

Hertsmere Borough Council

Eliminate, Advance and Foster

(Hertsmere Borough Council's response to the General Equality duty)

The Equality Act came into force on 1 October 2010. On 5 April 2011 the new Public Sector Equality Duty came into force. Hertsmere Borough Council is obliged to publish information to demonstrate compliance with the General Equality Duty. This is our report for 2017/2018.

Eliminate unlawful discrimination , harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mandatory training 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.• Dignity at Work policy aims to develop a culture where bullying, harassment and victimisation are unacceptable and not tolerated in the workplace.• A communication campaign was undertaken to inform staff and residents that abusive behaviour will not be tolerated. Reassured staff that they will receive support if they have to make a report of abusive behaviour.• We continue to work in partnership, with the Hertfordshire Modern Slavery Steering Group, towards the eradication of human trafficking and modern slavery.
Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 which are also avoided are Eid (Muslim), Diwali (Hindu) and Christian festivals.• We ensure we promote equality of opportunity for all by ensuring all employees receive pay for work of equal value. A copy of our equal pay statement can be found here on our website. Human Resources work with a company called Work Solutions who support motivated people with mental ill health, learning difficulties, Aspergers, physical disabilities and sensory needs who often find it difficult to get and keep a job. We publish our equal pay statement annually.• A new sports club for children was set up. Herts Disability Sports Foundation were in attendance along with coaches from the Foundation, Watford Football Club and the Golf Trust leading activities. 6 young people attended the sessions.• The Forum of Faiths is a local group organised by faith leaders from different religions and supported by the Council which has taken an active role in promoting inter faith relations and the understanding and tolerance of different beliefs. It provides a platform for faith communities of 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.

<p>Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hertsmere is the second most diverse district in Hertfordshire and we work very hard to bring all faiths together and practice intolerance. We renewed our commitment of solidarity to fight hatred, religious intolerance and unfair discrimination in all its forms.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although there was no specific threat against Hertsmere Jewish residents, the Community Security Trust, Hertfordshire Constabulary and the Hertsmere Community Safety Partnership worked together to ensure the safety and security of the Jewish community.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are working with Hertfordshire Adult and Family Learning Service and a local educational charity to enhance verbal and written English skills; support migrants to develop a greater understanding of British culture and practise and to support them to integrate better with their local communities. Those migrants arriving from Poland, Romania and the Indian sub-continent are the primary focus of this project. To date, we have worked with 33 migrants.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have maintained our level of funding to the voluntary sector. Through our grants programme we have provided support to organisations delivering services for those with disabilities and promoting cultural cohesion. This included workshops and an event during Black History month; tennis coaching and fitness training in tennis; providing archery and family orienteering for young disabled and transportation and travel costs for partially sighted and blind people to enable them to attend support services. • In Potters Bar, the Hindu Festival of Colour was celebrated through funding from local councillors; • The universal language of football brought together schoolchildren from primary schools across Hertsmere to learn more about different faiths at a special Diversity event organised by Arsenal FC. Approximately 55 children from primary and secondary schools were taught about Islamic, Jewish and Christian traditions at the event as well as participating in a physical activity; • We recognised Armed Forces Day by holding a ceremony and we also held a service to mark Holocaust Day.

The Hertsmere Context

Key Facts and Figures

Hertsmere is a mixed rural and urban district to the north of greater London. It has a population of 104,000 (mid year 2017 population estimate) spread across the main settlements of Borehamwood, Bushey, Potters Bar, Radlett and the village of Shenley.

Hertsmere covers an area of 100 km² (38.6 sq miles), 80% of which is Green Belt. The main settlements are Borehamwood and Elstree, Potters Bar, Bushey, Radlett and Shenley.

Hertsmere is a particularly diverse community and is home to a wide range of ethnic groups. and is the centre of Hertfordshire's Jewish community making up 14.38% of the population. There is also a large Indian population of 3,723 people, who mainly follow the Hindu faith and is home to the UK headquarters of the International Society for Khrishna Consciousness, Bhaktivedanta Manor.

Hertsmere is a relatively affluent area with low unemployment, good levels of education and a low crime rate. However, this hides significant variations between wards.

Hertsmere Borough Council is a public service organisation whose purpose is to deliver high quality, value for money services for our communities. Our vision 'working with you, for you, improving our communities, our places' reflects our commitment to be an enterprising council, plan for the future and support our communities.

One of our core values is 'ensuring equality in all we do'. We continue to promote a cohesive community by supporting organisations such as the Forum of Faiths.

During 2018-2019 disabled facilities grants were completed to a total value of £831,018. In addition to this, £276,621 was committed for ongoing grants and a further 113 enquiries were received for disabled facilities grant aid.

In 2017, the Government introduced legislation that made it statutory for organisations with 250 or more employees to report annually on their gender pay gap. Government departments are covered by the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 which came into force on 31 March 2017. These regulations underpin the Public Sector Equality Duty and require the relevant organisations to publish their gender pay gap annually by 30 March. This includes mean and median gender pay gaps; the mean and median gender bonus gaps; the proportion of men and women who received bonuses and the proportions of male and female employees in each pay quartile. The full report will be published on our website by 31 March 2019.

Published January 2019