

# EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY



2025-2028

# Need this information in a different way?

## Are we accessible to you?

We recognise that people who need or receive information from us may need it provided in a different way for a variety of reasons and;

- We want everyone to be able to understand us.
  - We want everyone to be able to access our written, visual, and audio materials.
- We want to provide you with what you need to communicate effectively with us.

We offer Language Line, which provides online video interpretation to give deaf customers full accessibility.

On request we will provide other formats including large print; Braille; British Sign Language DVD; easy read; audio and electronic formats; and translations of written materials into other languages.

If you need this information in a different format, please contact us on:

Email: [communications@southderbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:communications@southderbyshire.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01283 595795

[www.southderbyshire.gov.uk](http://www.southderbyshire.gov.uk) and complete our online enquiry form.

---



## Definitions

Throughout this Strategy, equality, diversity and inclusion are referenced.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are different things, but they need to be progressed together. Equality of opportunity will only exist when we recognise and value difference and work together for inclusion.

Below are our definitions:

**Equality** means fairness: we must ensure that individuals, or groups are not treated less favourably or differently. Equity means that some groups or individuals may require more treatment and support to experience equality. We will ensure that those who may face different challenges, or require our help to receive information, get our support.

**Diversity** is recognising, respecting, and celebrating each other's differences. A diverse environment is one with a wide range of backgrounds and mindsets, which allows for an empowered culture of creativity and innovation.

**Inclusion** means creating an environment where everyone feels welcome and valued.



## Foreword

Equality, diversity and inclusion are an integral part of everyday life for us at South Derbyshire District Council, as an employer, in the services we provide and the communities we serve. We are committed to putting these issues at the centre of our decision-making processes to ensure we best meet the needs of our residents.

We aim to embed this in everything we do and will use the four themes under the Local Government Equality Framework principles outlined below to enable use to monitor our progress.

### **Understanding and working with your communities**

We actively listen to the views of diverse communities through our involvement in county and District wide partnerships and engagement activities. This inclusive approach is a core element of our Customer Access Strategy, ensuring that the voices of all groups are heard and incorporated into decision-making processes.

### **Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment**

Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is championed at all levels of leadership. Our Members, Leadership Team, and senior managers consistently prioritise and consider equality, diversity and inclusion in strategic, leadership, and operational meetings. This unified focus underscores our dedication to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion into the Council's culture and practices.

### **Responsive services and customer care**

Equality, diversity and inclusion principles are embedded into our corporate and operational plans, ensuring they underpin and support the delivery of all our services. This reinforces our commitment to creating equitable outcomes for the communities we serve. We complete Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) to inform and identify opportunities and challenges when making service and budgetary decisions. These assessments ensure that equality considerations are integrated into all aspects of resources and financial allocation.

### **Diverse and engaged workforce**

The Council directly employs 427 people in full, part time and temporary posts across a range of occupations and works with other partners to deliver services. It is important that we are an inclusive employer, and we attract, appoint and retain the best workforce, that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. We monitor our workforce to find out whether it broadly reflects our community and to ensure our employment practices are free from discrimination and accessible and fair to all. We take positive action to support perspective and current employees to access opportunities to develop their career and achieve an appropriate balance between their working and personal lives to support their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

## The Council has seven values that describe how we work

Our employees have developed these values to represent how services are delivered and the standard for how we interact and communicate to ensure that the needs of our customers are met.



**Working together:** Working as a team to serve our residents.



**Accountability:** Taking ownership of the service that we deliver.



**Respect:** We value and listen to each other.



**Fairness:** Offering equal opportunities for all.



**Being Responsive:** We have a 'can do' attitude and respond to the needs of others quickly, positively and appropriately.



**Innovative:** Looking for new solutions.



**Excellence:** Delivering our services to the highest possible standards.



## These values are embedded into everything we do

We are pleased with the positive response to the engagement events we organised in partnership with South Derbyshire CVS, a local charity working to improve the quality of life for people in South Derbyshire, to develop our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan and then to move it forward with the support of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group.

It shows that people and community groups place a lot of importance on promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in our society and we share its commitment.

We will continue to engage with our community groups and residents – both longer-established and our new arrivals, those who are vulnerable and those at risk of being marginalised. We want to ensure all voices are heard.



## Our Commitment

On behalf of the Leadership Team, Members and our employees, we look forward to carrying out this work, so that we can deliver even fairer, more accessible and inclusive services for everyone that lives, visits and works in South Derbyshire.



**Cllr Robert Pearson**  
Leader of the Council



**Dr Justin Ives**  
Chief Executive

## Equality for South Derbyshire Residents

Being equal means making sure that life is fair for everyone. This is supported through the Equality Act (2010) and the Public Sector Equality Duty that requires all public bodies to demonstrate how they will give “due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.” This is called the Equality Duty.

### Under the Equality Duty, the Council needs to:

- Make sure that people are treated fairly and do not experience discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.
- Give special thought to make life fairer for everybody and ensure everyone has opportunities; and
- Help people who are different from one another to understand each other.

There are some groups who are treated less fairly than most. These groups need support and understanding to make life fairer. These are defined as people with ‘protected characteristics’ under the Equality Act. The protected characteristics are:

- Gender – male, female, or non-binary
- Disability – physical or mental impairment which has a substantial, long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities
- Age – people of different ages
- Race – people who come from different cultures, who may live in a different way or have a different skin colour
- Religion or belief – people of different religions and those with no religious beliefs
- Pregnancy and maternity – someone who is pregnant or breastfeeding
- Sexual orientation – a person's sexual orientation towards persons of the same sex, persons of the opposite sex, or persons of either sex.
- Marriage or civil partnership – a person who is married or in a civil partnership
- Gender reassignment – any person who is undergoing, proposing to undergo, or has undergone a process (or part of a process) of reassigning their sex/gender

People can experience discrimination or disadvantage because of other things that contribute to their identity. Creating an inclusive District also means recognising and minimising other causes of inequality or exclusion, such as low income, social or geographical isolation, living in poor housing or suffering poor health.

In line with the Equality Duty, the Council will publish information to show how it is meeting this Duty in its role as an employer and a service provider and how this affects people with protected characteristics. The Council will report on the progress made every year.

## About South Derbyshire

South Derbyshire is a local government District in Derbyshire. The population of South Derbyshire has grown by 13.3% in the last decade with 107,200 people living in the District, compared to 94,611 in 2011 (Census data). The total population of the District is forecast to be 120,342 by 2028 (ONS) and further forecast to be 122,769 in 2030. It is the fastest growing District in Derbyshire and one of the fastest in England.



South Derbyshire is a thriving, attractive place to live, work and visit with a mixture of well-developed urban areas and historic rural settlements. It has been transformed during the past few decades from a clay and mining area to a successful District with tourist attractions that bring in more than two million visitors each year, modern community and leisure facilities and activities for residents and visitors alike to enjoy. It contains a third of the National Forest.

The District boasts 4,000 business enterprises, among them international names such as JCB, Nestle and Toyota Motor Manufacturing UK.



## Population

The most recent figures (from the Office for National Statistics survey 2021) shows:



The population of South Derbyshire was 107,200 and with a gender split of approximately 51% females and 49% males. The remainder either have not specified or do not identify as either male or female.

42

The average age of people is 42, and the median age is also 42.



By religion, the most populous religious group within South Derbyshire is 'Others', accounting for 49.0% of the population, followed by 47.4 per cent Christian. Other groups include Muslim 0.7%, 2.1% Sikh, 0.5% Hindu and 0.2% Buddhist.



94% of people living in South Derbyshire were born in England.



96.9% of people living in South Derbyshire speak English. The other top languages spoken are 0.7% Punjabi, 0.6% Polish, 0.6% other European languages and 0.1 % Chinese.



Of South Derbyshire residents aged 16 years and over, 32.8% said they had never been married or in a civil partnership in 2021, up from 28.7% in 2011. In 2021, just under one in two people (49.2%) said they were married or in a registered civil partnership, compared with 52.9% in 2011. The percentage of adults in South Derbyshire that had divorced or dissolved a civil partnership increased from 9.4% to 9.6%.

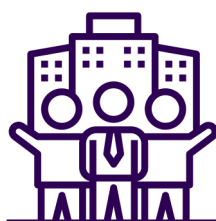
**Occupations of South Derbyshire residents** The top occupations listed by people in South Derbyshire are:



**Managers,  
Directors and  
Senior Officials**



**Professional  
Occupations**



**Associate  
Professional  
Occupations**



**Skilled Trades  
Occupations**

## Accessing services digitally

In an increasingly digital age, those who are not able for whatever reason to engage with the digital world are at risk of being left behind and isolated. Digital skills are increasingly important for connecting with others, accessing information, services and job opportunities.

Lack of digital access disproportionately affects vulnerable and low-income groups, the elderly and those more marginalized communities within our society. A study undertaken by Rural Action Derbyshire (2022) found that across the County, **7.6% of adults had no internet access at home**, 14% did not have a smartphone, 18.8% did not have a laptop/PC, and 39% did not have all the essential digital skills for work.

Significant progress has been made around the digital inclusion agenda. At South Derbyshire District Council, we are transforming our services so that our customers can access a range of services using a variety of methods including website, online forms and social media. We have introduced a system for customers to make payments to the Council using an online payment system or calling a touchtone payment line.

In the District, there have been upgrades to telephone exchanges and roadside cabinets that contain the technology needed to give homes and businesses access to fibre broadband. Delivered as part of the Digital Derbyshire project, the work means residents and businesses in the areas concerned can now order fibre broadband from an internet service provider of their choice, providing them with faster speeds and smoother service delivery.



## Our approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

It is important to the Council that we are an inclusive employer and we attract, appoint and retain the best workforce, that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. We monitor our workforce to find out whether it broadly reflects our community and to ensure our practices are free from discrimination, helping us to deliver appropriate and accessible services.

The Council collects equality information on its workforce to provide an overview of our progress and identify areas for further action. This includes meeting the requirements in the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty, where we are required to publish workforce information.

The Council makes its recruitment and selection process fair and transparent to encourage applications from under-represented groups and offers a range of different flexible working options to recognise the different needs of our current and future workforce. Through apprenticeships and other national and local schemes, the Council offers paid and unpaid on-the-job training placements to provide people and those who need to gain support before entering or re-entering employment with opportunities to get valuable work experience.

To embed a culture of inclusion, we have developed an in-house EDI learning module for all colleagues. This training enhances understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion principles while emphasising their role in driving all performance and fostering a supportive workplace.

As part of our ongoing dedication to inclusivity, we have been re-accredited as a 'Disability Confident Employer' under the Disability Confident Scheme. This recognition highlights our commitment to creating accessible opportunities and fostering a work environment that supports individuals with disabilities, and we will work towards the attainment of Disability Confident Leader.

The Council's Leadership Team and Members lead and actively drive our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. This ensures that all services are fair, inclusive, and accessible and that we work with partners, businesses and other groups to promote, influence and raise awareness both internally and across the District.

The Leadership Team has responsibility for managing the Council and works with Heads of Service to oversee progress made and outcomes achieved against the Council Plan 2024-28.

The delivery of the equality actions is a responsibility shared by Members, Officers, contractors, partners, stakeholders, and residents. The Chief Executive is responsible for the delivery of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan.



## Corporate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group

Our organisational structure ensures that equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) remain integral to all our operations. The Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group is chaired by the Chief Executive and co-chaired by the Chief Executive of CVS. This group includes representation from directorates, Trade Unions, voluntary, community and faith-based groups, and staff members, creating a collaborative platform to champion EDI initiatives.

### The group will:

- ✓ **Monitor the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Action Plan.**
- ✓ **Develop an annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion report on to inform people of our progress, celebrate our achievements and to continue engagement with our future plans, as well as meeting our legislative requirements.**
- ✓ **Advise, monitor, and review equality impact assessments.**
- ✓ **Share information and learning across the Council relating to equality, diversity and inclusion.**
- ✓ **Recommend and monitor equality, diversity and inclusion training.**
- ✓ **Engage with community, voluntary and faith-based groups, partners, and residents to raise awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion and to work together on actions to reduce exclusion, discrimination, and victimisation.**



## Monitoring and Reporting on Progress

The Council wants to be the best it can be in equality, diversity and inclusion. It is committed to working to improve and to address inequality in South Derbyshire.

To ensure this happens the Council will:

- **Publish information explaining the progress it is making towards achieving our equality objectives and review how we are doing.**
- **Listen to and understand the diverse needs of communities and improve how we collect information across different services to better understand the impact of our actions.**
- **Be open and transparent about our progress, sharing information and learning from experience.**
- **Review our equality objectives every four years or more regularly where a clear need has been identified.**
- **Use Equality Impact Assessments as part of our decision-making process by Committees and Officers to determine the equality impact of our initiatives.**
- **Collect information about residents and service users to inform policies and services we directly provide for the community.**
- **Use employee surveys to collect information about our employees and use it to check that employment procedures and practices are fair, inclusive, and transparent and continues our commitment towards creating a skilled and diverse workforce.**
- **Share best practice with partners so that we can collaborate, learn from others, and continually improve.**

## Our Journey since 2021

At a meeting of Council on 24 February 2021, we reset our approach to how, as a leader in our community, we would approach how we would comply with not only our statutory duties but also how we could best meet the needs of our community.

Following an ambitious and extensive programme of internal and external consultation, supported by our key partners such as the South Derbyshire CVS, voluntary, faith- based groups as well as organisations in the private and public sector we set our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and action plan for the period 2021 to 2025.

Having reached the end of this, we have taken the time to reflect on our approach and learn. We have achieved so much over the past four years but recognise that we now need to refine our approach and become more focused and not set ourselves and our partners with so many actions or initiatives. It is with is in mind we are now moving to using an established equality model to shape our future approach with less actions and more focus. Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion remains steadfast and we will continue to challenge unfairness, remove barriers to inclusion and celebrate diversity across of District.

We will continue to share our story with our partners and communities through the publishing of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual reports and with our Steering Group. As a reminder of our work over the past four years and the contribution made by our workforce, partners, and residents we have provided some highlights below under our previous priorities and for further details please view our annual reports [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion annual reports](#).





## **Encouraging and enabling a skilled and diverse workforce**

- **Launched the 'Supporting Aspirations' action plan for disadvantaged young people.**
- **Attended careers events and promoted 'Access to Work' scheme.**
- **Developed corporate safeguarding training as an e- learning resource.**
- **Increased apprenticeships to ten, and work experience placements to ten.**
- **Published an updated Gender Pay Report, showing slight positive pay disparity in favour of women.**
- **Held a series of events for Mental Health Awareness Week, Sign Language Week, and International Women's Day.**
- **Provided refresher training for the 26 staff we have as Mental Health First Aiders.**
- **Secured funding to support young people in the District to improve their employment opportunities, and attended careers events in Schools.**

## **Demonstrating inclusive leadership and partnerships**

- **Refreshed the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group with expanded representation.**
- **Developed a diversity calendar to celebrate key events.**
- **Promoted Hate Crime Awareness Week and the 16 Days of Action Against Domestic Abuse campaign.**
- **Supported South Derbyshire Place initiative for integrated healthcare.**
- **Ran a falls recovery service pilot with CareLink responders.**
- **We have worked in partnership with Swadlincote Primary Care Networks to set up a GP-Led home visiting service for the housebound, including those in local care homes. This has reduced the likelihood of people needing to be admitted to hospital or a decline in their conditions.**
- **Launched community initiatives such as the ALICE project for disadvantaged learners. 25 learners were supported.**
- **Organised events like the Festival of Leisure and Holocaust Memorial Exhibition to promote cohesion.**

## **Delivering responsive and inclusive services**

- Conducted a review of public spaces to enhance accessibility.
- Supported warm hubs in seven locations to address social isolation.
- Expanded dementia-friendly initiatives. Introduced programmes for children with disabilities, such as adaptive sports.
- Completed 66 home adaptations for disabled residents.
- Delivered the 'Holiday Activity Food' programmes to ensure vulnerable children receive free school meals and activities.
- A new free car park was constructed in Swadlincote with eight electric vehicle charging bays, three of which are extra wide to make them accessible for wheelchair users.
- At Rosliston Forestry Centre changes to improve access included enlargement of the slit windows in the bird hide so that people in scooters and wheelchairs can use them more easily.
- Held a diverse range of community events that have included the Get Active in the Forest Team working with DEAFinitely women to put on walks for women who are deaf or hard of hearing. The charity provides a British Sign Language interpreter to attend the walks.
- Held a Festival of Leisure, highlighting food, dress and hobbies from a country and across the world with which South Derbyshire has close links.

## **Understanding and Embedding Diverse Community Needs**

- Conducted a community demographic review to inform service planning.
- Promoting the Children in Care and Care Leaver Offer.
- Publicise an Active community events calendar.
- Completed Equality Impact Assessments on policies, projects and services.
- Launched Social Lives Project for adults with diverse abilities.
- Developed a structured Community Grants Programmes focusing on disadvantaged areas.
- Strengthened hate crime prevention efforts through awareness campaigns and partnerships.

If you need this information in a different format, please contact us on:

Email: [communications@southderbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:communications@southderbyshire.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01283 595795

[www.southderbyshire.gov.uk](http://www.southderbyshire.gov.uk) and complete our online enquiry form.



**South  
Derbyshire**  
District Council