

**Public Sector Equality Duty
Bolsover District Council Single Equality Scheme 2019-2023
Review 2021**

Some examples of how we are meeting our equality duty:

Eliminating discrimination, victimisation and harassment

Hate crime reporting

- Online reporting form for victims available via the Council's self-service portal at selfservice.bolsover.gov.uk
- We continue to provide support and assistance to any victims of hate crime incidents which include referrals to partner agencies. Two non-crime incidents were reported during 2021 and victims were supported.

Safeguarding

- Corporate safeguarding training is provided during induction to all new starters and refresher training is also provided to elected members. The last session took place on 24/06/21 and the next is on 21/09/21.
- Contact Centre staff have received Safeguarding training and are able to recognise and report safeguarding concerns.

Training/Guidance

- A refresher equalities training programme was delivered to existing 'office based' staff and alongside these sessions, smaller sessions were delivered to our Contact Centre staff.
- Equalities training was delivered to newly recruited staff as part of their induction.
- Training for accessibility regulations awareness was delivered to a number of staff needing to publish documents on the Council's website; it's important these documents are compatible with screen readers

Corporate Complaints

- One complaint received during 2020/21 alleging discrimination when using a council service. This was investigated under the Council's complaints policy and was not upheld.
- Under the complaints policy reasonable adjustments were made to enable three individuals to exercise their right to make a complaint to the Council.

Resident perceptions - Citizens Panel October 2020

- 194 respondents (94%) said they had not experienced discrimination in using Council services which is almost identical to the findings in 2018 where 93% stated the same, whereas 11 people said they had experienced discrimination which is substantially less than the 30 residents who said they had in 2018.
- Not including dealing with the Council, 89% stated that over the past year they had not experienced discrimination in the District while 95% said they had not in 2018 reflecting a 6% increase. Age and disability were the two main areas identified.
- 68% agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together which is a 5% increase from 63% in 2018.

Advancing equality of opportunity

Health & wellbeing

- The Physical Activity and Sports Development Team deliver various activities in the community which include Social Activity Hubs, Premier League Kicks (a weekly community football session for the young people of New Bolsover featuring informal games accompanied by music), as well as a **new** '5 o' clock Club' which runs three evenings a week at Go!Active for children from toddlers to seniors featuring various sports and physical activity. The Physical Activity and Sports Development also organised and supported the Palterton Flower Pot Festival encouraging local residents to get involved and raise funds for St Luke's Mission.
- Physical activities delivered at 21 different venues across the District, 108 different types of sessions with 1,691 attendances at these sessions in total.
- Chair-based exercise classes catering to those with mobility challenges.
- Two Holiday Activity Fund Programmes at Doe Lea, Creswell and New Bolsover – these targeted sessions were for children who have free school meals; sessions involved physical activity and included a nutritious lunch.
- The Council continues to partner with Active Derbyshire's PALS programme which aims to change behaviours and find solutions to help people face their daily challenges, allowing them to concentrate more on their health and wellbeing. This programme helps to assess needs, unpick situations and provide consistent support in an effort to improve lifestyles of customers helping them to become physically active.

Building Resilience

- Staff continue to deliver Tuesday 'Drop In' sessions for Polish/ EU residents at our Shirebrook Contact Centre. Since April 2021 we have seen 391 customers during these sessions.
- We have created a Community Advisor role responsible for attending events throughout the District, sharing relevant information about how to access services while also promoting digital awareness and our online services available. The Community Advisor has attended the following events to date since the lifting of Covid restrictions: Armed Forces Day (30/07/21), Anti-Social Behaviour Awareness at The Arc, Clowne (21/07/21) and Sports Direct (31//08/21) to continue sessions previously delivered through the Building Resilience Programme.

Access and Support

- Three more properties in Whitwell have been built as part of the £36million Bolsover Homes project to build four hundred Council houses over the next four years to meet local communities housing needs. The houses have been built to meet the Lifetime Homes Standard which ensure they can be adapted easily to fit the needs of those living there.
- Bolsover Partnership's flagship project, Raising Aspirations (RA) is a responsive approach to children and young people (in Years 6 to 11 identified as not being able to reach their potential for a variety of factors) and our project provides bespoke support to address the individual needs of each student. In total, 763 beneficiaries were supported during 2021.
- The Bolsover Partnership supported financial inclusion locally by using COVID-19 response monies allocated by Public Health. The project, run by Release Community Money Advice Centre, helped provide free, confidential and non-judgemental debt advice to those in need. The project ran until 30th June 2021 and supported 84 clients with debts over £140,000.
- The Council continues to record and contact customers registering for the support developed during the first lockdown. We have also been offering information on grants for financial assistance during the lockdown/furlough period and 'self-service' forms remain available on the Council's website.
- A local foodbank, Storehouse Community Shop opened in the District (Shirebrook) in March 2021 specifically for those families experiencing hardship. With thanks to grants from Bolsover Partnership and Bolsover District Council, we have been able to support those in need in the community. Membership is available to low income families and help will still be available to those requiring ad hoc support in urgent cases. Storehouse Community Shop now has 192 members and 58 partners.

- Bolsover District Council have formed a new Community Rail Partnership with East Midlands Rail called the 'Robin Hood Line' which runs from Worksop to Nottingham and has a total of thirteen stations (four of which fall within Bolsover District including Whitwell, Creswell, Langwith and Shirebrook). The benefits of this Community Rail Partnership includes engagement with a diverse range of local communities creating improved station facilities, enhanced support for rail-users and ensuring inclusivity for all passengers.
- The Council was awarded the sum of £188,833 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government which was used to employ four (full time equivalent) Community Champion Link Workers to disseminate Covid-related information. Additional support was offered to those in the communities to access the help they needed, be it mental health support or financial hardship assistance. The funds made a meaningful difference to those identified as being at most risk, e.g. people with disabilities and those in migrant communities.
- The Council ensures that information is available in other formats, if required and also ensures that key documents, such as the compliments, comments and complaints booklet and customer service standards leaflet are displayed in prominent positions in reception areas. We also offer to help if residents are having difficulty in filling in a form and always provide useful information that will help resolve problems or assist in filling in forms.
- Used [Language is Everything](#) service four times to support service delivery (3 interpretations and 1 translation into a number of languages).

Fostering Good Relations

[Promoting understanding](#)

- **Youth engagement through the pandemic:** More than 3,000 young people across Bolsover District received advice and help from our Extreme Outreach service; a new and innovative service developed by the Extreme Wheels team in response to Covid-19 and services being closed to young people overnight. Extreme Outreach was funded by the Community Safety Partnership, Building Resilience and a number of Parish Councils, with the teams visiting Bolsover, Barlborough, Shirebrook, Tibshelf and South Normanton.
- **A Rural Hardship Fund:** Our Council helped promote accessibility to the Rural Action Derbyshire Fund which provided one-off small grants of up to £250 to people in rural areas who suffered hardship during the Covid-19 pandemic. The grants were provided to improve the health and well-being of the rural community in cases where circumstances led to a significant deterioration in an individual's health and well-being. The fund was

particularly welcomed by residents living and working in isolated rural locations with little support.

- We continue to actively encourage **Armed Forces** veterans and serving personnel to register on the Council's database to support this group more effectively. We have also been actively registering veterans for our Council Newsletter so they receive council information about local events and important information via email.

Equality Objectives

How we are meeting our specific objectives:

Objective 1: Everyone can access our services, facilities and information

- [Hidden disabilities](#) – the Council has joined the scheme and has actively promoted it to staff and the public to raise awareness of the **Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Lanyard** which helps our residents by alerting staff in a discreet manner that they may require additional assistance or time by wearing the lanyard. Hidden disabilities are those which cannot be seen or easily recognised; from a sensory disability such as deafness to a mental health disorder such as anxiety or autism.
- We have undertaken a number of Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) for new and reviewed policies, services, consultations and functions and have published these where required on the Bolsover District Council website.
- Deaf residents whose first or preferred language is BSL (British Sign Language) can now use the InterpretersLive! Video Interpreting Service to contact the Council. Residents can access this service on their computer, tablet or phone. Information is available on the [Council's](#) and [InterpretersLive!](#) website.
- Customers who do not have English as a first language – who need help with interpretation and translation services – are assisted by our staff who use 'Language is Everything' to support customer needs.
- We make reasonable adjustments to our service and provide appropriate support to those customers who require it, including providing a response to customers in the format they require, for instance, large print, audio recordings, coloured paper. Seven requests for alternative formats have been received through the self-service [portal](#).

Objective 2: Decision-making and services take into account the needs of residents and communities

- Our Housing Department has relaunched its Tenants Newsletter for council tenants and leaseholders – [Bolsover Homes](#). This newsletter is

packed with information to keep our tenants well informed, seeks feedback and encourages tenants to get involved.

- Our authority publishes consultations and satisfaction surveys/reports on the Council's website and on [Ask Derbyshire](#) where opinions are sought and results are shared.

Objective 3: Discrimination, harassment and hate crime is not tolerated

- Please refer to the aforementioned 'eliminating discrimination, victimisation and harassment' section.

Objective 4: Our workforce, and workforce policies, support equality

- We are in the process of consulting on 'accessibility of meetings' in Council Chambers; this impacts Elected Members, visitors and staff. Findings will be published in the next Review.
- The Council has introduced an Agile Working policy which offers employees the option to work more flexibly to suit service/ employee needs. Options include working from home, hybrid working or compressed working hours.