

Eliminate, Advance and Foster

Hertsmere Borough Council's response to the General Equality Duty 2022/23



Hertsmere is a mixed rural and urban district to the north of greater London. It has a mixed population of 108,100 spread across the main settlements of Borehamwood, Bushey, Potters Bar, Radlett and the village of Shenley. Hertsmere is a relatively affluent area with low unemployment, good levels of education and a low crime rate. However, this hides significant inequalities between the wards.

Hertsmere Borough Council is committed to addressing equality and diversity, ensuring equality in all we do. Census 2021 data shows that Hertsmere's diverse communities are growing and that the borough is home to a wide range of ethnic groups. The borough is entre of Hertfordshire's Jewish community, who make up 17% of the population. Hertsmere also has a large Indian population and is home to the UK headquarters of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Bhaktivedanta Manor.

Eliminating Discrimination

- Mandatory training for all to increase knowledge of equality and diversity; help improve interaction with service users and colleagues and make staff aware of obligations under the related legislation has taken place.
- Hertsmere Borough Council is a Disability Confident Employer and as such guarantee interviews to people with disabilities who meet all essential job criteria.
- Hertsmere Borough Council undertake equality monitoring to assess our workforce profile against census information for Hertsmere. This will allow us to see if any action needs to be taken to address any significant differences.
- Hertsmere Borough Council conduct annual gender pay reviews to identify if there are any differences in pay between male and female employees
- Hertsmere Borough Council have a robust anti-harassment and bullying policy and take proactive action to respond to any concerns.
- Hertsmere Borough Council has taken an proactive role in ensuring community cohesion following the 7 October attack in Israel.

Advancing Equality of Opportunity

- Hertsmere's municipal calendar is updated annually and meeting dates are set to avoid Jewish festivals as a large proportion of councillors, and the population of Hertsmere, are Jewish. Other religious festivals also avoided are Eid (Islam), Diwali (Hindu) and Christian festivals.
- Hertsmere Borough Council ensure that council employees receive equivalent pay for work of equal value by using an analytical job evaluation scheme. A copy of our equal pay statement can be found [here](#).
- We consider flexible working requests. For instance this supports working parents, people with caring responsibilities and people with health conditions
- Hertsmere Borough Council held *Generation Hertsmere*, which was an exciting event aimed at young people looking for a steer in their careers, to get insights and advice from well known employers and new start ups.
- The Forum of Faiths is a local group organised by faith leaders from different religions and supported by Hertsmere Borough Council, which has taken an active role in promoting interfaith relations and the understanding and tolerance of different beliefs. It provides a platform for faith communities in Hertsmere to have a meaningful voice in local policy-making. We host their meetings and annual events. The Forum of Faiths is represented on the board of our Local Strategic Partnership.

Fostering good relations

- As part of our community engagement work, Hertsmere Borough Council have worked closely with our faith communities to create provision for warm spaces in the borough.
- Through our grants programme we have provided support to organisations, which reflect the growing diversity of the borough. This has included Spirit of Africa, which provided Black History Month workshops for children in Hertsmere, Diwali events, Potters Bar Christmas lights, in addition to funding for the well-established Camp Unity, which brings together children from different religious and cultural backgrounds.
- Hertsmere Borough Council recognised Pride month with a flag raising ceremony and sponsored and attended HertsPride.
- Hertsmere Borough Council marked Armed Forces Day through a flag raising ceremony and and we held a service to mark Holocaust Memorial Day.
- Hertsmere Borough Council marked the 75th Anniversary of Windrush, with an interview with a local resident who was part of the Windrush generation. Hertsmere Borough Council also marked Black History Month, with a cross partner video recognising the key Black women in history.
- The Community Safety Team in partnership with a number of agencies have held a number of Older Persons Advice, Learning and Safety events across the borough, ensuring that older people have access to a wide range of services that are available to them.
- Hertsmere Borough Council attended the Eid in the Park events, organised by the Borehamwood Islamic Society.
- Hertsmere Borough Council has marked all key religious festivals for the borough's diverse communities.