

Cambridge City Council

Single Equality Scheme

2015 – 2018



“Embracing diversity, committed to equality”

Cambridge City Council Single Equality Scheme 2015 - 2018

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Introduction

Cambridge City Council values the strength that comes with difference and the positive contribution that diversity brings to the city. Our vision for Cambridge¹ is of an international city which celebrates its diversity and actively tackles intolerance and discrimination. We want Cambridge to be a place where all citizens feel that they are listened to and have a stake in the community, and which supports and values individual and community initiatives that bring people together. This is reinforced by a clear statement of Equality Values².

In April 2010 the Equality Act was passed by Parliament bringing with it some specific duties for public bodies, including local authorities. Implementation of the Act began in October 2010 with the introduction of the employment, equal pay, education, and services, public functions and associations elements. On 5th April 2011 further parts of the Equality Act were implemented under the General Duty which requires local authorities and other local authorities exercising public functions to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who don't
- Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't.

The specific duties support and aid compliance with the General Duty and require specific public bodies including Cambridge City Council to:

- Publish information annually to demonstrate how we meet the General Duty starting no later than the 31st of January 2012.
- Prepare and publish one or more objectives to meet any of the aims of the General Duty at least every four years starting no later than the 6th of April 2012.

Cambridge City Council has produced two previous Single Equality Schemes covering the periods 2009-2011 and 2012-2015. Producing and publishing specific Equality Schemes no longer form part of our public duties under law, however, Cambridge City Council believes that

¹ see <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/annual-statement>

² see <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity-policies-and-plans>

having a Single Equality Scheme will help it to ensure that it complies with the general and specific duties, assist in tackling discrimination and promoting community cohesion and improve its knowledge and awareness of equality and diversity issues.

The City Council's Single Equalities Scheme covers all the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act, which are: Race, Disability, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Age, Sexual Orientation, Religion or Belief, Pregnancy and Maternity, Marriage and Civil Partnership. The Scheme is concerned with addressing discrimination in all its forms.

The City Council is also committed to tackling poverty and social exclusion, recognising that greater social and economic equality are the most important pre-conditions for the city's success. Although poverty or low income are not identified as protected characteristics under the Equality Act, we currently assess the impact of all new major policies and projects on residents and service users who have these characteristics.

The Council is currently developing a dedicated Anti-Poverty Strategy to address to improve the standard of living and daily lives of those residents in Cambridge who are currently experiencing poverty, but also to alleviate issues that can lead households on low incomes to experience financial pressures. The Single Equality Scheme focuses primarily on the nine protected characteristics, but references actions included in the draft Anti-Poverty Strategy where relevant.

As an employer, service provider and community leader, the Council aims to eliminate prejudice and discrimination, and to promote good relations between different groups. The Council aims to deliver high quality services in a fair and equal way to all who live and work in our community. The Council is committed to ensuring that citizens are encouraged to be involved in shaping its values and commitment to equality by:

- Influencing Council decision making processes
- Being involved in measuring Council performance
- Identifying and making suggestions on service improvement
- Working together in partnership.

What do we know about people in Cambridge?

Only by understanding who lives and works in Cambridge will we be able to provide appropriate and good quality services that meet the needs of the city's different communities. The information we hold about our communities is regularly updated and used to plan services.

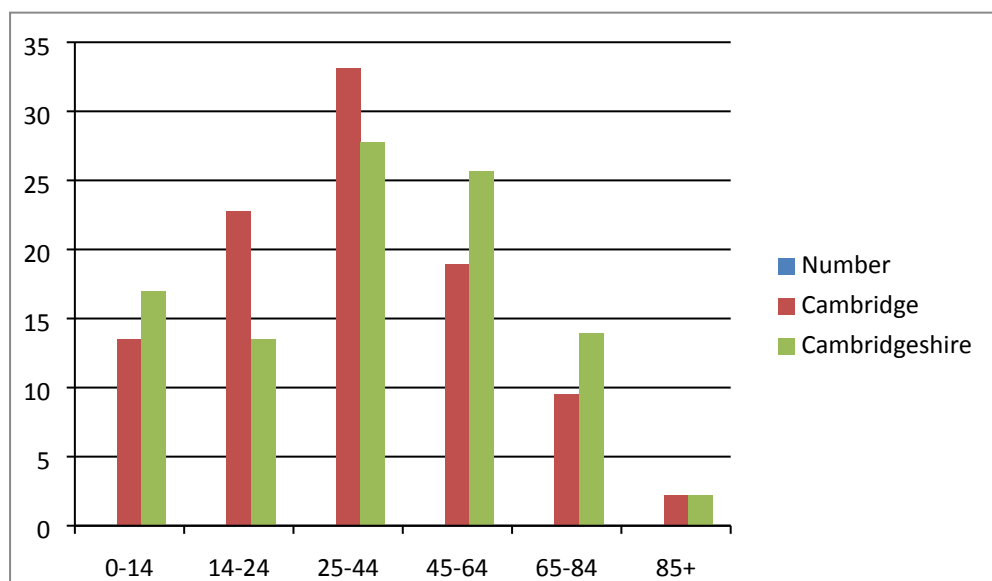
Since the Council's Single Equalities Scheme 2012-2015 was published in March 2012, data from Census 2011 has been released, improving our understanding of the people that live and work in Cambridge. It suggests that Cambridge continues to be a diverse city and a place of population growth.

Since 2001 the number of people living in Cambridge has increased by 15,000 people or 12.7%, to an estimated 123,900 people. The number of households in Cambridge has also increased by 4,042 or 8.6% since 2001. The Council expects this rate of growth to continue into the future due to the planned construction of new homes in the city.

Age

Cambridge's age structure differs significantly from the other districts in Cambridgeshire and nationally. The median age of people resident in Cambridge is thirty-one, one of the lowest medians for a local authority population in the country.

Chart 1: Residents by age group (percentage)



Over half (55.9%) of Cambridge's population continues to be aged between 15-44³. This is significantly higher than for Cambridgeshire as a whole, where 41.3% of people are aged between 15-44. This is primarily due to the city's large student population, with around 25,000 people attending Cambridge's universities.

Whilst the proportion of people over 65 in Cambridge has reduced since 2001, from 13.1% to 11.7%, the overall number has remained about the same at 13,500 people. This is contrary to the wider trend in Cambridgeshire and nationally of an aging population. In Cambridge, however, the number of the very elderly (85 years plus) has grown in number, from 2,100 in 2001 to 2,700 in 2011.

Available evidence suggests that older people are more likely to experience social isolation than other age groups. National research shows that over half (51%) of all people aged 75 and over live alone.⁴ 17% of older people are in contact with family, friends and neighbours less than once a week and 11% are in contact less than once a month.⁵ Two fifths of all older people say the television is their main company.⁶

Gender

According to the ONS 2013 mid-year population estimates⁷, 51.4% of the Cambridge population is male, and 48.6% of the population is female. This contrasts with Great Britain as a whole, where 48.8% of the population is male and 51.2% of the population is female.

According to the ONS Annual Population Survey 2013-14, employment rates are lower for women (72.9%) in Cambridge than for men (90.4%). However, employment rates are higher for both men and women in

³ <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/3B0B3A7B-E448-4D61-A853-0B5A1A467969/0/CambridgeCityDistrictReport2011.pdf>

⁴ Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2010, via Campaign to End Loneliness <http://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/loneliness-research/>

⁵ Victor et al, 2003, via Campaign to End Loneliness <http://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/loneliness-research/>

⁶ Age UK, 2014, via Campaign to End Loneliness <http://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/loneliness-research/>

⁷ NOMIS, Cambridge Local Authority Labour Market Profile <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157205/report.aspx?town=cambridge#tabrespop>

⁸ ONS annual survey of hours and earnings – earnings by residence 2014 <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157205/report.aspx?town=cambridge#tabrespop>

Cambridge than in Great Britain as a whole, where 67.5% of women and 77.3% of men are in employment.

On average, women in Cambridge also earn less than men. The average weekly earnings for women working full-time in Cambridge is £560.5 per week, compared with £582.2 per week for men in the city⁸. However the gap in earnings between men and women in the city is less than in Great Britain as a whole, where on average women in full time employment earn £463.0 per week and men in full time employment earn £561.5 per week.

During the course of 2015, the City Council will be further developing our equalities evidence base to inform the planning and delivery of Council services and improve monitoring of outcomes from projects and service delivery. As part of this work, we will be working with voluntary and community groups to conduct needs assessments for different equalities groups, including research into the needs of women in the city, and a similar study exploring the needs of men on low incomes.

Ethnicity

The 2011 Census shows that Cambridge continues to be one of the most diverse places in the country, outside of London, with an increasing proportion of its population made up of ethnic groups that are not white.

In the 2011 Census, 82.5% (or 102,205 people) in Cambridge identified themselves as white, compared to 89.5% in the 2001 Census. In 2011 66% (or 81,742 people) of Cambridge's population identified themselves as White British, 1.4% (1,767 people) White Irish and 15% White other.

In 2011, 17.5% (or 21,700 people) identified themselves as belonging to other ethnic groups, compared to 10.0% in 2001. The largest non-white ethnic groups were Bangladeshi, Chinese and Indian, representing an aggregated proportion of the population of 7.9% (or 9,716 people).

The 2011 Census identified Gypsy/Travellers as an ethnic group for the first time and showed 109 people from this group living in Cambridge. In Cambridge, much of the traveller population is settled in housing rather than caravans. The Cambridge Area Travellers Needs Assessment estimated that in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Gypsy/Travellers to be one of the largest minority ethnic groups in the county (at 6,080 people in 2005).

The 2011 Census also identified languages spoken in households. This reveals while 90% of households in the City contain at least one person who speaks English as a first language, there are 4,917 households (10% of all households) in Cambridge where no one in the household speaks English as a first language.

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Migration

People are drawn to Cambridge because it has an international reputation as a centre for academic excellence and research and has a thriving high-tech sector. This economic success contributes to a high jobs density in the City, but has also led to a high cost of living and low housing affordability.

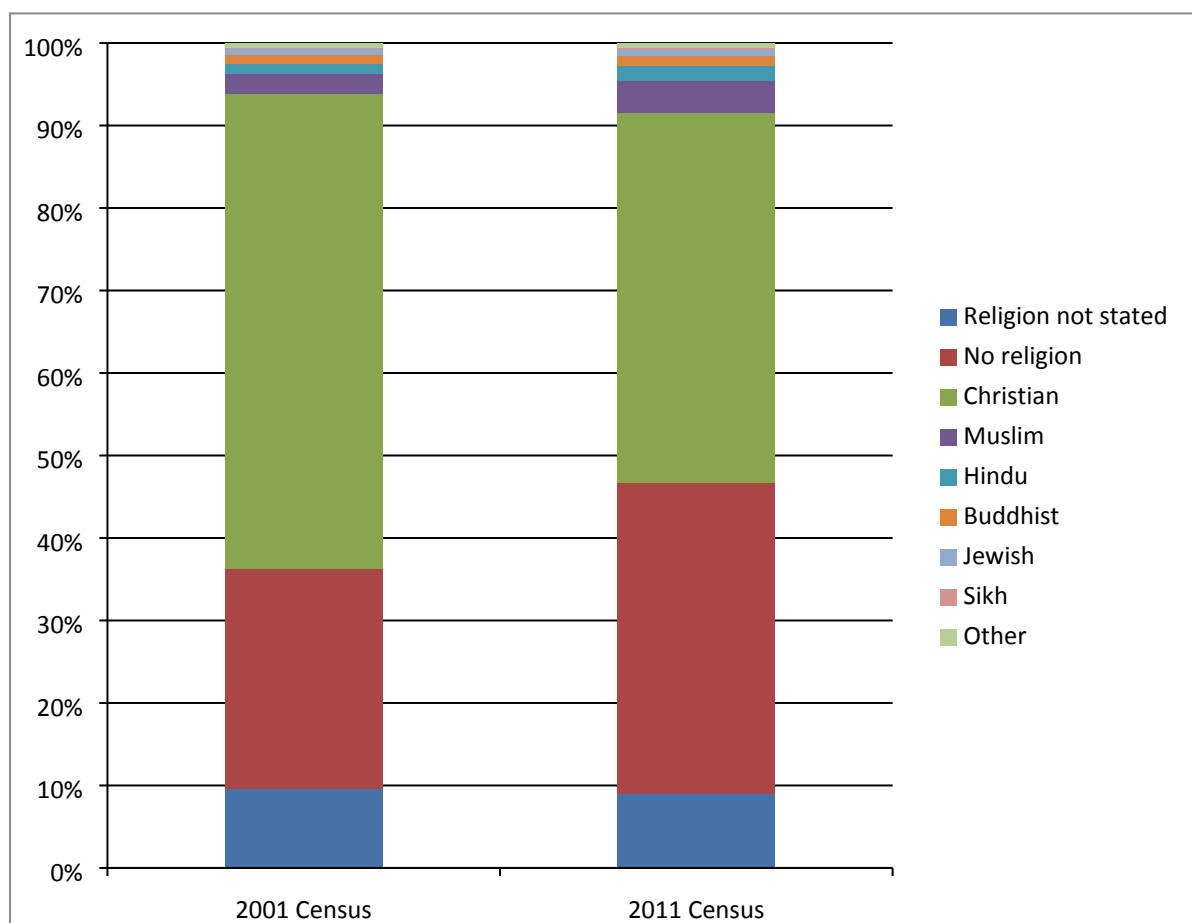
There is also a substantial churning in our population. According to the Council's own Electoral Registration records just over a fifth of the City's registered population changes each year. In November 2012 there were nearly 92,000 people registered in Cambridge. If you add in the number of non-responding properties, largely attributed to people from overseas (non-EU and Commonwealth) who are ineligible to vote (at 10% of households), this provides a picture of a dynamic population.

Partly because of the high level of migration to Cambridge, it is increasingly becoming a more diverse place with a number of different communities evenly spread, rather than concentrated, out across the geographical area of the City. The 2011 Census shows us that just under a third of people (33.1% or 46,100 people) resident in the City were born outside of England. In 2001 just under a quarter of people (23.9% or 26,100 people) were born outside England. During the intervening period the number of people born in England, resident in Cambridge, has remained at nearly the same number (82,900 people). This suggests that the growth of the Cambridge population has been supported by an increase in people from the European Union (the proportion doubling to nearly 8%) and people from outside the European Union (the proportion increasing by nearly a third to just under 18%).

Religion or Belief

Chart 2 below shows the religious make up of Cambridge in 2001 and 2011, according to Census data. The largest religious group in Cambridge is Christian, although the proportion of people in the city identifying themselves as Christian fell by almost 13% from 57.65% in 2001 to 44.8% in 2011. The next largest religious group in the city is Muslim, with the proportion of people who are Muslim increasing from 2.44% in 2001 to 4.0% in 2011.

Chart 2: Religion or belief of residents (percentage)



Cambridge remains among the districts with the highest proportions of people stating that they have no religion in the country. The proportion of people in the city with no religious association has increased from 26.6% in 2001 to 37.8% in 2011.

During the course of 2015, the City Council will be further developing our equalities evidence base. As part of this work, we will be working with

voluntary and community groups to conduct needs assessments for different equalities groups, including research into the needs of BAME and faith communities in the city.

Disability

Estimates of disability prevalence are highly dependent on the definition of disability used. For example:

- The OPCS Survey of disability estimated that in 2006 8% of the Cambridgeshire population had a disability.
- The 2011 Census reported that 12.97% of the Cambridge City population declared themselves to have a disability. Our analysis suggests that 8.3% of the total Cambridge City population is declaring a disability and economically active.
- The 2011 Census reported that 22.2% of households in Cambridge contained at least one person with a long term illness, health problem or disability which limit their daily activities, compared with 13.7% in 2001.

During the course of 2015, the City Council will be further developing our equalities evidence base. As part of this work, we will be working with voluntary and community groups to conduct needs assessments for different equalities groups, including research into the needs of people with a disability in the city.

Sexual Orientation

There are no statistically reliable data on the proportion of Cambridge residents who declare themselves as LGB (lesbian, gay and bi-sexual). However, Stonewall, the national charity working for equality for lesbians, gay men and bisexuals, states that a reasonable estimate for the UK's population of LGB people would be 5-7%. This would equate to approximately 5,360 – 7,504 people out of the 107,200 people who were aged 15 or over in Cambridge at the time of the 2011 Census.

It is recognised that urban areas like Cambridge tend to have higher LGB population rates than the national average, and Cambridge in particular is widely considered to have a large LGB community.

Transgender and Gender Reassignment

With regards to the transgender community, in 2011 the Gender Identity Research and Education Society estimated that organisations should assume that 1% of their employees and service users may be experiencing some degree of gender variance⁹. At some stage, about 0.2% may undergo transition. The number who have so far sought medical care is likely to be around 0.025%, and about 0.015% are likely to have undergone transition. Based on 2011 Census population data estimates, this would equate to 1,230 residents of Cambridge that may be experiencing some degree of gender variance and that between 18 and 31 residents are likely to have undergone transition. However, estimating the number of transgender people, and particularly those looking to, or who already actively engaged in, seeking medical transition, is something that is more likely to be underestimated.

Whilst no robust local data is available, informal research indicates that Cambridge is a cluster for the transgender community. For example, TGCamb, who run a social evening mostly for female-spectrum transgender people, estimate that over the last decade they have encountered around 100 trans women, many of whom still live in Cambridge. The group does not encompass the whole community, and is barely frequented by male-spectrum transgender people (e.g. trans men). Most of their attendees are male-to-female crossdressers, but they have some who are transsexual too.

LGBTQ needs assessment

In 2013 Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council commissioned Encompass Network to design and deliver a needs assessment looking at the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual trans and queer/questioning¹⁰ (LGBTQ) residents. The methodology for the needs assessment involved a combination of a survey (which received 130 responses) and focus groups and telephone interviews (which had a total of 38 attendees).

⁹ <http://www.gires.org.uk/Prevalence2011.pdf>

¹⁰ The final report on the LGBTQ needs assessment defines 'Queer' as an "umbrella term for sexual and gender minorities that are not heterosexual or gender-binary, or individuals who reject such notions". Non-binary is defined as "An umbrella term used to describe gender experiences, expressions and identities that fall outside of the male/female gender binary". The report defines 'Questioning' as "the process of questioning your sexual identity as a current personal definition in itself".

The needs assessment was developed to find out more about LGBTQ needs within Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire, with a specific focus on identifying experiences of discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, determining whether there were significant gaps in the provision of services for LGBTQ people, and whether specific sub-groups within the LGBTQ community might be in need of additional targeted services.

During the course of 2015 we will be carrying out similar needs assessments for other protected characteristics to build our equalities evidence base, including women, men on low incomes, people with disabilities, and BAME/faith communities.

Some of the key findings from the LGBTQ needs assessment which are relevant to Cambridge City Council include:

- Overall the experiences of living in Cambridge and City and South Cambs was reported as being a positive one, with 54% of respondents rating it to be positive and 21 % very positive. Terms used to describe the area included: liberal, open minded, accepting, tolerant and multicultural.
- LGB respondents used a wide range of terms to describe their gender-identification. Rather than simply using 'heterosexual', 'homosexual', or 'bisexual' respondents also used a combination of categories to describe their sexual orientation. This reflects the diversity within the LGB community, and that there is no one single LGB identity.
- Those who are traditionally categorised as 'transgender' are using a huge variety of terms to describe their gender identification. The majority of the survey respondents described themselves as having a fluid gender identity, or more than one gender identity. This was closely followed by the high number of respondents who described themselves as having no gender identity.
- 22% of Cambridge City respondents described themselves as having a disability, with 12% of Cambridge City respondents reporting issues with mental health. A lack of positive LGBTQ role models in the media and experiences of homophobia were identified as contributing to mental ill health.
- A relatively high proportion of respondents had experienced homophobia or hate crime (40%), but the vast majority of those who had experienced hate crime said that they had not reported it (89%).

- Many LGBTQ people in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire experience isolation, with 67 % of respondents wanting more opportunity to socialise, and 63 % saying that they knew few LGBTQ people.
- Both the survey and the focus groups identified the need for more LGBTQ events, and a specific LGBTQ space, as potential solutions to the experience of isolation. There was strong support for an LGBTQ Pride event in the City, but there was also support for incorporating LGBTQ needs in mainstream events such as the Big Weekend.

What have we already done to meet our objectives?

In the Single Equality Scheme 2012-2015 the City Council set six equalities objectives that it would focus to advance its equalities agenda. These are:

1. To continue to work to improve access to and take-up of Council services.
2. To develop an improved level of understanding of Cambridge's communities and their needs through research, data gathering and equality mapping.
3. To improve community engagement in the development and delivery of services.
4. To ensure that people from different backgrounds living in the city continue to get on well together.
5. To ensure that the City Council's employment policies and practices are non-discriminatory and compliant with equalities legislation as a minimum standard.
6. To work towards a more representative workforce within the City Council.

Over the past three years we have taken a wide range of actions to deliver these objectives. We have produced annual reports in 2012/13 and 2013/14 setting out our progress in delivering these actions¹¹. Some of the key achievements are set out below under the relevant objectives.

Objective 1 - To continue to work to improve access to and take-up of Council services.

Over a period of time we have sought to mainstream equality and diversity in everything that we do. We have taken a number of steps to ensure that equality and diversity remains embedded in the work of all services:

- We have also delivered a range of training to ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities. A series of five training sessions were held in 2013/14 to build the capacity of staff in carrying out effective Equality Impacts Assessments (EqIA). In 2014/15 the EqIA training sessions were incorporated into the Council's corporate Learning and

¹¹ See the City Council website: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity-performance>

Development program on an ongoing basis and regular sessions are now scheduled throughout the year. An audit carried out by the Council's Internal Audit service following this training programme gave the Council's EQIAs process 'significant assurance'.

- We have also refreshed the diversity training provided as part of the staff induction, made available three e-learning modules on Equality & Diversity, and included a focus on bullying and harassment in the Managers Skills programme for all managers.
- We have published a Quick Procurement Guide which looks at how to deal effectively with equality issues in procurement projects. By doing this, we can work to ensure that the suppliers and contractors that work for us don't operate in a way which conflicts with our legal responsibilities and do provide services/supplies that meet the diverse needs of the people that use our services.

We developed a new Customer Access Strategy and action plan to help improve the experience of all our diverse customers. It sets out what standard of service customers can expect and how it will be delivered. The Council's Customer Access Centre was recognised in 2012 by the Customer Contact Association as a centre of excellence for the way it treats and responds to customers. We are currently developing a new Customer Access Strategy, which will be linked to our ICT strategy.

We have also increased the accessibility of our buildings and facilities for residents and customers – including through:

- installing upgraded hearing enhancement systems in the Corn Exchange and the large and small Guildhalls to ensure visitors with hearing difficulties get the best possible experience in our venues.
- ordering new staging for the Guildhall Stage and a wheelchair lift to ensure the stage is accessible to wheelchair users.
- installing new software at the Council's Box Office that will enable customers to print tickets at home, which will benefit those who have difficulty getting to the box office.

We developed and launched a new, more accessible City Council website. As part of the development of the website, it was tested by the Shaw Trust, a national disability charity, to ensure that it is accessible to a range of customers. We aim to ensure that all content meets recognised accessibility standards and have provided the Readspeak link on every webpage so that text can be read out loud to customers

who may have difficulty reading, including those with visual impairments or whose first language is not English. We are currently carrying out a full audit of the Council's website, including both the technical elements and content of the site, and seek external accreditation for the site.

We have sought to address the challenges faced by City Council tenants in accessing on-line services through the 'Get Online' pilot project, which provides support for tenants and leaseholders on low incomes, through loan of computers, social broadband tariffs, and signposting to computer training providers within the City.

We have taken steps to improve access to services for customers with mental health issues. The Equalities Panel considered the challenges facing people with mental health needs and the implications of this for accessing Council services. Since then we have provided training sessions for staff as part of the Council's corporate Learning and Development programme, which have focussed on providing services to customers with mental health issues. We also provide a briefing for Councillors on Mental Health Awareness, and staff across the Council recently organised a wide range of internal and external activities to mark World Mental Health Day and raise awareness of mental health issues.

Objective 2 - To develop an improved level of understanding of Cambridge's communities and their needs through research, data gathering and equality mapping.

We have carried out a range of research projects which will increase our understanding of the needs of particular equality groups in the City. We have used the findings of this research to inform the development of Council services, policies and plans. For example we have:

- Worked with Encompass to carry out research into the needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender residents;
- Sought the views of disabled residents on arts provision in the Cambridge;
- Involved tenants in the development of our Tenant Satisfaction Survey
- Analysed and disseminated information from the 2011 Census.

We have also closely monitored the impact of the Welfare Reforms. The City Council is part of the Cambridgeshire Welfare Reform Strategy Group, whose remit includes monitoring the impact of welfare reform

across the County. The Council also formed a working group of senior officers to look at the impact of the changes on Cambridge residents. The group developed strategies and policies, including a discretionary housing payment policy, to ensure that the most vulnerable were identified and protected where possible.

Objective 3 - To improve community engagement in the development and delivery of services.

We have continued to involve, consult and listen to local people and stakeholders using a wide range of methods to engage our different communities. As part of an annual review of our Code of Practice on Consultation and Community Engagement, we asked residents associations in the City and members of the Diversity Forum how we could improve the way that we consult people.

Since then we have taken a number of steps based on the feedback we received, including: producing a list of “ten top tips for running an effective consultation” and promoting this to officers across the council; providing in-depth training on consultation methods and techniques, including questionnaire design, for staff; and identifying opportunities to use the Council’s new website to improve the way we consult people.

We have actively promoted the Council’s Diversity Forum to groups representing different protected characteristics and taken issues raised in the Forum to the City Council’s Equalities Panel for consideration. For example, the Forum has focused on issues facing older people, partnership work in relation to hate crime, and sustainable food and food poverty. The next meeting of the Forum will consider children and young people’s issues.

Objective 4 - To ensure that people from different backgrounds living in the city continue to get on well together.

We have worked with a range of local partners, including community groups to support and organise events to celebrate the different communities that live in Cambridge. Over the past three years, a range of annual events were held to mark or celebrate:

- Black History Month
- Cambridgeshire Celebrates Age
- Disability History Month
- Holocaust Memorial Day

- International Day for Older People
- International Women's Day
- Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) History Month
- Refugee Week

We have also provided an inclusive programme of arts and sports events including:

- The Big Weekend, which provides opportunities for a wide variety of groups to showcase their activities, including the Asian community through the Asian Mela, young people through performance slots (even on the main stage) and stalls for local voluntary groups.
- Other free events during the summer, including Bonfire Night, The Big Weekend and outdoor parks concerts, which are open to all residents regardless of income and had a record attendance.
- A senior citizens programme which included tea dances in the Guildhall and a trip for 700 senior citizens to Great Yarmouth and received excellent feedback from participants
- An Asian Family Community Sports event, which offered a range of community sports tournaments and activities including a netball, football, cricket, badminton and table tennis.
- A Disability Sports and Arts Festival, which included a diverse range of workshops, demonstrations, performances and film screenings.

Cambridge City Council has also played a role in hosting major international events which have brought residents in the City together. In July 2012 the Olympic Torch came to Cambridge, which drew over 80,000 people to Parkers Piece and the streets of the City. The City Council also supported the Cambridge Parasport campaign and the Paralympic Flame Relay Celebration during August 2012. In July 2014 Cambridge hosted the departure for the third stage of the Tour de France, along with a series of inclusive events and activities held between May and September as part of the associated Velo Festival.

Objective 5 - To ensure that the City Council's employment policies and practices are non-discriminatory and compliant with equalities legislation as a minimum standard.

We continued to carry out EqIAs on new and revised employment policies as a matter of course. For example, we reviewed the Council's

recruitment policy, processes and associated paperwork to ensure that appointment is based on merit. This process was informed by an EqlA.

We developed a Human Resources work programme to capture any actions that arise from EqlAs and have used this system to ensure that all actions from EqlAs were implemented.

Objective 6 - To work towards a more representative workforce within the City Council.

We have monitored the profile of the City Council's workforce, recruitment trends, and training attendance by equality group (age, gender, ethnicity, disability, religion and belief and sexual orientation where declared). We have reported this information in depth to the Equalities Panel annually through the Equality in Employment reports, which can be found on the Council's website here:

<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity-performance>

We reviewed the Council's targets for BAME and disabled staff representation in light of 2011 Census information and set new targets which take into account the proportion of those that are economically active and the proportion of the working population that are made up of BAME and disabled residents.

Since 2008 our BAME staff representation has increased, and as at 31st March 2014, 7.44% of all staff declared themselves to be BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic). From 2013/14 onwards our target for BAME staff representation was increased to 9.5%, and we will work to bring BAME staff representation up to this level. In order to raise the workforce profile from 7.44% to the target of 9.5%, a further 24 BAME staff would need to be recruited, based on the headcount at 31 March 2014.

As at 31st March 2014, 5.07% of the Council's workforce declared themselves as disabled. The Disability Profile for the Council's workforce has risen by just over 3% over the past 6 years, from 2.0% in 2007/8. From 2013/14 onwards our target for staff declaring a disability was increased from 4.5% to 5.5%.

The Council renewed its commitment to the Job Centre Plus "Positive about Disabled People" scheme, which guarantees an interview to an applicant with a disability if they meet the minimum criteria. Having and displaying the "Two Ticks" symbol remains a Council commitment. The symbol is a recognition, which Jobcentre Plus gives to employers who

have agreed to make certain positive commitments regarding the employment, retention, training and career development of disabled people.

The Council also worked with the Papworth Trust to improve the representation of the City's workforce by increasing the number of disabled people applying for jobs with the Council. The Council has a "Work Choice" agreement with the Papworth Trust (formerly known as Workstep), which offers help and support to disabled employees.

Further activity which has helped promote equality of opportunity

In addition to the actions outlined above which has contributed to the delivery of the six objectives of the previous Single Equality Scheme, the City Council has also delivered further activities which have helped promote equality of opportunity.

We have also provided grant funding to many local voluntary and community groups carrying out equality and diversity activities. The priorities for the Community Grants programme were reviewed during 2012/13. The revised priorities included specific provision for activities which support BAME groups, people with disabilities, LGBT groups, women lacking opportunities to live safe and fulfilling lives, and activities which promote community cohesion.

In July 2014 the priorities for the Community Grants were reviewed again and focussed social and all grant applications must now demonstrate how they will reduce social and/or economic inequality for city residents, by reducing barriers for residents with the highest needs. These barriers may be caused by low income or through inequalities caused by disability, gender, ethnicity or other protected characteristics. The Council's grants teams specifically targets equalities groups with publicity, help and support.

Our Children and Young People's Participation Service (ChYpPS) delivered a comprehensive activities programme for children and young people. This included neighbourhood events and activities, a summer programme including the Urban Sports Festival and a range of activities focused upon groups of young people with particular needs; for example, a group of young girls who were showing signs of risky behaviour and a group of young people who were participating in anti-social behaviour.

We have also worked closely with the Gypsy and Traveller community over the period of the second Single Equality Scheme. The Children and Young People's Area Partnership, which the Council plays an active role in, identified children from Traveller and Migrant communities as a priority theme in its local commissioning plans.

The Council's ChYpPS service delivered lunchtime play sessions at Shirley School in Chesterton (which is attended by many Traveller children from the Fen Road site), and it has worked with the Showman's Guild to deliver open access play sessions during the Midsummer Fair. ChYpPS has also liaised closely with the Ormiston Trust (which has been commissioned by the CYP Area Partnership to work with Traveller children and families), and Cambridgeshire County Council's Traveller liaison team. We are also continuing to assess the potential for provision of new Traveller pitches through the Local Plan process, working in partnership with South Cambridgeshire District Council.

We have also supported the two Credit Unions in Cambridge to help residents on low incomes, often single parents, who can be vulnerable to loan sharks and 'pay day' lenders. We have taken a number of steps to date and are currently exploring what additional support we can provide in future. Existing measures include:

- Hosting the Credit Unions in our Customer Service Centre.
- Working with Cambridge Volunteer Centre to help the Credit Unions to recruit more volunteers.
- Giving Rainbow Savers Credit Union a 'rolling grant' so they can administer small emergency loans to those in real need.
- Promoting the Credit Unions through City Council publications such as Cambridge Matters, Open Door and Neighbourhood Newsletters.

The City Council has also responded to the national Welfare Reforms, seeking to minimise the impact on vulnerable residents. For example, the Council developed a discretionary housing payment policy which aims to assist vulnerable residents to adjust to the changes. We also developed a new local Council Tax Support Scheme to replace the national council tax benefit. The City Council scheme was designed to ensure that those people who are the least well-off continue to pay the lowest amount of council tax.

We are also working with partners to prepare for the implementation of Universal Credit, which will incorporate existing benefits into a single payment, including Housing Benefit, Job Seekers Allowance (working age and income based), Income Support, Employment & Support Allowance (income related), Child Tax Credit, and Working Tax Credits. The government's current intention is that Universal Credit will be fully available for new claimants during 2016, with the majority of the remaining Housing Benefit caseload moving to Universal Credit during 2016/17. Cambridge City Council, will play a central role in supporting vulnerable residents in the transition to Universal Credit and in supporting claimants to increase their capability and become more independent.

Our Equalities Objectives for 2015 – 2018

Having reviewed what has been achieved over the period of the previous Single Equality Scheme for 2012-2015, the City Council has revisited its equality objectives. Some of the objectives identified in the previous scheme, remain ongoing challenges for the City Council, so we have retained these objectives for our new Single Equality Scheme. For example, it is always important for us to challenge ourselves to ensure that our services are as accessible as they can be to all customers who want or need to use them. However, we have also refocused some of the objectives and identified new ones to reflect some of the new and emerging issues facing the Council and the city of Cambridge.

The City Council has identified the following five objectives which it will focus on over the next three years:

1. To further increase our understanding of the needs of Cambridge's growing and increasingly diverse communities so that we can target our services effectively
2. To continue to work to improve access to and take-up of Council services from all residents and communities
3. To ensure all residents have equal access public activities and spaces in Cambridge and are able to participate fully in the community
4. To tackle discrimination, harassment and victimisation and ensure that people from different backgrounds living in the city continue to get on well together.
5. To ensure that the City Council's employment policies and practices are non-discriminatory and to work towards a more representative workforce within the City Council.

The Strategic Action Plan below sets out the key actions that we will take to progress these objectives. These actions focus primarily on the nine protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act (Race, Disability, Gender, Gender Reassignment, Age, Sexual Orientation, Religion & Belief, Pregnancy & Maternity, Marriage and Civil Partnership).

The Council is also committed to tackling poverty and social exclusion, and is currently developing a dedicated Anti-Poverty Strategy. The Strategy includes an action plan which sets out the key steps that the

Council is taking to improve the standard of living and daily lives of those residents in Cambridge who are currently experiencing poverty, but also to alleviate issues that can lead households on low incomes to experience financial pressures.

Single Equality Scheme 2015 – 2018 Action Plan

Our objective is	To achieve this over the next three years we will	In the first year of the plan (2015/16) we will	The service(s) that will lead on this is
<p>1. To further increase our understanding of the needs of Cambridge's growing and increasingly diverse communities so that we can target our services effectively</p>	<p>Develop an equalities evidence base to inform the planning and delivery of Council services and improve monitoring of outcomes from projects and service delivery</p>	<p>Use evidence gathered as part of the recent Grants Review to provide a fuller profile for who is in most need in Cambridge</p>	<p>Community, Arts and Recreation</p>
		<p>Using the approach adopted by the LGBTQ needs assessment, work with voluntary and community groups to conduct similar needs assessments for women, men on low incomes, people with disabilities, and BAME/faith communities</p>	<p>Community, Arts and Recreation, Corporate Strategy</p>
		<p>Improve information available on the housing needs of people with disabilities, through the Cambridge sub-regional Strategic Housing Market Assessment</p>	<p>Strategic Housing</p>
	<p>Use information gained through City Council consultation exercises to identify the needs of different groups and communities and inform decision making on services</p>	<p>Explore opportunities to adopt a more participatory approach to the City Council's annual budget consultation, including securing a representative sample of the Cambridge population</p>	<p>Corporate Strategy</p>

Our objective is	To achieve this over the next three years we will	In the first year of the plan (2015/16) we will	The service(s) that will lead on this is
		Analyse the results of the 2014 STAR City Council tenant satisfaction survey to identify groups with lower levels of satisfaction with services and target improvements for them	City Homes
2. To continue to work to improve access to and take-up of Council services from all residents and communities	Ensure that we assess the equality impacts of all decisions on policies and projects which have an impact on residents, visitors and customers in Cambridge	Deliver a series of training sessions on carrying out effective Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) and promote them to all services as part of the City Council's corporate Learning and Development programme	Human Resources, Corporate Strategy
	Ensure that Councillors and staff understand equality and diversity principles and are able to apply these to their work	Organise an annual briefing session for Councillors on equalities issues as part of the corporate programme of member briefings	Corporate Strategy
		Ensure that all new starters understand the importance of equality and diversity, and that staff are able to further their understanding as part of their ongoing development, e.g. through the disability awareness course in the corporate learning and development programme	Human Resources

Our objective is	To achieve this over the next three years we will	In the first year of the plan (2015/16) we will	The service(s) that will lead on this is
	Ensure that language does not act as a barrier for residents to accessing services or understanding their responsibilities	Procure a new corporate interpreting and translation contractor in collaboration with neighbouring councils and monitor the contract effectively to ensure that interpreters meet the needs of customers and Council services	Corporate Strategy
	Support residents to access digital services provided by the City Council and other organisations and businesses by enabling residents to access the internet and develop their digital skills	Work with partners to increase internet access points in community buildings, such as leisure centres and community centres	Customer Services
		Ensure that adequate training and support is provided to users of digital services by trained staff or 'Digital Champions'	Customer Services
		Continue to support City Council tenants who are unemployed or in receipt of benefits to access the internet through the Get On-Line programme, which provides digital skills training and a laptop loan scheme	City Homes
3. To ensure all residents have equal access to public activities and spaces in Cambridge and are able to participate fully in the community	Tackle barriers to accessing the city centre and playing an active part in the community for people with disabilities	Conduct a review of accessibility of Cambridge City Centre, including advertising boards and street cafes blocking pavements, poor and uneven pavements, location and availability of disabled parking bays, and particular issues facing deaf and blind people	Planning, Corporate Strategy

Our objective is	To achieve this over the next three years we will	In the first year of the plan (2015/16) we will	The service(s) that will lead on this is
		<p>Work with taxi trade representatives to develop and promote a Disabled Access policy for taxis in Cambridge, which will ensure a reliable service for customers who require wheelchair accessible taxis. The policy will address a range of identified issues including: tackling drivers who refuse to accept disabled passengers; vehicle standards; and training needs of taxi drivers on using ramps and safe accommodation of wheelchairs in taxis.</p>	<p>Refuse and Environment</p>
		<p>Ensure that the diversion of footpaths and creation of alternative routes on Parkers Piece during the redevelopment of the University Arms Hotel does not restrict access for people with disabilities, and that improvements to Parkers Piece include provision for disabled access (e.g. benches, signage and location of bins and cycle racks)</p>	<p>Streets and Open Spaces</p>
		<p>Respond to the National Accessible Britain Challenge, which aims to engage and work with disabled people to remove barriers that can prevent them being full and active contributors in their community.</p>	<p>Corporate Strategy, Planning</p>

Our objective is	To achieve this over the next three years we will	In the first year of the plan (2015/16) we will	The service(s) that will lead on this is
		Work with Citizen's Advice Bureau to develop a pilot project at East Barnwell Medical Practice to providing advice sessions, including a focus on mental health issues due to low income, debt or addiction.	Corporate Strategy
		Continue to provide move on accommodation for adults recovering from mental ill health, in conjunction with the Cambridgeshire County Council and Metropolitan Housing Group	City Homes
	Provide activities to promote physical activity and help reduce the social isolation experienced by some older people in the city	Continue to run and support groups for older people in Trumpington, Abbey, Arbury, Akeman Street Community Centre, and Ross Street Community Centre	Community, Arts and Recreation
		Continue to provide a tenure neutral city-wide support service for older people, working with health and social care services at Cambridgeshire County Council and local housing associations	City Homes
		Continue to provide targeted sports development work to complement NHS services in the community, including work to reduce falls amongst older people	Community, Arts and Recreation

Our objective is	To achieve this over the next three years we will	In the first year of the plan (2015/16) we will	The service(s) that will lead on this is
	Provide positive activities for children and young people	Continue to provide open access activities for children and young people, including a programme of summer activities	Community, Arts and Recreation
		Provide free swimming lessons at Council-owned pools for younger children (pre-school and key stage 1 children) from low income families and children who cannot swim at the key stage 2 assessment point.	Community, Arts and Recreation
	Work with voluntary and community groups to deliver activities which promote equal opportunities for residents	Continue to provide Community Grants to projects which reduce social and/or economic inequality for city residents, by reducing barriers for residents with the highest needs. These barriers may be caused by low income or through inequalities caused by disability, gender, ethnicity or other protected characteristics	Community, Arts and Recreation
4. To tackle discrimination, harassment and victimisation and ensure that people from different backgrounds living in the city continue to get on well together.	Work with partners to support and organise a range of events to raise awareness of and to celebrate the different communities that live in Cambridge.	Continue to support and deliver a wide range of celebratory activities, including programmes of events to mark Black History Month, Cambridgeshire Celebrates Age, Disability History Month, Holocaust Memorial Day, International Women's Day, Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) History Month, and Refugee Week	Community, Arts and Recreation

Our objective is	To achieve this over the next three years we will	In the first year of the plan (2015/16) we will	The service(s) that will lead on this is
		Continue to fund and support local events and festivals which increase community pride and cohesion, such as the Big Weekend, Cambridge Mela, Chesterton Festival, Arbury Carnival and Cherry Hinton Festival	Community, Arts and Recreation
	Working with partners and communities to reduce racial harassment and hate crimes targeted at all equality groups	Work with Cambridgeshire County Council's Crime Research Team to use available data on hate crime to improve our understanding of the local issues.	Strategic Housing
		Provide regular outreach surgeries at Cambridge Mosque and the Addenbrookes Hub on services to address racial harassment and anti-social behaviour	Strategic Housing
	Take action to prevent radicalisation and the development of violent extremism	Deliver a 'Prevent' event which will bring community representatives together to look at the issue of radicalisation	Strategic Housing
	Work with local communities in Cambridge to reduce domestic violence and abuse	Work to achieve White Ribbon status for the City Council and reduce domestic violence and abuse towards women and men	Strategic Housing
5. To ensure that the City Council's employment policies and practices are non-discriminatory and to	Analyse available data to understand how representative the City Council workforce is and identify any issues that need to be addressed	Continue to monitor the profile of the workforce, recruitment, and training attendance by equality group and report annually to the Equalities Panel	Human Resources

Our objective is	To achieve this over the next three years we will	In the first year of the plan (2015/16) we will	The service(s) that will lead on this is
work towards a more representative workforce within the City Council.		Analyse the results of the 2014 Employee Survey and if appropriate identify any actions to be taken in response to issues identified for particular equality groups	Human Resources
		Analyse the results of the recruitment survey into BAME community groups in Cambridge and identify any steps that need to be taken in to address issues identified in the research	Human Resources
	Work towards a more representative workforce within the City Council	Deliver an apprenticeship programme, which will increase the number of apprenticeship opportunities in City Council services	Human Resources