



District of **easington**.

# **Disability Equality Scheme**

## **2006 - 2009**

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درخواست پر یہ دستاویز اردو میں بھی مل سکتی ہے۔

 **0191 527 0501**

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## Foreword

This is District of Easington's first Disability Equality Scheme. The purpose of this document is to help us in identifying and eliminating the barriers that disabled people face when accessing our services and seeking employment with the Council. We are keen to embed equality and diversity throughout all its activities. This scheme does not exist in isolation; it directly links to our corporate aims and objectives, or Respect and Dignity (Equal Opportunities) Policy and our Corporate Equality Plan.

Disability is an important issue for District of Easington Council, not just because a third of our citizens have a limiting long-term illness or health condition, but also because we want to ensure that every citizen is able to participate fully and equally in public life. We all want to be able to use services and gain employment without feeling excluded. This scheme is our first step in achieving this goal.

As an excellent Council, we strive for continuous improvement. This scheme is a key tool in improving the services we deliver, not just for disabled people, but also for the community as a whole. Equality should not be seen as a minority concern, it is a benefit to everyone.

In developing relationships with disability organisations and disabled citizens, we hope to build the trust and confidence of our community and work together to achieve the objectives and actions set out in this Scheme. Although this is a three-year document, we will continue to work with disabled people and disability organisations both locally and nationally to make sure we are doing the right things in the right way.

Janet Johnson  
Cllr. Alan Napier

## **Acknowledgements**

District of Easington Council would like to thank all those individuals who gave up their time to share their views on Council services and help us improve.

We would also like to thank those voluntary, community and charitable organisations that also worked with us to develop plans to improve the ways we work.

Employees and Elected Members also contributed to the development of this scheme, we would like to thank them for their commitment to improving services for the people of Easington District.

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## Introduction

This Disability Equality Scheme forms part of District of Easington Council's commitment to revealing and tackling the causes of inequality in our community and promoting a greater awareness of equality issues.

We are aiming to make our District a prosperous, safe, attractive and healthy place to live for everyone, regardless of their gender, cultural background, age, marital status, religious or political persuasion, sexual orientation, or disability. To do this we will be an effective and financially responsible council that is open and accountable to our community.

We will:

- Provide excellent services which focus on our customers
- Strive to achieve excellence in the workplace
- Provide decent homes for all
- Ensure our community is clean and tidy
- Provide learning opportunities for all
- Provide better transport
- Make the most of opportunities for investment, economic growth and employment
- Reduce crime and the fear of crime
- Build a healthy community

As you will see from our action plan, this Disability Equality Scheme touches on all nine of our corporate objectives, but it is particularly related to quality services for our people and striving for excellence in the workplace. Promoting disability equality is not an addition to what we do, it is an integral part of our customer service and our role as an employer.

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## 2. The Disability Discrimination Act

Everyone wants to live in a community where they can participate fully and can achieve their full potential. For many disabled people, this is not the case and there is considerable work to be done to achieve this aim.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 was amended in 2005. It widened the definition of a disability and introduced the new Disability Equality Duty. This is an important new duty aimed at promoting disability equality across the public sector. It sets out what public authorities must do in order to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

### 2.1. Who Is the Disability Discrimination Act Aimed At?

If you are disabled, or have *had* a disability, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 makes it unlawful for you to be discriminated against in:

- employment
- access to goods, facilities and services
- the management, buying or renting of land or property
- education

The term 'disabled person' covers people with a wide range of disabilities and health conditions. A disability can be a physical, sensory or mental impairment. Severe disfigurement is also considered a disability. The definition of a disability, described in the Act is:

“...a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities”.

By “...substantial and have a long-term effect...” the Act means it must last or be expected to last for 12 months.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 widens the definition to include people with progressive illnesses such as HIV/AIDS, Multiple Sclerosis and Cancer from the moment they are diagnosed. It also removes the need for a mental disability to be clinically well recognised.

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## 2.2. Social Model of Disability

The Medical and Social Models of disability describe the different ways organisations react to disability issues and disabled people.

Organisations influenced by the **Medical Model** see disabled people as pitiful, tragic and needing medical treatment. This way of thinking disempowers disabled people.

Organisations that are influenced by the **Social Model** believe disabled people face discrimination daily. Their skills and attributes are overlooked and their potential is limited only by prejudice and they are excluded by society. The Social Model identifies the barriers, behaviours and attitudes that cause problems for disabled people. Disabled people are empowered by this model.

District of Easington Council works to the social model of disability. In fact, this scheme is part of that approach as it is designed to mainstream the needs and experiences of disabled people into our service development and employment practice.

### **3. The Disability Equality Duty**

In 2005, the DDA was updated to place a statutory “Disability Equality Duty on all public authorities, such as Councils, Police, Health etc. The main aim of the Disability Equality Duty is to get public authorities to think about disability equality issues from the start. This helps us identify from the beginning, where unnecessary barriers exist that prevent disabled people using our services and working for us. This is not just about physical/sensory barriers but also barriers that are created by the way services, policies or practices are designed.

This duty means that we must:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life
- Take steps to take account of disabled persons’ disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons

To help us meet these duties, we are publishing this Disability Equality Scheme. It is a practical framework that helps us plan, deliver, evaluate and report on our activities.

#### **3.1. Disability Rights Commission Pilot Project**

The Disability Rights Commission (DRC) and the Office of Public Management (OPM) selected District of Easington Council to be one of only six ‘champion’ local authorities in the country for disability equality schemes. This national project looked at the practical aspects of developing a Disability Equality Scheme and action plan and the barriers to implementing and mainstreaming them. Our experiences, along with those from the other five ‘champion’ authorities went into producing a toolkit for other local authorities called “Beyond Good Intentions” which can be downloaded from the DRC website.



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[http://www.drc-gb.org/pdf/Beyond\\_Good\\_Intentions\\_September06.pdf](http://www.drc-gb.org/pdf/Beyond_Good_Intentions_September06.pdf)

Following on from this pilot project, District of Easington is also represented on the Disability Rights Commission's Disability Equality Duty External Stakeholder group. This group meets regularly to discuss ongoing work and future direction for the Disability Equality Duty.

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## **4. Responsibility**

It is essential to the success of this scheme that everyone works to mainstream and promote disability equality.

Everyone, elected Members, employees and the community, need to be aware of this scheme, understand it and put it into practice. Disability equality can benefit everyone. It is therefore the responsibility of every individual to ensure that the actions in this scheme are completed.

### **4.1. Members**

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, members must promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, treat others with respect and not do anything which compromises or which is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, the authority.

### **4.2. Employees**

Employees of District of Easington Council are expected to act with integrity in their dealings with all service users and other employees. Any incident of inappropriate conduct, prejudicial behaviour or attitude or act of discrimination is a breach of discipline and will be dealt with accordingly. If an employee has serious concerns about the conduct of other employees or how a service is being operated, they can raise concerns through the confidential reporting code.

### **4.3. Equality and Diversity Working Group**

The Equality and Diversity Working Group is made up of elected Members and officers from both District of Easington Council and East Durham Homes. It is the group's responsibility to act as a scrutiny function to ensure equality policy is implemented correctly in employment and service delivery, including this scheme.

### **4.4. Access Working Party**

It is the responsibility of the Access Working Party to identify and eliminate barriers to physical access and access to services at the Seaside Lane Council Offices. This group consists of officers of the District Council and disabled people.

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## 5. Disability: The Easington Context

It is acknowledged that our current information regarding disabled customers and their transactions with the Council is weak. We are working to rectify this and have recently introduced a new Customer Service Centre and a Customer Relationship Management system. This system, once it is fully operational, will have the capacity to collect a wide range of information about our customers so that we can measure how many disabled customers contact us and what services they contact us for. This, combined with customer satisfaction information will give us a better picture of how well we are service our disabled population.

### **Our District**

**According to the 2001 Census, Easington has a population of 93,993 people. Easington has one of the highest proportions of disabled people with 31% of people in our District living with a limiting long-term illness compared to 18% nationally. Of this number, 27% are of working age. This figure is expected to rise as the likelihood of developing a disability increases with age. We have a growing elderly population. Currently, 41% of the District are aged 45 and over.**

### **What We Are Doing**

Because of our unique demographics, we must look at new ways to make our buildings and services more accessible to our disabled residents and for those who become disabled in the future.

We intend to conduct Equality Impact Assessments on all our services. These assessments will tell us whether there are barriers to accessing services and whether all sections of the community are receiving the same quality of service.

Our demographics also have implications for the involvement of disabled people in public life. Potentially, a third of our community are excluded from getting involved in Council and public activities.

With the help of disabled people in the District, we have written into our action plan ways of improving the accessibility of Council activities by ensuring that all those members of staff who are responsible for organising meetings, consultations and other activities receive a good practice guide to ensuring accessibility. This guide will include information on hiring venues, interpretation services and providing audio documents and other issues.

**We use Best Value Performance Indicator 156 to measure of how many of the buildings we use to deliver services from are currently fully DDA compliant.**

At the moment only 23% of our buildings meet this standard. This is a high priority of us at District of Easington and we have put together an access working party to improve this indicator. This group involves disabled users of Council buildings.

We intend to conduct a District wide survey on the accessibility of our Seaside Lane offices in Easington Village. This will give us an evidence base from which to prioritise essential works to the buildings and the grounds.

**Easington is one of the top four local authority areas for unpaid carers (12.7 per cent) and has the highest proportion of people providing unpaid care for over 50 hours a week, 31 per cent of all carers, or**

Until now the Council has not fully engaged with this section of our community. We intend to change this by engaging with carers' groups. We want to develop and promote carer friendly services. However, to be able to do this we must first learn

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**four per cent of the total population of the District.**

what the issues and priorities are.

**The provision of accessible transport and the design and location of public buildings is a big issue in the District, as 37% of households in Easington do not own their own transport.**

We already have plans to redesign the Council offices on Seaside lane so that they are accessible from the bus stop just outside.

We also intend to work with transport providers to improve the coverage of public transport routes across the District and to improve the accessibility of the vehicles.

**We conduct regular customer satisfaction surveys to help us identify areas for improvement**

We currently do not monitor customer satisfaction by disability or any other equality strand. We intend to change this with immediate effect so that we can begin to develop an evidence base.

## **Our Employees**

**District of Easington Council currently has 584 employees. Of this number, only 22 currently declare themselves as disabled. This is just under 4% of staff. We collect this information as Best Value Performance Indicator 16a.**

## **What We Are Doing**

We believe that this figure is not representative of the actual number of employees who have disabilities. There are many reasons why employees might not wish to declare themselves as disabled including not realising that a particular impairment or health condition would be considered a disability, or fear of being stigmatised. We need to work to inform employees what the definition of disability includes and to increase their confidence in declaring themselves as disabled. We can only do this by promoting disability friendly employment policies and living up to our promises. We also want to attract more disabled people to come and work for us. Even though we are a “Positive About Disability” employer, we get very few applications for jobs from disabled people. As yet, we do not understand why this is. We need to work with disability organisations to identify what the barriers are for disabled people to apply for our jobs. Once we understand what the issues are, we can work to change our policies and procedures. We also know that we need to promote the wide range of jobs that are available at the Council and the Public Sector as a whole.

**Our Best Value  
Performance Indicator 11c  
tells us what percentage of  
our top 5% of earners  
declare that they have a  
disability.**

Through our partnership event “Disability: Have Your Say” it was identified that the Public Sector organisations in County Durham need to work together on an employment event for disabled people. We have added this to our action plan.

Currently, just fewer than 5% of our top 5% of earners declare themselves as disabled.

However, just as with the figures for employees as a whole, there may be under-reporting. Again, we can only change this by promoting disability positive policies and challenging attitudes.

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## **6. Involvement of Disabled People**

In order to develop this Disability Equality Scheme, District of Easington Council has engaged with disabled people in a number of ways. We have engaged with members of the public, both on a County level and locally, we have also involved disabled employees and Elected Members. Below is an overview of the ways in which disabled people were involved in this Scheme and some of the outcomes from these events.

### **6.1. Improving Services for Disabled People – Easington Stakeholder Group**

District of Easington Council established a disability stakeholder group in April 2006. This 'Improving Services for Disabled People' group was initially set up to gather information on how we can improve the services we deliver for disabled people. We invited disability organisations and disabled people to come along to our meetings. However, where this was impractical, the Equality and Diversity Officer would attend meetings already established or meet with individuals separately. Membership of the group is flexible and as well as including representatives of disability organisations in the District, independent disabled people, key officers from District of Easington Council and East Durham Homes also attend.

Some examples of issues that have been raised at this group include:

- Communication support is a particular barrier to disabled people getting involved in Civic activities.
- The availability of documents in alternative formats is not well advertised (or advertised in very small print).
- Council staff need to understand disability issues in order to deal with customers sensitively
- Developing leisure activities for visually impaired people in partnership with Leisure Connections.

All of these issues and more have been included in our action plan. District of Easington Council will work to ensure that the group continues beyond the publication of this Scheme and will act as an external scrutiny to ensure that the actions we set ourselves are completed.



## **6.2. Disability: Have Your Say – Countywide Partnership Event 21<sup>st</sup> July 2006**

A Durham public sector Partnership was established in March 2006 to progress work on our Disability Equality Schemes. The seven Durham District Councils, Durham County Council, Durham Constabulary, Durham Police Authority, Durham University and Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service all came together to organise a County-wide consultation event. The initial idea was to come together to hold a consultation event, which would serve as a basis for more local involvement of disabled people.

Each organisation sent invitations to disability organisations and disabled people in their areas. This ensured there was a good cross section of people from across the County.

Before advertising the event, we held a pilot event with the Durham Disability Partnership to test out the format and to get feedback from disabled people on the questions being asked, the format of the day and the venue.

The event was held on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> July at County Hall, Durham City. 150 people registered an interest in the event and over 70 people attended on the day.

After an initial introduction by speakers from the Disability Rights Commission, Sedgefield Access group and Blind Life in Durham, attendees were split into workshops. We asked 3 main questions:

### **2. Is there anything you think the public sector do well that you would not want to see changed?**

Participants said that all the local district authorities were good for assistance with bins and they do a good job with waste collection services. They also said that bags are supplied for dog fouling and that Supported Housing for learning disabilities was a good service.

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**3. Is there anything the public sector could do better or differently to ensure that the needs of disabled people are met?**

Some of the issues disabled people raised were that Local Authority staff, particularly planners, need disability awareness training and that planning departments need to consult up-front when planning new buildings or refurbishments.

**4. How can we increase opportunities for disabled people to become actively involved in the way public services are delivered and in civic and community life?**

Examples of ways disabled people said we would increase involvement in civic and community life include consulting disability groups when planning public buildings; hold more events like the Disability: Have Your Say event and; let people know what communication support is available at meetings and events. Providing information in the right format will lead to a greater acceptance of disabled people.

The information from this day was broken down into sectors and each public authority took away information to discuss with their own disability groups. We took ours to the “Improving Services for Disabled People” group and found that most of the issues raised were agreed. They were then written into our action plan.

We were also able to invite those people from the District who attended the event to the “Improving Services for Disabled People” group, thereby, getting them involved in more local events.

**6.3. Staff Focus on Disability – Employee Focus Group**

On 1<sup>st</sup> June 2006, we held a staff focus group on disability issues. Five employees attended from a wide range of service areas. They gave us their feedback regarding disability equality and how we can encourage more disabled people to work for us. Some of the suggestions made at this focus group included:

- Improving induction for new starters
- Holding a consultation event with disabled people to investigate ways in which we can make working for

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District of Easington more attractive to disabled people and encourage more applications.

- The group also raised the issue of staff training in disability issues, particularly for managers who either have or will have responsibility for disabled staff.

The suggestions made at this event linked seamlessly with the issues raised at both the Disability: Have Your Say event and the Improving Services for Disabled People group.

#### **6.4. Elected Member Focus on Disability**

We held an Elected Member focus group on disability issues on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2006. This group looked at ways of improving services for disabled people, as well as how we can encourage more people to get involved in civic life.

Elected members said they would like to see more people, particularly disabled people, at Council meetings. They also said that they would like to see an employment mentoring/shadowing scheme set up to give those disabled people who are thinking of returning to work an opportunity to increase their confidence and skills.

They also said that two-way communication was vital. Disabled people need to know what the Council is doing to improve services and increase accessibility. However, it is also important that the Council and the community as a whole understand what good work disability organisations are doing across the District.

## **7. Impact Assessments**

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment is to improve the quality of District of Easington Council's services by making sure they do not discriminate and that, where possible, they promote equality. We must also consider where we can build promoting positive attitudes towards disability into our policies and practices.

There are a number of benefits to conducting Impact Assessments, for example:

- We can better understand the needs, experiences and circumstances of those people who will be affected by our policies
- We can identify where policies and practices can cause inequalities and change this.
- We can think about other ways in which we can achieve the same aims so that it will not lead to inequalities
- Impact Assessments increase transparency in the things that we do and improve public confidence in the fairness of our policies
- We can develop better policies, procedures and services
- We are more accountable to the people that we serve

We are currently drawing up a programme of Impact Assessments. We will assess all our services over the next two years. To increase accountability, this has been included in our action plan.

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## **8. Publication of The Scheme and Annual Reporting**

We will publish this Disability Equality Scheme as a document in its own right rather than as part of an integrated Scheme. However, the action plan will be included as part of our Corporate Equality Plan along with our Race Equality Scheme Action plan and our actions to achieve Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government.

We will ensure that this document is made as accessible as possible and available in a range of formats and languages. We will place this scheme on our Internet site. We have the Browsealoud program available on our website which can read documents for those people who are visually impaired or have reading difficulties.

We will also ensure that disability organisations across the District receive copies of the Scheme and will work with them to ensure they get it in the format that they need. We will also send a copy to all those individuals who have helped us develop this Scheme, in their chosen format.

Copies will be made available in Council and East Durham Homes buildings across the District.

### **8.1. Annual Reporting**

An annual report will be produced in every December, which will explain what actions have been completed, which are still ongoing and any additions changes made to the action plan as a result of better information and monitoring systems.

These reports will also be made available on the Intranet and to local disability organisations. It will also be made available to the members of the “Improving Services for Disabled People” group and any other person who requests a copy. They will be made available in alternative formats and languages.

## 9. Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan

<b>Quality services for our people</b>				
<b><i>Objective</i></b>	<b><i>Action</i></b>	<b><i>Target Date</i></b>	<b><i>Responsible Officer</i></b>	<b><i>Performance Measures</i></b>
Encourage disabled people to become involved in Civic life (such as scrutiny and other Council activities) by ensuring their communication and access needs are met.	Obtain a list of disability organisations and disabled people and invite/advise them of the meetings with the Council hold and access arrangements at venues	January 2007	Scrutiny Support Officer	List obtained. Invitations sent out.
	Send invitations to scrutiny meetings to disability organisations and disabled people.	January 2007	Scrutiny Support Officer	Invitations sent and response monitored.
	Produce a guide to meeting the communication needs of disabled people for staff responsible for organising meetings and events. Guidance to include how to book communications support and producing documents and minutes in	April 2007	Equality and Diversity Officer	Guidance produced and distributed to all managers and staff responsible for organising meetings and events.  Published onto the intranet.

	<p>accessible formats.</p> <p>Research ways of contracting BSL / lipspeaking / palantype / notetaking facilities for Council meetings and events.</p> <p>Support EDPIP to develop their communication training programme for members and volunteers</p> <p>Introduce a procedure whereby premises used for Area Forums and Area Management Boards will be inspected annually and at least four weeks prior to meetings to ensure access arrangements are adequate.</p> <p>For polling stations used in elections introduce a policy</p>	<p>April 2007</p> <p>April 2007</p> <p>April 2007 (ongoing)</p> <p>May 2007 (ongoing)</p>	<p>Equality and Diversity Officer</p> <p>Social Inclusion Team</p> <p>Democratic Services Officers</p> <p>Electoral Officer</p>	<p>Study completed and presented to Management Team for decision.</p> <p>Funding secured to appoint staff to develop training programme. Programme compiled and implemented.</p> <p>Procedure introduced and rolling programme of inspections produced.</p> <p>Policy introduced and a rolling programme of</p>
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	<p>elections, introduce a policy whereby polling stations will be reviewed for accessibility during each year that District, County, European and Parliamentary elections are scheduled.</p> <p>Work in partnership with East Durham Community Development Trust to develop a District-wide Disability Forum with themed sub groups consisting of Voluntary and Community Groups.</p>	<p>June 2007</p> <p>April 2008</p>	<p>Social Inclusion Team</p> <p>Social Inclusion Team</p>	<p>rolling programme of inspections produced.</p> <p>Steering group formed.</p> <p>Disabled Forum Launched.</p>
<p>Ensure that all Council Services are accessible to disabled people.</p>	<p>Work with other members of the Local Strategic Partnership and other partners to create a DVD to signpost residents to key services.</p> <p>Conduct an access survey to establish disabled</p>	<p>July 2007</p> <p>July 2007</p>	<p>Communications and Marketing Manager</p> <p>Equality and Diversity Officer /</p>	<p>DVD complete and sent to every household.</p> <p>Survey conducted and results analysed.</p>



	<p>people's access needs and opinions on the Civic Premises.</p> <p>Make the Council's website AAA compliant.</p>	<p>December 2007</p>	<p>Assistant Public Buildings Officer</p> <p>Website Manager</p>	<p>Website AAA accredited.</p>
<p>Inform residents and promote the use of alternative formats such as Braille, audio, large print etc.</p>	<p>For all customers reporting to Building 10, include in correspondence that staff will meet customers with access problems on the ground floor.</p>	<p>January 2007</p>	<p>Scrutiny Support Officer</p>	<p>Statement included in all correspondence.</p>
	<p>Design and produce posters and leaflets that promote the use of alternative formats and advise on how to obtain them.</p>	<p>July 2007</p>	<p>Equality and Diversity Officer / Graphics and Technical</p>	<p>Posters and leaflets produced and displayed in all reception areas.</p>
	<p>Ensure posters and leaflets are made available in all reception areas.</p>	<p>August 2007</p>	<p>Equality and Diversity Officer</p>	<p>Posters and leaflets visible in all reception areas.</p>
	<p>Contact, support and</p>	<p>June 2007</p>	<p>Social Inclusion</p>	<p>Residents contacted and</p>

	involve residents with sensory impairment in the colour and design of the material.		Team	given support.
Large print copies of all standard forms to be made available at Council Offices.	Each department to identify their most popular forms.	April 2007	All departments	Forms forwarded to the Equality and Diversity Officer
	Forms to be produced in large print	July 2007	Equality and Diversity Officer	Forms produced in large print and forwarded back to departments to store.
Improving monitoring systems	Include monitoring categories on the formal complaints form.	April 2007	Head of Customer Services	Monitoring categories included on the formal complaints form and all staff notified of the change.
	Democratic Services and Administration Unit to include in all customer satisfaction surveys an additional equality monitoring section to gather information including	April 2007	Scrutiny Support Officer	Monitoring form included on satisfaction surveys.

	<p>gender, ethnicity and disability.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the Disability Forum to submit information to inform the adopted monitoring system.</p> <p>Devise a monitoring system to collect information about our customers and link to the Customer Relationship Management system.</p> <p>Devise a reporting system for results of monitoring activity</p>	<p>September 2007</p> <p>April 2008</p> <p>April 2008</p>	<p>Social Inclusion Team</p> <p>Head of Customer Services</p> <p>Head of Customer Services</p>	<p>Monitoring details submitted.</p> <p>Monitoring system developed and linked to the Customer Relationship Management system</p> <p>Results of monitoring activity reported on a regular basis.</p>
<p>Develop a system of Equality Impact Assessments that include disability equality.</p>	<p>Impact Assessment to be conducted on all existing functions of the Council.</p> <p>Actions as a result of Impact Assessments to be written into service plan.</p>	<p>March 2008</p> <p>December 2008</p>	<p>All Departments</p> <p>All Departments</p>	<p>All Impact Assessments conducted.</p> <p>Actions written into service plans (evidence: service-planning documentation.</p>

<b>Striving for excellence in the workplace</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>
Develop a comprehensive training programme for staff and members on Disability issues.	Conduct a training needs assessment regarding disability issues	May 2008	Training and Development Manager	Training needs assessment carried out and recommendations made on which groups of staff require what training.
	Devise a rolling programme of training for staff and members including the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Disability Awareness</li> <li>• HIV issues</li> <li>• Mental Health issues</li> <li>• Deaf and Visual Awareness</li> <li>• Communicating with Deaf and hearing impaired people.</li> </ul>	July 2008	Training and Development Manager	Rolling programme devised and promoted throughout the organisation.
	Evaluate all training delivered	July 2008 and	Training & Development	Evaluation completed and recommendations for

	delivered.	ongoing	Manager	improvement made.
Improve the equality content of the new starter induction course	Include as part of the 2007 Elected Member Induction programme a specific training session for Members dealing with equality and diversity issues.	May 2007	Scrutiny Support Officer / Equality and Diversity Officer	Equality and diversity module included in May 2007 Member induction session.
	Develop an equality training module for the new starter induction course.	July 2008	Training & Development Manager / Equality & Diversity Officer	Equality training module developed and delivered.
	Evaluate all induction courses for its effectiveness, including the equality module and report on a regular basis.	November 2009	Training & Development Manager	Evaluations completed and report written.
Encourage the development of a group for disabled employees.	Research best practice in engaging with disabled employees.	April 2009	Equality & Diversity Officer / Personnel	Research conducted and recommendations made for action.

Increase the number of employees declaring themselves as disabled.	Conduct a monitoring survey to reassess numbers of employees declaring themselves as disabled.	April 2007	Personnel	Monitoring survey complete and figures available.
	Research best practice in increasing the confidence of disabled employees to declare themselves as disabled.	April 2009	Personnel / Equality & Diversity Officer	Research completed and recommendations made for action
	Implement recommendations of this research and monitor for changes in numbers of employees declaring themselves as disabled.	April 2009	Personnel	Recommendations implemented and monitored
	Evaluate the effectiveness of actions taken.	May 2009	Equality & Diversity Officer	Evaluation carried out and recommendations made for action.
Make working practices more 'disabled friendly'.	Investigate and install the most effective and economic connectivity methods between staff	December 2007	Head of E-Government and Information Services	Most effective and economic connectivity identified, installed and available to members of

	working from home and work			staff working from home.
<b>A sustainable job for everyone</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>
Encourage disabled people to work for District of Easington Council	Hold and employment focus group with disabled people to review the Council's advertisement, recruitment and employment practices.	August 2007	Personnel / Equality & Diversity Officer	Employment focus group held and recommendations written into an action plan for implementation.
	Hold an employment event for disabled people in conjunction with other local authorities and public sector organisations in the area.	July 2007	Equality & Diversity Officer	Employment event held.
	Evaluate effectiveness of the employment event and devise plans for future positive action activity.	August 2007	Equality & Diversity Officer	Event evaluated and a plan devised for future positive action work.
	Continue to offer work based mentoring / shadowing schemes in the Council for disabled people	Ongoing	Personnel	Continue to work with disability organisations such as Remploy and Finkle Training.

	<p>in partnership with disability organisations.</p> <p>Support EDPIP in securing funding to develop the Volunteer Training project, which will deploy disabled volunteers into work settings.</p>	<p>April 2008</p>	<p>Senior Social Inclusion Officer</p>	<p>Funding secured, project implemented. Volunteers trained and placed in work settings.</p>
<b>Decent homes for all</b>				
<b><i>Objective</i></b>	<b><i>Action</i></b>	<b><i>Target Date</i></b>	<b><i>Responsible Officer</i></b>	<b><i>Performance Measures</i></b>
<p>Involve disabled people in the design and development of excellent housing in the District.</p>	<p>Involve disabled people in the review of policy and service delivery for the aids and adaptations service and the disabled facilities grant.</p>	<p>September 2007</p>	<p>Housing Renewal Manager</p>	<p>Appropriate involvement and consultation carried out.</p> <p>Identifiable changes to policy or service delivery as a result of consultation and involvement of disabled people.</p>



	Involve disabled people in the review of the Council's allocations policy as a result of the Choice Based Letting scheme.	January 2008	Housing Policy & Strategy Manager	Appropriate involvement and consultation carried out.  Identifiable changes to policy or service delivery as a result of consultation and involvement of disabled people.
Develop excellent housing services for older disabled people.	Support planning and ongoing monitoring of needs for all residents in receipt of Care Services.	April 2007	Care Services Manager	100 per cent of support plans in place.  Monitoring and review process in place.
	DDA accessibility works carried out to all Aged Persons Units and sheltered accommodation.	March 2008	Asset & Property Manager	65 per cent of properties comply with BVPI 156
	Review provision of older persons accommodation on the 5 identified priority areas with an aim to selecting a	March 2007	Housing Policy & Strategy Manager	Review completed and development partner in place.

	development partner to provide new/improved accommodation where a need has been identified.			
<b>Clean, tidy communities</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>
Ensure that Easington District is a clean and accessible place to live.	Ensure that wheelie bins and Kerb-it boxes are returned to the place they were collected from when emptied to ensure footpaths are not obstructed.	April 2007	Environmental Health & Licensing Manager	Review performance against the Kerb-it contractual requirements and invoke penalties as appropriate.
	Improve enforcement of dog fouling.	January 2008	Operations Co-ordinator/ Cleaving Supervisor	Selected areas will be monitored on a weekly basis with the findings recorded and action taken where necessary to ensure that the crews return bins to where they were collected from.
			Environmental Health & Licensing Manager	Implement a Dog Control Order for the District of Easington

Encourage involvement of disabled people in the design and refurbishment of all Council buildings.	Develop an Access Strategy, which includes a statement of involvement of disabled people in the design and development of Council Buildings.	February 2007	Asset & Property Manager	Access strategy developed with a clear statement of involvement of disabled people.
	Ensure all draft schemes for design or refurbishment of Council buildings are taken to the "Improving Services for Disabled People" group for comment at the planning stage.	August 2007 (Ongoing for future works)	Asset & Property Manager	Draft schemes are tabled at meetings and presented to the group at the planning stage.
<b>Better transport</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>
Support community transport schemes.	Review how transport is used for Council events and activities and develop plans to better use community transport organisations so that they can continue to stay open.	February 2008	Equality & Diversity Officer	Plans developed. Use of community transport schemes increased.
Improve transport links across the	Work with partners through the Local Strategic	November 2008	Local Strategic Partnership	More public transport routes available.

District	Partnership to improve transport in the District.			
<b>Making the district safe</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>
Send a clear message to the community that District of Easington Council and its partners do not tolerate hate crime.	Review the current Hate Crime policy, in conjunction with East Durham Homes and other partner organisations to extend the its scope to cover Disability, Mental Health issues and HIV/AIDS as well as Sexual Orientation, Religion and belief, age and gender.	March 2007	Caroline Gardner	Hate Crime Policy rewritten to include disability, Mental Health and HIV/AIDS as well as Sexual Orientation, Religion and belief and gender.  All staff are made aware of the new policy.  New policy is made available on the Internet site.
	Produce easy-read summary version of the policy	March 2007	Caroline Gardner	Easy-read summary produced and made available in all Council buildings and on the Internet site.
Improve reporting of	Encourage reporting of	December	Caroline Gardner	Awareness Campaigns

disability hate crime and access to 3 <sup>rd</sup> party referral schemes	Disability Hate Crime by awareness raising campaigns and signposting of support services through the Community Safety Partnership	2007		undertaken. Disability Hate Crimes recorded
<b>Building a healthy community</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>
Develop leisure services for people with visual impairment	Leisure Connections to contact visually impaired community to help develop services for the visually impaired.	November 2008	Leisure Connections	Leisure activities available that are specifically designed for people with visual impairment.
	Support EDPIP secure funding to develop their Sportability project.	April 2007	Senior Social Inclusion Officer	Funding secured and project implemented.
<b>Learning opportunities for all</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Performance Measures</b>
Promoting awareness and positive attitudes	Develop a calendar of internal promotional activities to be held in	November 2007	Equality and Diversity Officer	Calendar published and events held on a regular basis.

through promotional events such as National Disability Awareness Week, World AIDS day etc.	conjunction with national disability campaigns such as World AIDS day etc.	July 2008	Equality and Diversity Officer	Diversity calendar to be published on our website
	Incorporate this into a wider 'Diversity Calendar' to promote diversity internally and externally through our website	April 2008	Social Inclusion Team	Publicity distributed.
Work in partnership with the Disabled Forum to publicise events	Attend the Disabled Forum meetings and update members on progress of Disability Equality.	April 2008	Social Inclusion Team	Meetings attended.
Establish a mechanism for communicating what the Council is doing regarding Disability Equality to the community				