

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY 2006



Report on achievements



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Report on achievements for equality and diversity to April 2006



For many years Torbay Council has been committed to the promotion of equal opportunities. We have tried to ensure that women, disabled people, black and minority ethnic communities, lesbians, gay men, young people and older people all have equal access to our services.

We have also made progress in developing a workforce that better reflects the diverse population of the people we serve.

This report summarises some of the great work already undertaken by Torbay Council. But whilst it is giving greater commitment to equality and diversity than it ever has before, it recognises that it still has a long way to go.

Cllr Beryl McPhail

Equality and Diversity Champion

Context

Torbay Council recognises its leading role in promoting equal opportunity and valuing diversity and has been working to support and develop its practices within its services for many years.

The last full statement in May 2005 (equality and inclusion policy and scheme 2005-8) built upon the council's 2004 equality policy to reflect changes in legislation and the community.

It set out the council's policies and principles to ensure it is an inclusive and equitable employer and that communities recognise diversity and prosper.

This document reviews the progress we have made in moving our commitment forward and how we have achieved some of our aspirations and targets. Some of the actions will be taken forward within a new context of equality and diversity and within a framework of new legislative requirements.

There are gaps and areas where we need to make faster progress. However, we can see from the progress to date that the council and the communities we have served have benefited from, and contributed to, changes in equalities that will bring long term positive benefits to Torbay.

Achievements

Related to 2004-5 and 2005-8 scheme and action plan up to May 2006.

1 Working to integrate equality and diversity into our strategy and planning processes

- The council has agreed its policy and strategic commitment in relation to equality. All democratic decisions through the committee system of the authority are required to report on equalities impacts on information and making of decisions. A template for committee decisions incorporates equality and is in consistent use.
- All relevant policies and strategies are equality impact assessed. The equality scheme itself was formally adopted in May 2004 and full scheme adopted by Council in May 2005.
- This means that cross cutting issues on equalities can be picked up across the diverse services that we deliver. The assessed adult social care policies that transferred to Torbay NHS Care Trust will now be subject to NHS governance arrangements which will be monitored by the council's performance monitoring meetings.
- As part of the overview and scrutiny's review of social services in 2004, an independent audit to test fair access to care services was carried out. The findings concluded that access to care services was fair.
- The original equality and inclusion policy used a variety of consultation processes with key community groups in Torbay. These groups continue to develop and change. The council is currently developing a disability equalities scheme with the involvement of people with disabilities, community groups and employees.

- All employees have equality and inclusion included as part of their induction and required training linked to organisational competences are in place.
- An “election” conference was held in April 2005 at the Riviera Centre to raise awareness of the election process for those with learning disabilities. The conference was held just before the May General Election and was attended by representatives from Labour, the Liberal Democrats, the Conservative Party and the United Kingdom Independence Party who spoke about their policies to the delegates.

In the afternoon, there were workshops and the delegates also had the chance to vote using a real ballot paper. The delegates voted for the representative who was “Best on the day”. This was won by Adrian Sanders, the Liberal Democrat representative who went on to win the Torbay seat in the General Election.

Torbay Council’s Returning Officer Paul Lucas and the Electoral Services Manager Melissa Tucker were also in attendance to answer any questions.

- The council has met level 1 of the local government quality standard and is working hard to be assessed at level 2.

2 Customer Focus

- Complaints processes have improved and issues are analysed through customer feedback processes.
- A plain language complaints form is being devised to be more focused on diverse needs and is available in a range of languages and formats.
- Translation services have been set up including the setting up of a direct contact with the job centre to assist with Eastern European translation issues.
- Seating areas have been introduced successfully to aid and ease waiting in the front facing office areas.
- Hearing induction loops in customer facing areas.
- Customer service advisors trained in BSL to assist customers with hearing difficulties.
- Letters in alternative formats and languages are available.
- Home visits arranged for customers unable to visit area offices.
- Assistance in completion of all forms where necessary at front facing offices.
- Alerts on contact manager to raise awareness of advisors regarding any help customers may require.
- Extended opening hours to assist in flexibility of attendance.
- Celebrated Black History Month by purchasing approximately 60 titles supplied by Askews. Collection is currently circulating around Torbay libraries.
- A welcome ticket was introduced in the library service in June 2005. The aim was to reduce some of the barriers to joining the library for example homeless people, those new to Torbay, and temporary residents. The ticket requires no identification to join, allows 2 items to be borrowed and allows internet use.

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- The council's A to Z contains DDA information on each entry.
 - Comprehensive, electronic A to Z of services is available on the council's website. It uses plain English terms, and contains DDA information in relation to council contact points (using DisabledGo assessment criteria). The A to Z also acts as a sign post for a diverse range of local, regional and national organisations.
 - Council website now contains a "no download required" screen reading tool.
 - Improved navigation structure on the council site making information more readily accessible.
 - Translation function on the council website offers translation of all council web pages at the click of a button.
 - SMS Text messaging channel piloted to allow greater freedom of access to council services.
 - Financially supported the 'disabled go' website to undertake audit of our main buildings. This information is linked from the council website as well as directly at <http://www.disabledgo.info>. Further public information is outlined at <http://www.torbay.gov.uk/> clicking on disabled.

3 Assets and buildings

- Investment has been put into the council's diverse range of buildings and 40% of the building stock has been improved to DDA standards to improve our performance of BV156 to 40% (by May 2006). We are continuing with DDA survey work on our further assets with a view of meeting the national average of 53% within two years. Where services are offered from non DDA compliant buildings we have sought to offer them in other ways or from other locations.
- Community cohesion action plan has been cross checked with more reference to equality.
- Procurement contracts are equality compliant and are monitored for equality. Our procurement processes are a key driver for an inclusive approach to our community as the council is a key economic force in the locality. We are seeking to further the procurement work from the monitoring of procurement on an equality basis, to seeing how we can influence the local economy through our procurement power to ensure equality and diversity.
- External signage to buildings has been reviewed and plans are in place to improve it including its equality impacts.

4 Transport and accessing our towns

- 56 kerbs were lowered during 2005-6 at the request of, or on behalf of, wheelchair users, which was well over target, (Local Transport Plan1 report).
- Shopmobility opened in Torquay and Brixham 200-2
- Continued councillor and officer representation on Shopmobility management committee.
- Continued council financial and officer time devoted to Shopmobility.
- Councillor and officer representation on Torbay Environment Access Meeting.
- Introduction of lowfloor buses on the two busiest routes by Stagecoach. This would not have been achieved without close working with the council.

5 Councillors and our workforce

- A range of council representatives are trained and proficient in undertaking impact assessments.
- Discriminatory incidents are able to be reported using a variety of methods.
- Equality monitoring reports are taken to elected members as part of the regular review of performance improvement across the council.
- We produce employment monitoring data and this is reviewed against the target.
- The council is in the process of analysing jobs for fair pay and this process is likely to be communicated to all workforces in 2007.
- Anti-harassment training has been organised for staff in some sections

6 Responsive and equitable services

- Torbay Council has been involved in taking a coordinated approach with other authorities within Devon to support gypsies and travellers. The council has contributed financially to a project with Plymouth University who are commissioned to provide a needs assessment of gypsies and travellers in Devon. This will help understand and deliver more equitable approach to the housing needs of gypsies and travellers and the social and financial cost currently incurred in supporting them.
- Torbay Library Services participate in a national scheme which allows children and young people who are travellers, looked-after or refugees/asylum seekers – and their parents or carers- to return library materials to any library in the UK (without any overdue charges being made). The library will then make arrangements to return the items to the borrowing library free-of-charge.
- The scheme has now been extended to allow young travellers to access the People's Network in any public library. Travellers are issued with a 'Keep IT Moving' card which can be used at any library to gain access to the People's Network without having to go through any unnecessary bureaucracy.
- Torbay Library Services uses Bright Books for our rental of foreign fiction in the following languages:
 - Chinese
 - Polish
 - French
 - Spanish

A further set of Polish titles has just been placed due to the growing demand for this language. The titles are exchanged by bright books on a quarterly basis.

- Civil Partnerships Act of 2004 came into effect in December 2005. From the outset Torbay Council has publicly supported same sex marriages and to date 53 Civil Partnership ceremonies have been conducted. All have taken place in a positive manner with compliments to staff for their sensitivity and professionalism.
- A play strategy has been developed which includes the needs of disabled children.

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- The Library Service hosts a club for older people at Paignton library every two months, with demonstrations of arts and crafts and invited speakers - addressing a range of subjects.
 - All of the libraries have a wide range of material suitable for both adults and children with a visual impairment. Spoken word cassettes, CDs and music CDs can be borrowed free of charge for 21 days.
 - Torbay Library Services currently pays for nearly 300 Torbay residents, to access the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) Talking Book Service. Talking books are delivered direct to the resident's home.
 - The Library Service can arrange subscriptions to the National Library for the Blind, who will lend books in Moon and Braille. Additionally, we subscribe to Clear Vision, an organisation which supplies us with Braille books for children.
 - Every month, Torquay library hosts a book review club for visually impaired people.
 - Torbay Library Service offers services to domiciliary establishments, eg residential / nursing homes and sheltered accommodation. The Inclusion Services Coordinator visits the home to discuss residents' requirements. The books are then delivered/collected every ten weeks.
 - The Oasis Project seeks to serve children who are not in mainstream schooling by addressing their ICT learning needs. Oasis is Target 3 of Torbay's Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA).
 - Torquay Library is working with Adult and Community Learning Skills for life tutors to provide literacy taster sessions.

7 Listening to and involving people and partnerships

- Joint work is being undertaken at sub regional level with Devon.
- Youth e-panel and Torbay Council has taken an innovative approach to listening to young people by using an electronic consultation approach.

This will help shape services around the needs and aspirations of young people in the area.
- Torbay Connect provides a regular way of local people raising issues with both the council and other service providers. This regularly tours our main towns and this year has been invested in to provide a more up to date facility which is compliant with DDA requirements.
- The council works with the Police and other sectors to ensure that there is a pro active way of reporting race and homophobic crime and this is part of our shared monitoring work with our partners.

Code	Description	Actual 2003/4	Actual 2004/5	Actual 2005/6	Change between 2003/2006	Performance against all England authorities 2004/5
BVPI 2a	The level of the Equality Standard achieved.	1	1	1	-	N/A
BVPI 2b	The duty to promote race equality – quality of the council's Race Equality Scheme.	72%	84.2%	84.2%	↑	Best 25% were 72% or above
BVPI 11a	Percentage of top 5% of earners that are women.	30.4%	29.9%	34.6%	↑	Best 25% were 40.23% or above
BVPI 11b	Percentage of top 5% of earners that are from black and minority ethnic communities.	3.8%	1.96%	1.69%	↓	Best 25% were 3.48% or above
BVPI 11c	Percentage of top 5% of earners who have a disability.			0%	-	New for 2005/6
BVPI 16a/b	Percentage of local authority employees with a disability, compared with the percentage of the economically active population in Torbay who have a disability.	30%	30%	20%	↓	Best 25% were 31.33% or above
BVPI 17a/b	Percentage of local authority employees from minority ethnic communities, compared with the percentage of the economically active minority ethnic community population in Torbay.	100%	118%	141.7%	-	Best 25% were 100%
BVPI 156	Percentage of council buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people.	30%	33%	41%	↑	N/A
BVPI 53	Households receiving intensive home care per 1,000 population aged 65 or over.	7.2%	7.6%	8.3%	↑	Best 25% were 15.51% or above
BVPI 54	Older people helped to live at home per 1,000 population aged 65 or over.	50.7%	68.6%	71.2%	↑	Best 25% were 98.54% or above
BVPI 165	Percentage of pedestrian crossings with facilities for disabled people.	48%	58.2%	78.3%	↑	Best 25% were 100%
BVPI 174	Number of racial incidents recorded by the authority per 100,000 population.	22%	25.13%	39.25%*	↑	N/A
BVPI 175	Percentage of racial incidents that resulted in further action.	100%	100%	98%	↓	N/A

*Note: as an authority we are currently actively trying to encourage more people to report racial incidents, to ensure we are accurately measuring this area. In the long-term we would want this figure to reduce.

TORBAY'S RESIDENT POPULATION

The latest population estimate for Torbay show continued growth in the resident population. The 2005 Mid Year Estimates (MYE) released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) estimate Torbay's resident population to be 132,800. The table and graph show more detail:

Age Group	Population
0	1,300
1-4	5,000
5-9	7,000
10-14	8,100
15-19	8,200
20-24	6,700
25-29	5,700
30-34	7,000
35-39	8,700
40-44	9,300
45-49	8,400
50-54	8,700
55-59	9,900
60-64	8,800
65-69	7,800
70-74	6,600
75-79	5,900
80-84	4,900
85-89	2,800
90+	2,000

The table below details the projected population of Torbay for the next 25 years.

N.B. These projections are due to be revised in the last quarter of 2006.

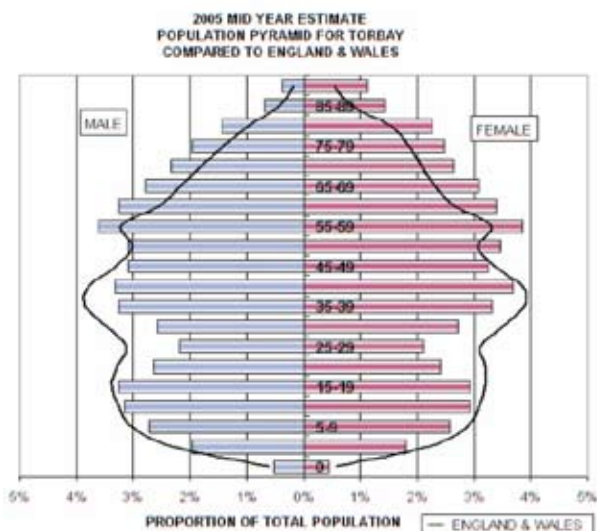
Year	All Ages	Year	All Ages
2003	131,300	2016	147,700
2004	132,500	2017	149,000
2005	133,800	2018	150,300
2006	135,000	2019	151,600
2007	136,300	2020	152,800
2008	137,600	2021	154,100
2009	138,800	2022	155,300
2010	140,100	2023	156,500
2011	141,400	2024	157,600
2012	142,600	2025	158,700
2013	143,900	2026	159,800
2014	145,200	2027	160,900
2015	146,500	2028	161,900

Source: ONS, 2004 Sub National Population Projections.

How does Torbay's growth compare to other authorities locally?

Area	2003 MYE ('000s)	Estimated population growth	
		2003 to 2010	2003 to 2020
Devon County	714.9	5.78%	13.95%
East Devon	126.7	6.71%	16.34%
Exeter	113.3	4.94%	11.03%
Mid Devon	71.2	7.44%	17.70%
North Devon	88.9	5.62%	13.61%
Plymouth	241.5	0.54%	1.99%
South Hams	81.8	2.32%	6.72%
South West Region	4,999.3	4.59%	11.35%
Teignbridge	122.6	5.79%	14.27%
Torbay	131.3	6.70%	16.37%
Torridge	60.9	9.20%	21.18%
West Devon	49.6	4.84%	11.90%

Source: ONS, 2004 Sub National Population Projections.



Torbay's population is estimated to grow over the next 25 years, at an average rate of 1,200 persons a year.

Torbay's three towns resident population at the 2001 census was:

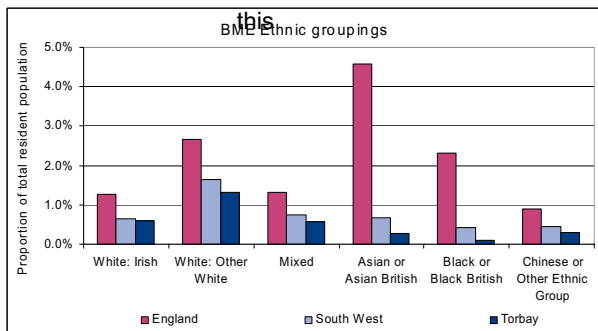
- Brixham: 17,457 - 13.5%
- Paignton: 48,251 - 37.2%
- Torquay: 63,998 - 49.3%
- Torbay: 129,706 - 100%

ETHNICITY

The number of people from a black and ethnic minority background living in Torbay has increased significantly since 1991 and now accounts for 3.2% of the resident population. However, this figure is still well below the national average.

Area	% of total population – White British	% of total population – Non-White British
England	87.0%	13.0%
South West	95.4%	4.6%
Devon	97.0%	3.0%
Plymouth	96.5%	3.5%
Torbay	96.8%	3.2%
East Devon	97.5%	2.5%
Exeter	94.7%	5.3%
Mid Devon	97.6%	2.4%
North Devon	97.6%	2.4%
South Hams	97.0%	3.0%
Teignbridge	97.3%	2.7%
Torridge	97.6%	2.4%
West Devon	97.3%	2.7%

Source: 2001 Census, ONS



Source: 2001 Census, ONS

RELIGION

Area	% of People stating religion as: Christian	% of People stating religion as: No religion
England & Wales	71.75%	14.81%
England	71.74%	14.59%
South West	73.99%	16.75%
Devon	74.84%	16.25%
Plymouth	73.56%	18.27%
Torbay	76.19%	14.91%
East Devon	77.85%	13.89%
Exeter	69.12%	20.45%
Mid Devon	75.40%	15.98%
North Devon	75.11%	15.95%
South Hams	74.68%	16.53%
Teignbridge	75.56%	15.68%
Torridge	75.54%	15.62%
West Devon	76.42%	15.41%

Source: 2001 Census, ONS

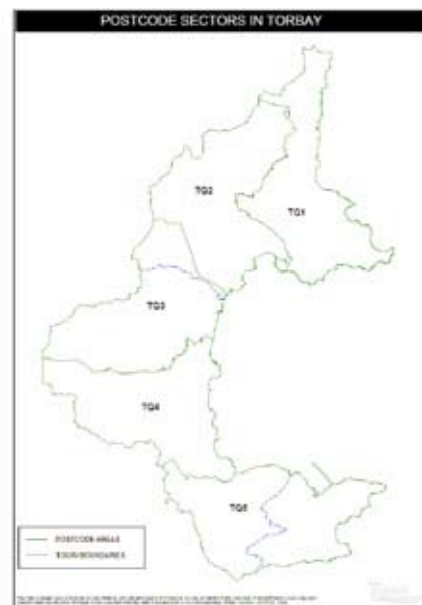
WORKER REGISTRATION SCHEME

Number of applicants to the workers registration scheme working in Torbay (May 2004 to March 2006) by nationality and by postcode sector:

Nationality	Number
Czech rep	45
Estonia	13
Hungary	14
Latvia	12
Lithuania	75
Poland	441
Slovakia	85
Slovenia	5

Postcode sector	Number
TQ1	200
TQ2	272
TQ3	117
TQ4	72
TQ5	25

Source: Home Office





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