



South Derbyshire District Council Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Annual Report 2023/24

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South
Derbyshire
District Council

Foreword

We are proud to introduce our annual equality report.

The purposes of this report are to highlight the progress we and our partners have made over the past 12 months on our equalities agenda, to outline our next steps, and to meet the requirements of the public sector equality duty.

The Council wants to see a District in which people have a good quality of life 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.

We continually work to improve, and we acknowledge there is more to do to address inequality, discrimination, and exclusion.

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.



Dr Justin Ives
Chief Executive



Councillor Robert Pearson
Council Leader

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, and faith-based groups, Trade Unions, senior Council officers, Members, and employees.

We shared and received feedback on our action plan for 2023/24 with this group and with the Leadership Team, Heads of Service and Trade Unions. This plan was continually monitored through the year.

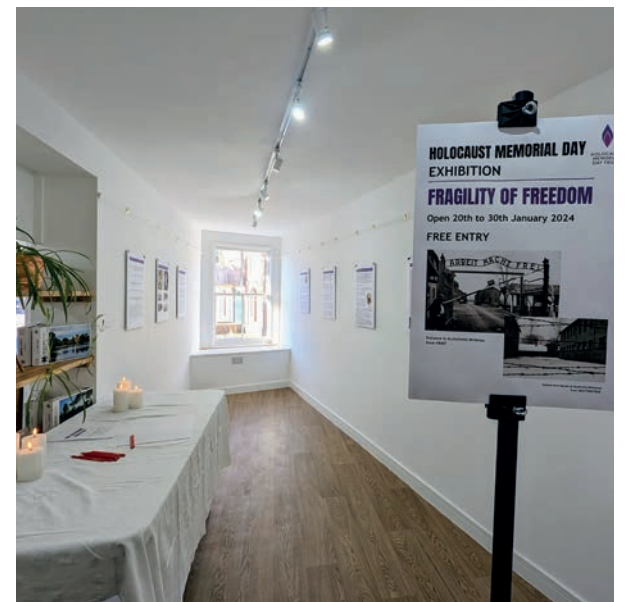
We adopted an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy and completed Equality Impact Assessments to inform our approach.

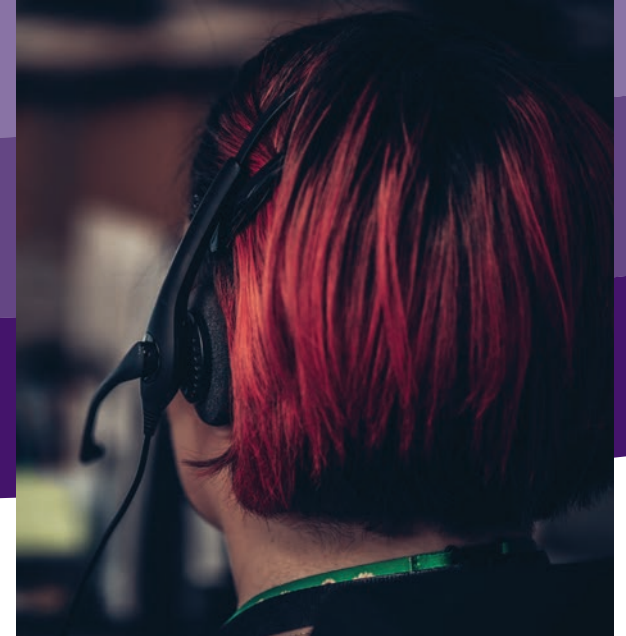
Community cohesion is what brings members of different communities together. During 2023/24 examples of activities we organised to bring people from different backgrounds together included the Festival of Leisure, Get Involved, and a Holocaust Memorial Day exhibition.

Our lead membership of the South Derbyshire Partnership which aims to improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of South Derbyshire makes an important contribution to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

Among projects it helped fund in 2023/24 is the Alternative Learning in Creative Environments (ALICE) project, run by South Derbyshire CVS. This engages with individuals who are most disadvantaged and find it difficult to access traditional learning and work opportunities.

Outcomes achieved were impressive – 25 individuals were supported using a combination of cooking classes, first aid classes, learning and practical activities. Six of these people are volunteering, two have gained college places, one has found work, and the others are working towards an Award in Employability Skills.





Diverse workforce

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

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 2023/24 we have:

- Employed ten apprentices across our services to promote workforce planning and retention, including two Level 7 town planners, a Level 3 LGV mechanic, and a Level 3 digital support technician.
- Provided ten work experience opportunities for young people and students, engaged a graduate on a national programme and supported staff to gain further academic qualifications.
- Provided Parkinson's awareness sessions to help staff appreciate how best to provide our services to those affected.
- Held a series of events for Mental Health Awareness Week to highlight the support available for staff and to increase their understanding and management of their own mental health.
- Completed risk assessments and provided equipment and support to staff to enable them to undertake their duties in office-based and more physical occupations.

- Provided refresher training for the 26 staff we have as Mental Health First Aiders across the Council including colleagues in front line occupations.
- Delivered training events for our staff and Members in equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Completed an employee survey that evidences that our staff consider that we have a positive and visible approach to equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Developed and completed consultation on our Customer Access Strategy to identify different ways that we can support our customers and staff to deliver services.
- Completed and published our Gender Pay Report that shows that on average, we pay females slightly more than males.
- Completed and published Equality Impact Assessments on corporate and employment policies and procedures.
- Secured funding to support young people in the District to improve their employment opportunities and attended careers events to provide information for students and parents on future career options.
- Promoted campaigns such as Sign Language Week, International Women's Day, and an employee presented his insight and experience of observing the Ramadan festival.



Responsive services



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

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

Our work on Disabled Facilities Grants continues to support individuals maintain independence and supports their confidence and wellbeing. In 2023-4 we completed 66 adaptations in private properties (including private rented and social landlords) and 51 adaptations in Council-owned properties.

These adaptations include stairlifts, level access shower installations, hard standings and dropped kerbs, kitchen alterations, ramp installations, bedroom extensions and internal alterations.

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 2023 and 31 March 2024, they handled a total of 49,657 calls, 97.7% of which were answered within 30 seconds.

They also supported an enhanced recovery service pilot project with East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) to ensure that rapid access and support was provided to people in the District who had suffered a fall which has resulted in this becoming a new service.

There are activity groups in South Derbyshire specifically for the over-50s age group. These include a Senior Tennis Group and Senior Bowls Sessions. Each of these runs weekly at Maurice Lea Park in Church Gresley, moving indoors during winter months.

Derbyshire specialist child exploitation charity Safe and Sound has been able to deliver over 50 outreach sessions with young people across South Derbyshire.



The outreach sessions has given young people a voice, listening to their concerns, empowering them to action change. This enables them to access different organisations to seek support, feedback their views and help to positively shape the future delivery of services. This has included a group in Newhall Park discussing improvements that they believe could help reduce anti-social behaviour in the park and how to improve facilities for young people.

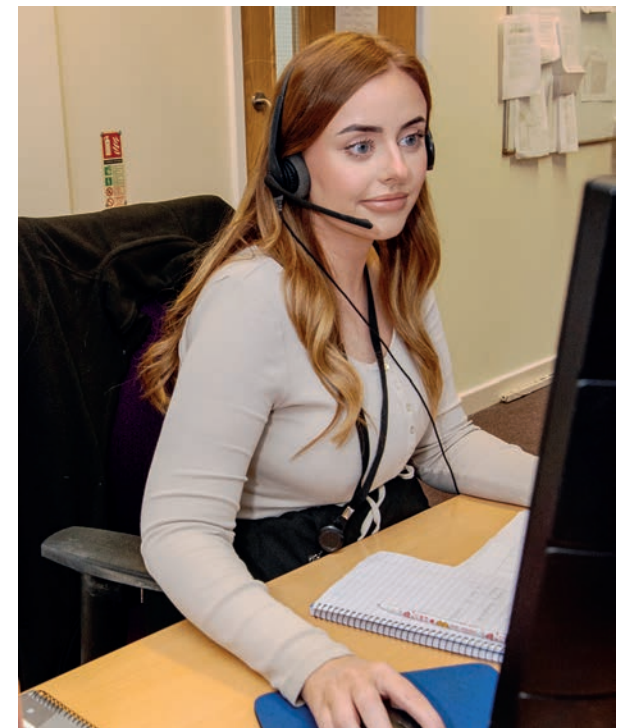
Our Community Grants scheme is used to support groups and organisations in the District with financial assistance or access to advice or resources. This support was provided among others to the Aston and Weston Bowls Club, an important community gathering place and activity provider, with members who include people with dementia, autism, physical

disability, confidence/anxiety/loneliness and life-limiting issues.

The club also successfully applied for funding for a new lawn mower, which means they can now maintain the facility themselves.

The Active Schools Partnership delivered the Holiday Activity Food (HAF) programme – offering free school meal to students that schools deem vulnerable along with free holiday camp provision during the Easter and summer holidays that was attended by 70-90 students a day.

The Partnership also piloted the Resilient Me Programme, designed to improve a student's level of resilience. This operated in 10 schools , with 10-20 students at each school taking part in one-hour sessions for six weeks.



Involve and enable

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

We have continued to deliver a broad range of events that enabled local groups of people and volunteers to participate in activities that promote equality, diversity, and inclusion and engaged them in the way we provide our services.

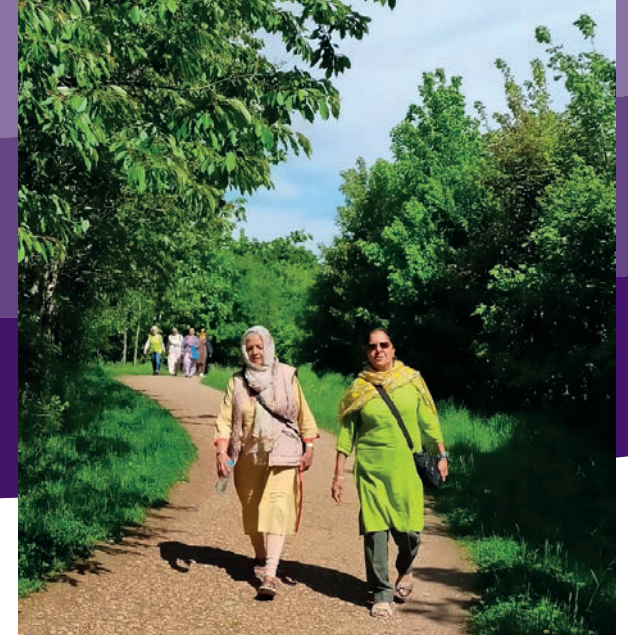
Work has been done to make facilities more accessible, in some cases enabling different groups to participate in activities for the first time.

Consultation of our proposed Customer Access Strategy was completed with the support from South Derbyshire CVS. This was a hugely successful example of partnership working with the CVS who were able to reach a large number of customers with protected characteristics.

One of the findings from this consultation was the difficulty some communities have with connectivity.

The Social Connectiveness project, run by South Derbyshire CVS, made significant contributions to involving and enabling communities. This partnership work included research into what prevented people from accessing community and activity groups and subsequent work to help break barriers down.

A survey revealed that even where community groups and facilities such as village halls exist, people still feel socially disconnected for three reasons; they don't know what is on offer, they can't physically get to a community group or the groups on offer are not of interest to them.



Everything from social media and village noticeboards to increasing knowledge of care coordinators and social prescribers were used to raise awareness of and access to existing groups. The project delivered 277 contacts with organisations and community groups, helped nine new groups helped to establish, and 78 existing groups supported.

We recognise that digital exclusion remains a barrier for some of our residents and we continue to provide information in different formats such as printed media, noticeboards and face-to-face meetings.

Consultation was carried out during the year regarding play area refurbishment and found that "Accessible equipment for all abilities" was the most important considerations in a new play area.



A new free car park was constructed in Swadlincote with eight electric vehicle charging bays, three of which are extra wide to make them accessible for wheelchair users.

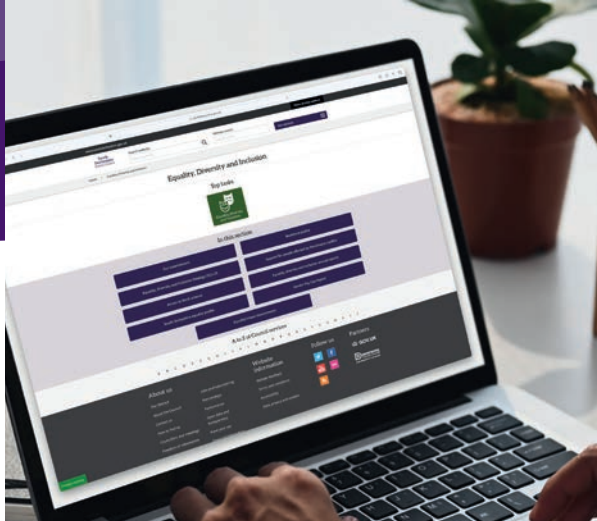
At Rosliston Forestry Centre changes to improve access included enlargement of the slit windows in the bird hide so that people in scooters and wheelchairs can use them more easily.

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

We hold a diverse range of community events that have included the Get Active in the Forest Team working with DEAFinitely women to put on walks for women who are deaf or hard of hearing. The charity provides a British Sign Language interpreter to attend the walks.

At our Festival of Leisure, there was a Japanfest highlighting food, dress and hobbies from a country with which South Derbyshire has close links. Entertainment from other cultures also featured in the annual programme of free entertainment, including a Caribbean steel band, Chinese dancers, Taiko drummer workshops and street food from countries including Greece and Mexico.





Policy & practice

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

We are committed to furthering our insight of our community to support the continued development of the services we deliver, either directly or in partnership.

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

During 2023 – 24 we launched our new Council Plan covering the period 2024 – 2028. When developing this plan, we listened to feedback from our Members, staff, partners and key stakeholders and used the information to determine what is most important for us to deliver.

We introduced the voluntary use of pronouns in our communications.

We added to the resources on our website, support for people affected by the Ukraine conflict, and the Access to Work scheme.

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 supported the 16 Days of Action Domestic Abuse Campaign and promoted Hate Crime Awareness Week. Reported hate crime figures for the District are low, with those for 2023 – 24 showing South Derbyshire has the third lowest in the county.

Hate crime figures

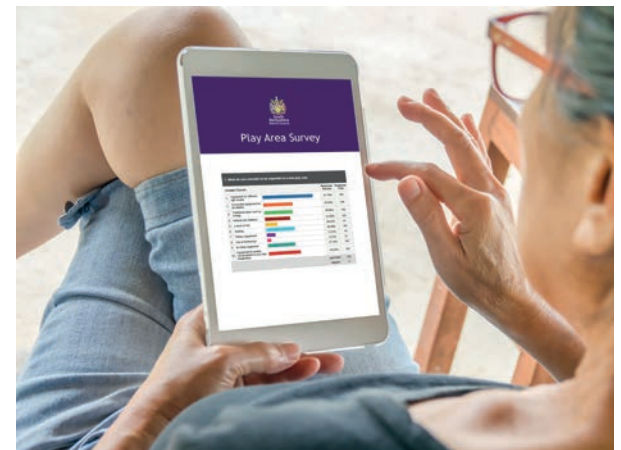
District	Apr 2022 to Mar 2023	Apr 2023 to Mar 2024	Volume Change	% Change
Amber Valley	242	237	-5	-2.1%
Bolsover	147	129	-18	-12.2%
Chesterfield	241	223	-18	-7.5%
Derby	950	1,055	105	11.1%
Derbyshire Dales	75	75	0	0.0%
Erewash	218	264	46	21.1%
High Peak	120	97	-23	-19.2%
North East Derbyshire	155	132	-23	-14.8%
South Derbyshire	153	121	-32	-20.9%
County Council area	1,351	1,278	-73	-5.4%
Unallocated location	8	35	27	337.5%
Force area	2,309	2,368	59	2.6%

Looking ahead

Excellent progress was made in 2023 - 24 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 2024 - 5 include:

- Completing a self-assessment against the Equality Framework for Local Government and setting out a clear road map to move from 'developing' to 'achieving' level.
- 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 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 service delivery and potential areas where timescales can be reduced, and the customer journey improved.
- The implementation of our Customer Access Strategy to provide more choice, transparency and information to our residents to improve how we deliver our services. This will be supported through mandatory training for all staff.
- Publish and raise awareness of key events during the year with our Diversity Calendar.
- Play area and footpath improvements identified through the play area refurbishment survey will be completed, improving accessibility including of the equipment itself.
- We will continue to strengthen work with external partners to advance, recognise and celebrate equality, diversity, and inclusion in South Derbyshire.



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如果你需要这份文件的中文翻译，或者需要传译员的帮助，请联系我们。这些数据也备有大字体印本、盲人点字和录音带，欢迎索取。

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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।

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