

Corporate Equalities Annual Report 2016/17

Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on public bodies such as South Derbyshire District 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.

The Act includes the Public Sector Equality Duty, which replaced the former duties relating to race, disability and gender equality.

Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Duty was developed in order to harmonise the equality duties and to extend them across all protected characteristics. Those subject to the Equality Duty must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

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

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 Act states that meeting different needs involves taking steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities. It describes fostering good relations, tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups. It states that compliance with the duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others.

Specific Equality Duties

In addition to the general duties outlined above, '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 annually
- Adopt and publish equality objectives that must be reviewed at least every four years.
This was undertaken in April 2016.

How this report is organised

This report is designed to highlight what we have done to meet the Equality Duty during 2016/17 and to demonstrate how we have continued to play our part in helping to make society fairer by tackling discrimination and providing equality for all.

The first section (page three) demonstrates how we have met the Equality Duty. Some of the work is ongoing. The second section (page 10) looks at the progress we have made in relation to meeting our equality objectives.

1. Public Sector Equality Duty

This section of the report demonstrates how we are meeting or have met the Equality Duty in 2016/17.

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Eliminating discrimination, victimisation and harassment

Area covered	Supporting information
Governance arrangements and local 'champions'	<p>In order to take forward issues within the Council and the local community we have maintained the practice of having Elected Member champions for equalities and diversity and safeguarding.</p> <p>Corporate Equalities and Safeguarding Group - Chaired by the Director of Finance and Corporate Services, the group includes the Elected Member champions and service level representatives.</p> <p>Its aims are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ share best practice▪ set and review equality objectives▪ consider implications of new legislation and procedures▪ develop and agree equality initiatives and procedures▪ scrutinise corporate and service level performance▪ monitor and review our action plan <p>The group has an important role to play in advising the Council, in particular when key business decisions are being made. In 2016/17 one of the key aims of the Corporate Plan is to promote inclusion. The work of the CESG has underpinned this vision.</p>
Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Elected Members and employees	<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▪ staff to take part in mandatory training covering equalities▪ employees to treat others with respect and not discriminate unlawfully against any person▪ contractors to abide by our Equalities Policy as standard <p>We've developed policies and procedures to tackle discrimination, victimisation and harassment.</p>

	<p>For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> providing training in relevant policies and procedures for staff and Elected Members. Up to March 2017, 168 had attended Equalities and Fairness training standards of conduct and all relevant equalities policies and procedures are covered in induction sessions for employees recording and monitoring all reports of harassment
Comments, complaints and compliments	<p>We receive 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 2016/17, there were 2 (1) comments, 73 (74) complaints and 44 (61) compliments (2015/16 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>
Safeguarding	<p>Our 'safeguarding' responsibilities are set out in our Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy.</p> <p>During 2016/17:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three officers from Community Safety and Housing attended a countywide training course to identify and protect potential victims of human trafficking and modern day slavery. We delivered four 'Prevent' briefings to SDDC staff on how to recognise and report individuals who may be susceptible to radicalisation. We delivered specialist child sexual exploitation training to representatives from local sports clubs and groups. We delivered child sexual exploitation education as part of a parents' evening session at Granville School in Woodville. We delivered a 'know more' pilot event at Pingle School in Swadlincote to Year 9 pupils on mental health wellbeing, online safety and sexual consent.
Safer South Derbyshire Partnership	<p>The Safer South Derbyshire Partnership is a statutory partnership formed under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.</p> <p>All of the priorities within the Safer South Derbyshire Partnership Plan are delivered in accordance with the overarching principles set out in the Derbyshire Strategic Threat and Risk Assessment.</p> <p>Within the plan, one of the priorities is 'protecting those most at risk'. Details of work done as part of this can be found in the case study on the page below.</p>

Eliminating discrimination, victimisation and harassment case study

The work of The Safer South Derbyshire Partnership

Examples of how the Safer South Derbyshire Partnership demonstrated its commitment to eliminate discrimination, victimisation and harassment in 2016/17 include:

- An **International Women's Day** event was held in Swadlincote to promote services for women. It attracted 25 organisations from education, health and sport and employment.



Liberation Day

Speakers included the Fire Service Community Safety Officer, the director of sexual violence charity SV2 and a young resident and UK Motocross Champion. Year 10 pupils from local secondary schools were among the 120 attendees at the inspirational event.

- **Hate Awareness Week** in October was promoted using social media. Three drop-in hate crime surgeries were held in Newhall, Stenson and Swadlincote with police, victim support services and the Partnership all involved.
- 270 properties were secured through the **Safer Homes** security project. The scheme is open to elderly and vulnerable people, victims of burglary and domestic abuse victims. It works by installing additional door and window locks and other appropriate equipment free of charge.
- The **Derbyshire Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Victims First Project** is aimed at providing help to vulnerable victims of anti-social behaviour through a sharing of information with partners who can provide appropriate measures.

The information is collated in an ASB case management system, called E-CINS, which is populated with information about those identified as being vulnerable victims. The system, which risk assesses each victim, is used by the Police, council departments, the fire service and Children's Services (Derbyshire County Council).

The aim of this project is to:

- Ensure the victim is at the heart of our approach to tackling ASB
- Provide a multi-agency approach to the identification of vulnerable/repeat ASB victims
- Improve the service for ASB victims, especially the most vulnerable
- Improve ASB case management for victims and offenders through IT
- Holding **Liberation Day** for more than 300 South Derbyshire residents aged 60 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, finance and Benefits.

Advancing Equality of Opportunity

Area covered	Supporting information
Corporate policies, vision and values	<p>Our Corporate Plan 2016 - 2021 sets out our plans and priorities for delivering local services. One of the key outcomes centres on equality and diversity, with a key aim of promoting inclusion.</p> <p>The Sustainable Community Strategy 2009 – 2029 sets out how the South Derbyshire Partnership is committed to planning for the kind of future our communities want. The Partnership's vision is to seize opportunities to develop successful communities while respecting and enhancing the varied character and environment of our fast-growing District.</p>
Other policies, plans and strategies	<p>Other policies, plans and strategies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our new Economic Development Strategy 2016 - 2020 sets raising skills levels and working to make opportunities available to all as priorities. • A new cycling plan for South Derbyshire, to sit alongside a wider vision for Derbyshire, was introduced. WI members and members of sustainable travel organisation Sustrans were involved in its creation. Over-50s cycling sessions and Bikeability training are being run as part of its action plan.
Making services accessible to all	<p>We offer assisted refuse collection to elderly, infirm or disabled people who do not have anyone to help them put out their bins.</p> <p>Customers needing to make Benefits claims but who are unable to access the Civic Offices and who meet the criteria are provided with a home visit. Further details can be found in the case study on the page below.</p>
Making our new website comply with Equalities needs and requirements	<p>Work on a new website for SDDC has seen the specification 90% completed. It is coded to standards:</p> <p>WACG guidelines - Level AAA W3C / WAI testing methodology for HTML5</p> <p>Additional features of the site to help with accessibility are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access keys • Display options - for high contrast and large text • ARIA coding standards to make pages more accessible to people with disabilities.

Case study: Advancing equality of opportunity

Home visits

Customers entitled to Benefits who need to complete paperwork and provide documentary evidence but who are unable to get into the Civic Offices can be visited at home by Customer Services Adviser Liz Atton.

The qualifying criteria is strict, but nevertheless more than a dozen were made during 2016/17.

These were to people in a wide range of different circumstances and included an elderly couple who live in one of South Derbyshire's rural villages and a Council flat tenant in the Swadlincote area.

The elderly couple found themselves in need of help after the husband developed severe sight problems and, as a result of his wife being unable to drive, they were prevented from making an application for support to which they were entitled.

A home visit saw paperwork completed and legitimate claims made.

In the case of the Council tenant, she had lost her job after suffering a series of strokes. This put her in considerable financial difficulties. She was in arrears with rent payments and had been visited by bailiffs.

Liz visited her at home, assessed the situation and spoke to people that the woman's lack of mobility meant she could not get to see.

As a result, Benefit claims were made and the woman's debts have all been cleared. She has also joined a stroke support group and her life has been transformed as a result of Customer Services' intervention.



Customer Services Adviser Liz Atton (right) can make home visits.

Case study: Advancing equality of opportunity

New LGBT+ youth group

A Multi-Agency Team (MAT) support worker has developed a by invitation only youth group in Swadlincote for young people who identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or who are questioning their sexuality or gender.

Sessions provide somewhere for members to feel safe, have fun and meet other LGBT+ young people. These are delivered by knowledgeable and friendly staff who are there to support and provide a space and time to talk confidentially about any issues.

Fostering good relations

Area covered	Supporting information
Sign posting to support groups, voluntary organisations and other partners for help and assistance	Our website includes a page dedicated to volunteering to raise awareness of <u>support groups and voluntary organisations</u> that provide advice and support to different sections of the community. External links are also provided to a <u>talking newspaper and books</u> 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.
Tenant Participation	Tenant Participation encourages individuals to make a real contribution to the decisions that affect their homes and communities. Involvement means that customers are able to provide us with a valuable source of feedback, which in turn improves our services. More details can be found in the case study on the page below.
Social cohesion and celebrating diversity	<p>We:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • raise awareness • promote understanding • get actively involved in local and national activities, events, campaigns, festivals and commemorations <p>We develop arts and recreational initiatives with our partners to celebrate and promote diversity through mediums including dance, music and sport. Examples include the Swadlincote International Food and Drink Festival and the Holocaust Memorial Day tree dedication at Rosliston Forestry Centre.</p>
Communities Forum	<p>Together with South Derbyshire CVS, we have established the Communities Forum to address equality and diversity issues.</p> <p>Membership includes voluntary sector organisations and interest groups who represent individuals discriminated against because of their gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, age, physical or mental disability.</p> <p>The forum provides training and advice sessions for South Derbyshire's voluntary and community groups and provides them with opportunities to network.</p>
Understanding our diverse communities	We access Census and other socio-economic demographic data to inform our work. 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.

Fostering good relations case study

Tenant and resident participation

During 2016/17, Tenant Participation has completed three successful Dreamscheme projects and has worked with organisations including mental health charity Bank House, Swadlincote CVS and Derbyshire County Council.

The Dreamscheme works with young people aged 8-18, encouraging them to give back to the community through projects.

They bank points for every hour worked and claim them back during a trip out.



Young workers on the allotment project

Projects include:

- **Midway Allotment Project** - In April, the Tenant Participation team and 13 young volunteers took over a neglected 25x15m allotment plot. During the week-long project, they cleared the area of weeds and grass, turned over the soil and spread manure, ready to plant. The ultimate aim for the Council is for the volunteers to grow their own produce so that the fresh food can be donated to the Food Hub, run by South Derbyshire Community Voluntary Services, and be used as part of ongoing cookery schools. As a reward for their hard work the youngsters enjoyed an evening of go-karting.
- **Dreamscheme Week of Action** - In August, Dreamschemers took part in various days of action, including litter picking near Aldi and McDonalds, in Swadlincote, and at Eureka Park. They tidied Swadlincote town centre planters and cleared weeds from Midway Allotment. Participants were treated to a session at the Apex climbing wall, at the Green Bank Leisure Centre in Swadlincote, and a trip to the cinema for their hard work.
- The Dreamscheme project was recognised by national tenant involvement expert TPAS in its **Excellence in Youth Involvement Award** category.

Judges chose the Dreamscheme Allotment Project and Cookery School as one of only four schemes shortlisted for the central regional heat. Hartshorne tenant and trained chef Dave Bonner, who helped to set up the allotment project and ran the cookery school alongside the Council's Tenant Participation team, attended an awards ceremony in Solihull. Although narrowly missing out on top spot, the project was highly commended by the TPAS judging panel.

- **Ready, Steady, Cook Challenge** - Dave Bonner organised a cookery school at Bank House to show the Dreamschemers how to cook healthy meals with fresh produce grown on the Midway Allotment. During the session, Dreamschemers were divided into three groups and each had to prepare and cook a meal or dessert. They then served the food to clients using Bank House and chatted to them about their experiences.

2. Equality objectives

This section of the report demonstrates how we are meeting or have met our Equality Objectives in 2016/17.

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.

They are:

Objective 1: Provide accessible services which reflect the needs of South Derbyshire residents.

Objective 2: Protect and support the most vulnerable, including those affected by financial challenges.

Objective 3: Enable people to live independently.

Objective 1: Provide accessible services which reflect the needs of South Derbyshire residents	
Area covered	Supporting information
Tenant Participation	<p>We have a group of tenants involved in various aspects of housing service delivery. During 2016/17, tenants have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reviewed the Supported Housing service• Reviewed the new Fit to Let Policy• Reviewed the Tenant Participation service, including the Tenant Participation Strategy and Action Plan. This helped us set key performance indicators for 2017-18• Helped design and produce the Housing Services Annual Report.• Helped to set up the Safer Homes Plus Scheme. This scheme was set up in partnership with Swadlincote CVS to help vulnerable and elderly tenants manage their gardens and low-level DIY. So far, 30 tenants within the District have been helped across 95 visits to their homes.
Sports, leisure and recreational activities	<p>We ensure our sports and leisure provision reflects the needs of 'protected' groups and our <u>Sport and Health Strategy</u> aims to support the delivery of local and national objectives, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Young people participation and volunteering• Adult participation and volunteering• Reaching communities - addressing local needs

Objective 1: Provide accessible services which reflect the needs of South Derbyshire residents

Housing allocations and homelessness

We have a statutory responsibility to manage and review the housing waiting list.

We allocate all of our properties through 'choice-based lettings'.

Everyone applying for a place on our waiting list is put into a priority band depending on need. If potential tenants see a property they are interested in, they are allowed to 'bid' for it. The 'bidder' with the greatest housing need is allocated the property.

We work with partners to provide advice and assistance for a wide variety of issues and to prevent homelessness. We raise awareness of other organisations that can help and provide links to them from our website.

Our Homelessness Prevention Strategy sets out how we're working to reduce and prevent homelessness.

The Housing Advice and Options Team provides free information, assistance and specialist advice to landlords, tenants and owner occupiers to help prevent homelessness.

The team can:

- negotiate with friends and family on behalf of residents to enable them to stay where they are for longer while we help them to find something more suitable
- provide debt counselling services with independent financial advisors
- negotiate with residents' landlords if they have arrears
- see whether residents are eligible for mortgage advice
- support tenants to find a rented property in the private sector, in some cases we can help with a deposit
- help residents to apply for social housing
- help single people to access hostel accommodation
- provide practical help and support if a resident needs to leave home because of violence or abuse.

The number of people on the housing register at 31 March 2017 was 834 (1,061 in the previous year).

We have accommodated many applicants throughout the year in our own stock, which is brought to a 'fit to let' standard before being 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.

Case study: protect and help support the most vulnerable

Tenant food education pack

An innovative new food education programme was trialled among our housing tenants in 2016/17.

Designed to help households - many of which are on limited incomes - to save money, it teaches new cookery skills and encourages the reduction of food waste.

It has also improved levels of nutritional awareness, healthy eating and confidence among participants to cook from scratch.



Community food hub Buh-Doof served up its 1,000th meal.

The initiative was made possible thanks to the Waste less, Save more project, under which £1 million was invested by Sainsbury's in Swadlincote to help tackle food waste.

On taking part in the food education programme, more than 100 South Derbyshire residents received a welcome pack with more than £50 worth of food and storage solutions such as Tupperware, food labels and freezer bags, encouraging users to store their items correctly and make the most of leftovers.

The pack also included more than 30 easy-to-follow recipes, based around the ingredients provided, along with tips on meal planning and ways to make the most of leftovers and revitalise wilting foods.

The information also detailed local community services such as the 'Buh-doof' Community Food Hub, which operates on a 'pay what you can afford' basis and which dished up its 1,000th meal in 2016/17.

In addition to the pack itself, welcome sessions were held at Swadlincote's Sainsbury's store. Participants met and received advice from the team of Food Saver Champions, a group of workers recruited under the Waste less, Save more initiative to help people to curb food waste.

After three months of a six-month trial, research with a sample of participants showed that 65 per cent of people reported wasting less food.

More than 37 per cent said they felt more confident in cooking from scratch, while 43 per cent reported they had 'learned a lot' about food waste and nutrition.

Objective 2: Protect and support the most vulnerable, including those affected by financial challenges

Area covered	Supporting information
Food Education pack	An innovative food project was introduced among our tenants this year. The Buh-Doof food hub also continued, serving its 1,000 th meal in less than a year. The project includes providing meals to those in need. More details are in the case study above.
Dementia Action Alliance	SDDC has officially signed up as a member of the South Derbyshire Dementia Action Alliance (DAA). Seven other local organisations have signed up and two smaller organisations have become supporters. An agreed action plan for SDDC includes encouraging front line staff and Elected Members to become Dementia Friends (113 so far). More details are in the case study on page 15.
Universal Credit	Universal Credit, a result of changes to the Benefits system being introduced as part of the Welfare Reform bill, has been added to the agenda of the Corporate Equalities and Safeguarding Group agenda as a standing item.
Safer Places scheme	The Safer Places scheme, supported by the leading national charity MacIntyre, aims to keep vulnerable adults safe if they feel scared, threatened or are in trouble while out and about. Further details are in our case study below.

Case study: protect and help support the most vulnerable Safe Places scheme

Work started during the year to get South Derbyshire District Council to sign up to the Safer Places scheme. This is an initiative coordinated by Derbyshire County Council as part of the 'hate crime and keeping people safe project'.

The scheme is aimed at supporting all vulnerable adults in Derbyshire with a learning difficulty by providing a temporary place of safety if they get into difficulty when they are out in the community.

Committee approval was granted in February and a successful application for accreditation was made. In 2017/18, detailed training for all Customer Service staff and some key officers (e.g. Communities team) will be provided. Basic awareness-raising for all staff will be carried out via team briefs.



Objective 3: Enable people to live independently

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 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 Social Services.</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.</p> <p>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 (CSC) • 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 in Swadlincote. CSCs offer support and advice and act on residents' behalf to get assistance from other organisations, such as Social Services. CSCs can help with other housing issues such as repairs and maintenance and tenancy issues.</p>

Case study: Enable people to live independently

Dementia-friendly community

During the year, South Derbyshire District Council stepped up its efforts to become a Dementia Friendly Community.

An action plan for the work was approved by committee in June 2016.

The plan identifies four aims. These are:

- Make South Derbyshire District Council dementia friendly
- Develop a housing offer that supports residents with dementia and their carers
- Provide information and advice about dementia-friendly services to local residents
- Support the South Derbyshire Dementia Action Alliance

Since the plan was approved we have trained more than 40 members of staff as 'Dementia Friends' to improve life for those in the District living with the condition. The plan is to ensure that all front-line staff and managers can offer understanding and support.

The Council is part of the South Derbyshire Dementia Action Alliance, a group of organisations that came together early in 2016 to set out how Dementia Friendly Community status would be achieved.

The interactive information training increases understanding of dementia and encourages people to think about the small things they can do to make a difference to people affected.

A national programme coordinated by the Alzheimer's Society, becoming a Dementia Friendly Community means putting in place strategies that improve inclusion and quality of life for people living with dementia, as well as their families, friends and carers.

The South Derbyshire scheme was initiated by community groups including Swadlincote Town Team and South Derbyshire CVS as well as local businesses such as Timms Solicitors, and is being supported by both the District Council and Derbyshire County Council.

Dementia is a condition which affects so many lives and, with those aged 75-plus living in South Derbyshire expected to increase by 100 per cent by 2031, it is essential plans to cater for those affected are in place.



Front-line staff complete their training.