

**Newcastle City Council's
Disability Equality Scheme**

Annual Report

December 2008

This document tells you about some of the work that Newcastle City Council has been doing over the past year to promote disability equality.

It is available electronically, in large print and in Braille.

If you would like it in another format please telephone 0191 277 7529 or email disabilityequality@newcastle.gov.uk

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1. Introduction

Welcome to our second annual Disability Equality Scheme progress report. This document tells you about some of the work that Newcastle City Council is doing to promote disability equality.

We published our Disability Equality Scheme in December 2006 and our first annual progress report in December 2007. These told you about the action we are taking to make sure we meet our legal duty to promote disability equality.

We think that we have made good progress against the actions within our Scheme. Throughout this report we have included examples of how we have been promoting disability equality. Each section tells you about the action we have been taking over the past year to ensure that disability equality becomes a key part of our day-to-day work. The action plan at the end of the report provides an update against the actions we included within our Disability Equality Scheme.

We recognise that there is no 'one size fits all' description of disability. The term disability can describe a five year old child with autism, an elderly adult with Alzheimer's, or a young woman with learning difficulties. All are disabled people but each person's circumstances are different, each having different needs which will change throughout life.

We also know that people can experience multiple discrimination because, for example, they are disabled and gay or from Black and Minority Ethnic groups. To help us to ensure that we consider how our practices, policies and services affect different people in our community we are planning to develop a Single Equality Scheme in 2009. You can find out more about our plans on page 7

We are improving but we know that we still have a lot of work to do to meet our commitment to promoting equality for all people who live in Newcastle. We worked with disabled people to develop the Disability Equality Scheme to make sure our aims and outcomes reflected what they wanted to see in Newcastle. We hope to continue to improve the lives of disabled and Deaf people in Newcastle with the introduction of our Single Equality Scheme.

To see Newcastle City Council's Disability Equality Scheme or to read our 2007 Annual Report go to www.newcastle.gov.uk/core.nsf/a/des

2. What the law says

From 5th December 2006 The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 placed a duty on all public bodies to promote disability equality. The Disability Equality Duty requires the Council to actively promote disability equality.

The Act sets out what is known as the general duty. This means that the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equal opportunities for disabled people.

The Council needs to consider the elimination of harassment of disabled people, promotion of positive attitudes and the need to encourage the participation of disabled people in public life.

Requirements of the general duty

The basic requirement for the Council when carrying out its functions is to have due regard to do the following. We are looking at ways in which we can:

- **promote equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled people**
- **eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the DDA**
- **eliminate disability-related harassment**
- **promote positive attitudes towards disabled people**
- **encourage participation by disabled people in public life**
- **take steps to meet disabled peoples' needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.**

Some specific examples of how we are meeting the general duty and delivering outcomes for disabled people are given throughout this report in boxes like the ones below.

Meeting the Disability Equality Duty

Adult Services Transforming Lives

Newcastle City Council's Sensory Support Team offer a range of support services to residents with sensory impairments.

One service user who has benefited from their work is Jonathon. He has been registered blind since childhood and was reliant on friends and family to find his way around.

Two years ago he started working with Darren, a Rehabilitation Worker who showed Jonathon how to use a cane, cross roads safely and use landmarks to identify his position.

Jonathon says "Darren showed me how to get around the city centre, told me where different places are and took me on the buses....The Sensory Support Team opened new doors for me by helping me be more independent and confident. I don't want people to do things for me, I want people to show me how to do things for myself, and that's exactly what they did".

Meeting the Disability Equality Duty

School Disability Sports Day

Newburn Activity Centre was the setting for the School Disability Sports Day in July 2008. Hosted by the School Sports Partnership and Sports Development in conjunction with Select Education and Newcastle City Council's Fusion scheme the event brought together 85 young disabled athletes from schools across the city.

The Sports day gave the young people the opportunity to take part in a range of activities including athletics, archery, rowing bell-boats and scaling a two-story climbing wall.

The Lord Mayor of Newcastle upon Tyne, Councillor David Wood, who opened the event, said "The Newcastle Schools' Disability Sports Day was an excellent way for young athletes to take part in a variety of activities they may not have previously experienced. It is great to see each of the organisations involved in the day raising the profile of disability sports, as well as giving the youngsters the chance to become passionate about sport."

3. How we measure our performance

Last year we told you about the work we were doing with the 'Equality Standard for Local Government'. This is the tool we use to help us make equality a part of our everyday work. It is a long-term process that has been designed to help us meet our duties under all equalities legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

The Equality Standard has five levels of achievement. We are currently at level 4 and are working towards level 5. The requirements of the Equality Standard will change in 2009 so we are looking at the work we are doing to make sure that we can meet these new requirements. Our aim is that Newcastle becomes an excellent Council.

A Single Equality Scheme

One of the ways we can work towards meeting these requirements is to produce a Single Equality Scheme. This will tell you about all the work we are doing to promote equality in relation to disability, race, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion and belief, to help make sure that all people are treated with respect and dignity. It will also help us to ensure that all people have the best possible chance to benefit from the opportunities and services offered in an increasingly diverse Newcastle.

Our Single Equality Scheme will include the on-going actions in our current Disability Equality Scheme. It will also explain what we are doing for disabled people who have other needs. For example, when we supply meals on wheels we will ensure that we can provide culturally diverse food, including Kosher and Halal meals.

We will be asking disabled people what they would like to see in our new Scheme and we will tell you more about how you can become involved with this in February and March 2009.

Meeting our targets?

In our Disability Equality Scheme we told you how we measure our performance in some areas relating to disability using Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPs). BVPs were replaced with a new set of national indicators from 1 April 2008. However, we will continue to use some of those indicators to help us to measure our performance. For example, we are still monitoring the diversity of our workforce and reporting on how many buildings are physically accessible to all disabled people. Further information on our local disability targets can be found in Appendix 2.

We will tell you more about how we plan to measure our performance in our Single Equality Scheme 2009.

4. Involving disabled people

Newcastle City Council has a legal duty to engage with disabled people to help develop our services and to help promote disability equality. We know that both the information available on disability, and the areas which disabled people view as most important, will continue to change over time. To reflect this we want to continue to involve disabled people, parents, carers and other stakeholders as much as possible in the work that we do.

We recognise that to improve the accessibility of our services it is essential for us to hear first hand what our disabled service users see as being the main issues. To help us with this we set up a Disability Equality Group. This group meets every couple of months to look at any issues we need to address and help develop new projects. It is made up of Council officers and representatives of disability organisations throughout the city.

Council Officers also attend local disability organisations meetings, like Newcastle Disability Forum's 'Access and Highways Group'; to hear first hand about the issues facing local disabled people.

We also have a Disabled Employee Network which acts as a forum for consulting on how we could improve as an organisation and raises employment issues.

'Shaping your Service' task groups made up of local visually impaired and blind residents continue to work with our Sensory Support Team to help plan services.

Meeting the Disability Equality Duty

Involving parents and carers

In September 2008 we held our first Parent Carer Conference for parents and carers of disabled children. The event was attended by over 35 parent carers who were asked to tell us what they thought of our services and how they could help us to take forward the Aiming High for Disabled Children agenda. Several parent carers signed up to be more involved in service planning in areas such as Short Breaks and appropriate childcare for disabled children and young people. The day was a great success and plans are being made to hold another event in 2009.

Finding out what you think?

Earlier this year Adult Services carried out three surveys to find out what people who use particular services think about the support they get. The three surveys were sent to people with a physical or sensory disability who have had equipment fitted or minor adaptations made to their home; people over 65 who receive care at home; and people who care for someone aged over 65 who live at home.

The feedback from the surveys has helped us to shape new proposals that we think will really improve the services we provide.

We were asked if we could make the equipment like stair rails more attractive so we're now going to make them available in a choice of colours. If small adaptations could be fitted quicker? We are now aiming to fit this equipment within seven working days. We also plan to change the way that we assess carers so that we can give them better support and look particularly at carer's breaks.

To find out more about the surveys go to www.newcastle.uk/homecare2008 or www.newcastle.gov.uk/homeequipment2008

Meeting the Disability Equality Duty

Helping to Ensure Good Health

In 2008 Adult Services asked all users of our 'meals at home service' to take part in a health and well-being survey. Interviews took place in people's homes using a questionnaire developed to find out why a high percentage of older people admitted to hospital were malnourished.

The information we got back from the survey has helped us to change the way we provide our services. We now nutritionally screen all new referrals to the 'Care at Home' service and will introduce screening for all referrals for hot delivered meals.

What our residents and staff think

Every year we carry out a Residents' Survey to find out what residents think of the Council and how satisfied they are with our services and with different aspects of life in Newcastle. In 2008, 7,800 questionnaires were sent out to Newcastle households and a total of 3,326 (43%) responded.

We analysed the results of the survey to see whether there was any meaningful difference between the response of non-disabled and disabled residents in the city.

37% of the people who answered the survey said that they had a limiting long term illness (disability). 42% of the people who answered the survey were over 60 years old. We use the information from the survey to help us to improve our services.

What have the results of the 2007/08 Survey told us?

- Disabled people were more likely to contact the Council if they had a complaint. But they were also less likely to consider that the Council treated all types of people fairly.
- Disabled people were more satisfied with the opportunities for participating in local decision making.
- Generally disabled people were better informed about what services the Council provides.
- Women, older and disabled people felt less safe after dark in the city centre. Older and disabled residents in particular also felt less safe during the day when outside in Newcastle.

- Older and disabled respondents were more likely to use Adults' Social Services; however where older respondents tended to be more satisfied with these services, disabled respondents satisfaction levels were mixed.
- In terms of services disabled people were less satisfied with the waste collection service, museums and galleries and bus services but more positive about libraries, recycling services and housing services.

These results are similar to the findings from last year's survey. We recognise that we need to explore further why disabled people are less satisfied with our services than non-disabled people, to help us to establish what can be done to improve the way we work.

You can find out more about what the survey told us on our website at:
www.newcastle.gov.uk/core.nsf/level2?readform&ID=100004~200024

Meeting the Disability Equality Duty

Giving people with learning difficulties more choice and control

The Learning Disabilities Partnership Board has a three year plan called Citizens First to make newly updated Valuing People happen in Newcastle. The aim of this plan is to give people more independence, choice and control through the provision of high quality personalised services. Citizens First's work is grouped in nine themes including Housing, Safety and Quality (including hate crime) , Learning and Employment , having a Community life and the most pressing priority of all, Health.

The involvement of people with learning disabilities in getting behind this plan, promoting and challenging its achievements and progress is vital. So the Board has commissioned an organisation to employ nine learning disabled people to each Champion a Citizens First theme.

The champions will work with the theme groups to reflect people with learning disabilities' views and inform progress. These roles will help decision makers see the impact of policies and change upon people with learning disabilities' lives.

Recruitment of the champions is underway with the Champions taking up post by the end of April 2009.

5. Employment

We recognise that we need to do all that we can to help disabled people work for the Council. To help us to do this we employed a new HR Disability Employment Advisor in January 2008. Since then work has been ongoing to support and advise our Managers and disabled employees. This includes helping to identify reasonable adjustments that can be made in the workplace and supporting initiatives to improve job progression.

Work placements have also been organised for disabled people wanting to gain work experience within the Council.

Meeting the Disability Equality Duty

Lesley's work experience placement

Lesley had been working with the Shaw Trust to seek work experience placements. They wanted to find an employer who would support Lesley strongly through any difficulties faced due to her visual impairment.

After working with our HR Disability Employment Advisor, Lesley found a suitable receptionist opportunity with Neighbourhood Services.

The manager, Julie, ensured the placement was appropriate for Lesley's needs and that the staff understood the barriers faced by Lesley in the workplace. To help overcome these Julie ordered additional equipment to support the placement. When the 6 week placement end date drew near, all parties were so pleased with it that they agreed to increase it to 10 weeks.

Julie said "Lesley is a pleasure to have as part of the team and I only wish the placement could last longer"

During her time on placement Lesley has improved her skills, increased her confidence and been able to test whether she is ready to return to work. In return she has been able give advice on improvements which can be made to benefit disabled staff and the public.

Lesley has now decided to use her new skills and confidence in looking for work with Newcastle City Council, and is being supported by our Disability Employment Advisor. Lesley says "I have been given the chance for a new start in life".

Job-carve

Last year we told you about the work that was being done to employ disabled people using a 'job-carving' initiative. This was to help disabled people who wanted to get a job but who may not have been ready to take on all aspects of a job role. Using 'job-carve', a person is employed to do the parts of a job they are able to do, whilst having the chance to develop their skills in other areas with the help of a Supported Employment service.

We now have 11 people employed through this system with a further 2 posts being considered. The success of this project is best illustrated through the feedback from these employees. 'The best bit about working in the Civic Centre is meeting people. Everyone is really friendly to us and I am much more confident and I enjoy the work. It's also great to get paid!'

The work on this initiative led to the City Council being short listed in the North East Equality Awards 2008 in both the 'Innovative Working Practices' and 'Outstanding Practice' categories.

Meeting the Disability Equality Duty

Workstep

In our Disability Equality Scheme we told you that the City Council delivers Workstep, a Jobcentre Plus programme that supports disabled people into employment. This provision is inspected every 3 years by Ofsted.

Our service was inspected in October 2008 and received a very positive outcome with key strengths including:

- 'Well-planned learning programmes'
- 'Very good individual support'
- 'Excellent management and support by the council'
- 'Good actions to improve opportunities for people with a disability'

Feedback given said, 'Equality of opportunity has improved through a strong focus on meeting the needs of people in Newcastle with the most severe types of disability'.

We told you earlier that Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) stopped being used in 2008. However, we plan to continue to use the indicators to measure our performance on diversity in the workforce. The Council has two employment equality BVPIs for disability. BV11c relates to the percentage of top 5% of earners that have a disability. BV16 is the percentage of local authority employees declaring that they are disabled under the Disability Discrimination Act definition.

Appendix 2 on page 39 tells you how we are performing in these areas.

6. Access to buildings, services and information

What is the Council doing to improve access to buildings and the built environment?

We have continued to make improvements to our buildings over the past year, through our Access Works Programme. We have been listening to disabled people and have made adjustments to our facilities and equipment to help make sure that they are as accessible as possible.

Feedback from our Disability Equality Group told us that we needed to make changes to help disabled people independently access the Civic Centre. These included the installation of an intercom security system that could be used by Deaf people and people without speech. A new system has been put in place that uses text and has a camera to enable remote opening by staff. Other ongoing works include the installation of new signage and loop systems, and plans to provide additional accessible parking spaces for blue badge holders attending meetings and events at the Civic Centre.

We have also been involved with the '**Tyneside Changing Places Toilets Campaign 2012**'. Working with Mencap, other local Council's and stakeholder organisations we have been looking at ways to raise awareness about the need to provide fully accessible changing facilities for people with complex needs. As part of this process we have committed to providing updated facilities, where possible, in all of our swimming facilities. We also plan to include these facilities in the new City Library and Eldon Square in 2009.

Meeting the Disability Equality Duty

Mystery Shoppers – Raising Deaf Awareness

A number of healthy living sessions were held at our leisure centres last year to help to encourage more deaf people to develop a healthier lifestyle.

To help deaf people to access our facilities a mystery shopping exercise was carried out on our leisure centres and our swimming pools by deaf users. During the visits assessments were made about the accessibility of the building and the information provided for deaf people. Staff communication skills were also assessed to see if they were aware of how to use communication aids, such as type talk.

The feedback has provided us with many suggestions for how we can improve our services which we hope to put into action during 2009.

Work has been continuing on the **Newcastle React Scheme**. This is a wayfinding system that allows blind and partially sighted people to have independent access to parts of the city centre. This works by giving spoken directional messages via units situated around the city. Working with RNIB, local stakeholder organisations and

Nexus the system was piloted throughout 2008 and will be officially launched in March 2009.

We are continuing to increase the number of pedestrian crossings with facilities for disabled people in Newcastle. With every planned highway maintenance scheme providing dropped kerbs at crossing points if they don't already exist.

City Wide Access Guide - DisabledGo – Newcastle

In November 2007 we hosted the launch of DisabledGo - Newcastle, a free online Access Guide which provides access information on over 500 venues across the city. This provides information on all sorts of buildings, from leisure centres and libraries, to hotels and tourist attractions.

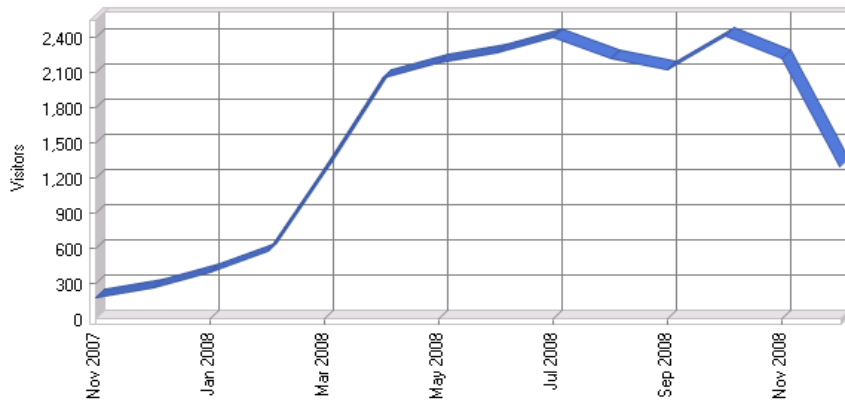
In November 2008 we carried out an annual review of all the venues listed to see if the access provision had changed. Structural and non-structural changes such as opening hours and contact details were also checked. In addition, 35 further venues were added to the site.

Deleted: ,

The annual review has continued to raise awareness of access issues amongst the Newcastle business community and the updated information will continue to provide up to date detailed information for disabled people living in and visiting Newcastle.

The information below shows the user rates for the Newcastle area for DisabledGo over the past year. You can visit the guide at www.disabledgo.info

Activity by



Month

Month	Hits	Visitors
Nov 2007	3,117	176
Dec 2007	2,299	267
Jan 2008	4,685	391
Feb 2008	3,141	573
Mar 2008	3,849	1,281
Apr 2008	4,809	2,054
May 2008	4,549	2,177
Jun 2008	6,054	2,262
Jul 2008	5,181	2,394

Aug 2008	5,758	2,217
Sep 2008	4,587	2,118
Oct 2008	6,364	2,405
Nov 2008	5,049	2,220
Dec 2008	2,911	1,297
Total	62,353	21,832

What is the Council doing to improve access to services?

We have continued to improve access to our services over the last year. In November 2008 we opened two more Customer Service Centres in the East and West End of the city. Both offer a one-stop shop range of services and information from the Council and other public services.

These new centres are the final two in a citywide network of six customer service centres opened within our local communities to provide convenient services which are accessible to all. The local community has been closely involved in the development of all the centres, helping to make decisions about accessibility and use of the centres.

You can find out more information about the centres on our website at www.newcastle.gov.uk/customers

Meeting the Disability Equality Duty

Digital TV - A new way to access services and information

Our newly developed TV site contains information on local services and organisations in Newcastle. The site is interactive and it lets you to report issues and make comments as well as enabling you to find information.

You can find the following types of information on the site:

- Contact us
- Advice and information
- Services
- Your area
- Report it – an interactive form to let you report issues to us
- Job shop

Our digital TV site is available if you subscribe to Sky or Virgin or have a mobile phone that can connect to the internet.

Meeting the Disability Equality Duty

Meeting the needs of parents and carers

The Family Information Service provides support to parents and carers by providing information and advice on the full range of services available to them within the area. It offers free up-to-date information, advice and assistance for children with disabilities and their families on things to do and places to go, including; sports, play, leisure and holiday activities. Also providing information and advice on financial help for childcare and parenting support.

To find out more visit www.newcastle.cyp-directory.org.uk

What is the Council doing to improve access to information?

The Council has been working to improve access to its information. To help us to do this we have developed a new 'Information for All' Policy. This policy tells staff how to produce information so that all people can access it. It gives guidance on how to produce easy to use information, how to translate documents and how to provide an interpreter for someone who needs help understanding English.

To help us to make sure that were doing this right we asked local voluntary and community groups to tell us what they thought. We have used this feedback to inform our guidelines. We will launch this policy in early 2009.

Meeting the Disability Equality Duty

Tynesound News

Citylife is Newcastle City Council's own magazine. It is delivered free to all Newcastle residents. Thanks to a group of dedicated volunteers, visually impaired people are able to hear all the city's news too.

Tynesound News are able to record Citylife every two months. This can be heard as a podcast on the Newcastle City Council website, or supplied as an audiotape.

"We do some editing to group similar items together under a clear heading for our listeners, such as community or environment," says presenter Michael Matthews. "The 11,500 words of a typical Citylife make a 90-minute tape."

Tynesound News recordings are so popular they are sent to appreciative listeners all over the world, including Canada, Australia and Macedonia.

Increasing the accessibility of our online services

Newcastle City Council is committed to producing accessible and usable on-line services. Our website www.newcastle.gov.uk has been designed to be accessible and usable by the widest audience possible.

Meeting the Disability Equality Duty

Creating a fully accessible website

Throughout 2008 the IT Web Services team has been working to improve the accessibility and usability of the Council's website. To help do this the team worked with Shaw Trust, a national charity that provides work opportunities for disabled people, to look at our website to find out if it was accessible to all.

Shaw Trust tested our site in January and gave us a detailed report about how accessible our website was. It was measured against the Web Accessibility Initiative's (WAI) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0 (WCAG 1.0) to give accurate feedback on any non-compliant issues.

Feedback said that 'The website on the whole showed good accessibility and the web development team should be commended for their efforts'.

There were also some areas identified where we could improve our website. Work has been ongoing to make changes to our site to address those issues. From a technical standpoint, the website attains a good level of accessibility and was eligible for a 'Shaw Trust Web Accreditation Award'.

To help all people to access information that we provide on our website we have installed Browsealoud software. This function allows the information displayed on the council's website to be read out to all users.

Browsealoud is free to the end user which means that even if you do not have your own assistive technology you can still access information from the Newcastle City Council website in the accessible way you require.

Our website has also been shown as an example of good practice in a research article on web accessibility for people with autism.

7. Partnerships

We have developed our relationships with partner and stakeholder organisations over the past year to work together to promote equality.

Meeting the Disability Equality Duty

First Disability Sports Event (DSE) Regional Mini Games

The first DSE North East regional Mini Games, organised by Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside Council, Gateshead Council and South Tyneside Council, took place in May 2008. Held at Gateshead International Stadium, the Games saw 95 young people between the ages of 8 and 11 compete in a range of events.

Amongst the events were track and field athletics, boccia, polybat, new age kurling and target cricket. 12 schools from across the region participated in the Games and each child and school was awarded a certificate.

The children competing have been lauded as potential stars of the future in the world of disability sports.

Social Inclusion, community cohesion and equality

Newcastle City Council has produced its first Social Inclusion Strategy, to help support partners to understand the needs of our diverse local communities. Social inclusion is about making sure that all people have the best possible chance to benefit from the opportunities and services offered by all organisations in Newcastle.

The Newcastle Partnership has set up an Equalities and Community Cohesion working group which aims to:

- Understand our communities and the equality and cohesion issues they face;
- Celebrate communities and cultures and help build strong relationships between them;
- Develop a simple positive message about the kind of Newcastle we want to tell people about;
- Help people participate and be involved in their communities; and
- Help to drive the equalities, community cohesion and social inclusion agendas, within and with partner agencies.

The group will help to ensure that the Newcastle Partnership draws together the experience of partner organisations to promote equality for all across the region.

Meeting the Disability Equality Duty

Working in Partnership to Support Carers

In December 2008 a drop-information event for carers was held at Newcastle Civic Centre. The event was to mark Carers' Rights Day, this is a national day held annually by Carers UK. It aims to raise awareness of the needs of carers, guide carers towards support, make sure carers know their rights and increase the take up of benefits by carers. We joined groups up and down the country in doing something to mark Carers' Rights Day and promote its messages.

The event brought a range of organisations together, so carers had access to a variety of up-to-date information in one place. Carers could browse the stalls and decide themselves which of the organisations present they spoke to, or what information they took away. Event organisers were also on hand to assist people who wanted to know more about what information might be useful to them or to point carers towards particular sources of support.

Stall holders were also able to network and make links and contacts with other organisations. This helped them to learn more about the different work that organisations were involved in and how each other's roles contributed to supporting carers.

The event was part of Newcastle's multi-agency 'Carers Strategy Action Plan', which sets out how Adult Services, Health Services and voluntary organisations will develop services to support carers in Newcastle. The multi-agency approach being taken is positive, as the work of many organisations impacts on carers. Through this approach we can work together with other agencies to make more positive changes to benefit carers.

8. Training

Over the last year we have been running disability training courses to help staff learn more about specific disability issues. The courses run by local disabled trainers and facilitators include Deaf Awareness and Communication Tactics and Visual Awareness training.

We have also introduced two further courses aimed at managers and front line staff to help them develop a general understanding and awareness of disability.

Meeting the Disability Equality Duty

Learning Disability Awareness Training

In 2008 we piloted a new training course developed and presented by people with learning disabilities. Three people who are involved with Skills for People a Newcastle based organisation delivered the training, providing real life examples based on their own experiences.

Hillary, one of the facilitators said of the training "I think that people had a different perspective about disability when they left the room, I think that it is better for us to do the training because we are living our lives. How can people know what our lives are about".

Suzie said "We get people to listen to hear what it is all about, how life should be and how people should treat us. We need to get the message across. It is important that we do the training because we are disabled we know the full picture and we have tried the services"

Billy said "We can help them to do a good job and listen to people"

The training was a success and we plan to run further courses in 2009.

We recognise that in order to provide accessible services and create inclusive environments, our planners, builders and technicians need to have an understanding of how planning and design can impact on disabled people. To help with this in January 2009 we are running a number of training courses on understanding Inclusive Environments and the DDA.

9. Procurement

We have made a number of improvements to our procurement systems to help us to take account of equality issues when we procure goods, works and services from suppliers. To help our staff who carry out procurement we have produced new guidance and delivered some briefing sessions. We are now regularly monitoring the impact of this. This will help us to identify any further training needs.

We still have more work to do to support our suppliers and contractors to improve their awareness and performance in relation to equality. Following a pilot last year we are now looking into the possibility of working with other organisations across the region to provide support and guidance to suppliers.

Meeting the Disability Equality Duty

Direct payments - giving people more choice and control

We are committed to giving people more independence, choice and control by providing high-quality and personalised services. This means that people are able to choose the support they receive and decide how they use resources to suit their needs and lifestyle.

With the creative use of Direct Payments service users and their families are able to employ workers who can, for example, better meet cultural or religious needs.

Mrs A, a lady referred for personal care needs, was cared for by her family. As her care needs increased it became clear that Mr A's own health problems were affecting his ability to provide care. The social worker discussed a Direct Payments package with the family who were enthusiastic about the flexibility it offered. It also enabled them to employ workers who could meet Mrs A's cultural and religious needs. The family preferred to engage an agency for this rather than individual Personal Assistants. Mrs A and her husband lived, alternately with their eldest son and daughter in law in Newcastle for 3 months and then in the home of their younger son and his wife for the next 3 months, in a neighbouring local authority. Services therefore needed to be flexible so the family hired an agency which works across both local authority areas and provides day care on two different sites.

10. Disability related bullying and harassment

In the Newcastle Plan for Children and Young People one of the priorities expressed by young people was decreasing discrimination and bullying. In 2007 the Anti Bullying Strategy for children and young people was reviewed to look at ways to focus on disability. One of aims of the Strategy was to look at the way the school system deals with bullying and to help schools become more efficient and effective when dealing with bullying issues.

A number of events have taken place during 2008 to help raise awareness of disability bullying. In February, the Anti Bullying Response Team held a development day with schools, regional and national practitioners and community groups who work with young people and adults who have special educational needs. During the day current good practice and success stories were highlighted and key questions were discussed. The group also looked at methods to promote disability equality and action professionals could take to address disability bullying. Following this event an action plan was developed to address the priorities highlighted during the day. These included the need to provide relevant information on disability bullying with training and support being provided for mainstream and special schools.

Meeting the Disability Equality Duty

Special Educational Needs and Disability Bullying Conference

In November 2008 a Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disability Bullying Conference was held to highlight issues surrounding bullying and disability. The event was well attended by professionals from Education, Children's and Health services from across the region.

Young people from local mainstream and SEN schools worked with the Response Team to plan and deliver the event. They participated fully in the day, introducing speakers and gave their views and ideas to help explore good practice and inform workshops.

A number of high profile speakers delivered presentations on the day including Stephen Miller - Paralympics Gold Medal winner and poet, Lucie Mason - Disability Equality in Education and Helen Wheatley – Council for Disabled Children and representative for Every Disabled Child Matters.

Feedback from the event was very positive and will be used to help develop future anti disability bullying work.

Work is also ongoing to look at ways to help prevent the bullying and harassment of disabled people. ARCH (Agencies Against Racist Crime and Harassment) have been working with Learning Disability Partnership Board to look at ways to report hate crime and provide support and assistance to victims.

11. Tyne and Wear Museums

Tyne and Wear Museums have been working on many initiatives over the past year to help promote disability equality and to increase the diversity of customers to museums and art galleries.

Meeting the Disability Equality Duty

'Mind the Gap' exhibition

The Discovery Museum is currently hosting the 'Mind the Gap' exhibition. This explores the history of mental health in the North East and aims to inform, enlighten and dispel myths surrounding mental health.

The work highlights the success stories of people living with mental health issues in the North East today and challenges popular misconceptions regularly portrayed regarding people who have mental health issues.

The exhibition was created by a partnership of Tyne & Wear Museums' Outreach team and Northumberland Tyne and Wear Service User and Carer network (NTWSU&C). Up to 20 groups and organisations from across Northumberland and Tyne & Wear participated in the project. The NTWSU&C was given appropriate support which enabled group members to determine the project's direction. They worked with TWM Outreach team to create a brief, which outlined the aims and objectives for the project.

The groups worked on material for the exhibition over the course of the past year. Their work included visual art, historical objects and information looking at attitudes and treatment of mental health in the past, personal testimonies and film.

The exhibition has proved very successful and its run has been extended into 2009.

TWM Disability Access Questionnaire

In 2008 we developed a questionnaire to find out what disabled people think of the improvements we have made in our museums and galleries. It also asked what access issues disabled visitors would want to prioritise over the next 3 years. The questionnaire was completed by over 150 disabled people of all ages, with a varied range of disabilities.

Deleted: issues

As a result of the information we received a number of projects have been set up for development in 2009. These include creating an engagement and consultation group for young disabled people and establishing 'disability open days' at selected venues.

12. Further information

If you would like further information about our Disability Equality Scheme annual report:

Email: disabilityequality@newcastle.gov.uk
Telephone: 0191 277 7528 or 0191 277 7529

For more information about the Council's work on equality issues visit our website at www.newcastle.gov.uk/equality

Annual Update 2009

Newcastle City Council Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan

Corporate

Action	Deadline	Update on progress
Develop a Disability Issues Working Group to include key representatives from disability organisations and senior representatives from the Council, including Councillors	Completed	The Disability Equality Group continues to meet bi monthly. There are over 18 members who represent a variety of disability and Deaf stakeholder organisations.
Develop corporate disability awareness training courses and involve disabled people in developing the courses	Ongoing	A number of training courses have been developed which are delivered by disabled people. For further information see page 20
Hold briefing sessions and awareness raising sessions to ensure that key staff and Councillors are informed of their responsibilities in relation to disability equality	Ongoing	Briefing sessions have been ongoing throughout 2008.
Install specialist changing facility for people with complex needs as part of the Eldon Square redevelopment	February 2007- October 2009	NCC is a member of 'Changing Places'. This is a group which has been established to promote the need for specialist changing places across the North East. See page 13
Pilot internet based access information on facilities throughout the city	November 2009	Website holds access information on over 530 buildings, facilities and sites across Newcastle. See page 14
Look at developing the Agencies Against Racist Crime Harassment (ARCH) process to record incidents of disability related harassment and look at ways of preventing such harassment	December 2008 - ongoing	Work is ongoing and will be progressed in 2009, see page 22 for further info

Continue to develop partnership working with other public authority bodies and local organisations	Ongoing	We are in the process of undertaking a review of how the Council interacts with diverse groups. This has involved working with a wide range of local organisations including those specifically for disabled people. Outcomes include the proposed development of a flexible forum to allow more targeted consultation and engagement relating to equality and diversity.
Carry out Disability Access Plan Statements on all of our operational buildings	Ongoing	Disability Access Plan Statements (DAPS) continue to be produced for all our operational buildings.
Establish a clear plan involving disabled people in culture, libraries and life long learning services and opportunities	April 2009	We provide funding to Arcadea, the Disability Arts Development Agency for the North East region to promote the cultural and artistic equality of disabled people and their artistic works. The libraries service has continued to encourage the use of its home delivery service.

Adult Services

Complete modernisation of learning disabilities service and implement change programme	Dec 2011	Project continues on target. Now part of the overarching Adult Transformation Programme described below.
Provide 600 benefit checks for families of children with disabilities	March 2009	Project continues on target. More than 300 checks are due to be completed by April 2008. From the 1st Jan 2006 to date, the project has seen 798 clients as part of the Quids for Kids project. The project has achieved gains of £1,641,396 with arrears of £302,039.
Introduce better ways to engage with service users with a sensory disability from BME communities.	March 2009	Engagement work began in 2008, with support from the City Council Community Development Team. The Sensory Disability Team have established links with Roshni, the Kira Asian Womens' group and the NE Chinese Elders Group. Other groups have been approached and the team await responses.
Participate in development of rehabilitation and intermediate care strategy for older people in the city	March 2009	The Single entry point was successfully developed in partnership with the Primary Care Trust . Originally planned until April 2009, this work is now part of the overarching Adult Transformation Programme described below. Theme 4 of that

		programme is Older People's Services and Integrated Working with NHS across all service user groups.
Adult Services Transformation Programme.	Dec 2011	The programme vision is to make personalisation the cornerstone of social care ensuring that everyone across the spectrum of need has control and choice over the shape of his or her support in the most appropriate setting. This will include a strategic shift towards early intervention and prevention. By 2011, all Councils with social services responsibilities must make significant progress towards delivering personalised services, enabling individuals or groups to develop solutions which work for them.

Children's Services

Review and extend Newcastle's Special Educational Needs Strategy to ensure that local authority schools provide specialist support and inclusive education	December 2009	<p>The strategy has been reviewed and key priorities have been identified for 2008-2013. These are currently being consulted on. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the extension of collaborative professional partnerships and enhanced participation of parents and carers and children and young people; • raising levels of educational attainment across all key stages for pupils with SEN and disability; • identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people at times of transition into adult life; • developing a continuum of provision which incorporates flexible pathways; • developing the skills of the workforce within schools and support services to meet the needs of children and young people with SEN and disability to ensure their progress and development; • promoting inclusion to increase the capacity of schools and settings to meet current and future needs; • ensuring early and timely identification of children and young people's needs; and • ensuring resources that support inclusion are allocated fairly and used appropriately to meet identified needs and give good value in terms of outcomes and impact.
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		The Children with Disabilities and Special Needs Management Partnership is ensuring a cross agency strategy for LDD children is being delivered (Following JAR inspection the feedback stated we had made good progress).
Improve opportunities to maximise educational attainment of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	April 2009	<p>All special schools have established targets (PIVATS) and assessment procedures to track pupil progress and inform planning. These processes have been judged outstanding in a number of schools in a recent OFSTED inspection. There are plans to introduce these procedures (PIVATS) in mainstream schools across the city.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased use of P-Levels and PIVATS over time is providing increasingly detailed information on pupil attainment –2 special schools have been identified as models of good practice by the National Strategies. Both have been judged to have outstanding achievement. <p>Achievement in special schools is consistently judged to be good or outstanding. In 40% of special schools children make outstanding progress. In 80% of special schools children make good or better progress (national 21% outstanding and 79% good or better in 06/07).</p>
Increase the participation rates of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in inclusive leisure, sport, art, drama and other cultural activities	April 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wide range of sports, leisure and cultural activities are available to children and young people with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD), particularly in special schools and ARCs, e.g. Football coaching and Disability Dance in Newburn Activity Centre. Some of the developments in sports and leisure provision for children with learning difficulties and disabilities (CLDD) include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A programme of coaching to raise awareness of sports opportunities for children with disabilities and help train SEN assistants to deliver activities, e.g. new age kurling, boccia, multi sports Two pilot swimming clubs established to target young people and adults with LDD to learn to swim, develop water confidence and improve A weekly disability dance group in Newburn Activity Centre, in partnership with Dance City and Tin Arts, regularly attracts 20+ participants and their carers. They performed at Gala Theatre, Durham in 2007 Following 10 weeks of coaching Newcastle have 9 students with LDD entering this year's Regional Athletics event (April 08) and 15 students into

		<p>Regional Mini Games.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Football coaching for Special Schools leading up to the regional FA schools festival in July. ▪ Children with SEN Statements account for 5% of all permanent exclusions and 5% of fixed term exclusions compared to national figures of 11% and 12% respectively. Performance is good. ▪ The learning needs of all children and young people particularly where there are barriers to achievement will be understood and supported ▪ The support provided by the Bridges School for young people not able to attend school because of medical needs is judged by Ofsted to be good with outstanding features. ▪ The low number of cases to SEN tribunal confirms quality of working in partnership with parents.
<p>Involve parents, carers, children and young people in decisions which relate to the well-being of children and young people</p>	<p>December 2009</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U Decide” the Participatory Budgeting process piloted in Newcastle with children and young people continues to go from strength to strength and has just received a national award for Innovative Engagement from the Academy For Sustainable Communities. Children and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities have been involved in “U Decide” events over the last year. • Children and young people are involved in key decisions in schools that will have an impact upon their general well being and they are increasingly involved in the design of services. E.g. pupils at Sir Charles Parsons and Thomas Bewick Special schools have been heavily involved in the design process of their new schools through the Building Schools for the Future process. <p>What is planned for 2008/09?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For children and young people with LDD provide easier access to leisure services and further develop person controlled planning. • Build on successful “U Decide” participatory budgeting work across a range of Council and partnership activities including developing special school and voluntary sector projects <p>A forum for children and young people with learning disabilities will be established.</p>

Work with the ARCH project to reduce disability related bullying and harassment among children and young people	December 2008 - ongoing	See page 22 for further information.
Raise disability awareness among children and young people through an inclusive approach to provision and opportunities	April 2009	<p>A stakeholder group has been established. They will carry out a mapping exercise on existing provision to identify any gaps. Transition groups involving key managers are in place and targets set.</p> <p>Transition protocols are in place between Children with disabilities (CwD) social work team and Adult with Learning Difficulties team and also between Leaving Care team and Adult with Learning Difficulties team.</p> <p>Children and young people are well supported in planning for transition between phases. They receive good advice about education and training post-16, are properly prepared and given the support they need. Transitions are managed by a multi-agency approach, which includes healthcare, education, social care and housing.</p>
Complete integration of telephony system and Customer Relationship Management system	Complete	CRM is now available in our Contact Centre. This allows us to find customer details on our database when we receive calls to the Centre.
Continue to develop alternative methods of accessing Council services. Includes investigating the feasibility of a video link to a BSL signer in Customer Service Centres, a video conferencing facility and a plasma screen with BSL in the new Gosforth Customer Service Centre (CSC)	April 2007 - Ongoing	We are currently investigating the feasibility of utilising the plasma screens in Gosforth CSC to provide a welcoming and way finding message to Deaf customers
Engage with disabled community members to participate with Gosforth and Benwell CSC Focus Groups	Completed	Gosforth, Byker and Benwell CSC opened

Continue to improve accessibility to the Newcastle City Council website to meet all user needs. This will be assisted by developing the skills and knowledge of / technical assistance to IT staff	March 2007 - Ongoing	A number of initiatives have been progressed during 2008, please see page 17 for further information.
Continue to roll out Deaf awareness training to City Service managers	Completed	Managers continue to receive training where appropriate.
Develop online accessible form for housing and council tax benefit	2009 – 2010	This went out to tender in November 2008. Early indications show that there are three companies who each meet the specification in the tender. Demonstrations of the system will happen in 2009. We hope to have the system fully operational within 2009/2010. There was no successful funding received from DWP. Funding has been sought through alternative channels.

Environment and Regeneration

Monitor disability discriminatory graffiti in Newcastle and develop a process to refer the information to an appropriate organisation	December 2006 - Ongoing	Only 6 instances reported between 2007/08. Graffiti continued to be monitored.
Increase number of dropped kerbs within Newcastle	Ongoing	Dropped kerbs continue to be implemented on request where there is an identified need and at all new crossings throughout the city. An audit will be undertaken to establish the location of all dropped kerbs to enable further planning in 2009.
Introduce an awareness raising campaign to discourage parking on pavements. Run an internal and external campaign	Ongoing	The external awareness raising campaign will be launched in early 2009 and is linked to the decriminalisation of parking enforcement for which the Council will undertake responsibility in Spring 2009.
Install, test, promote and launch pilot REACT Scheme	Mar 2009	System updated and piloted during 2008. The official launch is due to take place in March 2009. For further information see page 13
Review effectiveness of pilot REACT Scheme with service users	Completed	Piloting of the system identified a number of issues which have been resolved in anticipation of the launch in March 2009.

If pilot REACT Scheme is considered suitable for user need, extend the route to cover further parts of the city	March 2010	To be reviewed following launch of system.
Develop a policy to improve accessibility to the Council's green space sites	Ongoing	There is no direct policy to cover this area however actions are being completed to improve accessibility to the Council's green space sites. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have obtained 9 Green Flag awards for our parks this year • We have been granted £4.49million from the Heritage Lottery and Big Lottery to improve Ouseburn Parks. This will commence in Spring 2009 with one of the main objectives being to improve physical access within and between the parks • Funding has been received from the Big Lottery and Central Government to improve play areas across the City which will be designed to be fully accessible.
Review and promote the provision of the Assisted Bin Lift scheme	Completed	The Assisted Bin Lift Scheme is now monitored and administered by Envirocall.
Deliver the objectives set out in the Accessible Networks Project operational plan	Ongoing	Accessible clubs and activities have continued to be introduced throughout the City to increase the participation of disabled people in leisure activities, including swimming clubs, dance sessions, football teams and badminton coaching.
Develop consultation pilot Scheme with the Access Association for Design and Access Statements within planning applications	Ongoing	A Senior Planning Officer has attended Access Association meetings. Consideration is being given on how best to achieve this action.
Provide training for relevant officers on inclusive design principles	Feb 2009	Training sessions will be delivered in January 2009 for 45 Council officers on principles of accessible design within the built environment.
All taxi drivers in Newcastle to attend disability awareness training course and refresher training	Ongoing	All new drivers are required to attend disability awareness training and all existing drivers have to attend refresher training every 3 years.

Employment

Action	Deadline	Update on progress
Deliver sessions to disabled people about job opportunities at the Council, completing application forms and interview techniques	Ongoing	Ongoing action in place. Sessions are delivered with internal and external candidates regarding job application support. Candidates are taken through the whole job application process; informed about jobs, advised and helped with application form and support given with interview techniques. This applies both to specific jobs and the general process of applying for jobs at the Council. This same support is provided to existing employees within the Council, in particular to staff unable to continue in their regular job role due to their disability.
Increase work experience placement opportunities available to disabled people	Ongoing	Progress has been made in re-establishing work experience placement opportunities for disabled people. Support throughout the Council is growing and placements have been offered to a number of disabled people in a variety of roles and teams. The HR Adviser (Disability) has made presentations on the benefits of the scheme to Senior Managers to encourage further support across the Directorates. This has directly led to increased support. The work is ongoing and we continue to offer further placements and to further publicise the scheme to disabled people. We aim to develop stronger links with Jobcentre Plus and partner organisations to support this.
Continue to support disabled people on work experience placements to apply for posts within the Council	Ongoing	Ongoing application support and encouragement is given to disabled people who are involved in work experience placements or who have completed work experience placements with the Council. Advice is provided about possibilities for reasonable adjustments, the DEN group and other in work support as appropriate.
Investigate, research and develop positive action initiatives for disabled people	Ongoing	We continue to implement positive action initiatives including the Two Tick Disability Symbol, attendance at recruitment events, advice and guidance for disabled applicants.
Publicise the work of the Disabled Employee Network (DEN) through surgeries and circulation of a DEN leaflet	Ongoing	Awareness of the DEN group has been raised through a variety of staff information channels. This has directly led to increased membership and participation within the DEN group.
Provide advice to both managers and staff about reasonable adjustments	Ongoing	Advice given, by HR Adviser (Disability) upon request, to managers and staff regarding reasonable adjustments for individual situations. Support also given to

through presentations and individual contact		individual employees regarding accessing support and funding in particular from Access to Work and the Council's Disability Access Fund.
Revise exit interview form and develop system for analysing exit interview forms	Completed	The exit interview form has been revised to ensure managers are better able to capture information about reasons for leaving. Information will be analysed and feature in the Council's Annual Workforce Monitoring Report.
Develop partnership with Job Centre Plus to ensure wide circulation of job vacancies	Ongoing	There is an ongoing relationship in place between Jobcentre plus and the Council allowing the Council to publicise its vacancies through the Jobcentre. Jobcentreplus advisers working with disabled jobseekers can refer them to the HR Adviser (Disability) for advice and support through the application process.
Update current job application forms	Completed	Job application forms have been revised. This includes the introduction of two different application forms, including a simpler form for jobs with fewer entry requirements.
Develop a job carving initiative for people who are learning disabled	Completed	Successfully implemented – for further information see page 11

Strategic Housing

Action	Deadline	Update on progress
Build all new properties in the regeneration of Walker Riverside to Lifetime Homes Standards	December 2008 and beyond	Progressing in line with Walker Riverside Area Action Plan.
Seek funding to develop temporary accommodation that is accessible and meets all user requirements	Ongoing	Plan for improvements still to be identified.
Establish protocols between key agencies to identify those clients most at risk in order to prevent homelessness	Ongoing	Hospital discharge protocols have been set up and are being monitored. Specific clients are being targeted to prevent homelessness. The Mental Health Housing Strategy has been agreed and sets a framework for joint coordination between housing, health and social care organisations in order to reduce levels of homelessness.
Increase access to a wider range of	December	A bid to the Department of Health for "Extra Care" housing for people with learning

housing options for people with learning disabilities through the implementation of the Learning Disability Housing Strategy	2009	disabilities was unsuccessful. We are currently promoting awareness of this type of model with our partners.
Develop ways for people with mental health conditions to access housing and support that is appropriate to their needs through the implementation of the Mental Health Housing Strategy	December 2008 and ongoing	Action on hold until resource secured.
Develop process for recording disability related harassment including linking in to the development of the ARCH process to ensure that disability related harassment incidences are recorded and dealt with appropriately	Completed	Disability related harassment is now recorded on a new IT system.
Develop ways to increase engagement with disabled tenants, prospective tenants and residents of Newcastle by promoting participation opportunities available	Ongoing	In September 2008 the tenant involvement team sent out a survey to disabled customers/residents to find out their views on how accessible our services are. Under-represented disabled groups, such as blind and deaf people were targeted. We hope to complete an evaluation of the feedback by the end of 2008.

* Please note that Your Homes Newcastle (YHN) have drafted an independent Single Equality Scheme for 2008-2011. This covers the work that they are doing to promote disability equality.

Tyne and Wear Museums

Action	Deadline	Update on progress
Carry out programme of targeted exhibitions to increase the diversity of visitors to museums and art galleries	Ongoing	Following the success of the 'One in Four' exhibition exploring the experiences and attitudes surrounding disability a new exhibition entitled 'Mind the Gap' is now being exhibited at the Discovery Museum. For more information see page 23

Carry out targeted promotion, communications and outreach work through contact with SEN schools and groups of children and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities	Ongoing	<p>Consultation is ongoing, with parents and children being involved through family fun activities and tailored pilot events. The findings have helped to improve activities and develop sessions for young people with learning disabilities and disabilities.</p> <p>A newsletter to primary schools has been updated to help to communicate what facilities are available for all children. With holiday activities being adapted to meet all user needs, sessions are advertised in a 'What's On' brochure.</p> <p>Inclusive family day activities are planned during 2009 where disabled and d/Deaf Children will be encouraged to take part.</p> <p>Visits to local schools and colleges by TWM staff have meant that we can raise awareness of activities for all. As part of our 'loan box' programme, museum items are left that could be of interest to young people.</p>
Produce guidance on procurement and include commitment to equality issues	Completed	New Procurement Procedure Rules were approved in February 2008. Changes include a Contractor Evaluation Questionnaire and a requirement for all companies to provide information relating to Equality and Diversity. These have been implemented and rolled out to staff.
Review accessible information guidelines for staff	March 2009	<p>Review finished - revised guidelines to be completed by March 2009.</p> <p>A consultation process was undertaken involving museum staff, disabled and Deaf visitors and the Museums and Galleries Disability Action Group (MAGDAG). Advice was also sought from the RNIB, MPH and NCC.</p>
Consider use of Crystal Mark Plain English Campaign	Ongoing	NCC application forms now meet this standard. TWM are continuing too review applying the standard to key documents.
Review disability equality training for all staff and volunteers and ensure that refresher training is offered regularly	Ongoing	<p>74.4% of current TWM staff trained. The training has been reviewed and refresher training will be offered from March 09 to staff who attended disability equality training over 3 years ago.</p> <p>A programme of disability targeted training is also being undertaken. Initially, this has involved d/Deaf awareness training and will incorporate visual awareness</p>

		training.
Increase promotion of Tyne and Wear Museums' services to disabled people by advertising and displaying information in more appropriate places	Ongoing	<p>A communications strategy has been developed to help to raise awareness of BSL signed tours.</p> <p>TWM has held stands at disability events such as the Sight North East Exhibition and the Disability North Exhibition (DNEX).</p> <p>Access open days are to be held at four TWM venues in February and March 2009.</p> <p>Work has begun with partners to set up a junior 'MAGDAR' in 2009.</p>
Research and involve disabled people to find out the best way to promote positive images of disabled people	Ongoing	<p>The promotion of positive images of disabled and d/Deaf people is continuing with the 'Mind the Gap exhibition', building on the work achieved through 'One in Four'.</p> <p>Further research has been on-going to reach excluded groups, via a Disability Access Questionnaire. The results from the findings will help underpin future strategic action planning to improve disability access</p>
Increase consultation, involvement and partnership working. Ensure that representation of disabled people in consultation groups reflects the diversity of disabled people's experience	Ongoing	<p>Regular meetings are held by the Tyne & Wear Museums and Galleries Disabled Access Group which continues its involvement in projects and exhibitions.</p> <p>The planned creation of a Junior 'MAGDA' Group and the on-going work strengthening links with schools/colleges is a natural progression in extending our consultation network.</p>
Carry out Disability Access Plan Statements on all Tyne and Wear museums and art galleries	Ongoing	<p>Work on Access Statements is ongoing across all TWM venues. This will be completed by March 2009.</p> <p>The Access Statements will be displayed on the TWM website and will be fully accessible to prospective disabled and deaf visitors, staff and volunteers.</p>
Use a wider range of media and specifically targeted campaigns to encourage more disabled people to apply for work or volunteer with TWM	Ongoing	<p>TWM have signed up to Gateshead Voluntary Organisations Council 'Say Yes to Disabled Volunteers' programme.</p> <p>The volunteer induction pack and application process has been simplified. A BSL</p>

		<p>DVD is available.</p> <p>Positions with TWM are regularly advertised in disability specific publications e.g. Disability Now.</p> <p>Funding has been secured via the One North East funded Cultural Volunteering Programme 'North East Volunteers' to develop an employability focused volunteering programme. One of the target areas is Disabled and d/Deaf people. This is a 2 year project running up to March 2010.</p>
<p>Increase traineeships and work experience offered to disabled people through partnership working</p>	<p>March 2009</p>	<p>Partnership working continues with Rehab UK, Royal British Legion, Neuropartners, Shaw Trust and other organisations that provide work placements. A partnership has also been formed with Scope and their Inclusive Volunteering Programme.</p> <p>TWM are also involved in the One North East Regional Cultural Volunteering Framework.</p>

Appendix 2

Best Value Targets

	2006/2007 Actual	2007/2008 Actual
BV002a: The level of the Equality Standard for Local Government to which the authority conforms	3	4
BV011c: The percentage of the top paid 5% of staff who have a disability	1.98%	5.47%
BV016a: The percentage of local authority employees with a disability compared with the economically active population in the local authority area who have a disability	5.30%	6.01%
BV043a: The percentage of proposed statements of special educational need issued by the authority in a financial year and prepared within 18 weeks excluding exceptions under the Education Regulations 2001	100%	100%
BV043b: The percentage of proposed statements of special educational need issued by the authority in a financial year and prepared within 18 weeks including exceptions under the Education Regulations 2001	48.00%	68.00% Target
BV156: The percentage of authority buildings open to the public in which all areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people	45.55%	57.08%
BV165: The percentage of pedestrian crossings with facilities for disabled people, as a proportion of all crossings in the local authority area	99.59%	99.59%