

East Lindsey District Council and the Equality Act (2010)

Equality and Diversity

Equality legislation was simplified by the **Equality Act 2010**, which requires our Council to meet the **Public Sector Equality Duty**. We will aim to fulfil our legal duties, not just because we must, but because our vision requires us to.

Our vision for East Lindsey is “A District with healthy, prosperous, vibrant people and places”. This cannot be achieved without action to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Our **Equality Objectives** are central to our **Corporate Strategy**:

- **Enabling people to get actively involved in their community, and**
- **Improving equality of opportunity and life chances**

We want everyone to feel part of their community, with opportunities to influence our policies and services. Our approach puts people, both our customers and our staff, at the heart of what we do.

Our Council wants to do a great job. We want to do our best to provide services that meet customers' needs. We will ask our customers about their needs rather than making assumptions, valuing what they tell us and using this in the decisions we make.

We want to work closely with our communities, treating everyone fairly and delivering and commissioning services based on their needs. However, we will not always be able to provide everything. We do recognise that sometimes, inequitable treatment may occur. If this happens we will do our best to rectify the situation and learn from it.

In difficult economic times and with limited resources, it is even more important that we understand the needs of our customers so that we can provide services that are appropriate to their needs and are cost effective.

When we introduce a new policy or service, or make changes to a policy (such as stopping a service or delivering it in a different way) or plan a new project we will think very carefully about how it might affect our customers and staff and will ask their views. We will do our best to make sure that everyone understands and can respond to our questions.

We will consider the potential for adverse impact and will aim to minimise this. Where a proposed change may have a negative effect we will assess the risks and try to prevent or reduce any adverse consequences.

This approach will help us to provide fair access to services for all our customers whatever their individual circumstances.

East Lindsey District Council's Community

East Lindsey's population is made up of long-term residents and new arrivals drawn by the area's quality of life, its coastal aspect and specific job opportunities.

We aim to understand the composition of our community to help us deliver appropriate services. In general terms:

- our population is older than elsewhere, as people are living longer and many older people choose the area as a location for their retirement.
- linked to this, the local population has a higher than average proportion of residents with disabilities and long-term adverse health conditions requiring support to live independently.
- many younger people move away after school, for further education or employment elsewhere.
- some people's job roles, such as the Forces, require them to be mobile.
- many people live in mobile homes or caravans as "temporary residents" and are often less well known to local service providers.
- The area attracts seasonal workers from both the UK and abroad in recognition of the dynamics of the local economy.

Community Engagement and Accountability

East Lindsey District Council believes it has a leading role to play in promoting equality and diversity in the community, in our own services and in our work with partners and suppliers.

Engaging with communities is vital to developing services. Engagement can take a number of forms:

- we communicate with communities to raise awareness of our services
- we consult communities for their views to shape our decisions and how we deliver services
- we build relationships with community groups and representative organisations to enable scrutiny of our progress
- we support and enable groups to act independently.

In 2012-13, the Council will refresh its Community Engagement Strategy and will consult widely on this to ensure that it takes account of new technologies and of the needs of those who share the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act.

Community Groups

There are many organisations that provide support and representation to specific groups. We have good links with some, but we are conscious that we may not be aware of others. If you are part of a group which would like to work with us on Equality issues, please contact us to discuss this further.

Community: Recent Activity

This page provides access to information on our recent activity to promote equality and diversity. In 2010-11 and 2011-12, we have:

- Been an active partner in Lincolnshire arrangements for Safeguarding Children (rated as outstanding by Ofsted) and Vulnerable Adults.
- Delivered Supported Housing Services to young people and families across the District, preventing homelessness and increasing access to advice and benefits.
- Been an active partner in the Lincolnshire "Excellent Ageing" initiative.
- Actively supported and promoted Lincolnshire Carers and Young Carers Partnerships.
- Researched the numbers of people living in caravans with a special focus on their needs in the event of a local emergency situation.
- Actively supported plans for a new extra care housing scheme for Skegness.
- Supported and promoted intergenerational activity programmes with our partners.
- Supported and promoted work fairs with our partners.
- Introduced a refurbishment programme for local public conveniences including an increase in the number of "Changing Places" facilities.

Case Studies: You will shortly be able to see specific case studies for these and other work programmes:

East Lindsey District Council's Workforce

East Lindsey District Council is an equal opportunities employer and aims to ensure that all employees and job applicants are treated fairly. We are conscious of the profile of our community and aim to have a workforce which is representative of the community that we serve.

One way to assess employees experience in the workplace and to ensure it is fair, is by monitoring the data of key areas of our employment practice. This can help us to assess the effectiveness of our People Management policies and practices, identify any areas of concern for further investigation or action, and also to assess whether we are representative of our community. It also enables us to fulfil our commitments to ensuring employment practices are free from discrimination and to meet our obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Working for the Council

We are an ambitious, people focused organisation which aims for excellence. As an equal opportunities employer, we aim to ensure that all employees and job applicants are treated fairly. We liaise with Trades Unions through our Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) regarding employment policy and practice.

Two Ticks - Positive about Disabled People

East Lindsey District Council welcomes applications from disabled people, and has been awarded the 'Positive About Disabled People' (Two Ticks) symbol in recognition of our commitment in ensuring that disabled people are supported and treated fairly at every stage of their selection, employment and career development.

To find about more about this scheme please [follow this link](#) or visit <http://www.direct.gov.uk>

Investors in People

The Council has sought recognition of its effectiveness as an employer through the Investors in People Standard.

Our Employment Policies

The Council has a full range of HR policies available to all staff on our intranet. These are designed in full consultation with trade unions, and are regularly updated to keep up with changes in legislation, and also in response to strategy changes and feedback from the workplace.

Staff Survey

To provide a successful working environment, we need to know and understand what we do right and what we can improve on in the future. The staff survey is one way that employees can tell us what they think. The survey is an independent, confidential questionnaire making it a real opportunity for employees to shape and change their working life. The next staff survey is due in 2012.

Respecting Others

Any form of harassment (including bullying and discrimination) is unacceptable in East Lindsey District Council. We are committed to creating an environment where positive action is taken to prevent harassment between employees of the Council, or of Council employees by people not employed by the Council.

We aim to protect employees from harassment by:

- creating an environment where everyone is treated with respect and dignity
- having procedures which protect employees from harassment at work wherever possible
- having procedures to deal effectively with any complaint of harassment at work
- having trained Harassment Advisors in place to support employees who feel they may be experiencing harassment

The Employee Support section of our employment manual contains the key employment policies that support the prevention of, and procedures for dealing effectively with, harassment.

The Health and Welfare of our Employees

We are working in partnership with Lincolnshire NHS, Lincolnshire County Council and the 6 other District Councils, in the Motiv8Lincs workplace project which encourages all public sector staff to lead healthier lifestyles.

We recognise that good health and safety management supports the safety of our employees and the delivery of our services. Our Health and Safety Steering Group oversees a programme of initiatives to protect staff and service users.

We provide access to:

- our confidential employee support and counselling service: firstassist
- occupational health
- counselling services
- screening to identify and address specific conditions eg hearing
- sight tests

Case Studies: You will shortly be able to see specific case studies on this page: