

# EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ANNUAL REPORT



2024-2025



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# Foreword

**We are proud to introduce our annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion report.**

This report highlights the progress we and our partners have made over the past 12 months to advance our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion; to outline our next steps, and to meet the requirements of our public sector equality duty.

The Council wants a District in which people have a good quality of life, be who they want to be and can achieve their full potential. This is underpinned by the recognition that individuals, families, and communities do not all have the same starting point or access to the same opportunities.

We highlight some of the work we have been doing to promote and celebrate equality, diversity, and inclusion in collaboration with our partners, and in the wider community. This demonstrates our ongoing commitment to ensuring our residents, customers, and staff are treated fairly and equitably by the Council.

Our work shows the many ways we have used to listen, include, and involve our communities. We understand that everyone is an individual with their own characteristics, preferences and life styles they choose. We celebrate difference and acknowledge personal choice.

We continually work to improve, and we acknowledge there is more to do to address inequality, discrimination, and exclusion. We are committed to being a role model and being there for people who need our help or support.

We are proud of the work we have achieved to make South Derbyshire a place where people can fully participate in the social, cultural, political, and economic life of our District.

We thank our partners who play an important role in achieving our aims, and our staff who constantly go above and beyond to serve our residents, customers, and partners. We will continue to work together to ensure equality, diversity, and inclusion are central to everything we do.



# Leadership

**We demonstrate inclusive leadership, partnership, and a clear organisational commitment to being a leader in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.**

We have an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Steering Group with a broad membership that includes representatives from voluntary, community, faith-based groups, Trade Unions, Leadership Team, Members, and staff.

We have reviewed, updated, and received feedback on our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2025-2028 and action plan with this group and with the Leadership Team, Heads of Service and Trade Unions and Members. We have listened and focused our action plan on a smaller number of activities that will be delivered during the year and then to review our approach.

Community cohesion is what brings members of different communities together. During 2024/25 examples of activities we organised to bring people from different backgrounds together included the Festival of Leisure, and a weeklong exhibition of The 80 Candles Quilt which was a community arts project led alongside the multi faith centre in Derby to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day.

As lead member of the South Derbyshire Partnership, we contribute to improving the economic, social, and environmental wellbeing of the District, while also promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion.

## In 2024-25:

- Our active travel service supported wheelchair users to access 340 journeys to medical and social appointments (medical journeys funded by Derbyshire County Council and social journeys funded by us).
- Our connected South Derbyshire project, in partnership with Public Health Derbyshire, supported the community to form and sustain groups for people with dementia, Parkinson's disease and other mobility issues.
- Handy person service completed 682 call outs to vulnerable residents or with a disability.
- Mental wellbeing support service supported 184 people.
- 'Youth shape' delivered assemblies to 114 young people, with 14 signing up to become volunteers'.
- We hosted work experience and intern placements for South Derbyshire young people.
- We trained Mental Health First Aiders in all our service areas.
- We have supported employees with reasonable adjustments and changes to their working conditions to recognise their personal needs.



# Workforce

**We actively promote equality, diversity, and inclusion to our workforce and take actions to support this.**

We recognise the value and importance of treating all staff equitably and to take positive action, provide support and raise awareness of barriers and challenges staff can face in the workplace or in their daily life.

## During 2024/25 we have:

- Reviewed and agreed our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy for 2025-2028 and an annual Action Plan.
- Completed and published our Gender Pay Gap report that shows that on a median basis females are paid 12.8% more than males.
- Maintained our Disability Confident status and have plans to achieve Disability Leader accreditation.
- Have written our Customer Access Strategy and have rolled out a mandatory training plan for staff.
- Completed a self-assessment against the Local Government Equality Framework and engaged with the EDI Steering Group to produce the road map for accreditation by the end of 2026.
- Continued to provide Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training for our staff and with our partners
- Supported employees with disabilities to remain in work through providing access to equipment and support.
- Hosted 11 work experience placements to promote local government careers and support people into work.
- We employed 10 apprentices and supported them with additional training and support to enhance their future career options.
- Provided Menopause training and awareness sessions.
- Completed Equality Impact Assessments on employment policies and procedures along with completing the same with service based strategies and policies.
- Expanded recruitment efforts onto social media platforms and redesigned recruitment materials to reach a wider and more diverse audience.



# Communities

Ensuring everyone can access and benefit from our services is key to our work.

## Supporting Independence and Wellbeing

Our work on Disabled Facilities Grants continues to support individuals to maintain independence, whilst supporting their confidence and wellbeing. In 2024-25 we completed 68 adaptations in private properties (including private rented and social landlords) and 49 adaptations in Council-owned properties.

The Council's Careline team provides a 24/7 responsive service to almost 1,000 residents throughout the District.

They ensure vulnerable residents stay safe and receive help if they fall, become ill, or are at potential risk from fire. Between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, they handled a total of 41,699 calls, 99.1% of which were answered within 60 seconds.



## Supporting Children, Families, and Vulnerable Residents

Looked after and care-experienced children, along with their carers, can access our Leisure Centres (managed by Everyone Active) free of charge. Free membership is also available to anyone living with Parkinson's.

Weekly activity groups run across South Derbyshire, including a year-round Tennis group (indoors during winter) and a seasonal Bowls group at Maurice Lea Memorial Park from May to September.



The Derbyshire specialist child exploitation charity, Safe and Sound, has delivered weekly outreach sessions with young people in Swadlincote town centre and local urban parks. These sessions provide a safe space for young people to share their concerns, empower them to take positive action, and connect them with organisations for support. They also ensure young people's voices help shape the future delivery of services.

The South Derbyshire Community Grant Fund, which is administered by the Council, supported 17 community projects in 2024/25. These ranged from improvements to community venues and community sports facilities to energy efficient measures and environmental projects such as a new community woodland.

## Holiday Activities and Schools

The Active Schools Partnership delivered their Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Holiday Camps during the Easter and Summer Holidays – HAF provides healthy meals, enriching activities, and free childcare places to children from low-income families, benefiting their health, wellbeing and learning. Over the summer 16 sessions were delivered, averaging 58 attendances per day with a total of just under 1000 places delivered. Through Active South Derbyshire and Get Active in the Forest additional HAF programmes were also provided during the holidays at Cadley Park with cycling sessions, Swadlincote Skatepark with drop-in coaching sessions and an Out and Active camp at Rosliston Forestry Centre, hosting 25-30 children per day over 6 sessions.



In partnership with the three Swadlincote Secondary Schools, Active South Derbyshire delivered year 1 of our Sports Mentoring scheme. The scheme provides an open, trusting environment and provides young people facing challenges or barriers at School with an opportunity to explore their thoughts and feelings, whilst also enabling them to reap the many benefits of participating in physical activity; with the overall aim of enabling the young person to feel able to fully re-engage in their education. In year one, more than 20 full eight-week referrals were completed, with several participants returning to full timetables and schools reporting improved engagement and behaviour in lessons.

This year, as part of our programme of Summer Activities, two free to access SEND Family Sessions were held at Midway Community Centre to offer an opportunity for young people with SEND to try a wide variety of activities and have fun with their parents, carers and/or siblings in a safe and supported environment. These accessible sessions offer adapted activities in a quieter setting, designed for those who may be deterred by busier summer sessions or unable to access mainstream provision due to their additional needs.

## Health and Inclusion Initiatives

Get Active in the Forest have launched their Parkinson's Group at Rosliston Forestry Centre. This is a free monthly social group for people with Parkinson's and their families. The sessions offer the chance to participate in a variety of activities such as Chair Based Exercise and Nordic Walking, as well as the opportunity to socialise and enjoy a drink and a chat.

At Rosliston Forestry Centre, changes were completed to improve the bird hide which included enlargement of the slit windows for people in scooters and wheelchairs. Also, an additional Trampler mobility scooter has been purchased enabling visitors requiring additional support to access more of the site.



## Customer Access and Equality

A project has been initiated in response to the actions identified in the Customer Access Strategy, with a core objective of improving how customers interact and engage with our services. It focuses on ensuring that all contact channels are clear, accessible, and aligned with customer expectations, while also enhancing communication to keep customers informed and confident in their interactions with us.



A Diversity Calendar of Events was created and delivered during the year, with different religious festivals, themed weeks and months all promoted. These included Eid, Pride month, and Sign Language Week.

We have continued to deliver a broad range of events promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion. This included launching a new weekly walk at Newhall Surgery and ongoing support for Sikh community groups from Stenson Fields, providing transport during the spring and summer to enable fortnightly walks at visitor attractions across the National Forest.

The Festival of Leisure is accessible for all. This year we focused on bringing accessible arts, such as running textile weaving and ceramics workshops, to those that would not normally have the opportunity.

A corporate approach to the collection of equality data of people accessing our services or requesting information has been introduced. This informs the delivery of services, provides information to monitor trends, and highlights potential barriers for people accessing our services that we can address and resolve.

We continue to share resources on our website, and support for people who need support from the Access to Work scheme.

## Partnership Working and Safety

Partnership working remains vital to understanding and supporting our communities. We continue to be an important member of the South Derbyshire Community Safety Partnership, a multi-agency group that works to reduce crime and the fear of crime, signposting people to available support.

We have actively supported Hate Crime Awareness Week, delivered Hate Crime education sessions, and are working with education authorities to explore available funding for external education across schools in the District. In addition, we have signed the UNITE Unity over Division charter, demonstrating our commitment to eradicating and challenging all forms of racial discrimination and hate crime, while working in partnership to promote an inclusive workplace and society.



Reported hate crime figures for the District have increased slightly, with those for 2024–25 showing South Derbyshire has the fourth lowest in the county.

Total Hate Crimes				
District	April 2023 - March 2024	April 2024 - March 2025	Volume Change	% Change
Amber Valley	245	230	-15	-6.1%
Bolsover	131	162	31	23.7%
Chesterfield	230	298	68	29.6%
County Council area	1,307	1,341	34	2.6%
Derby	1,100	1,013	-87	-7.9%
Derbyshire Dales	74	77	3	4.1%
Erewash	268	198	-70	-26.1%
Force area	2,407	2,354	-53	-2.2%
High Peak	97	110	13	13.4%
North East Derbyshire	135	131	-4	-3.0%
South Derbyshire	127	135	8	6.3%



# Looking ahead

**Excellent progress was made in 2024 - 25 but there is still more to do.**

Working with our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Steering Group and other stakeholders and partners, we will continue to build on what has been achieved.

## Our plans for 2025–26 include:

- Submitting an application to be assessed against the Local Government Equality Framework
- Continuing to review our employment policies and procedures, completing Equality Impact Assessments to identify any opportunities to make us as inclusive as possible and an 'Employer of Choice.'
- A continuation of the social mobility programme aimed at disadvantaged young people, aged 11 – 16 in secondary schools in the District to improve their employment prospects through a range of interventions which include employee visits, out of school visits to employers, and work experience placements.
- Our disabled facilities grants team will work with Foundations, the national body for disabled facilities grants and home improvement agencies, to look at where timescales can be reduced, and the customer journey improved.
- Develop pay equality reporting to include disability and ethnicity.
- Review our recruitment processes and practices to encourage applicants from underrepresented groups.
- We will continue to strengthen work with external partners to advance, recognise and celebrate equality, diversity, and inclusion in South Derbyshire.
- Develop a corporate calendar of events to commemorate, celebrate or educate through activities, information or support of significant national or local events.
- Review our services in light of the Supreme Court judgment to ensure we remain compliant with the law whilst continuing to support members of the LGBTQ community.
- Complete an equality impact assessment on the proposals for a new leisure centre and office facility
- Complete an internal campaign to build or insight into the equality profile of our workforce.
- Develop our approach to identify and support employees with mental health conditions including the provision of neurodiversity training for Managers.
- Procure an employee assistance programme that will enable employees to obtain access to a range of different support services to support their physical, mental and financial health.



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This information is also available in large print, Braille or audio format upon request.

**General enquiries: Call 01283 595795 or visit [www.southderbyshire.gov.uk/contact](http://www.southderbyshire.gov.uk/contact)**

