

CABINET - 3 DECEMBER 2008

CORPORATE EQUALITY SCHEME 2008 – 2011

PORTFOLIO :
EMPLOYMENT, HEALTH &
WELLBEING/ALL

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the Council's revised Corporate Equality Scheme (CES) for the period 2008 to 2011.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Council adopted the Equality Standard (ES) in 2003/04. A requirement of the ES is for the Council to adopt a CES to show how the Council's commitment to its equality policy will be implemented.
- 2.2 It also provides the opportunity to demonstrate how the Council links its statutory equality schemes and duties in respect of race, disability and gender together with other equalities work.
- 2.3 The Council's initial CES was for the period 2004 to 2007 and later extended to 2008.

3. CORPORATE EQUALITY SCHEME 2008 - 2011

- # 3.1 The present scheme has been revised and updated. A copy is attached. It reflects the recent changes to legislation and the changes to the Equality Standard from 1 April 2009.
- 3.2 It has also been written as far as is possible to anticipate the changes that will arise if the Equalities Bill 2008 becomes law. One of the features of the Bill is a single equality scheme. This would replace the 3 statutory schemes and the CES with a single scheme. It is hoped the CES before you today would be the core of such a single scheme.
- 3.3 The scheme however retains the Council's approach to Equality. It understands that a one size fits all approach can lead to discrimination and social isolation. The CES explains that equality is about knowing our communities and their needs and responding appropriately to them: Local solutions for local people. It is not about adopting practices and policies just because other authorities have done so.
- 3.4 As well as showing the Council's commitment to Equalities and Diversity the CES shows how it will continue the work of previous years through the next 3 years. These activities aim to improve the accessibility of services and employment; raise community and partner awareness, and develop community involvement further.

4. CONSULTATION ON THE CES 2008/2011

- 4.1 The draft CES was published in August 2008 and the consultation period ended on 31 October 2008. It was put on the Council's web site with an article on the home page seeking comments and views from the public. It was also widely distributed to members, the Equality Network, the Equality Advisory Group, Diversity Network partners, employees, our employee representative for equalities, Hampshire Equality Network, and other local voluntary and community groups within the district.
- 4.2 Only a few comments were received however they were all supportive of the content of the policy document. A number of them congratulated the Council for tackling such a comprehensive topic. One comment asked that once the full scheme had been approved for a short leaflet to be produced highlighting the main aspects of the scheme for circulation within the district. It is hoped this will be produced by the end of January 2009.

5. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CES

- 5.1 The actions will be undertaken in a range of ways. Some will be incorporated into services' day to day service provision while some will be carried out corporate on behalf of the whole Council. Others will be undertaken in partnership with others such as voluntary and community groups as well as local agencies.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL, and CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS.

- 6.1 There are no direct implications arising from approving the CES. However it is hoped that a greater awareness of equality and diversity issues will have a positive effect on their communities.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report however there may be some minor financial implications arising from some of the improvement activities. The intension is to fund these from existing resources.

8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The CES for 2008 -2011 carries on the work of the Council to promote equalities and meet it statutory equality duties.

9. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENT

- 9.1 Councillor Maureen Holding as the Council's champion for equality issues supports the approval of the scheme.

10. RECOMMENDATION

- # 10.1 That the Council be recommended to agreed that the proposed Corporate Equality Scheme, as attached at Appendix 1 to this report, be approved as the Council's Corporate Equality Scheme for 2008-2011.

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Background information

Published papers



New Forest
DISTRICT COUNCIL

DRAFT

CORPORATE EQUALITY SCHEME

2008 – 2011

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MESSAGE FROM COUNCILLOR MAUREEN HOLDING - PORTFOLIO HOLDER

“I have been privileged to witness over many years the hard work and enthusiasm of our employees and partners working with local residents to achieve meaningful involvement and improved access to services. As Member Champion for equalities I am proud of the Council’s achievements so far and know that they have made a real difference to people’s lives.

We have already been judged as an “Excellent” authority as part of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment. This is a good indication that we are now meeting the needs of our residents as part of our everyday business. However we are not complacent and realise there is more to do.

I firmly believe that the Council’s past actions will act as a firm foundation for the future. This Scheme outlines what we intend to do for the next three years and I am sure it will be a time of further challenge but also achievement.”

Cllr Maureen Holder
Portfolio Holder

STATEMENT FROM EQUALITY NETWORK ADVISORY GROUP

“The Council should be congratulated on a very good piece of work.”

COMMITMENT TO EQUALITIES

In the Council's Corporate Plan for 2008-12 called "Leading Our Forest Communities" a firm commitment to equalities is given. One of the Council's aims as part of its Employment, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio is:

"We will seek to ensure that all residents in the New Forest have equal access to fair employment and equal access to services provided by the Council. We wish to make a positive difference to the lives of residents and to demonstrate this commitment the council aims to achieve the highest level of the Equality Standard for Local Government. We will measure our success not only by the delivery of ambitious three year action plans set up in partnership with our residents and partner organisations within our Corporate Equality Scheme but also by the satisfaction of our minority communities."

We recognise this is a continuing process involving the need to plan, monitor performance and then review regularly. This cannot be done without the involvement of local people, employees, partners and other stakeholders. That is why two of our key themes are "Engaging local people and communities in all we do" and "Improving the ease and equality of access to public services of all our customers and citizens".

INTRODUCTION

Equality is not about treating everyone the same but recognising and respecting differences, and then treating each other with fairness and dignity.

The Council understands that a one size fits all approach does not meet the needs of its residents or employees. Practices and policies that may appear neutral can have significantly different effects on men and women or people of different ages, religions or beliefs, or those with a disability which can lead to inequality and disadvantage. The Council believes its record on providing excellent services to residents, and from being an employer of choice demonstrates its commitment to ensuring such disadvantage does not occur. Valuing differences goes to the core of the Council's work and is also an essential part of community involvement.

Equality is also about knowing the needs of our communities and responding to those needs. Therefore our actions will be based on our understanding of our communities and what is important to them rather than nationally suggested solutions.

In recent years the Council has used the equality laws and the Equality Standard as measures to judge its performance and to focus our goals. We believe we have achieved much. We have published our three statutory Schemes

- Race Equality Scheme in 2005
- Disability Equality Scheme in 2006
- Gender Equality Scheme in 2007

and our self assessment in 2006 showed we had achieved Level 3 of the Equality Standard.

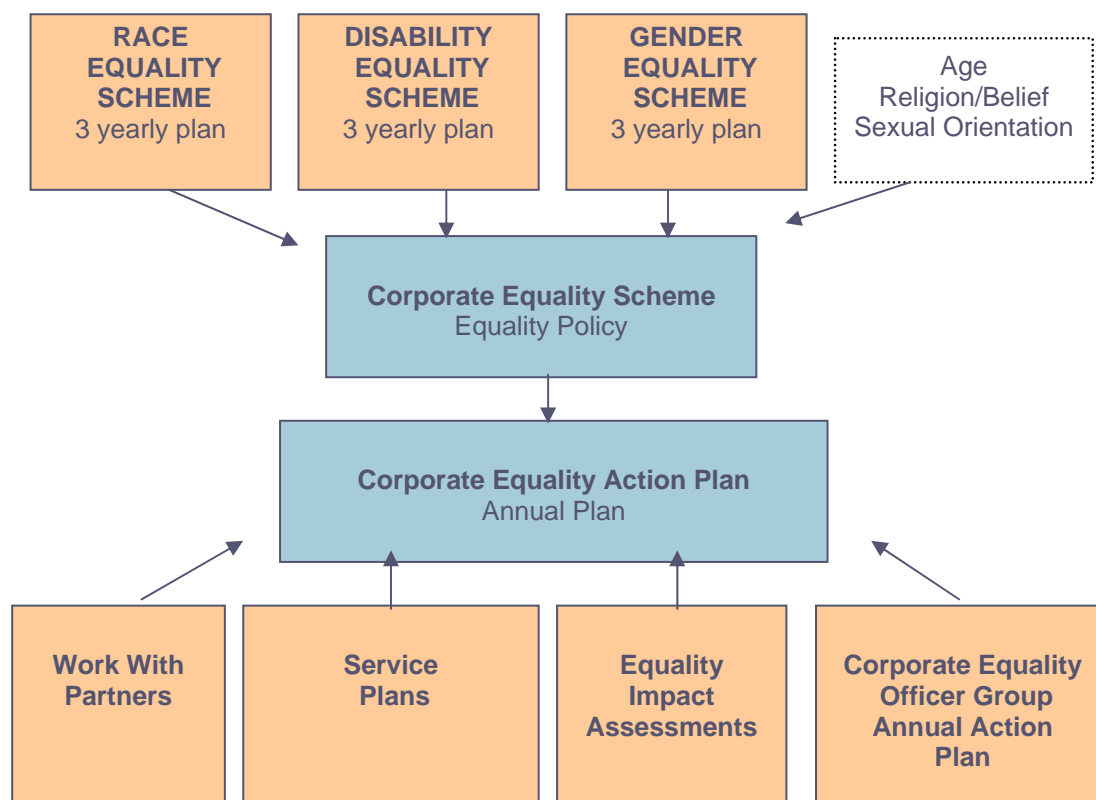
At the time this new Scheme was being drafted the Equality Bill was before Parliament and the Government had announced that the Equality Standard would be replaced in April 2009 by the Equality Framework.

This Scheme therefore shows how in the coming three years the Council will not only carry on the work it has started in its previous Corporate Equality Plan in 2004-08 to eliminate discrimination and harassment, and to promote equalities but also how it will adapt how it works to meet the challenges of a single equality duty encompassing all who are excluded and isolated for whatever reason. Equalities is often categorised under six strands: age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. In this scheme transgender is included in gender although some regard it as the 7th strand.

The Scheme demonstrates how this will be achieved and how performance will be monitored and reviewed. Much of this work is within the Council's action plans and within its Race Equality Scheme (RES), Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and Gender Equality Scheme (GES) and their action plans. These schemes and plans have been published in their own right and can be found on the Council's website at www.newforest.gov.uk.

The Corporate Equality Scheme links the individual Schemes and the Corporate Equality Action plan shows the action for any given year. The actions taken by services and corporately by the Corporate Officers Group also contribute to the overall objectives as does the work undertaken with partners.

This diagram shows how the Council's equality Schemes work with other strategies.



This Corporate Equality Scheme is for a three year period to 31 March 2011. However it is also a working document. As such it will need to be updated as work programmes and needs change, so although the information will be correct at the time of publication, updated action plans will be posted on the Council's website throughout the year. To view these please visit the Council's website at www.newforest.gov.uk.

In this Scheme you will find:

- A profile of the district's characteristics in relation to the equality strands;
- The Council's commitment to equality of access to its services and fair employment;
- How the process of Equality Impact Assessments are carried out;
- Details of the specific activities within the Council's Race, Gender and Disability Equality Schemes;
- Challenging yet achievable goals for the six equality strands;
- Details of how its minority communities will be involved and contribute to the achievement of the Scheme;
- Plans for the monitoring process and the measuring of effectiveness of the Scheme.

PROFILE OF THE NEW FOREST DISTRICT



The district area is situated at the South Coast between Southampton and Bournemouth within the County of Hampshire. It is a mix of ancient forest, the coast and sailing, some small market towns and rural picturesque villages. We have recently established the New Forest National Park in the centre with main settlements arranged around its borders.

Administratively the area has three tiers of Local Government. Hampshire County Council is concerned with highways, waste disposal, education, adult and children's services, libraries etc. The Town and Parish Councils administers local open space, are statutory consultees on planning and some provide management of community facilities in their areas. The New Forest National Park is the Planning Authority within its boundaries.

The New Forest District Council is responsible for local services such as waste collection and recycling, social housing, environmental health, collection of council tax and health and leisure centres.

The New Forest is a popular visitor destination with approximately 13 million visitors a year. Tourism is also the largest form of employment with approximately 30% of all employment. However wages are generally lower than elsewhere in the United Kingdom. Banking, finance and insurance at 18% and public administration, education and health at 22% are the next two most popular areas of employment. However the average weekly pay in 2007 was £400 as compared to the rest of England and Wales at £450. Men's wages are closer to the national average but women's pay at £260 per week is far less than the national average of £345 per week. Looking at commuting flows about a third of working people work outside the district while a smaller number travel to the New Forest each day from the surrounding areas. This coupled with the severe shortage of affordable properties means local people often work outside the district and workers come daily to undertake mainly lower paid work in hotels and care homes.

The New Forest being an area of high quality environment is an attractive and sought after place to come to live particularly for retired people. The 2001 census gave a population of 169,331 inhabitants. The population forecast suggests this will rise to 171,801 by 2010. This represents 2.2 people per hectare against the national average of 3.4 per hectare. Of the 750 square kilometers about one third is open park or enclosures. However there is a relatively poor public transport system. For those on lower incomes or without the use of a car this leads to rural isolation and lack of inclusion issues.

This is particularly relevant as although the gender balance is similar to the national average the age spread does not. There are fewer younger people and 4% more 75+ people in the district than the national average. The implications of this elderly population is that there are a high number of residents with degenerative conditions and disabilities without access to public transport.

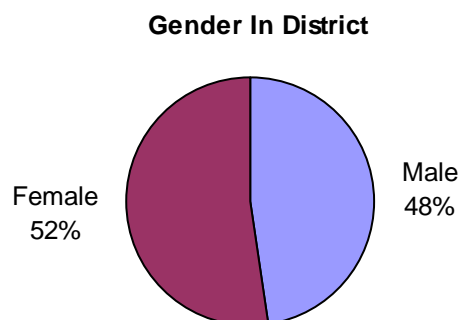
The New Forest has a lower black and minority ethnic (BME) community at 1.1% than nationally at 9.1%. However Southampton which is situated on the border does mirror the national situation. With no mosques, temples, synagogues or gurdwaras or other similar community centres, BME residents seek cultural and religious support outside the district. Research shows our BME population consists of families and individuals living mainly in the towns. The exception to this are our Gypsy and Traveller population (collectively known as Travellers) who are a private community cautious of producing statistics and who are not included in the 2001 census. It is however felt that the Travellers constitute our biggest minority group. The last couple of years has seen higher numbers of economic migrants from the A8 countries. Whether this will have a major impact on the district in future years is not possible to judge at present.

On the following pages you will find some more detailed information on the New Forest area. It must be remembered that people do not fit neatly into single categories but will cross boundaries wholly or part of the time.

| ORIGINS OF RESIDENTS | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| <i>Place Of Birth</i> | <i>New Forest</i> | <i>% New Forest</i> | <i>% Hampshire</i> | <i>% England</i> |
| Born in UK | 161,346 | 95.28 | 94.15 | 90.74 |
| Born Elsewhere in EU | 2,909 | 1.72 | 2.11 | 2.35 |
| Born Outside EU | 5,076 | 3.00 | 3.75 | 6.91 |

Gender

This is similar to the national average for England and Wales of 51% female and 49% male. It is predicted to remain fairly balanced for the life of this Scheme.

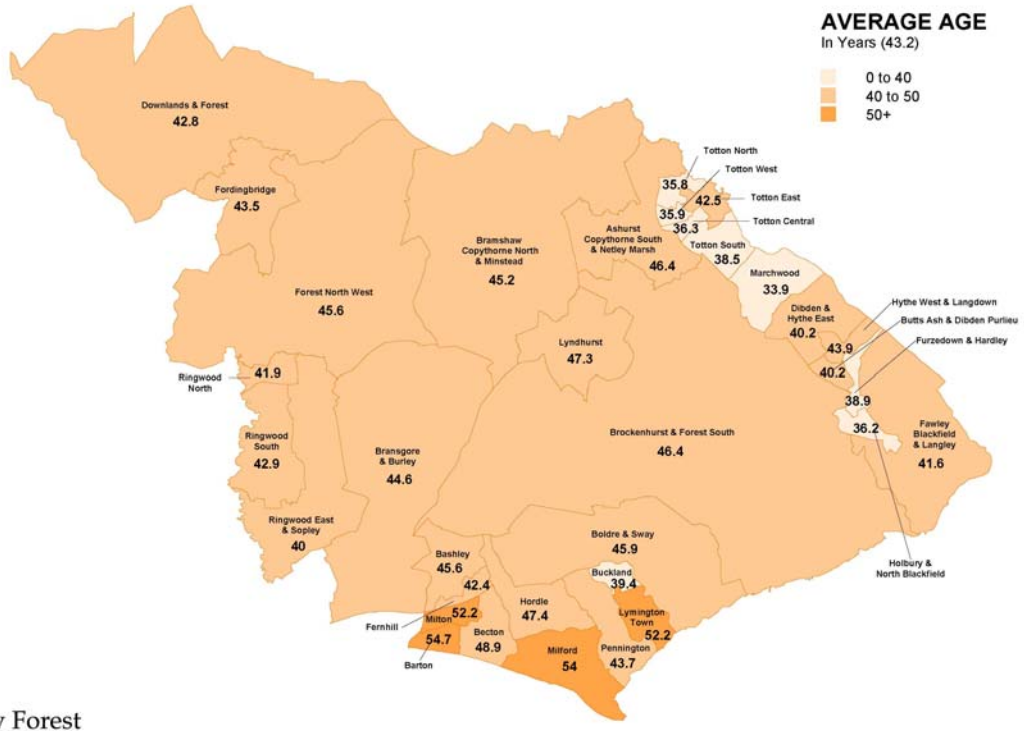


Transgender:

Gender Dysphoria is a recognised medical condition, not a lifestyle choice. There are no recognised studies or statistical evidence on this condition. People who have this condition, particularly if they choose to have gender reassignment incur prejudice and discrimination in a similar way as other minority groups.

Age

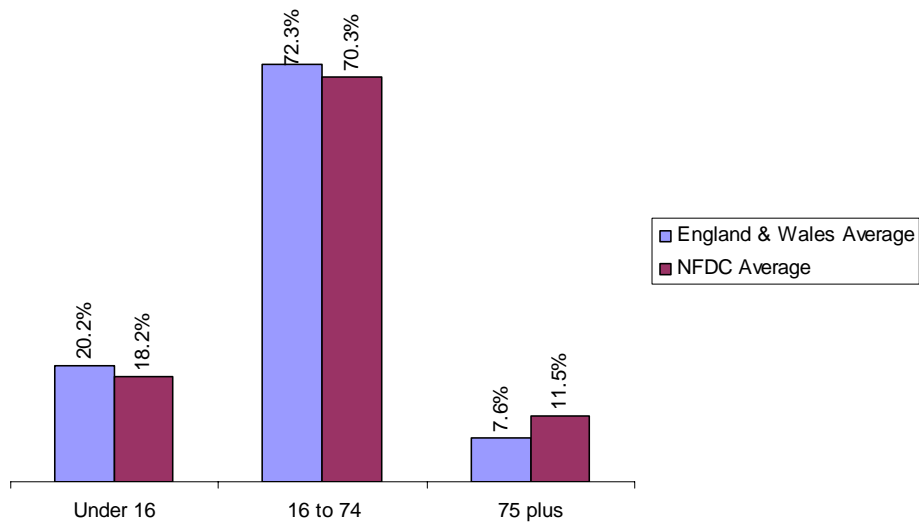
The age profile of the district does not follow that of England and Wales. Both the under 16 year old and 16 to 74 year old groups are slightly lower than the national average. As a result the 75+ year old group is approximately 4% higher than the national average.



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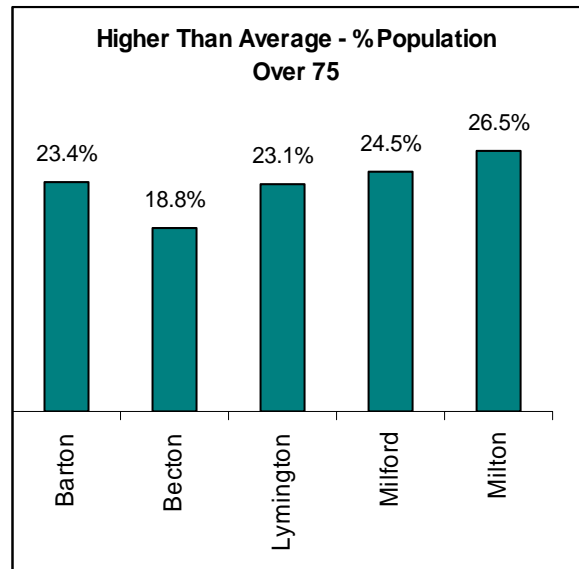
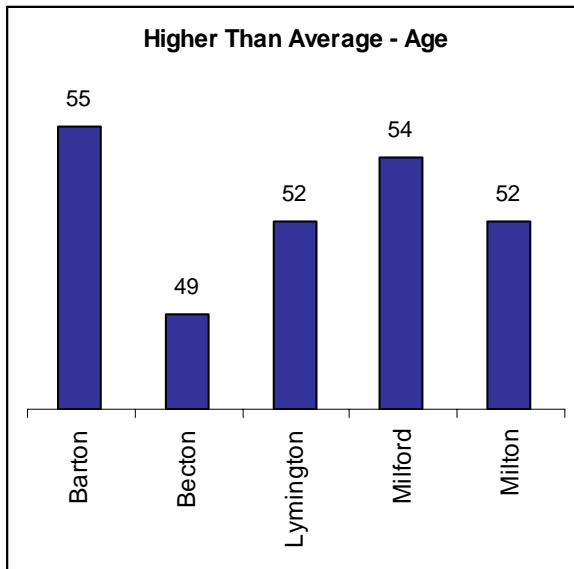
Source: 2001 Census

Age profile of the NFDC area:

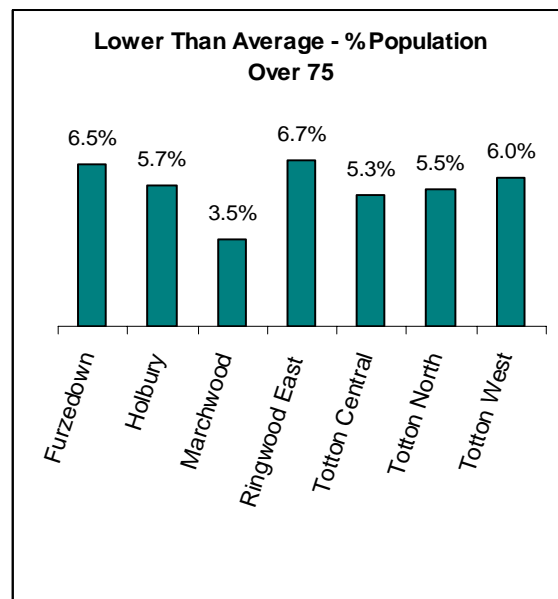
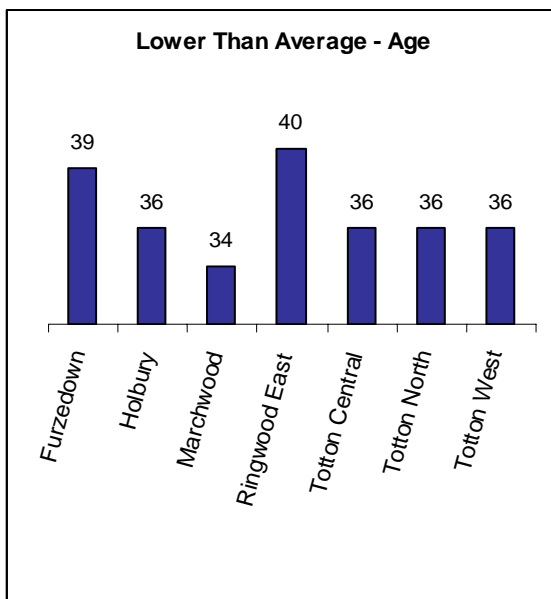


The average age is also higher at 43.2 years compared to the national average of 38.6 years. The indications are that there will be a continuation of the reduction in under 16 year olds and the 30 – 44 age group. This will result, it is predicted, that most of the increase of the population by 2011 will be in the 45 – 85+ age groups.

Looking at the age dispersal across the district it can be seen that some wards have a higher than average age eg Milford On Sea at 54 years and some a lower than average age ie Totton Central at 36.3 years.

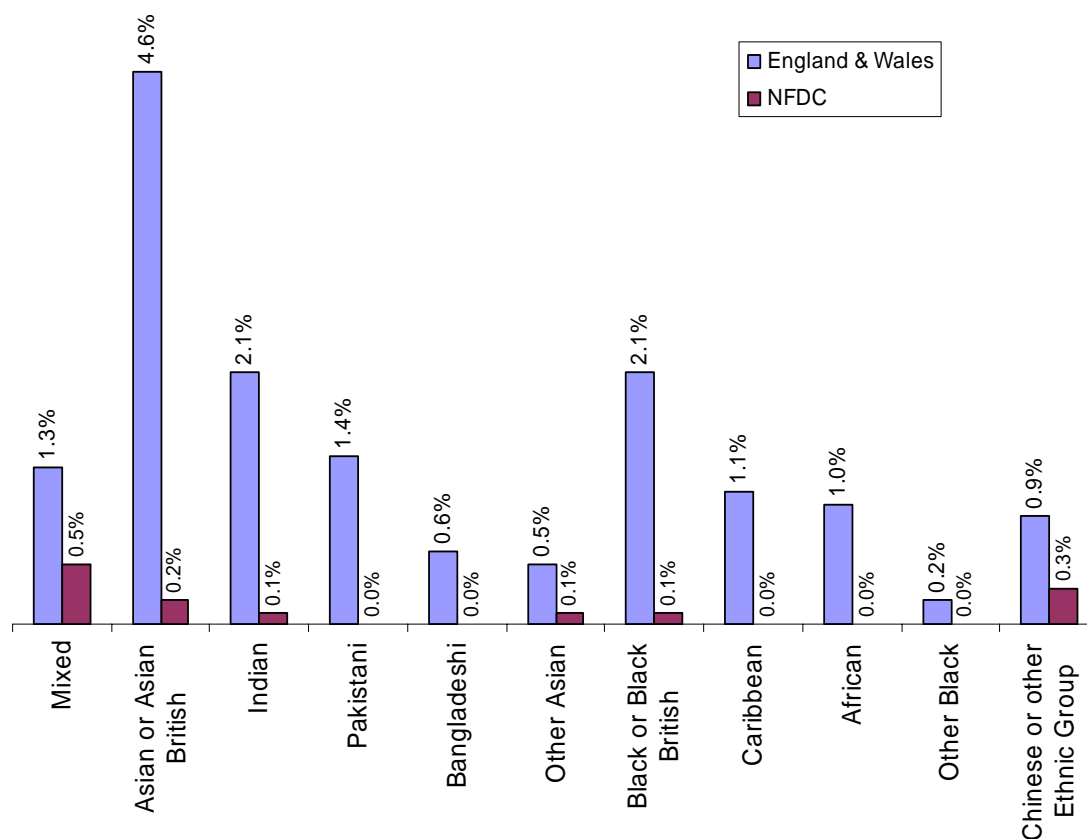


In contrast some wards have lower numbers of over 75's:



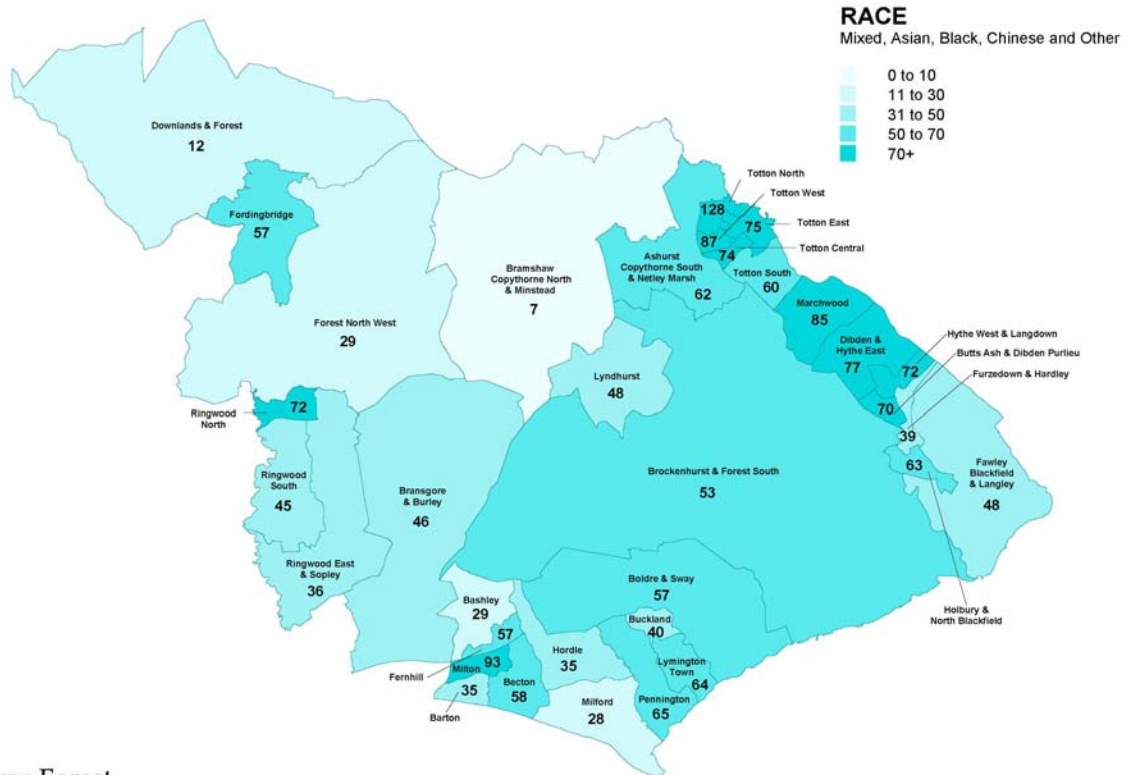
Ethnic Group/Race

At 1.1% total ethnic and race group of the population of the district the council has fewer such residents than the England and Wales average at 9.1%.



The numbers of residents per group are consequently quite low with the 2001 Census giving the following data:

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Mixed Race | 839 |
| Asian | 785 |
| Black | 308 |
| Chinese and other | 492 |
| Total | 2423 people |



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Source: 2001 Census

Geographically these residents can be seen to be living mainly in the Waterside, Lymington, Totton and Ringwood areas.

Gypsies & Travellers:

National research estimated there were between 200,000 and 300,000 Gypsies and Travellers in the UK in 2002. It is estimated that 90% of them live in bricks and mortar. Some communities are highly mobile including those who have chosen to live in houses and they can spend several months each year “on the road”. Irish Travellers should be regarded as a separate ethnic group of extended families who also follow a nomadic life style.

Locally there is one permanent Gypsy and Traveller site and no authorised transient sites. The local Gypsy community has estimated there are 10,000 Gypsies in the New forest. If this is correct this as about 6% of the total New Forest population and higher than all the other ethnic groups put together. Most Gypsy households living on the site at Bury Brickfields in Marchwood are settled but 15% continue to travel.

In 2006 there were 8 unauthorised encampments. These were at Totton, Netley View, Bartley, Ashurst, Marchwood, Hythe and Calshot which are all along the main travelling route. There was also one other encampment at Ringwood.

The Hampshire wide survey for the Housing Needs Assessment of Gypsies and Travellers housing need to 2011 was carried out in 2006 and established a need for one managed transient site for the Test valley, Eastleigh and New Forest areas and three new permanent pitches (6 caravans) in the New forest areas.

A research project focusing on mental health, equality and wellbeing of Travellers and Gypsies was carried out by the Forest Bus between May 2007 and March 2008. This was funded by NIMHE, and managed and supported by The Centre for Ethnicity and Health, University of Central Lancashire. The report from this project concluded that there is a need to address the mental health, accommodation and transport needs of all the Gypsy community including young people. The report also concluded that they had overriding feelings of isolation and alienation as well as some suicidal tendencies.

Economic Migrants:

In the last couple of years there is evidence that people from European countries have come to the district as migrant workers particularly into the tourism and care sectors. The New Forest is not the place where economic migrants arrive in the UK as it has no airport or sea port. There is also no support agencies or groups. Southampton however has been the home of many eastern European people since the second world war and it continues to attract new economic migrants, particularly from Eastern Europe. Currently Southampton's numbers are above the South East region's average. In 2006/07 635 economic migrants registered for work, 330 of these came from Poland.

Worker Registration Scheme Approved Applications April 06 – March 07

| Local Authority | Czech Rep | Estonia | Hungary | Latvia | Lithuania | Poland | Slovakia | Total |
|--------------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Basingstoke & Deane | 20 | | 20 | 10 | 15 | 480 | 45 | 590 |
| East Hampshire | 10 | | 20 | 5 | 20 | 230 | 25 | 310 |
| Eastleigh | | | 5 | | 5 | 125 | 10 | 145 |
| Fareham | 5 | 5 | 5 | 10 | 5 | 90 | 15 | 135 |
| Gosport | | | | | | 40 | | 40 |
| Hart | 5 | | 15 | | | 110 | 15 | 145 |
| Havant | 5 | | 5 | | 5 | 75 | 5 | 95 |
| New Forest | 15 | 5 | 30 | 120 | 75 | 330 | 50 | 625 |
| Rushmoor | | | 5 | | | 95 | | 100 |
| Test Valley | 5 | | 15 | 15 | 15 | 280 | 40 | 370 |
| Winchester | | | 20 | | | 150 | 45 | 215 |
| | 65 | 10 | 140 | 160 | 140 | 2005 | 250 | 2770 |

However the following tables show that although there are reading and writing needs of adults and children the overall numbers are low in comparison to the rest of the district.

Read Write Plus – Estimates Of Adult Skills Needs, DfES, 2003, New Forest

| ESOL | Population Aged 16-64 | Estimated ESOL Population Aged 16-64 | % ESOL Population |
|---|------------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Bashley Ward | 1,575 | 30 | 1.9 |
| Lymington Town Ward | 2,665 | 50 | 1.88 |
| Milton Ward | 2,450 | 40 | 1.63 |
| Forest North West Ward | 1,570 | 25 | 1.6 |
| Becton Ward | 2,330 | 35 | 1.5 |
| Lyndhurst Ward | 1,670 | 25 | 1.5 |
| Totton West Ward | 3,340 | 50 | 1.5 |
| Totton North Ward | 3,770 | 55 | 1.45 |
| Totton East Ward | 3,420 | 45 | 1.31 |
| Buckland Ward | 1,925 | 25 | 1.3 |
| Ringwood East & Sopley Ward | 1,740 | 20 | 1.15 |
| Hythe West & Langdown Ward | 3,575 | 40 | 1.12 |
| Marchwood Ward | 3,635 | 40 | 1.1 |
| Ashurst, Copythorne South & Netley Marsh Ward | 3,305 | 35 | 1.06 |
| Boldre & Sway Ward | 3,045 | 30 | 0.99 |
| Ringwood North Ward | 3,650 | 35 | 0.96 |
| Bramshaw, Copythorne North and Minstead Ward | 1,580 | 15 | 0.95 |
| Fernhill Ward | 3,220 | 30 | 0.93 |
| Milford Ward | 2,195 | 20 | 0.91 |
| Pennington Ward | 3,280 | 30 | 0.91 |
| Totton South Ward | 3,830 | 35 | 0.91 |
| Downlands & Forest Ward | 1,755 | 15 | 0.85 |
| Furzedown & Hardley Ward | 2,010 | 15 | 0.75 |
| Ringwood South Ward | 3,320 | 25 | 0.75 |
| Totton Central Ward | 3,475 | 25 | 0.72 |
| Holbury & North Blackfield Ward | 4,305 | 30 | 0.7 |
| Hordle Ward | 2,845 | 20 | 0.7 |
| Fordingbridge Ward | 3,635 | 25 | 0.69 |
| Brockenhurst & Forest South East Ward | 3,040 | 20 | 0.66 |
| Butts Ash & Dibden Purlieu Ward | 3,920 | 25 | 0.63 |
| Bransgore & Burley Ward | 3,465 | 20 | 0.58 |
| Fawley, Blackfield & Langley Ward | 3,910 | 20 | 0.51 |
| Dibden & Hythe East Ward | 3,535 | 30 | 0.45 |
| Barton Ward | 2,365 | 10 | 0.42 |

Ethnic Minority Achievement Service

First language of children in Hampshire Schools January 2007 – New Forest District Council

| Language | Where Spoken – Principally | Number Of Children | % of New Forest EAL Children |
|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Malayalam, Hindi, Gujerati, Kannada, Teluga | India | 27 | 15.43 |
| Tagalog/Filipino | Philippines | 27 | 15.43 |
| Bengali | Bangladesh | 17 | 9.71 |
| Chinese – Cantonese, Mandarin | China | 12 | 6.86 |
| Polish | Poland | 12 | 6.86 |
| French | France | 10 | 5.71 |
| Fijian | Fiji | 9 | 5.14 |
| Arabic – standard | Middle East, Also North Africa | 8 | 4.57 |
| Swedish | Sweden | 6 | 3.43 |
| Russian | Russia | 5 | 2.86 |
| Shona | Zimbabwe | 5 | 2.86 |
| Spanish | Spain, Chile, Columbia, Mexico | 4 | 2.29 |
| Dutch/Flemish | Netherlands | 3 | 1.71 |
| German | Germany | 3 | 1.71 |
| Japanese | Japan | 3 | 1.71 |
| Portuguese | Portugal/Brazil | 3 | 1.71 |
| Romanian | Romania | 3 | 1.71 |
| Bemba | Zambia, Republic of Congo | 2 | 1.14 |
| Estonian | Estonia | 2 | 1.14 |
| Norwegian | Norway | 2 | 1.14 |
| Turkish | Turkey | 2 | 1.14 |
| Others (1 each) | | 10 | 5.71 |
| Total | | 175 | 100.00 |
| % of all New Forest Children | | 0.80 | |
| % of Hampshire EAL Children | | 0.25 | |

Although the migrants have low literacy needs some cultural issues still arise.

Hampshire Constabulary National Interpretation Service Calls – March 2006 To February 2007

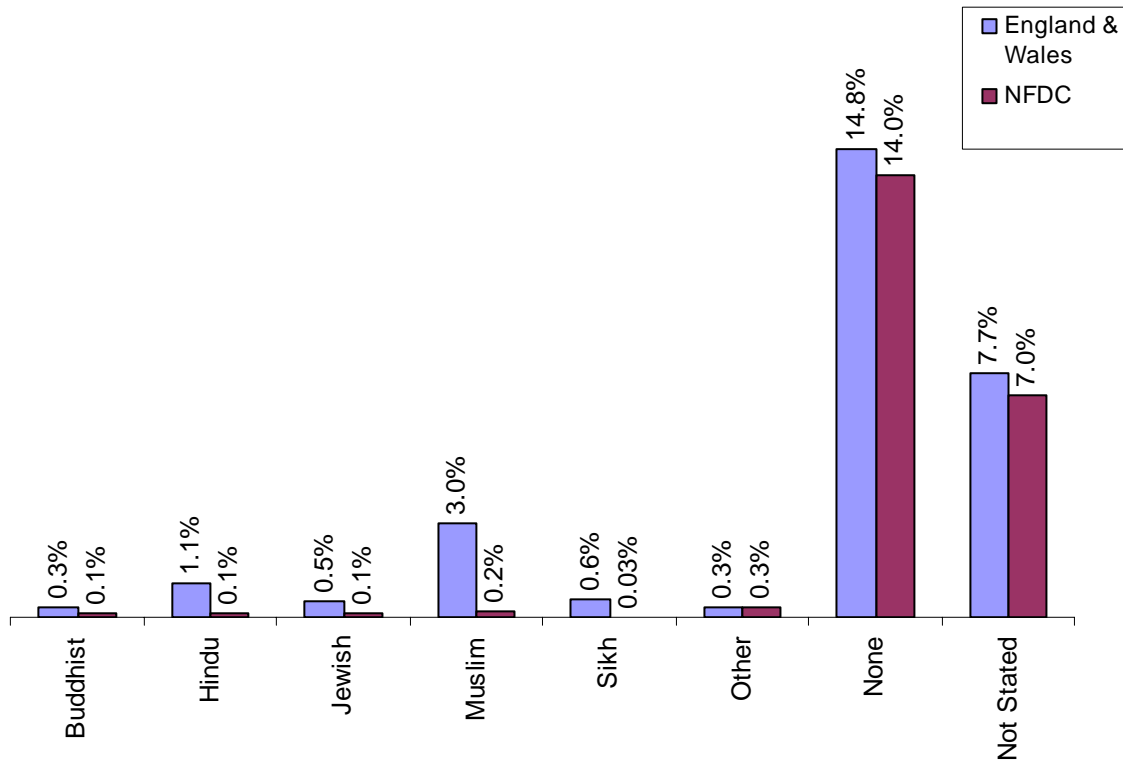
| Top Ten Languages | Polish | Mandarin | Russian | Portuguese | Farsi | Kurdish | Lithuanian | Bengali | Vietnamese | Turkish | Total |
|--------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Basingstoke & Deane | 49 | 13 | 5 | 16 | 5 | 0 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 5 | 116 |
| New Forest | 43 | 14 | 8 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 0 | 3 | 90 |
| Eastleigh | 49 | 5 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 71 |
| Rushmoor | 23 | 15 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 0 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 5 | 70 |
| Test Valley | 20 | 6 | 2 | 15 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 61 |
| Winchester | 23 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 53 |
| Fareham | 21 | 6 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 43 |
| East Hants | 8 | 3 | 8 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 42 |
| Gosport | 5 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 31 |
| Havant | 5 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 26 |
| Hart | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Total | 249 | 77 | 40 | 60 | 36 | 14 | 38 | 39 | 20 | 36 | 609 |

The typical migrant worker is single, male aged 25-35, over-qualified and supporting a family back home. There may be an issue of accommodation particularly housing of multiple occupation but as most housing is provided by employers or outside the New Forest this is difficult to assess.

Religion or Belief

Again the New Forest District Council residents do not mirror the national statistics. Nationally 27.2% of residents are of faiths other than Christianity or have no faith. The New Forest District Council figure is 21.7%. This is not surprising considering the low number of BME residents. This 21.7% is represented by the following:

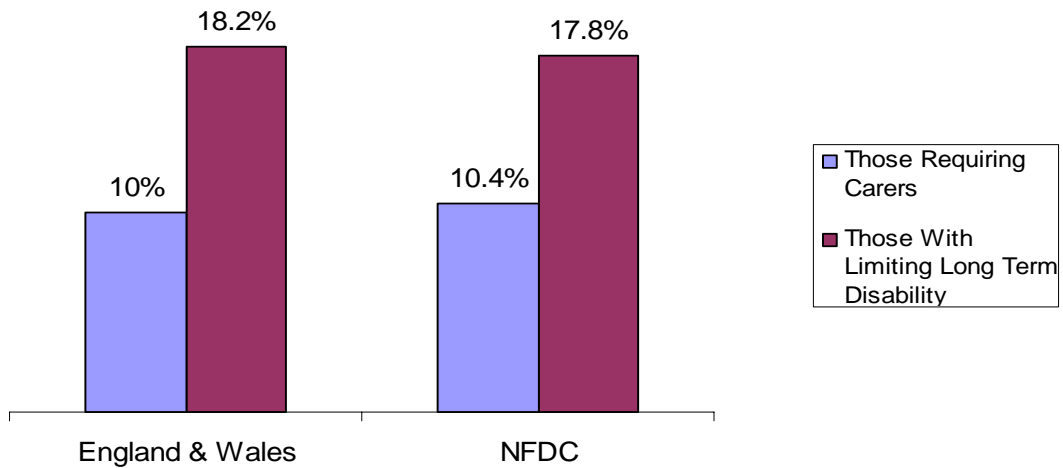
| | |
|--------------|--------------------|
| Buddhist | 221 |
| Hindu | 118 |
| Jewish | 182 |
| Muslim | 290 |
| Sikh | 35 |
| Other | 522 |
| Total | 1368 people |



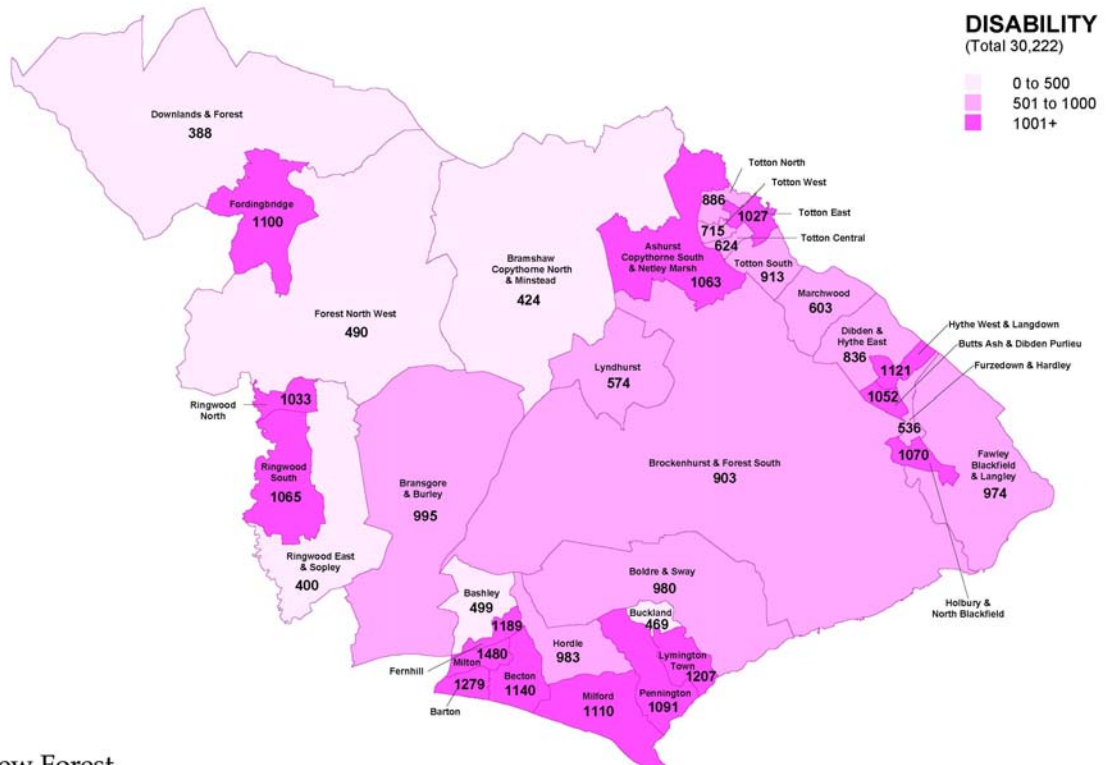
There are no synagogues, temples, mosques or gurdwaras in the district.

Disability

The 2001 census did not ask direct questions on disability but asked about long term illness and those requiring carers.



The district area has approx 30,000 people with long-term disabilities or illnesses. These residents are likely to be protected by the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act.



Again there are some wards with higher percentages of people with disabilities:

| | |
|-----------|-------|
| Barton | 25.3% |
| Becton | 24% |
| Fernhill | 20.7% |
| Lymington | 22.8% |
| Milford | 23.6% |
| Milton | 27.1% |

This is not surprising as the same wards have the highest number of elderly residents.

As all wards have significant numbers within their boundaries, it can be concluded that disability issues is the major minority group for the district.

The 2001 census does not give any breakdown of figures within the 7 categories of disability;

- Sight
- Hearing
- Mobility
- Disfigurement
- Mental health
- Learning difficulties
- Specific learning difficulties

however other research estimate that there were 10 million disabled people in Britain in 2005. Of these, 6.8 million are of working age which represents 19% of the working population. 44% of adults over the age of 50 have a disability.

In 2005 there were 770,000 disabled children under the age of 16 in the UK which is 5% of all under 16's. The Disability Rights Commission (now part of the Equality and Human Rights Commission) suggested 1 in 7 people in the UK were disabled. This equates to 14% of the New Forest population.

Sexual Orientation

There are no national records on sexual orientation. Stonewall, the national organisation representing the interests of lesbian, gay and bisexual people (LGB) suggest 6% of the population are LGB. This is 3.6 million people countrywide. Furthermore they suggest 1.7 million are in work.

This would suggest a LGB population within the district of about 10,000 people based on the 2001 figures.

EQUALITY DUTY AND LEGISLATION

There are legal duties that this and other public bodies have to tackle discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity in respect of disability, gender and race. Therefore in undertaking the provision of services and as an employer we must comply with the following duties:

Race Equality Duty –

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination
2. Promote equality of opportunity
3. Promote good relations between people of different racial groups

Disability Equality Duty –

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination
2. Eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disabilities
3. Promote equality of opportunities between disabled people and others
4. Take steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities even where that involves treating them more favourably than others
5. Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
6. Encourage participation by disabled people in public life

Gender Equality Duty –

1. Eliminate unlawful sex discrimination
2. Eliminate unlawful harassment
3. Promote equality of opportunity between men and women
4. Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of gender reassignment.

These are both positive and proactive. It is no longer acceptable just not to discriminate. The Council must actively seek how it can improve its services and ensure employment opportunities truly are equal for its residents and employees. The way this Council fulfils its equality duties can be seen in its separate Schemes:

- Race Equality Scheme 2008 – 2011
- Disability Equality Scheme 2007 – 2009
- Gender Equality Scheme 2007 – 2010

To see these Schemes please visit the Council's website at www.newforest.gov.uk.

However as our commitment to equalities shows, the Council does not wish to restrict its equality work just to race, gender and disability but to embrace all the equality strands including age, religion or belief and sexual orientation. This commitment will shortly be reflected by the law. The Equality Bill "Framework For A Fairer Future" will introduce a single equality duty to replace the race, disability and gender duties and will include gender reassignment, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief. Other changes are also included in the following pages which show some of the equality challenges facing the Council and a glimpse at the work so far taken in response. A full list of equality legislation is show in Appendix One.

Age:

Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
Equality Bill "Framework For A Fairer Future" 2008

The regulations provide protection against age discrimination in employment and adult education for people of all ages. They also protect against harassment in the workplace. They do not provide protection from discrimination in the provision of goods, services and facilities. Age is the only equality strand now not to be so protected. This is however changing. The Equality Bill "Framework For A Fairer Future" will introduce a single equality duty that will cover age. It will make it unlawful to discriminate against someone because of their age when providing goods, facilities and services or carrying out public functions.

The age profile of the district shows that the average age of residents was 43.2 years old in 2001 and the prediction is that this is increasing. In addition some areas of the district have higher average ages such as Lymington, Milford and Milton all over 52 years average age. The implication of this in equality terms is that with higher than average ageing population and with a decreasing population of under 44 year olds there is likely to be a higher than average demand on age related service without a lower than expected level of family/community support. As age is also closely related to disability, it is likely accessibility issues will also become more acute.

Although the employment requirements apply to all ages, ageism tends to have a more dramatic and detrimental effect on older people. Being refused a service because you are perceived as too old or unable to benefit long term from a service is something older people suffer from. This injustice can be progressive and therefore slowly eat into people's self confidence and a low self esteem and a feeling of worthlessness can arise before an individual is aware of what is happening. The Council must be aware of this and work to eliminate discrimination on grounds of age.

So in response the Council has as one of its corporate aims "Valuing and Supporting Older People". This recognises the higher proportion of older people in the Forest and that the numbers of very elderly people will continue to grow. Many of these are vulnerable and we will work closely with partners to help meet their needs. This commitment has led to the establishment of a Community Action Network specifically on the issues of Older People under the Local Strategy Network which the Council leads. This group is working closely with the Older Persons Focus Group which is now an independent body. There are also elderly people on the Council's Equality Network which helps provide feedback. In recent times they have looked at the Council's website and safety in the community. Services ensure they do not discriminate or ignore unmet needs by carrying out Equality Impact Assessments on their policies, practices and service delivery.

Disability:

Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Disability Discrimination Amendment Act 2005

Equality Bill "Framework For A Fairer Future" 2008

The original Act made the discrimination of disabled people in employment, in the provision of goods, facilities and services, and in the administration or management of premises illegal. In 2005 the Act was updated to introduce a positive duty on public bodies to promote equality for disabled people. Under the 2005 Act there were new legal duties for the Council which are both General and Specific duties.

General:

When carrying out its duties the Council must

- eliminate discrimination
- eliminate harassment
- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- take account of disabled peoples' disabilities even where that means treating disabled people more favourably than other people.

This is a positive and proactive duty. It is no longer acceptable just to not discriminate. The Council must actively seek how it can improve its services and assist its disabled residents to achieve equality. Disability equality needs to be mainstreamed into the Council's everyday decision making processes if this is to be achieved. The test will be if disabled people can participate on an equal basis with non-disabled people.

Specific:

- publish a Disability Equality Scheme (DES) by December 2006
- involve disabled people in the Scheme and the action plan
- gather and analyse information
- explain how impact on disabled people will be assessed
- produce an action plan for the next 3 years
- report progress every year
- review the Scheme every 3 years

The Council's DES and its action plans can be seen in full on the Council's website at www.newforest.gov.uk.

Fulfilling the General Duty

The General Duty has 4 parts -

- eliminate discrimination
- eliminate harassment
- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- take account of disabled peoples' disabilities even where that means treating disabled people more favourably than other people.

It is felt that although each part has to be met individually the resultant actions tend to overlap and in simple terms our DES as a whole shows how the Council intends to meet the general duty. However there are specific actions that will contribute to the parts individually.

Eliminate Discrimination - The Council has undertaken an audit of its functions, policies, and services to assess whether any activity unwittingly discriminates against people with disabilities. This work is shown in the schedules attached as Appendix Two.

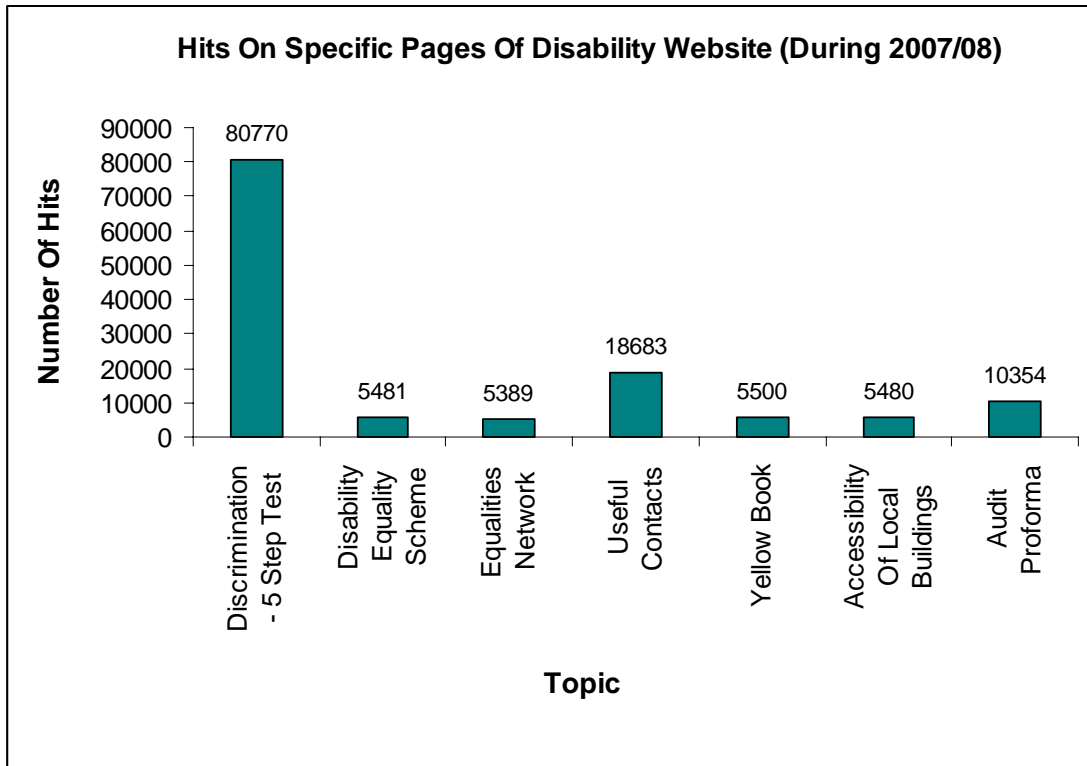
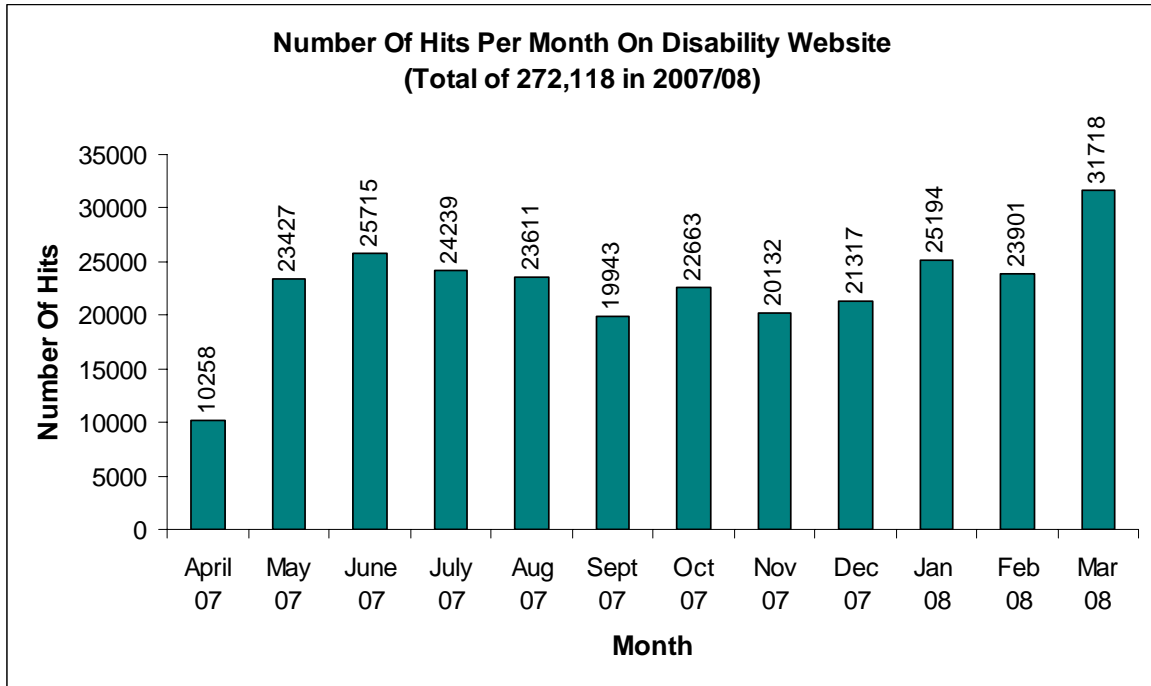
Eliminate Harassment - The Council has provided employees and the public with race incident/harassment reporting forms for some years. These are now in the process of being redesigned as forms for reporting any kind of anti-equality incident or harassment, including disability. Once designed, they will be available at Council offices and on the Council's website www.newforest.gov.uk.

Promotion of Equality of Opportunity - The Council regularly consults its residents on its present and proposed activities and on their opinions and comments using the Citizen's Panel. As the panel statistically matches the profile of the district this does mean that minority voices can be lost amongst the voices of the many. The Council seeks to redress this balance by continuing its development of the Equality Network where people with disabilities, and other minority groups, are consulted on issues that affect them by the use of surveys or focus groups. The preparation of this DES and indeed future Schemes also shows the Council's activities in this area.

Take Account of Disabled Peoples' Disabilities - The Council's impact assessments for present and future activities will ensure proper regard is made of peoples' disabilities. These are explained in full in later pages and detailed impact assessments are available on the Council's website www.newforest.gov.uk.

Since the publication of the DES in 2006 a number of the residents with disabilities have continued to help the Council. Collectively they are called the DES Advisory Group. Recently some of them have helped with the design of a village style wet changing room for Applemore Health and Leisure Centre which will be built in the Spring of 2009. They have also helped with the training of planners on access statements and in the publication of leaflets such as Blue Badge Parking and How To Vote. The Council also co-ordinated a Day For The Disabled in its grounds in 2007.

The Council also recognises that disabled people have specific issues with regards to information they may wish find and therefore have a dedicated space on the Council's website which holds information useful to both those with disabilities and interested parties which can be found at www.newforest.gov.uk/disability. Statistics from the website show that the pages are well visited.



Gender:

Equal Pay Act 1970 (Amended)

Sex Discrimination Act 1975

The Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999

Civil Partnerships Act 2004

Gender Recognition Act 2004

The Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005

Equality Act 2006

Equality Bill "Framework For A Fairer Future" 2008

Individuals have a right to the same contractual pay and benefits as a person of the opposite sex in the same employment, where the man and the woman are doing: like work; work rated as equivalent under an analytical job evaluation study; or work that is proved to be of equal value. It is also unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of sex. Sex discrimination is unlawful in employment, education, advertising or when providing housing, goods, services or facilities. It is unlawful to discriminate because someone is married, in employment or advertisements for jobs. There are now new definitions of indirect discrimination and harassment, explicitly prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy or maternity leave, sets out the extent to which it is discriminatory to pay a woman less than she would otherwise have been paid due to pregnancy or maternity issues.

More recently legislation has been passed to prevent sex discrimination relating to gender reassignment. It clarified the law for transsexual people in relation to equal pay and treatment in employment and training. Also transsexual people now have legal recognition in their acquired gender. Legal recognition follows from the issue of a full gender recognition certificate by a gender recognition panel.

The Civil Partnerships Act has meant there is legal recognition and parity of treatment for same-sex couples and married couples, including employment benefits and pension rights.

From the Equality Act 2006 there are new legal duties for the Council which are both General and Specific.

General:

When carrying out its duties the Council must

- eliminate discrimination
- eliminate harassment
- promote equality of opportunity between men and women
- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of gender reassignment.

This is a positive and proactive duty. It is no longer acceptable just to not discriminate. The Council must actively seek how it can improve its services and ensure employment opportunities truly are equal for men and women. Gender equality needs to be mainstreamed into the Council's everyday decision making processes if this is to be achieved.

Specific:

- Produce and publish a Gender Equality Scheme by 30 April 2007 showing how the duties will be met, and setting out gender equality objectives.
- Identify gender equality goals and the intended outcomes
- Develop a 3 year action plan that will show how the outcomes will be implemented.
- Consult stakeholders including employees, service users and others to help determine its gender equality objectives
- Monitor progress and publish annual reports
- Develop and publish a policy on equal pay arrangements between women and men and show how this will be reviewed every 3 years.
- consider the need to include objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap
- conduct and publish gender equality impact assessments, consulting appropriate stakeholders covering existing and proposed major and significant policies and services.
- gather and use information on how policies and practices affect gender equality in the workforce and in delivery of services
- review the Scheme every 3 years

Fulfilling The General Duty

The General Duty has 4 parts –

- eliminate discrimination
- eliminate harassment
- promote equality of opportunity between men and women
- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on grounds of gender reassignment.

It is felt that although each part has to be met individually, the resultant actions tend to overlap and in simple terms our GES as a whole shows how the Council intends to meet the general duty. The GES can be seen in full on the Council's website at www.newforest.gov.uk. However there are specific actions that will contribute to the parts individually.

Eliminate Discrimination – The Council has undertaken an audit of its functions, policies and services to assess whether any activity unwittingly discriminates unlawfully. Equality Impact Assessments by services consider also any unmet need.

Eliminate Harassment – The Council has provided employees with informal and formal systems to report and remove harassment for some years. These have now been reviewed and are available on the Council's internal intranet.

Promotion of Equality of Opportunity Between Men and Women – The Council's policies have been reviewed to ensure compliance and employees have access to training and information to support the policies.

Since the publication of the GES most effort has been placed on a review of equal pay and the results are now being implemented. Further work is necessary with transgender issues and making contact with support groups is a current action.

Race:

Race Relations Act 1976

Race Relations Amendment Act 2000

Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulation 2003

Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006

Equality Bill "Framework For A Fairer Future" 2008

The Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000) (RRAA) places a general duty on public authorities to promote race equality. The legislation requires the Council and its employees to -

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity, and
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups

The aim of this general duty is to make race equality an integral part of the way local authorities work by placing it within policy and decision making, service delivery, employment and enforcement. By pursuing the elimination of discrimination and promoting fair access to all the following outcomes should be achieved:

- decisions based on knowledge, evidence and consultation
- targeted action
- accessible and appropriate services
- increased public confidence in services

The Act also places several specific duties on the Council:

- assess functions for adverse impact (and every 3 years after)
- publish results of assessments and consultations
- ensure information and services are accessible
- train employees
- assess impact of proposed policies and consult.

The Race Relations Amendment Act also places a specific duty on public authorities to publish a Race Equality Scheme (RES). The Scheme is required to indicate the actions this Council has and will take to meet the general and specific duties of the Act. The Council's RES can be seen in full at www.newforest.gov.uk.

From the profile of the district it can be seen that in 2001 the numbers of residents from BME communities was 1.1%. Although this will have grown, residents from these communities still consist of extended families and individuals around the district. Community development work in the past and today have not established a community need for specific representation groups apart from the Gypsy and Traveller population.

With the help of a BME Community Development Worker (appointed in February 2008) the Council continues to identify those from the BME community who may be isolated or feel apart from other communities. The possibility of capacity building is still being explored as the need arises. Individuals are still supported in their role on the Equalities Network.

Indeed the low number of BME residents within the wider community means that other residents do not have the opportunity to learn about and understand cultures other than their own. As part of its race work the council aims to raise awareness of a multi-cultural society. One way is by running awareness sessions for employees where people from different cultures are invited to discuss similarities and differences. 59 employees attended sessions in 2007 and this is to be extended to approximately 150 in 2008. A briefing session was also held for Members. Newsletters are also circulated to employees and members throughout the year signposting sources of information.

To celebrate the multicultural nature of the district an event is to be held in August 2009 in partnership with other public and voluntary bodies in the district. April 2009 will also see a joint training venture between the Council and Community First New Forest for voluntary and charitable groups on Equalities issues following the issue of the Equalities Toolkit.

Gypsies and Travellers:

Travellers are the district's largest racial group. The Council has set up a Steering Group with partners with the aim of creating an independent body with the skills and sufficient robustness to actively represent their community and take part in the wider community issues of the district. As with the creation of the Equalities Network this takes time and it is hoped the group will slowly develop over the next four to five years. They are already committed to exploring the possibility of a local Travellers magazine and will take an active part in the multicultural event in 2009. Much of the time of the Community Development Worker is spent in building trust and developing contacts to assist with overall work. In the area there is also The Forest Bus. This is an independent mobile community project which engages with the settled Gypsy and Traveller communities. The Council annually awards grant aid funding to this project and works jointly with them on a number of projects.

Economic Migrants

The New Forest district has not seen the influx of migrants experienced by other areas. It is however on the boundary of Southampton who host one of the largest Eastern European communities. Work has been undertaken in conjunction with partners to identify the needs of those in the district and that work will continue. So far various documents have been translated (most being into Polish) as the need has arisen. This has included the translation of various health and safety instructions for commercial services employees (including refuse collectors and grounds maintenance teams) many of whom are agency workers who are Polish.

Although there is a range of information available prior to leaving their home country services have concluded that a basic guide would be useful. Work is presently underway to produce such a booklet in Polish and English.

Religion or Belief:

Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulation 2003

Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006

Equality Bill "Framework For A Fairer Future" 2008

The 2003 Regulations were brought in to protect against discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in employment, vocational training, promotion and working conditions.

In 2006 the Racial and Religious Hatred Act was passed with an aim to stop people from intentionally using threatening words or behaviour to stir up hatred against somebody because of what they believe.

The Equality Bill, once law, will extend the present equality duties for disability, race and gender to remove discrimination and harassment and promote equality of opportunities to religion or belief. As the Council is already committed to this there will not be a need to greatly alter the Council's existing activities. We will continue to make contact with local faith leaders and those who provide this role outside the area for New Forest residents. The Community Development Worker is developing these contacts and will be encouraging new individuals to join the Equalities Network. We will aim to involve all faiths in the multicultural day in 2009.

The employee awareness training in 2007 and 2008 will also address different belief systems.

Sexual Orientation:

Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

Civil Partnership Act 2005

Sexual Orientation Regulations 2007 (introduced as result of Equalities Act 2006)

Equality Act 2006

Equality Bill 2008

These pieces of legislation have together ensured that lesbian, gay and bisexual communities have the same legal protection as that previously introduced for women, people with disabilities, and black and minority ethnic communities.

It is illegal to:

- Discriminate in employment or training;
- Treat those in a civil partnership differently to married people;
- Discriminate in the provision of goods, services and facilities.

This Scheme therefore addresses issues both of service delivery and employment. However for some it remains a taboo subject. To aid the Council in its way forward for its employees and potential employees questions were included in its Equalities and Diversity Employee Questionnaire in 2005. Bearing in mind concerns from organisations such as Stonewall, the TUC and our own union representatives, not to monitor sexual orientation without sound purpose, a question was included: "If there were any questions in this questionnaire asking you about your sexual orientation, would you have answered them?" An explanation of what sexual orientation was given. 68% of respondents indicated they would. Therefore when the survey was repeated in 2007 the following question was included: "What is your sexual orientation?" The results were:

90% opposite sex
3% same sex
3% both sexes
4% prefer not to say

Accepting the reluctance of some employees even in an anonymous questionnaire to provide this information this would be in accord with the suggested national figures of 6% within society generally being from lesbian, gay and bisexual communities.

During the life of this Scheme, and as shown in the action plan activities will be carried out to establish what barriers, if any, both residents and employees experience and what steps can be taken to minimize them. As a first start services are required to consider their policies, practices and how they deliver their services and any unmet need when undertaking Equality Impact Assessments. Contracts are also being made with members of the community to take part in the Equalities Network.

SERVICE PROVISION

In 2007 the Chief Executive started a review of the officer structure. Today he and two Executive Directors form the Executive Management Team. They co-ordinate support the elected members and provide leadership to the officers. They manage the performance of the Council and enable the delivery of its corporate and strategic goals. The Chief Executive takes personal responsibility for the management of equality and diversity across the Council.

Individual functions are grouped into 12 service areas, each managed by a Head of Service. They work with Portfolio Holders to set the direction for the work of their areas and are responsible for the effective and efficient delivery of their service including equality issues.

Portfolio Plans have recently been produced to show how the corporate and strategic goals will be achieved in practice. These are high level plans which inform more detailed service plans and strategies.

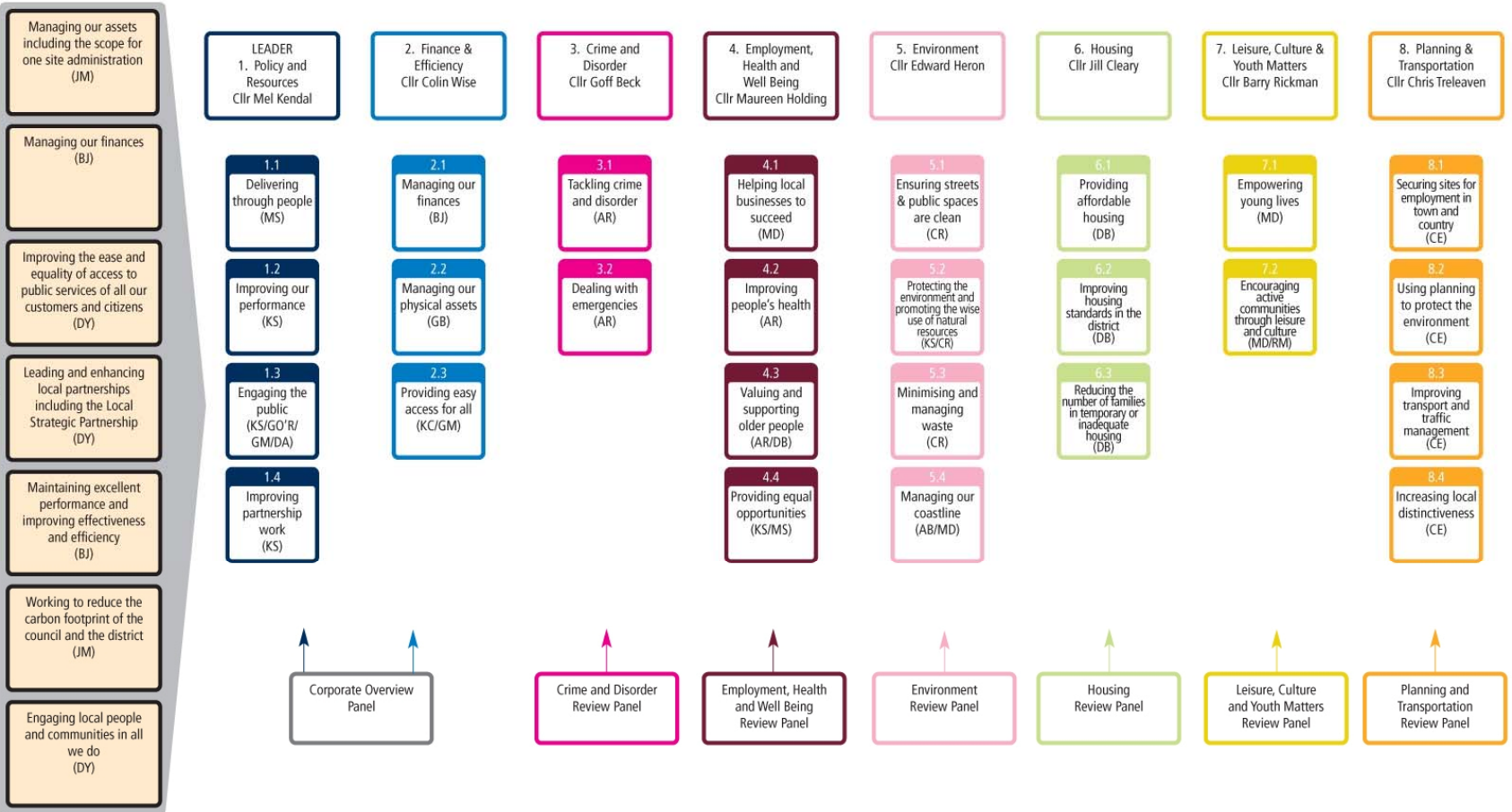
The duty to carry out Equality Impact Assessments rests with the Heads of Services. It is these assessments that assist Services to develop their service provision to remove barriers or fulfill unmet needs. The Council has chosen to assess services against age, sexual orientation and religion or belief as well as disability, race and gender.

Following the publication of the Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes, the Equality Impact Assessment schedules were combined and a programme of intended schedules was produced for the following three years – 2006/07, 2007/08 and 2008/09. The Schedule for 2008/09 can be seen as Appendix Three. Early in 2009 Heads of Service will reconsider their services against the equality duties and a new three year programme of assessments will be produced.

Heads of Service are also responsible for undertaking predictive equality impact assessments for proposed new policies and major changes in service delivery. The results of the assessments are included in the reports to Cabinet so that members can make informed decisions.

Roles and Responsibilities

Executive Management Team



EMPLOYMENT

Before an organisation can inspire others it is necessary to ensure its own employment practices and workforce reflect the community it serves and understands the issues and needs they have.

As an IIP accredited organisation the Council understands the importance of development and training. Over the years a range of training has been undertaken. This has included specific training on the statutory duties, training by services on their particular needs, generic training and awareness raising generally and recently multicultural training focusing on race, religion or belief. In 2008 the multicultural training will be run and will include meeting disabled people. In between the formal training approximately three newsletters a year are published and a range of information made available on the employee intranet. Training of senior managers and members is undertaken as opportunities arise.

To establish employees needs and opinions equality based surveys have been undertaken in 2005 and 2007. They established:

- 83% of employees are aware of current equalities legislation in 2007. This was 80% in 2005
- 72% of employees are prepared to challenge unacceptable behaviour in 2007. This was 55% in 2005.
- 91% of employees understand their responsibilities in regard of equalities in 2007. This was similar in 2005.
- Employees in 2007 are still experiencing or witnessing unacceptable behaviour in the workplace, eg: banter with unwelcome overtones (7.1%) or unwelcome behaviours in the workplace (1.8%) but this was an improvement on 2005 which was 20%.
- Number of employees needing training almost halved between 2005 and 2007. The training needs remaining are in working with communities and minority groups.
- 65% of employees found the equality newsletters useful.
- 94% of employees in 2007 are aware of the translation service available to them. This was 80% in 2005.
- 6% of employees in 2007 felt they had been asked inappropriate questions at interview.
- 12.7% of employees felt they were doing the same or similar job to someone of the opposite sex but were being paid less in 2007. This was 17% in 2005.

These responses indicate training and development and access to information have benefited employees between 2005 and 2007.

In response to questions about themselves employees said:

- 1% stated they were BME
- 2.7% had a faith other than Christianity
- 1.2% had needs arising from their faith or culture but they all said their needs were met
- 14% had a disability (physical or mental) but only 6% experienced barriers at work
- 8% experienced age related issues at work
- 1% experienced gender related issues at work
- 2.7% stated their sexual orientation was same sex with a further 4.5% preferring not to say.

The following tables show the employee profiles of 2007/08. It can be seen that the workforce does not fully mirror the profile of the community.

| Total Number Of Employees Trained | Female | Male | % Female | % Male |
|-----------------------------------|--------|------|----------|--------|
| 920 | 506 | 414 | 55 | 45 |

| Number Of Top 5% Earners | Female | Male | % Female | % Male |
|--------------------------|--------|------|----------|--------|
| 56 | 16 | 40 | 28% | 72% |

| | Total | Male | Female |
|---------------------------------|-------|------|--------|
| No of harassment cases | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Grievances | 8 | 6 | 2 |
| Disciplinary | 11 | 8 | 3 |
| Capability (including sickness) | 11 | 8 | 3 |
| Redundancy | 16 | 3 | 13 |

EMPLOYEE STATISTICS FOR 2006/07 AND 2007/08

| | 2006/07 | | | | | 2007/08 | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|------------|----------|-------------------|-------|---------|------------|----------|-------------------|-------|
| | In Post | Applicants | Promoted | Ceased Employment | P/T | In Post | Applicants | Promoted | Ceased Employment | P/T |
| | 1448 | 5921 | 54 | 348 | 668 | 1465 | 3792 | 79 | 277 | 698 |
| Gender: | | | | | | | | | | |
| Male % | 43.51 | 51.28 | 42.59 | 44.83 | 30.99 | 43.55 | 53.24 | 48.10 | 45.49 | 31.66 |
| Female % | 56.49 | 48.66 | 57.41 | 55.17 | 69.01 | 56.45 | 46.65 | 51.90 | 54.51 | 68.34 |
| Race: | | | | | | | | | | |
| White% | 98.00 | 0.17 | 100.00 | 97.41 | 97.01 | 94.54 | 0.55 | 98.73 | 96.03 | 91.12 |
| Asian % | 0.28 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.15 | 0.27 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.36 | 0.14 |
| Black % | 0.21 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.15 | 0.14 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Chinese % | 0.21 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.29 | 0.30 | 0.14 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.36 | 0.14 |
| Mixed % | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.29 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Other % | 1.31 | 99.83 | 0.00 | 2.01 | 2.40 | 4.91 | 99.42 | 1.27 | 3.25 | 8.60 |
| Disability: | | | | | | | | | | |
| Yes % | 3.38 | 0.03 | 7.41 | 2.59 | 1.65 | 2.87 | 0.03 | 2.53 | 2.89 | 1.58 |
| No % | 96.06 | 0.14 | 92.59 | 96.26 | 97.60 | 93.86 | 0.55 | 97.47 | 95.67 | 92.84 |
| Unknown % | 0.55 | 99.83 | 0.00 | 1.15 | 0.75 | 3.28 | 99.42 | 0.00 | 1.44 | 5.59 |

| | 2006/07 | | | | | 2007/08 | | | | |
|-------------|---------|------------|----------|-------------------|-------|---------|------------|----------|-------------------|-------|
| | In Post | Applicants | Promoted | Ceased Employment | P/T | In Post | Applicants | Promoted | Ceased Employment | P/T |
| | 1448 | 5921 | 54 | 348 | 668 | 1465 | 3792 | 79 | 277 | 698 |
| Age: | | | | | | | | | | |
| 16-25 % | 21.34 | 10.20 | 14.81 | 37.07 | 36.68 | 22.46 | 11.92 | 17.72 | 37.55 | 37.11 |
| 26-35 % | 16.71 | 7.13 | 24.07 | 15.80 | 17.07 | 16.11 | 8.23 | 17.72 | 18.41 | 16.33 |
| 36-45 % | 21.75 | 7.90 | 29.63 | 15.52 | 18.41 | 21.50 | 10.50 | 34.18 | 14.08 | 17.91 |
| 46-55 % | 22.03 | 6.92 | 20.37 | 11.78 | 14.82 | 21.50 | 10.52 | 18.99 | 10.11 | 15.33 |
| 56-65 % | 16.37 | 2.84 | 11.11 | 16.38 | 9.58 | 16.45 | 4.96 | 11.39 | 16.61 | 9.89 |
| 66+ % | 1.80 | 0.14 | 0.00 | 3.45 | 3.44 | 1.91 | 0.24 | 0.00 | 3.25 | 3.30 |
| Other | 0.00 | 64.87 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 53.64 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |

- Please note that this Authority does not currently collect data on religion or belief or sexual orientation

PARTNERSHIPS

“Future Matters” is the Sustainable Community Strategy for the New Forest District 2008-2012. Its vision is “a thriving New Forest where people, the environment and the economy provide an exceptional quality of life”.

The Strategy links with the Hampshire Local Area Agreement, Hampshire Sustainable Community Strategy, the New Forest Local Development Framework, the Council’s Corporate Plan “Leading Our Forest Communities”, core Strategies, Community Plans and our partners Strategies to ensure we work together for the benefit of our residents. The work is guided by the Local Strategic Partnership and the Council is an active member of it.

Future Matters has a number of desired outcomes and Community Action Networks (CANs) have been set up to deliver them.

The Active Communities CAN has four priorities over the three years:

- improving community engagement
- using community planning as a key tool
- integrating the impact of equalities issues into service delivery
- increasing opportunities to volunteer

The Equalities Network Steering Group has been tasked with identifying some of the barriers that prevent marginalised groups from fully engaging with the Council and Partners. Once the barriers are better understood the group will propose actions to help overcome the barriers.

The Older Persons CAN has been recently established and is in the process of developing its action plan. However the following actions have been identified:

- to create an older persons action plan
- develop an Older Persons Wellbeing Strategy
- identify existing networks
- investigate barriers
- investigate developing older people as a resource

The Older Persons Focus Group has been identified as a likely group to take these actions forward.

Future Matters aims also to deliver some Flagship Projects, one of which should assist with improving the accessibility of services for everyone. The project is “Establishing a common community engagement framework for the New Forest District”. The Active Communities CAN will have a role in understanding how best to inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower communities and helping communities know about the opportunities they have for participation. This is another area where the Equalities Network Steering Group will be active.

The Council also works in partnership in more informal ways to promote equality and to raise awareness of equalities issues.

The Council is a member of the County wide officer group called the Hampshire & Isle Of Wight Race & Equalities Network. The group comprises of representatives from the District & Borough Councils within Hampshire, the three unitary authorities (Southampton, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight), Hampshire County Council, Hampshire Constabulary, the Police Authority, the Primary Care Trust, the Fire & Rescue Service, Community Action Hampshire and the various areas of the Judicial System. We work together to raise awareness of equalities, share best practice and, where possible, work on joint projects.

Within the district the Council works with other agencies such as New Forest Community First, Town and Parish Councils and voluntary groups. For instance, New Forest Access For All helped produce the guidance on Access Statements and also assisted in the training of planning officers; a group of people with disabilities helped with the design of the wet changing room for a Health and Leisure Centre; Southampton Football Club helped to deliver a series of anti-race sessions to school children; Forest Bus provides play facilities for the children of Gypsy and Traveller families; the Community Planning Guidance involves representatives of local areas in the development of Parish/Town Plans.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT

Getting people involved in shaping their local communities is an important role for Councils. This is recognised in the Local Strategic Partnership's (LSP) strategy document and the Council's Corporate Plan. Indeed the Council has had a Consultation Policy since 2005 with guidance to employees on when and how it should undertake consultation.

However what is meant by engagement, involvement and consultation and when it is appropriate to use one rather than another can be confusing especially as some of the terms are used interchangeably. The Council and the LSP are working together to establish a common community engagement framework for the New Forest area. It is intended that this framework will recognise the various ways the process works and that each method has its own vital part to play in the overall aim of increasing community impact. This work will contribute to the Council's Duty to Involve from April 09 and the Communities In Control white paper.

The following table outlines how this strategy is evolving. The examples show what is already being done and the ideas for the future are actions that are being considered for future action. Many of the examples show how the Council works to understand the needs of minority groups and engage with all of its communities.

ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

| | INFORM | CONSULT | INVOLVE | COLLABORATE | EMPOWER |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Public Participation Goal | To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions. | To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions. | To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered | To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution. | To place the final decision–making in the hands of the public. |
| Promise to the Public | We will keep you informed | We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision | We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision | We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the max extent possible | We will implement what you decide |
| NFDC examples (actual) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of Members - community - scrutiny - executive • New Forest Today • Website • Information offices • Council tax leaflet • Signage • Information pages eg Equality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of Members - community - scrutiny - executive • Citizens’ Panel • Young People’s Panel • Focus Groups • Web based consultation • Networks eg Equalities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of Members - community - scrutiny - executive • health & leisure centres user groups • tenants liaison • Equalities Network • DES Advisory Group | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability groups inputting into service & corporate issues eg audits of buildings, design & access statement guidance, providing planning applicants with advice on design & access issues • Participatory Needs Assessments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Election process • Participatory Needs Assessments • PRIME |

| | INFORM | CONSULT | INVOLVE | COLLABORATE | EMPOWER |
|---|--|---|---|--|---|
| NFDC examples (actual) continued | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surgeries • Seminars • Exhibitions and displays • Roadshows for business and smoke free | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major written consultations eg Future Matters - Issues and Options • A wide variety of service driven consultation • Shared surveys and results • Meetings with voluntary groups • Surgeries • Seminars • Scores on doors • Air Quality Management Areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Control Advisory Group • Daily surveys about how we perform on requests for service • Safer Food Better Business • Childsafe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market Town health checks • Parish Plans • CCTV external panels • Anti Social Behaviour Panels • Taxi Consultative Committee | |
| NFDC – ideas for the future | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More fact sheets • Continue development of Web site • More “open houses” / events • Council/ partnership radio station • Use technology as a key tool • Cabinet meetings in the community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More opportunities for public comment via information routes • More focus groups • More surveys • More public meetings • Meet the Cabinet “roadshow” • Use technology as a key tool | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More emphasis on workshops • Deliberate polling • Review panels working in communities • Use technology as a key tool | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen advisory committees • Consensus building • Participatory decision making • Use technology as a key tool • Performance monitoring role by advisory groups eg DES • More area based working • More community of interest focus | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen juries • Ballots / Referenda • Delegated decisions • Use technology as a key tool • Allocating funds to community groups • Council tax payers to have options for tax increase • Crime and Disorder “Meet the People” |

THE NEXT THREE YEARS

The following describe what the Council intend to achieve in the next three years to comply both with our statutory obligations and with the commitment to equalities it has made. These actions can be described as aims and objectives, or target and goal setting. Our key aim will be to have the highest level of the Equality Framework and meet all our statutory obligations. These are however the outcomes the Council wants to achieve:

- The Council and the Local Strategic Partnership agencies understand how best to inform, consult, involve, collaborate with and empower communities;
- Communities have equal opportunity to participate and they know about the ways they can participate to get involved in the things the Council and LSP agencies do;
- Communities help shape the services they receive;
- Service delivery is accessible to and meets the needs of all users including minority groups;
- New Forest residents including minority groups are satisfied with the services provided by the Council;
- We have raised awareness within the wider community of the need to consider minority groups in their activities. This includes the provision of a range of information;
- We value and celebrate the diversity of the district;
- We make our information accessible in a range of ways to meet our residents needs;
- Our employees understand the equality issues and are proactive in promoting them;
- We enable employees and the public to report hate crimes and incidences of harassment;
- We have published a single equality Scheme and sought stakeholder comments;
- Our employment profile matches that of the profile of the district;
- We have implemented the actions that arose from the Equal Pay audit;
- Our buildings and those we use are accessible.

The following table shows the activities we plan to undertake in 2008/09 against the outcomes. Action Plans for future years will be published on the website annually.

| Outcome | Subject/Task | Begin | Target |
|---|--|--------------|---------------|
| Understanding how best to engage with communities | Equality Network Steering Group – research the barriers to effective communication | Sept 08 | March 09 |
| | Equality Network Steering Group – extend membership of partners | April 08 | March 09 |
| Equal opportunity to participate | Equality Network – engage on Equality Impact Assessments | Sept 08 | March 09 |
| | Corporate Equality Scheme 2008-11 – publish for consultation | Aug 08 | Sept 08 |
| | Develop Equality Network membership | Aug 08 | Sept 08 |
| | Promote Citizens Panel, Young Person's Panel and Equalities Network | April 08 | March 09 |
| Communities to help shape the services they receive | Gender Equality Scheme 2007-10 Year 2 action plan | April 08 | March 09 |
| | Disability Equality Scheme 2007-09 Year 2 and part Year 3 action plan | April 08 | March 09 |
| | Publish Race Equality Scheme 2008-11 for consultation and work on Year 1 action plan | April 08 | May 08 |
| Services are accessible and meet the needs of users | Equality Impact Assessments – undertake those programmed for 2008-09, consult and publish | April 08 | March 09 |
| | Equality Impact Assessment Schedule – revise for 2009-11 | April 08 | July 08 |
| | Service Equality Standard Improvement Action Plans – work with services to identify actions required | April 08 | March 09 |

| Outcome | Subject/Task | Begin | Target |
|--|---|--------------|---------------|
| New Forest residents including minority groups are satisfied with the services provided by the Council | Place survey | July 08 | Autumn 08 |
| | Scrutiny & Audit – continue to work with community, members and partners to scrutinize and monitor progress | April 08 | March 08 |
| Achieve highest level | Equality Standard external validation for Level 3 | April 08 | Oct 08 |
| | Equality Framework – strategy to adopt and work towards level of excellence | Jan 09 | March 09 |
| Raise awareness within community | Website – ensure information is kept up to date and promotion carried out | April 08 | March 09 |
| | Prepare for Equalities Toolkit Workshop in April 2009 | Jan 09 | March 09 |
| | Provide information for newsletters to Small and Medium Enterprises | April 08 | March 09 |
| Value and celebrate diversity | Work with partners to prepare for a diversity day in New Milton in Summer 2009 | Sept 08 | March 09 |
| | Publish press releases on good news stories | April 08 | March 09 |
| Make information accessible in a range of formats | Promote alternative format leaflet | April 08 | March 09 |
| | Awareness raising training for employees | Oct 08 | Dec 09 |
| Members and employees understand equalities and are more proactive | Awareness raising training for employees | Oct 08 | Dec 09 |
| | Intranet – ensure information up to date | April 08 | March 09 |
| | Produce employee newsletters three times a year | April 08 | March 09 |
| | Corporate Equality Group – undertake 2008-09 action plan | April 08 | March 09 |

| Outcome | Subject/Task | Begin | Target |
|---|--|--------------|---------------|
| Employees and public able to report hate crimes or incidences of harassment | Promote incident reporting form with employees and in the community | Nov 08 | Dec 08 |
| Publish a single equality Scheme | To keep up to date with Equality Bill and take action once it becomes law | | |
| Employee profile matches that of community | Employment – monitor employee levels against community profile | March 09 | March 09 |
| | Undertake training of employees on recruitment | April 08 | March 08 |
| Equal Pay Audit | Undertake actions arising from Equal Pay audit. | April 08 | March 09 |
| Buildings are accessible | Carry out programme of access audits of Council buildings programmed for 2008-09. | April 08 | March 09 |
| | DDA Schedule of Building Works – carry out actions programmed for 2008-09 and seek funding for 2009-10 onwards | April 08 | March 09 |

MONITORING AND SCRUTINY

To ensure the Council's actions meet both our legal duties and our commitment on equalities the Council has adopted the Equality Standard for Local Government to measure itself against. The Standard has five levels and the Council has self assessed itself at Level 3 in 2006 setting equality objectives and targets. This compares to the national picture where 24.1% of Councils have Level 3 and above.

| BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------|--|
| BV2a: Level Reached Against Equality Standard 2006/07 | | | |
| Level | Type Of Authority | Number | % Total No Of Authorities (415) |
| 5 | London Development Agency | 1 | 1.5% |
| | Greater London Authority | 1 | |
| | London Boroughs | 3 | |
| | District | 1 | |
| | Total | 6 | |
| 4 | London Boroughs | 7 | 3.6% |
| | Districts | 1 | |
| | Metropolitan Districts | 5 | |
| | Passenger Transport Authorities | 1 | |
| | Transport For London | 1 | |
| | Total | 15 | |
| 3 | London Boroughs | 15 | 19% |
| | Districts | 21 | |
| | County's | 11 | |
| | Metropolitan Districts | 12 | |
| | Passenger Transport Authorities | 3 | |
| | Unitary Authorities | 17 | |
| | Total | 79 | |
| 2 | London Boroughs | 8 | 46.5% |
| | Districts | 110 | |
| | Counties | 20 | |
| | Metropolitan Districts | 18 | |
| | Passenger Transport Authorities | 1 | |
| | National Parks | 1 | |
| | Unitary Authorities | 25 | |
| | Total | 193 | |
| 1 | Counties | 3 | 26% |
| | Districts | 96 | |
| | Metropolitan Districts | 1 | |
| | National Parks | 2 | |
| | Passenger Transport Authorities | 1 | |
| | Unitary Authorities | 5 | |
| | Total | 108 | |
| 0 | Districts | 9 | 3.4% |
| | National Parks | 5 | |
| | Total | 14 | |

The Council is presently preparing for its external audit at Level 3 while continuing to work towards Level 4. Further information can be seen in Appendix Four.

In April 2009 the Equality Standard will be replaced by the Equality Framework. The Council hopes the external validation will enable it to be judged as performing at the Achieving level of the new framework and it will then continue towards achieving Excellent level.

It is also necessary that we carry out ongoing self assessment and scrutiny of our equalities work to ensure we are continually improving. This is a role that is undertaken by both officers and members particularly the Employment, Health and Wellbeing Panel.

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APPENDICES

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CURRENT EQUALITY LEGISLATION

Equal Pay Act 1970 (Amended)

This gives an individual a right to the same contractual pay and benefits as a person of the opposite sex in the same employment, where the man and the woman are doing: like work; work rated as equivalent under an analytical job evaluation study; or work that is proved to be of equal value.

Sex Discrimination Act 1975

The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of sex. Sex discrimination is unlawful in employment, education, advertising or when providing housing, goods, services or facilities. It is unlawful to discriminate because someone is married, in employment or advertisements for jobs.

Race Relations Act 1976

The Act prohibits discrimination on racial grounds in the areas of employment, education, and the provision of goods, facilities, services and premises.

Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Outlaws the discrimination of disabled people in employment, the provision of goods, facilities and services or the administration or management of premises.

The Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999

The Act seeks to prevent sex discrimination relating to gender reassignment. It clarified the law for transsexual people in relation to equal pay and treatment in employment and training.

Race Relations Amendment Act 2000

Places a statutory duty on all public bodies to promote equal opportunity, eliminate racial discrimination and promote good relations between different racial groups.

Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulation 2003

Introduced new definitions of indirect discrimination and harassment, new burden of proof requirements, continuing protection after employment ceases, new exemption for a determinate job requirement and the removal of certain other exemptions.

Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulation 2003

The directive protects against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in employment, vocational training, promotion, and working conditions.

Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulation 2003

The directive protects against discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in employment, vocational training, promotion and working conditions.

Civil Partnerships Act 2004

Provides legal recognition and parity of treatment for same-sex couples and married couples, including employment benefits and pension rights.

Gender Recognition Act 2004

The purpose of the Act is to provide transsexual people with legal recognition in their acquired gender. Legal recognition follows from the issue of a full gender recognition certificate by a gender recognition panel.

The Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005

Introduces new definitions of indirect discrimination and harassment, explicitly prohibits discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy or maternity leave, sets out the extent to which it is discriminatory to pay a woman less than she would otherwise have been paid due to pregnancy or maternity issues.

Disability Discrimination Amendment Act 2005

Introduces a positive duty on public bodies to promote equality for disabled people.

Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006

The Act seeks to stop people from intentionally using threatening words or behaviour to stir up hatred against somebody because of what they believe.

Employment Equality (Age) Regulation 2006

Protects against discrimination on grounds of age in employment and vocational training. Prohibits direct and indirect discrimination, victimisation, harassment and instructions to discriminate.

Equality Act 2006

Establishes a single Commission for Equality and Human Rights by 2007 that replaces the three existing commissions. Introduces a positive duty on public sector bodies to promote equality of opportunity between women and men and eliminate sex discrimination. Protects access discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in terms of access to good facilities and services.

Equality Bill 2008

Combines the three existing equality Schemes into a single Scheme but also includes age, sexual orientation and religion or belief. It also extends protection grounds of age to goods, services and facilities.

RESIDENTS SURVEY RESULTS

In June 2008 a survey was carried out with residents to find out how accessible the Council is to all its residents, in particular those with any specific needs with an aim to identify any barriers that may exist so that they could be removed. A similar survey had been carried out in 2004 and this would allow comparisons to be made to see whether the Council was improving or whether there were areas needing more attention.

The survey was circulated to members of the Citizens Panel and the Equalities Network. Individuals were also approached by the Community Development Worker when the opportunity arose. The responses were as follows:

Citizens Panel (total 919 members) = 61% response

Equalities Network (total members 80, some already on Citizens Panel) = 30%

Other BME residents = 3 responses

From these responses the following information was gathered.

71% of respondents rated the Council as either very good or good in providing services for those with specific needs, which was an improvement from 61% in 2004. It was also noted however that no-one had needed to contact the Council due to their specific need.

A question was then asked whether individuals would be interested in seeing information on improvements the Council is making to ensure services are more accessible. The response to this was 68% who were either very interested or interested, which was an increase on 2004 when 61% responded as such.

A question was asked where information on the Council should be published. This had not been asked before, but high responses were 84% free local papers, 71% in New Forest Today, 58% on web. There was also an opportunity for suggestions to be made – responses included notice boards, libraries and on local radio stations.

The next section asked questions about racial harassment and reporting. 25% of residents were aware of the Council's racial harassment policy and reporting forms. This was a drop from 2004 when 33% responded. This is an area that the Council has been working on with the Police to improve so that harassment of all areas of equality can be reported, which when finalised would have a publicity campaign included.

It was asked where these forms should be available. Suggested areas were Information Offices, the Citizens Advice Bureau, police stations, town and parish council offices on online via the website. Other suggestions made were local shops, post offices, schools and colleges, religious places and in publications.

When residents were asked if they would make a report if they witnessed or experienced, or if became aware of an incident the following response was received:

- 74% would if experienced (67% in 2004)
- 69% would if witnessed (64% in 2004)
- Only 54% if aware of it (51% in 2004)

When asked if they would not report it, what would be the reason, the response was:

- 72% if scared (35% in 2004)
- 43% if first time occurred (15% in 2004)
- 23% if considered to be minor racial harassment (53% in 2004)

The questions then turned to specific services within the Council. 14% had contacted Council and 6% had contacted Housing. With both of these services, no difficulties experienced were due to equalities issues.

When asked about Customer Services there was a 31% response, 12% saying it was due to the Council's approach to age. This would need to be investigated further.

Finally the questions turned to all council services, with 81% of respondents indicating they would know where to go to get information. Most would either visit the website, contact their local information office or ring the council.

At the end of the questionnaire, individuals were asked if they wished to be involved further with regards to equalities and perhaps join Equalities Network. 10% were interested in specific needs relating to age, 5% for disability, 2% for race, 1% for sexual orientation and also religion or belief. These individuals had left contact information and would be contacted with more information about the Network.

PROGRAMME OF EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

The statutory equality duties include the requirement for public bodies to assess their policies and functions for their relevance to them. The Council has chosen to assess the impact against age, sexual orientation and religion or belief as well.

Therefore the following publication of the Disability, Gender and Race Equality Schemes, the three existing schedules, were combined and a programme of intended assessments was produced for 2006/07, 2007/08 and 2008/09. These have been published on the website so the public are aware when individual assessments will be carried out and can contribute to them if they wish. As assessments are completed they are published on the website and the schedules updated. The up to date schedules and assessments can be seen in full at www.newforest.gov.uk. The identified actions are included in Service Action Plans. The programme of Equality Impact Assessments for 2008/09 is as follows, with the next three year programme being produced in 2009 for 2009/12.

| SERVICE PLAN | FUNCTION/POLICY | TARGET DATE | DATE COMPLETE |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------------|---------------|
| Communications | Communications with the public, via news media, and within the organisation | Sept 2008 | |
| | Graphics | Sept 2008 | |
| | Events | Sept 2008 | |
| Communities & Employment | | | |
| Communities & Employment | Tourism Service, Destination, visitor information centres, marketing, environment | Aug 2008 | |
| | Play and Sports Development | Aug 2008 | |
| | Employment | Aug 2008 | |
| | Partnerships agreements, grants and open space | Aug 2008 | |
| | Coastal Management, Beach Huts and Catering | Aug 2008 | |
| Customer Information Services | | | |
| Customer Information Services | Concessionary Travel | July 2008 | July 2008 |

| SERVICE PLAN | FUNCTION/POLICY | TARGET DATE | DATE COMPLETE |
|-----------------------------|---|--------------------|----------------------|
| Environment Services | Grounds maintenance | Nov 2008 | |
| | Building cleaning | Nov 2008 | |
| | Street cleaning | Nov 2008 | |
| | Vehicle and plant maintenance | Nov 2008 | |
| | | | |
| Financial Services | Advice and support of managers | Jan 2009 | |
| | | | |
| Housing | Central control and lifeline service and Sheltered Housing | July 2008 | |
| | Housing needs service, estate management and resident participation | July 2008 | |
| | Rent collection and arrears and right to buy | July 2008 | |
| | Disabled facilities grants, and Repairs and maintenance | July 2008 | |
| | Provision of housing | July 2008 | |
| | Housing strategy and private sector | July 2008 | |
| | | | |
| Human Resources | Health and Wellbeing | Sept 2008 | |
| | Recruitment and selection including under represented groups | Sept 2008 | |
| | Organisational development | Sept 2008 | |
| | Supporting NF National Park | Sept 2008 | |
| | Pay and reward | Sept 2008 | |
| | Skills and capacity | Sept 2008 | |

| SERVICE PLAN | FUNCTION/POLICY | TARGET DATE | DATE COMPLETE |
|--|---|--------------------|----------------------|
| Human Resources (contd) | Leadership | Sept 2008 | |
| | Consider organisational development implications of One Site administration | Sept 2008 | |
| | Review of Council Culture | Sept 2008 | |
| | | | |
| ICT | Technical support and advice to users | March 2009 | |
| | Strategic development and implementation of ICT | March 2009 | |
| | Maintenance of website and intranet | March 2009 | |
| | | | |
| Leisure | Health & Leisure Centres, Dibden Golf Centre | Aug 2008 | |
| | | | |
| Performance and Strategic Development | Performance Management Policy | April 2008 | April 2008 |
| | Corporate Strategy | April 2008 | April 2008 |
| | | | |
| Property Services | Central purchasing unit | Oct 2008 | |
| | Building works | Oct 2008 | |
| | Engineering design | Oct 2008 | |
| | Engineering works | Oct 2008 | |
| | Estates & Valuations | Oct 2008 | |
| | Property Services | Oct 2008 | |
| | | | |
| Cross Cutting Services | Procurement | Feb 2009 | |
| | Contact Centres | Dec 2008 | |
| | Engagement Strategy | Aug 2008 | |
| | Gypsy & Traveller Strategy | Oct 2008 | |

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EQUALITY STANDARD FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Equality Standard provides a structured framework for complying with its statutory duties and best practice on equalities. There are five levels:

- Level 1: Commitment to comprehensive equality policy
- Level 2: Assessment and consultation
- Level 3: Setting equality objectives and targets
- Level 4: Information systems and monitoring against targets
- Level 5: Achieving and reviewing outcomes

Once a Council has achieved Level 5 it is judged to have fully mainstreamed equalities into its service delivery. The activities themselves are delivered by –

- Individual Officers/Sections – There are some activities that are undertaken by an individual officer or a section that will benefit the whole Council. For example the Audit section has been responsible for ensuring agreements with contractors include the requirement that all contractors adopt the principles of equality and diversity. Another example is where the Head of Human Resources will ensure correct advice on employment and personnel issues is given. Information arising from the work of these individuals and sections will be made available within the Council.
- Service Plans – The Service Planning process is the mechanism Services use to identify any barriers to their services and to detail in their improvement plans how the barriers will be overcome. Guidance particularly on Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) is included in the Service Planning Guidance for those responsible for service planning. Although the annual review of each service plan will focus on its own service it will benefit from the equality work carried out elsewhere in the Council. The fundamental reviews will include a more detailed review of a service's equality issues. In future years service planning will also be the mechanism for identifying service objectives and targets and monitoring and reporting progress.
- Corporate Group – The Council has its Corporate Equality Group. The group has an annual work programme which is approved annually by the Executive Management Team. As well as promoting awareness and carrying out equality activities, CEG has the additional responsibility for auditing the achievement of the Equality Standard itself. The group has representation from all services and employee side. The Portfolio Holder also attends its meetings.
- Equality Unit – The Equalities Manager and Equalities Officer are a corporate resource. They provide information and advice on equalities issues and lead the officer group. They also undertake research and projects on behalf of the whole Council. They are responsible for the review of the Corporate Equality Scheme and action plans.

- Partnership Working – Many of the Council’s objectives are met by working with its many partners and equalities are no different. Specifically this includes working with the agencies of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). For example the Council is working with the LSP on the Equalities Network with members from the minorities groups to improve awareness and to undertake consultation.
- Members – Equalities has for many years been in the portfolio of the Leader of the Council. He deputized the Health and Social Inclusion Portfolio Holder to be the Equality Champion. She is a member of the officer group and is involved in many equality activities. The Corporate Overview Panel carried out Member scrutiny. Since the review of the Council’s structure in 2008 Equalities is now formally part of the Employment, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio. The Portfolio Holder has remained the Equalities Champion, however member scrutiny is undertaken by the Employment, Health and Wellbeing Panel and Corporate Overview Panel.

Equality Framework (as of 2009)

The original Equality Standard consisted of five levels. These will be consolidated into three levels:

- Level 1 – Emerging
- Level 2 – Achieving
- Level 3 – Excellent

The new framework will be constructed around five areas of change management. These reflect the four major areas of the standard, but in addition relate more directly to the new performance framework and the new Comprehensive Area Assessment.

The five areas of change management are:

- a) Knowing your community – equality mapping
- b) Place shaping, leadership, partnership and organisational commitment
- c) Community engagement and satisfaction
- d) Responsive services and customer care
- e) A modern and diverse workforce