volunteers has been recruited, and we are supporting the event to develop its sustainability. With the first run attracting 112 runners, the average number runners now taking part is around 75. In total 213 different participants have taken part in this initiative.

Village Games Project

We work in partnership with South Derbyshire Sport and local villages to help their rural communities develop sport and activity programmes that are of interest to local people, such as, hockey, netball, squash and gymnastics.

Improved leisure facilities

A scheme of refurbishment works were undertaken at the Green Bank Leisure Centre. These works include modernising the dry side changing rooms, creating a new crèche, sauna and dance areas. Over the past two years, the wet side changing rooms have been renovated and disabled changing facilities introduced by the poolside.

Fostering good relations

Area Covered	Supporting information
Sign posting to other support groups, voluntary organisations and other Partners for help and assistance	<p>We use our website to raise awareness of support groups and voluntary organisations that provide advice and support to different sections of the community.</p> <p>External links are also provided to a Talking newspaper and books to enable people who are blind, have a visual impairment or find it difficult to hold a book to enjoy newspapers and reading material in an accessible format.</p>
Tenant and resident participation	<p>Tenant and resident participation encourages individuals to make a real contribution to the decisions that affect their homes and communities</p> <p>Involvement means that customers are able to provide us with a valuable source of feedback, which can lead to improved services.</p>
Social cohesion and celebrating diversity	<p>We:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> raise awareness; provide support; promote understanding; get actively involved in local and national activities, events, campaigns, festivals and commemorations through sustained publicity <p>We develop and hold arts and recreational initiatives with our partners to celebrate and promote diversity through mediums such as dance, music, story telling and sport.</p>

Case Study - Social Cohesion

Taking steps to get Elected Members and employees actively involved in staging events and activities that they can participate in:

During October, we encouraged young people to take a more active role in civic life by supporting **Local Democracy Week**. This raises awareness of

Case Study - Social Cohesion

local politics and the ever evolving decision making process. Officers and elected members visited schools, informing pupils how they can get involved.

During November, we supported and promoted the **National Trustees Week**, which celebrates the work undertaken by voluntary and community organisations, charities and individual people who support or care for some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in our community.

Promoting and supporting local communities while delivering cultural events and festivals in the district

For instance:

- [Community events](#), such as the Festival of Leisure and the Pancake Races in Swadlincote
- The Swadlincote [Christmas Lights Switch on](#) and supporting the festivities at Melbourne
- Delivering the '[Glade in the Forest](#)' programme of events at Rosliston Forestry Centre
- [Etwall Well Dressings](#)
- [South Derbyshire Day](#)
- [Healthier South Derbyshire Day](#); and
- [The National Forest Walking Festival](#)

Working in partnership to promote community cohesion

For instance:

- [Derbyshire Village Games Project](#) is a highly visible, accessible community spirited sport project across rural Derbyshire. It uses village competitions, festivals and events to encourage people to participate in sport and recreation. It also acts as a catalyst to a programme of club/coach development and volunteer recruitment. It also builds village identity and social interaction.

Case Study - The Dreamscheme

The [Dreamscheme](#) is a youth project involving eight to 18 year olds who are encouraged to take part in an activity that benefits the community. The participants are rewarded for their hard work and commitment with points,

Case Study - The Dreamscheme

which can be redeemed for group trips and activities. Previous trips have included Alton Towers, Drayton Manor, Laser Quest and Swadlincote Odeon.

The Dreamscheme, which is now in its fourth year, has seen some successful projects, from creating a community garden in Hartshorne to transforming communal gardens for residents living in Church Gresley and Etwall.

This year's projects include:

Village Hall transformation

Teaming up with Overseal Parish Council, 22 Dreamschemers and 11 adult volunteers spent a week with our Tenant Participation Officers to transform the village hall and outside area.

Young people aged between 6 and 22 years worked from 9am to 4pm to paint an IT suite and office. They also took part in a two day spray painting workshop with a graffiti artist from Urban Canvas to design and spray paint a mural on the old and neglected youth shelter.

Work was also undertaken to dig over a piece of disused land and plant shrubs and plants for the residents and visitors to enjoy.

On the last day of the project, a Family Fun Day was held for the Dreamschemers and their families, the project sponsors and community groups to showcase the project's success and say thanks to all involved.

Christmas Hamper Scheme

Working in partnership with our tenant led Community Events Group, we were able to make up 30 hampers. All the goods were donated by the community. Of the hampers, 25 were delivered to those who were housebound, disabled or living on their own, as well as families who were struggling financially. Five others have been donated to the South Derbyshire CVS to distribute as part of the organisation's Food Bank Scheme.

A 71 year old woman, a recipient in Repton, said: *'I can't believe it – nothing like this ever happens to me. It's so wonderful to see the young people showing an interest in their communities.'*

Dreamscheme Projects help a Birmingham Landlord

In October, we were asked by a housing association in Walsall to help launch their first Dreamscheme. This came about after CaldmorAccord's Customer Engagement Officer, Nazir Ahmed, visited us to find out how we organise and deliver Dreamschemes after watching a YouTube video diary of the 2013 Open Space Project in Etwall.

4. **Doing more**

We recognise a need to do more to assess the impact of our services, policies and activities on different communities to ensure that:

- They are not being discriminated against by better promoting what we and our partners are doing
- Equality assessments can be embedded in the design and delivery of our policies, strategies and activities
- Equality monitoring is undertaken where necessary and acted upon
- We can proactively identify opportunities to foster good relations and lead by example