



# Equality, diversity and inclusion annual report

2021/22

[www.southderbyshire.gov.uk](http://www.southderbyshire.gov.uk)



# Foreword

Equality, diversity and inclusion is the very foundation on which we strive to ensure our customers, residents and staff are treated fairly and equitably by the Council; giving individuals the opportunity to be who they are and achieve the successes they aspire to.

Through this Strategy we have taken steps to promote understanding, celebrate diversity, tackle prejudice and remove or minimise disadvantage.

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021-2025 provides a detailed insight into our ongoing commitment to equality, what we are looking to achieve and other arrangements for embedding equality, diversity and inclusion into everything we do and, where we need to further develop our approach.

We will continue to deliver collaborative services to meet the needs of all our communities just as we did during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We can only do this by working with our customers, residents and our partners in the public, private and voluntary sector.

This annual report highlights some of our achievements and work over the previous year to further our work on equality, diversity and inclusion.

In particular it demonstrates the work we have done around our five equality objectives set out in our strategy and the progress we have made throughout 2021/22.

Given our level of ambition, we accept that more work is still required to achieve our goals. This report highlights significant progress on our equalities performance indicators and lays out a series of case studies that demonstrate the various ways we have shaped our services to ensure they are fair, inclusive and accessible to our customers, residents and employees.

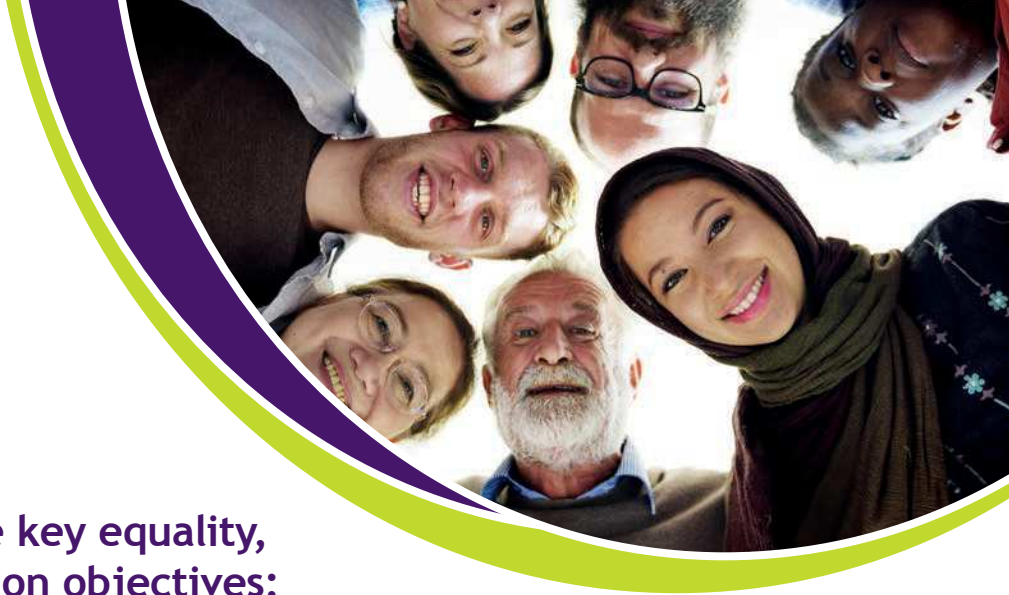
We will continuously assess and improve our performance, working closely with stakeholders and exploring partnerships that will help us to meet our equality outcomes to make South Derbyshire a great place to live, visit and invest.



**Councillor Kevin Richards**  
Council Leader



**Frank McArdle**  
Chief Executive



## The Council has five key equality, diversity and inclusion objectives:

1. Encourage and enable a skilled and diverse workforce to build a culture of equality and inclusion in everything we do.
2. Demonstrate inclusive leadership, partnership and a clear organisational commitment to being a leader in equality, diversity and inclusion in the District.
3. Involve and enable our diverse communities to play an active role in society and put the resident's voice at the heart of decision-making.
4. Deliver responsive services and customer care that is accessible and inclusive to individual's needs and respects cultural differences.
5. Understand our diverse communities and embed that understanding in how we shape policy and practice across the Council.

## Obtaining alternative versions of this document

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

Jeśli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać ten dokument w innym języku lub potrzebują Państwo usług tłumacza, prosimy o kontakt. Informacje te są również dostępne na życzenie w wydaniu dużym drukiem, w alfabecie brajla lub w wersji audio.

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यदि आपको ये दस्तावेज किसी दूसरी भाषा में चाहिये, या किसी दुभाषिये की सेवाओं की जरूरत है तो हमें सम्पर्क करने की कृपया करें। ये जानकारी माँग करने पर बड़े अक्षरों, ब्रेल या आडिओ के रूप में भी उपलब्ध करवाई जा सकती है।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਸਰੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀਆਂ ਸੇਵਾਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰੋ ਜੀ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਮੰਗ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ, ਬ੍ਰੇਅਲ ਜਾਂ ਆਡਿਉ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਉਪਲੱਬਧ ਕਰਵਾਈ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।

اگر آپ یہ ڈاکیومنٹ کسی اور زبان میں چاہتے ہوں، یا اگر آپ کو کسی ترجمان کی خدمات درکار ہوں، تو براہ کرم ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔ درخواست کرنے پر یہ معلومات بڑے پرنٹ، بریل یا آڈیو فارمیٹ میں بھی دستیاب ہیں۔

## Supporting our communities

The impact of the pandemic and ongoing challenges has identified wider inequalities experienced by groups within South Derbyshire. The Council is fully committed to reducing these inequalities and improving the life of all residents.

All services across the Council stepped up and worked in partnership with different Government, public health, third sector and community groups to coordinate and provide support for the community.





## This work has included:

The distribution of more than £30 million to local businesses and residents facing hardship as a result of the pandemic as well as more than £100,000 in Test and Trace payments for people who were forced to isolate after receiving a positive COVID-19 test. We also provided support for residents unable to make their Council Tax payments.

Working with South Derbyshire CVS, we continue to distribute food parcels as part of the South Derbyshire food hub for the most vulnerable residents who are facing food poverty.

Between April and December 2021, we prevented 233 families from homelessness by providing support to enable them to stay in their homes or by finding suitable temporary accommodation. The Council has dedicated points of contact for people to call who have nowhere to stay or are at immediate risk of becoming homeless as well as for those who may find themselves without accommodation.

Dedicated support for residents who find themselves at risk of homelessness as a result of domestic abuse.

The Council carried out 172 interventions to prevent fuel poverty for residents.

An information leaflet was sent with Council Tax bills to every registered address in South Derbyshire with details on support available including advice on benefits, domestic abuse support, assistance with homelessness, contact points for different support agencies and helplines for people with physical or mental health issues.

During the pandemic many people had to rely on the internet and digital devices to access services for the first time. In some parts of the South Derbyshire, people have struggled to do things online; whether that's keeping in touch with family and friends, seeking job opportunities, accessing financial support, arranging medical appointments, ordering goods and food, or even transacting with council services.

We have worked in collaboration with Citizens Advice Mid Mercia to support residents who have physical disabilities and mental ill-health, through effective practical support and mentoring to use digital technology and online services.

This work provided the skills to those people who required support in using digital applications, which helped improve their health, wellbeing and quality of life.

In particular this work involved advice and support to help people improve their confidence in online safety when using a computer, tablet or smartphone.

Consultation and engagement with all our communities has always been important to us, but the pandemic pushed us to look at using different ways of reaching out to all communities.

During the last 12 months we continued to develop our social media platforms to connect with communities and to ensure they are included and updated.

Recognising that digital exclusion is a barrier for some people we also continued to use other methods of communication such as leaflets and postcards where appropriate to provide information and allow residents to take part in consultation.



## Encourage and enable a skilled and diverse workforce, to build a culture of equality, diversity, and inclusion in everything we do

During 2021/22, we reviewed our equality, diversity and inclusion training for staff and councillors.

This training includes an overview of our equality objectives and priorities, statutory and legislative duties, completing equality impact assessments and case studies to increase awareness of the needs of different customers and the challenges of unconscious bias.

**66%**

of employees have completed equality, diversity and inclusion training

**60%**

of managers have completed training to carry out Equality Impact Assessments which are used to identify any potential opportunities or negative impact of our work on people, communities and our workforce.

We also provided similar training for the trustees, board members, employees and volunteers of Derby Museums.

To build our knowledge on the number of diverse communities we serve, how our services are used and the make-up our workforce, we have refreshed and updated our equality monitoring categories to support us with the continued development of fair and accessible services and that our workforce become more diverse and representative.

This includes a profile of South Derbyshire's population based on the nine protected characteristics. This will be updated with information from the 2021 Census when it is made available from summer 2022.

We will be transparent when collecting this data and ensure it is done in a consistent and fair way through the development of guidance and supporting resources to be used. Any information gathered will be added to our equality data on our website [www.southderbyshire.gov.uk/equalities](http://www.southderbyshire.gov.uk/equalities).

We will continue to add to this information so our customers, residents, councillors and workforce can view and support the steps we are taking to make our services and employment opportunities accessible to all.

We recognise that barriers exist to employment opportunities and have taken positive action to promote the 'Access to Work' scheme that enables financial or other support for current or future employees [www.southderbyshire.gov.uk/access-to-work](http://www.southderbyshire.gov.uk/access-to-work).

The Council promotes employment and training opportunities including volunteering for school leavers, the unemployed and those furthest from employment or self-employment, through attendance at careers events, job fairs and other events held.

During the year, we also developed our Supporting Aspirations action plan to support disadvantaged young people in South Derbyshire to realise their aspirations. This will focus on activities that we can take forward, and that will make a positive contribution to the South Derbyshire Partnership's aims to enhance social mobility.

Over the year the Council has increased the number of apprenticeships employed to six with another apprentice beginning work in April 2022.

Processes were adapted to support new ways of working in a virtual and remote environment for apprentices. Teams across the Council worked together to ensure apprenticeships were available with an inclusive and accessible recruitment process.

To support the national recovery from the pandemic we supported the Government's Kickstart programme and provided three placements for people to gain work experience and enabled them to progress to other employment opportunities within the Council.

We continue to enable access for existing staff to apprenticeship training programmes across a wide variety of disciplines and professional areas. Any future employment opportunities will be advertised on the Council's website: [www.southderbyshire.gov.uk/jobs](http://www.southderbyshire.gov.uk/jobs).



# Demonstrate inclusive leadership, partnership, and a clear organisational commitment to being a leader in equality, diversity, and inclusion

Following extensive consultation with residents, councillors, staff, trade unions and partners the Council approved the equality, diversity and inclusion actions and milestones for 2021/22. This plan has been continually monitored through the year and 72 per cent of actions were achieved with an updated set of objectives being developed for 2022/23.

We refreshed our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group to further expand its membership for voluntary, community and faith-based groups as well as trade unions, councillors, employees and senior council officers.

The group has updated its terms of reference and supports the Council to integrate and embed equality, diversity, and inclusion in the delivery of services and across the current and future workforce to make South Derbyshire a great place to live, visit and invest.

The group monitors and challenges the Council's performance in relation to its five corporate equality, diversity and inclusion objectives, to ensure that we meet the Public Sector duties under the Equality Act 2010 and establish ourselves as a role model for our local communities and workforce.

An Equality Impact Assessment framework has been introduced that will enable the Council to make an informed assessment on the potential opportunities and risks when new policies, strategies and decisions are made that have an impact on our customers and residents.

It is expected that this robust and transparent approach will support the Council to develop and improve its work around equality, diversity and inclusion and through sharing our work, it will benefit others in the community.







As a community leader, the Council takes its responsibility to recognise and support key events throughout the year that are associated with equality, diversity and inclusion. Working with the Steering Group, a diversity calendar of events is being developed and this will be supported by a range of activities to raise awareness of the events being recognised.

A full list of these will be made available on our website when this is approved.

The Council is a key partner in the South Derbyshire Community Safety Partnership which is a multi-agency group that works to reduce crime and the fear of crime. Through the partnership, the Council signposted people to support that is available.

During the pandemic, more people spent time at home and this resulted in an increase in domestic incidents, neighbour related anti-social behaviour, hate crime and cyber-crime. From April to December 2021, the Council intervened in 29 per cent more cases of anti-social behaviour compared to the previous year.

In October 2021, the Council promoted Hate Crime Awareness Week and supported the 16 Days of Action Domestic Abuse Campaign during November 2021 and secured over 162 properties through the CVS Safer Homes Scheme.

Work has also been carried out to promote the help and support available for people and employees suffering with physical and mental health issues, particularly in campaigns for Mental Health Awareness Week and providing information on the COVID-19 vaccine rollout.

The mental health of our workforce was also a key focus with more employees completing the Mental Health First Aider training to ensure support is available for staff suffering with any issues resulting in poor mental health.

A key focus for the following year will be to continue this work and to use our deeper insight of the needs of community to work with partners to improve the quality of life for residents, especially those facing financial hardship.

# Involve and enable our diverse communities to play an active role in society and put the resident's voice at the heart of decision-making

Following extensive engagement with residents, voluntary, community and faith-based groups the Council adopted a Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy in 2021 and developed an action plan for our work over the next five years.

Both documents are on our website and regularly updated to provide the community with details of our work, to celebrate our achievements and set clear targets for our further work to embed equality, diversity and inclusion into our services.

We delivered a broad range of cultural and other events that enabled local groups of people and/volunteers to participate in activities that promote equality, diversity and inclusion. Examples of these are:

- The Community Heroes Awards and Roll of Honour.
- Information packs were provided to residents aged over 60 in the absence of the Liberation Day event that had to be cancelled due to the pandemic. These packs included information on services provided by the Council and local charities and partners including help with mobility, financial support and social isolation.
- Positive manners worker group for mums to build their own network and reduce the risk of isolation.
- Litter picking groups including Rosliston Rangers began carrying our activities again in parks and open spaces following the pandemic.
- Community newsletter distributed to residents.
- Modern Curling competition delivered in primary schools for children with special needs.
- Establishing an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group to advance equality, diversity and inclusion in the services provided by the Council.
- Training Mental Health First Aiders in the Council to provide support to employees.
- Using the Council website to signpost people to community groups and sources of support.
- The Supporting Aspirations action plan was approved by the Council which will provide support to improve the social mobility of young people in South Derbyshire to equip them with the skills to find employment or self-employment.
- Walking for Health groups regularly met at Rosliston Forestry Centre.



Working with 31 parish councils, we have progressed work to reach all sectors of the community to provide them with options to become more engaged and involved with the democratic process and decision making activities of the Council. This will be further developed in 2022 with plans for council meetings to be live-streamed allowing residents to view the meetings from home.

The Council also works with local schools and other academic centres to raise awareness of the services it provides for the community and to provide young people with an insight in to how they can get involved in this process or consider this as a future career opportunity.

A review of the effectiveness of the Community Grants programme for voluntary, community and faith-based groups has been carried out to ensure that it meets the needs of our communities. Grants of between £1,000 and £25,000 will be awarded as matched funding to support capital projects with a value of £4,000 and above. Those applying must demonstrate that being awarded the funding would improve the quality of life of residents in South Derbyshire.

# Deliver responsive services and customer care that is accessible and inclusive to individual's needs and respects cultural differences

Unprecedented events over the past two years have really focussed our work in how we can better support people in our community. We have had to adapt to recognise the challenges facing people during the pandemic and afterwards to deliver responsible and accessible services.

## A summary of our activities include:

Developing a Customer Access Strategy that will build upon our experience and lessons learnt to make it easier and quicker to gain access to Council services and takes into account the needs of all service users.

Developing an approach with partners to use community programmes to reduce social isolation and improve mental health, particularly amongst groups that live in rural areas, are elderly or have limited access to other support networks.



Supporting People Express with Safer Neighbourhood Funding to deliver a two-year Music Based Project for disadvantaged and disabled young people in South Derbyshire. The project, called Passport to Music, has been shortlisted for the Rocksteady Award for Progressive and Inclusive Music Education.

Modernising internal process to enable residents to join the Housing Register and view and express an interest in vacant Council properties along with progressing work to enable direct online access to housing rent accounts and repair ordering.

Supporting the distribution of new funding and grants schemes that included a multi-agency welfare group to support tenants and other residents through the on-line Universal Credit process to minimise delays in processing claims.

Supporting the Safer Homes and Sanctuary Scheme services to improve home security for victims of crime and domestic abuse. Promotional leaflets and referral forms were updated and circulated to referring partner agencies.

We have implemented and promoted initiatives such as Sign Live and the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower scheme to provide different access channels for people with a disability to use Council services.

Completing a review of our public buildings, parks and open spaces to ensure that they are accessible to all and have plans in place to further develop these facilities working with community groups and users.



We continue to offer an assisted bin collection service for residents.

Our Local Plan was used to develop best practice in terms of accessible homes. This will form part of the initial Local Plan consultation that will ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are a key determination in our plans for the development of the district, provision of homes and other facilities.

Making better use of technology to enable access to our services which includes more online functionality via our website to pay for services, request services and the increased use of social media platforms to inform, respond to and publicise the services provided by the Council.

Reviewed our website information and implemented a set of standards to ensure that it is accessible and inclusive. This has been independently assessed and has met industry recognised standards for accessibility and use.

Recognising that digital exclusion remains a barrier for some people in the community, we provide information in different formats such as printed media, noticeboards and holding area forums across the District.

# Understand our diverse communities and embed that understanding in how we shape policy and practice across the Council

A common outcome from the pandemic is how people from different communities have come together to support each other. From this we have gained a deeper insight of our community which is supporting the continued development of the services we deliver, either directly or in partnership.

The development of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan was built on extensive engagement with the community and we have used their feedback to shape our approach. In addition to this, we have established resources on our website that provides details on;

- The breakdown of our community by various categories.
- How this compares nationally and regionally.
- Details of different community groups that are established and can be used for engagement activities.
- The network of groups supporting our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group and worked closely with South Derbyshire CVS to nurture and build collaborative and mutually beneficial relationships.





Further examples of different services where we have worked to develop our understanding of our diverse communities include;

- Using the 50+ age survey, to address the specific needs of the elderly population particularly around housing, social care and health and wellbeing.
- Promoting the Children in Care and Care Leaver Offer which provides support for young people leaving care at 18.
- Ongoing support is offered via the Active Community Directory, which gives local sport/physical activity clubs, community groups and facilities the chance to be listed, for free, in the Directory and on our website as a way of helping the public to know what opportunities are available.
- We also publicise an Active community events calendar that offers a range of physical activity and wellbeing-based events – from activities for children and young people, through to Nordic walking for adults.
- Working in partnership with transport services to improve the accessibility of transport services to people that live in rural areas.
- The South Derbyshire Sustainable Community Strategy and Partnership brings together representatives of public services, local businesses, voluntary and community groups and residents to work together to help improve the district. It concentrated on the issues local people have said are important for a better South Derbyshire.

# Looking ahead

**We are making progress but there is still more to do. Working with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group and other partners, we will build on the progress we have made this year and continue to make a difference to our community over the next 12 months.**

Some of our upcoming projects and initiatives include:

- Continue with the delivery of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and action plan.
- Develop and enhance diversity monitoring across all service areas and use this data to deliver services that are accessible and available to all.
- Complete a gap analysis against an Equality Index and develop plans to advance LGBTQ+ equality.
- Publish and complete campaigns identified in our Diversity calendar.
- Re-establish our programme of events that celebrate and raise awareness of difference, inclusion and equality.
- Nurture and continue to build partnership working with external partners to advance equality, diversity and inclusion in South Derbyshire.
- Learn more about our community by reviewing the Census Data 2021 as it is released and enriching our information about our local communities. This analysis will be regularly updated, published and used to identify priorities for a local area.
- Work with communities to deliver services that are based on current data and research around the needs of our communities for example: financial hardship, food poverty, health inequalities, protection from hate-crime, disabilities, social mobility, education, older people and carers.
- Establish effective targeted communication and engagement methods to engage with a wider cross-section of local communities, providing them with a voice and opportunity to shape how our services support their needs.
- Work with partners to address the challenges faced by parts of community in terms of isolation and digital exclusion.
- Work with academic centres and schools to progress key actions under the Supporting Aspirations project for improving the social mobility of young people.
- Continuing with the review of our built facilities, parks and open spaces to improve access and accessibility for all.
- Work with partners and other groups through the South Derbyshire Partnership and Sustainable Community Strategy to improve life for people in the District.
- Work in partnership to deliver the volunteer development programme with a range of activities including supporting LGBTQ+ young people and safeguarding.

