



Adult Social Care and Health

Inclusive by Design

**Equality Diversity and Inclusion
Strategy 2024 - 2027**



English

If you would like help understanding this information - for example, if you would like to request it in an alternative format or language - please contact ASC.EqualityTeam@eastsussex.gov.uk

Arabic

على الاثر صال يجرى المعلومات، هذه فهم في المساعدة تودك نت إذا

ASC.EqualityTeam@eastsussex.gov.uk

Bengali

আপনি এই তথ্য বুঝতে চাইতে অগ্রহ কতে যোগাযোগ কেতবি:

ASC.EqualityTeam@eastsussex.gov.uk

Hindi

अगर आप यह जानकारी समझने में मदद चाहिए, तो कृपया ASC.EqualityTeam@eastsussex.gov.uk पर संपर्क करें।

Italian

Se desiderate aiutarci a comprendere quest'informazione vi preghiamo di contattare

ASC.EqualityTeam@eastsussex.gov.uk

Mandarin

若您对于本信息有任何疑问，请联系 ASC.EqualityTeam@eastsussex.gov.uk

Polish

Jeżeli potrzebują Państwo pomocy, aby zrozumieć niniejsze informacje, prosimy skontaktować się z ASC.EqualityTeam@eastsussex.gov.uk

Portuguese

Caso necessite de assistência para compreender esta informação, deverá contactar

ASC.EqualityTeam@eastsussex.gov.uk

Tamil

இந்தத் தகவலைப் புரிந்துகொள்ள உதவி ததலவப்படுமரயின், ASC.EqualityTeam@eastsussex.gov.uk என்ற மின்னஞ்சல் முகவரியில் எங்கலளத் கதரடர்புககரள்க

Turkish

Eğer bu bilgileri anlamak için yardıma ihtiyacınız olursa, lütfen bu e-posta adresinden

ASC.EqualityTeam@eastsussex.gov.uk bizimle iletişime geçin

Urdu

مہربانی بہ راہ تو وہ ہیں چاہتے کہ رونا پش مدد میں سمجھنے کے و معلومات اس آپ آگے رکھیں۔ پ رراب طہ ASC.EqualityTeam@eastsussex.gov.uk

Welcome letter from the Director

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy's title, *Inclusive by Design*, reflects our ambition for the coming years, despite the financial challenges we currently face. It sets out a framework for the actions we will take and the values we will be guided by when transforming support and services to get the best value for money, improve outcomes and reduce inequality for residents.

The strategy builds on the successes and learning from our previous Equality and Inclusion Strategy and is designed to help us achieve our 'What Matters to You' plan to enable care, support and independence for adults across East Sussex.

We are proud of the work we've done to date, but we know there is more we can do to advance the EDI agenda locally. As a leadership team, we are committed to championing this work and taking action to deliver meaningful and sustainable change for everyone.

We have set ourselves four EDI priorities for the next three years. This strategy document provides background context, and explains how we developed the priorities and the outcomes we would like to see for each priority. It is supported by a detailed action plan setting out what we will do.

Our success will be judged on whether we are achieving our priorities of:

- 1) Delivering leadership on equality and demonstrating commitment
- 2) Engaging effectively with residents to make improvements
- 3) Delivering quality services that reflect the diverse needs of local people
- 4) Building a diverse workforce with equality confidence, knowledge and skills

We can only achieve our priorities if we forge strong working relationships with our partners across the system, from the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE) to NHS partners, providers and other public sector organisations.

Together we can ensure that we are offering inclusive care and support for everyone.

Mark Stainton

Director

Adult Social Care and Health

Vision: Our commitment

Our equality diversity and inclusion ambition is to create fairer, safer, accessible and inclusive care and support services for everyone, where everyone feels they belong, have a voice and an equal opportunity to thrive. Achieving this will contribute directly to the vision set out in our Adult Social Care Strategy 'What Matters to You'.

Being truly inclusive is not just about welcoming different contributions. Inclusion also means actively tackling inequalities and advancing greater equality, as well as fostering good relations between different people. Inclusion means removing the barriers – physical, economic, structural or social – that hold people back, so we can ensure everyone in East Sussex is included.

The Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 places certain duties on public authorities, which includes Councils. Public authorities must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Equality Act 2010 further explains that having due regard for advancing equality means public authorities should:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- Take steps to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics, where these are different from the needs of other people;
- Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

Finally, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 places a requirement on public authorities to publish, at least annually, information to demonstrate compliance with the above duties. Public Authorities with 150 employees or more are also obliged to publish, at least annually, information

concerning protected characteristics in relation to their staff and other persons affected by its policies and practices.

What are the benefits of the equality duty?

The Equality Act provides the legal framework for statutory services, but this strategy seeks to go beyond this statutory duty. We want to ensure all sectors and communities take into account the needs of everyone who experiences disadvantage and discrimination. This includes those with caring responsibilities and those in care, homeless people, refugees and people seeking asylum, people in and coming out of the criminal justice system, people with substance misuse problems, and those experiencing deprivation and poverty, as well as people we seldom hear from. We want to ensure everyone has appropriate access, is treated inclusively and can benefit from the same access to opportunities.

Our Human Rights commitments

As well as the Equality Act 2010, the council is subject to the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998, which sets out a framework for the basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person from birth to death. The rights defined in this act and international law are:

- Right to life
- Freedom from torture and inhuman or degrading treatment
- Freedom from slavery and forced labour
- Right to liberty and security
- Right to a fair trial
- No punishment without law (under which people's rights can be restricted if they break the law)
- Respect for private and family life, home and correspondence
- Freedom of thought, belief and religion
- Freedom of expression
- Freedom of assembly and association
- Right to marry and start a family
- Protection from discrimination in respect of these rights and freedoms
- Right to peaceful enjoyment of property

- Right to education
- Right to participate in free elections

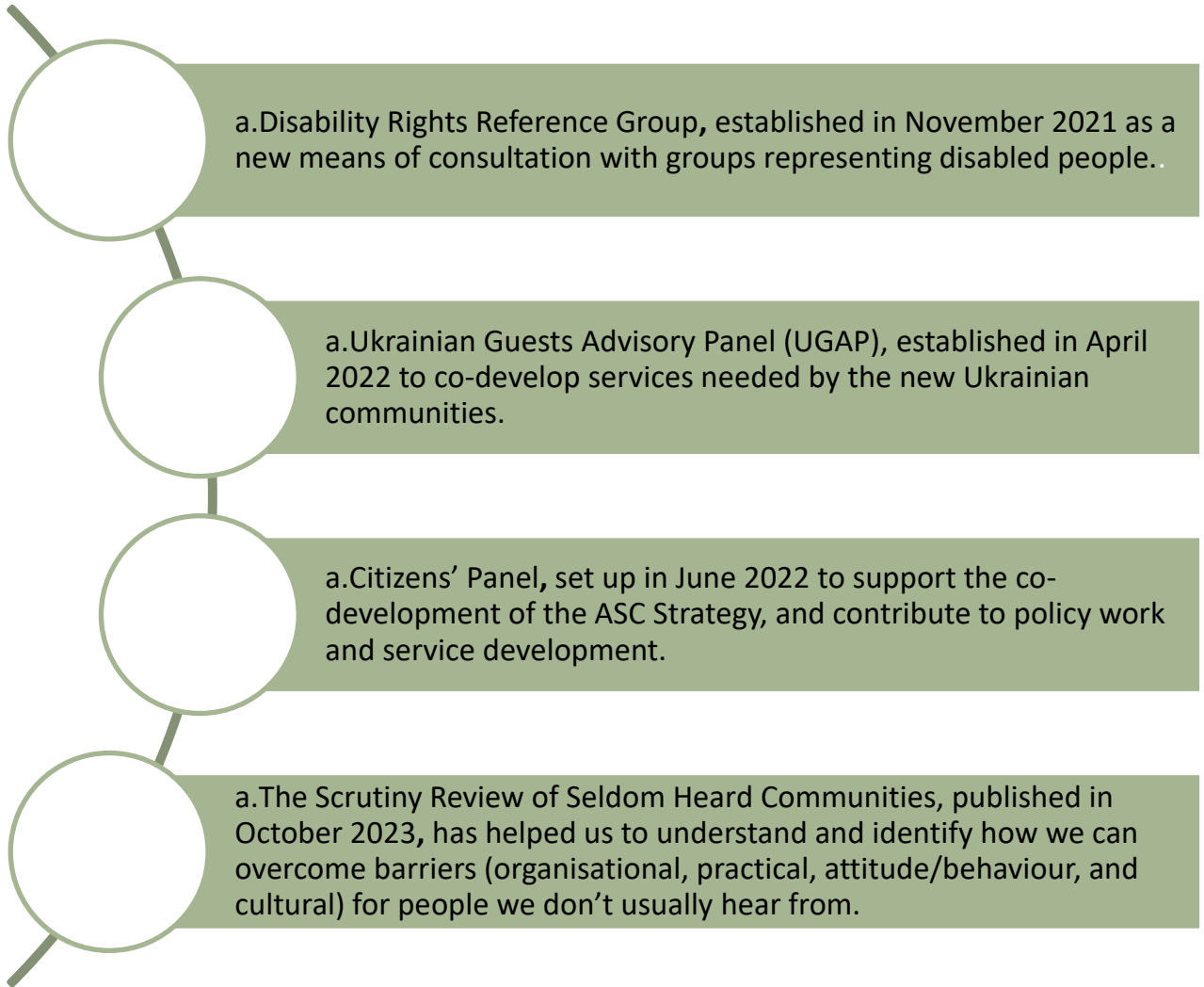
We want to work to ensure people are aware of their rights. We are taking steps to ensure that rights-based conversations, with people who draw on care and support from us, inform our strengths-based practices in provision of care and support.

Our progress so far and the key challenges we face

As a department, we have achieved a significant amount since 2021, including spearheading a focus on EDI across East Sussex County Council. Key achievements from across the department on the 2021-2024 Equality and Inclusion Strategy are listed below:

1) Knowing our communities and inclusivity at the heart of service development

We have continued to use and further strengthen ASCH's existing community engagement mechanisms to inform equality impact assessments and co-produce policy and service improvements.



2) A safe, fair, and inclusive workplace environment

Our Workforce Programme is spearheading the change programme to ensure we are investing in recruitment, retention, wellbeing and building leadership for the future. All of this has been supported by the Building Social Justice project which aims to create and maintain a safe, fair and inclusive workplace for all staff.

1. Working Inclusively Guidance and Self-Assessment Tool launched in June 2022 continues to be used to help individuals and teams identify their equality objectives, training, and development needs.

1. Equality Allies network (ASCH staff), established in June 2023 as championing EDI messages, campaigns, and good practice to teams and developing the culture of our work in the department to be inclusive and equality aware.

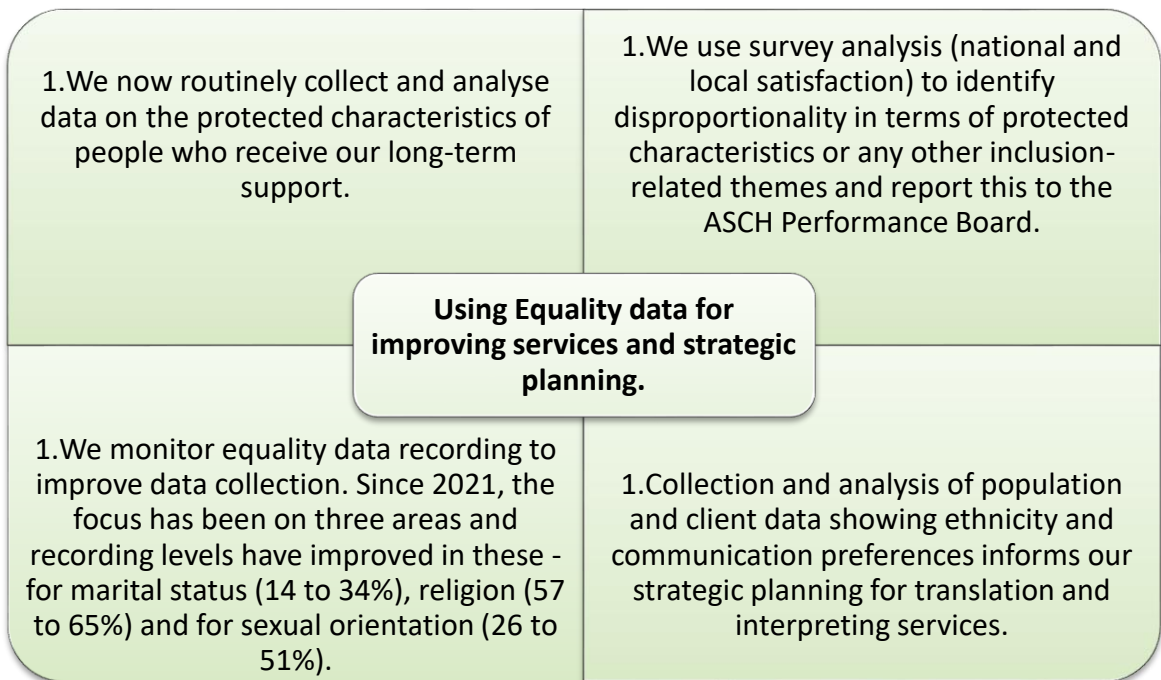
1. Building and enhancing social justice, equality, diversity and inclusion in the workforce is a strand of ASCH Workforce Programme which aims to ensure staff feel valued, supported and safe in the workplace.

1. The violence, harassment and discrimination against staff project has been established with aims to provide better support and monitoring, and to understand the breadth and depth of these issues by collecting and analysing data.

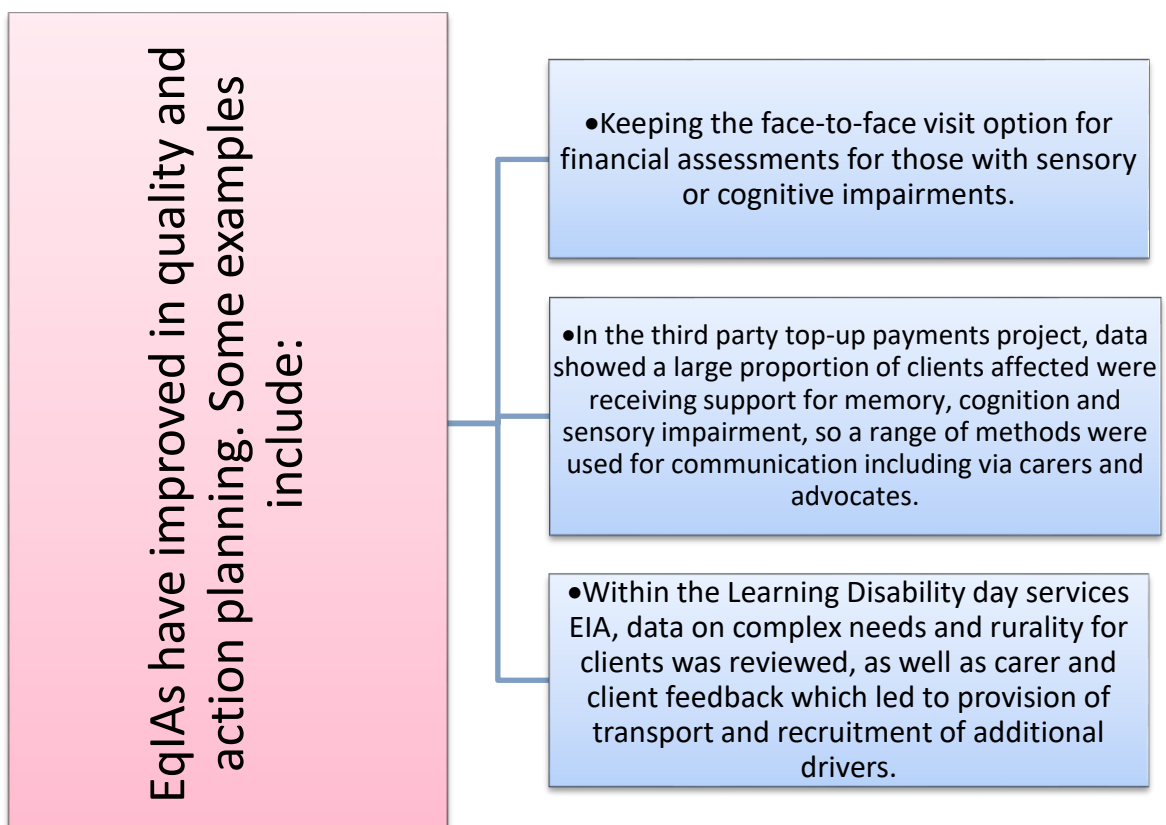
1. Creation of the Neurodiversity Viva Engage group, which is Council wide and now has 221 members with monthly online meetings. This staff network group is in addition to others that support people with specific protected characteristics, including Race Equality, LGBTQ+, Disability and Carers.

3) Data recording, sharing and analysis

We have an improved data monitoring process and improved outcomes for how we use that data.

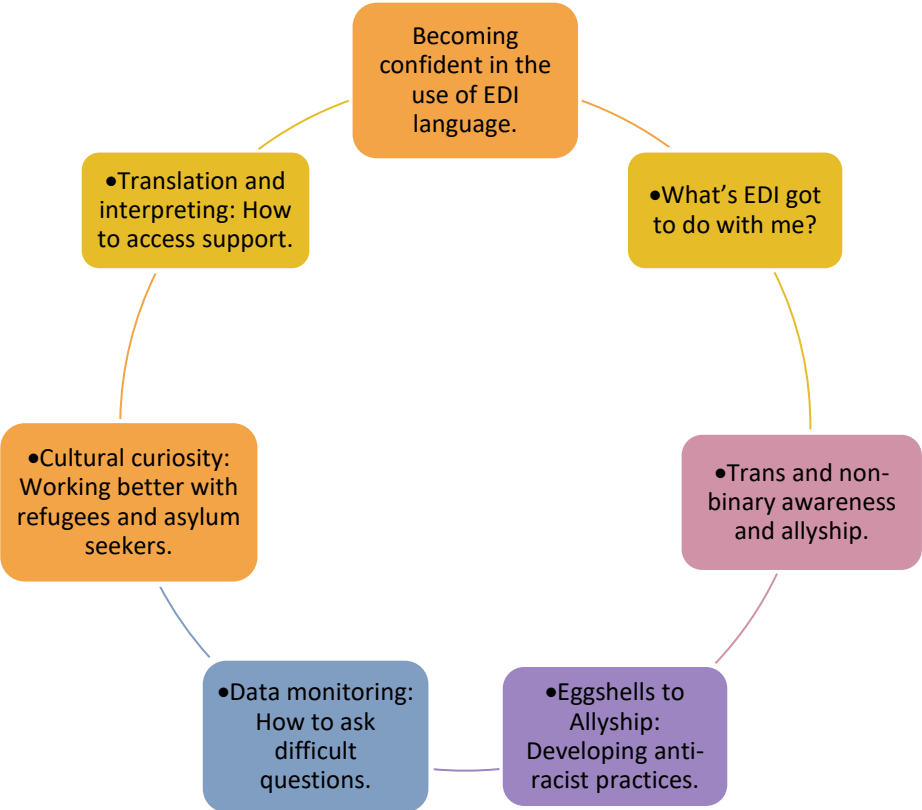


Our Equality Impact Assessment processes use our equality data to improve planning and commissioning of services.



4) Strengthening ASCH staff practice and knowledge in all aspects of equality and human rights as they connect with ASCH work

Overall, sessions were attended by 720 people across the department. Feedback has been extremely positive and included staff feeling that their practice was consequently more inclusive for clients, carers and colleagues. The following training sessions have been designed and are being delivered:



East Sussex population



Population aged 65+

East Sussex = 26%

England = 18%

26% of the adult population in East Sussex are older people (65+), considerably higher than England where 18% of the population is aged 65 and over.



Additional households headed by older people by 2035 = 37,700

By 2035, there will be 37,700 more households headed by older people, aged 65 and over.

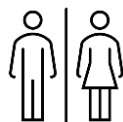


Fall in working age population in next 20 years

Hastings = 5.6%

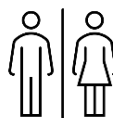
Eastbourne = 3.3%

The working age population in Hastings and Eastbourne is expected to fall by a considerable amount in the next 20 years (5.6% and 3.3%, respectively).



Working age adults by gender

Male = 49% Female = 51%



Older People by gender

Male = 45% Female = 55%

As age increases the proportion of the population that is female generally becomes higher.



Population aged 66 and over living alone = 30%

There are 41,304 one-person households aged 66 years or








Population aged 85+ by 2026

East Sussex = 4.3%

England = 2.5%

We currently have the highest percentage of people aged 85 and

<p>over, equating to 30% of the population aged 66 years or over living alone. Within the county it ranges from 27% in Wealden to 35% in Hastings.</p>	<p>over of any local authority area in England.</p>
 <p>BME population = 11.1%</p> <p>11.1% of the population in East Sussex is from a black and ethnic minority background; this has increased from 8.0% in the 2011 Census.</p>	 <p>Residents born outside UK = 9.9%</p> <p>The 2021 Census showed around 53,820 residents (9.9%) of East Sussex were born outside the UK, an increase of 10,970 (25.6%) since 2011.</p>
  <p>Rural = 26% Urban = 74%</p> <p>Based on 2011 census classifications 74.0% of the population lives in an urban area.</p>	 <p>Proportion of people with a disability</p> <p>East Sussex = 20.4% England = 17.9% South East = 15.7%</p> <p>East Sussex has a higher proportion of total people with a disability when compared to the South East and England</p>

This population profile means we have a higher proportion of the population with multiple complex needs, a higher population than average with dependency needs, and a lower working age population. Additionally, our population is increasingly

diversifying. This is set against increased demand for services, financial pressures, and workforce challenges.

In this strategy, we are using our data to set targets and measures to improve our practice and service delivery to clients to ensure accessibility and inclusivity, and to demonstrate that to our residents and others. This means equalities data and insight will be monitored and considered within other work projects and learning mechanisms including strengths-based assessments, reducing waiting times, complaints and feedback and casefile audits.

How we defined our priorities and actions

The priorities set in this strategy have been aligned to our council-wide Equality Objectives. However, the department-specific actions and objectives have been co-developed while working with a range of partners. We have been holding community engagement meetings with our Voluntary Community Service and Enterprises (VCSE) partners since June 2023.

We have held planned engagement and consultation on these priorities and activities with a range of forums, including those representing people who draw on our care and support options, our staff groups, our VCSE partners, and our ICS partners, as well as other public sector partners.

What people said to us was:

1. They want visible leadership on EDI issues.
2. They want the feedback loop to be closed so they know how their feedback has been used.
3. Engagement and consultation should not only be cyclical but also a continuous conversation so we are not starting from scratch every time we engage on a new plan or service.
4. They want staff to be trained on EDI issues and for everyone to receive the same training so that there is no disparity in the services they receive.
5. They want commissioning of services and care and support options to be transparent and informed by Equality Act considerations.
6. They want to understand how data monitoring has been utilised to improve services.
7. Staff should feel safe, included, valued and supported in the work they do.

This feedback and other actions from our ASC Strategy, 'What matters to you', and the report and recommendations on seldom heard people and communities has helped us create our action plan for this strategy.

Set out below are our four priorities and our action plan.

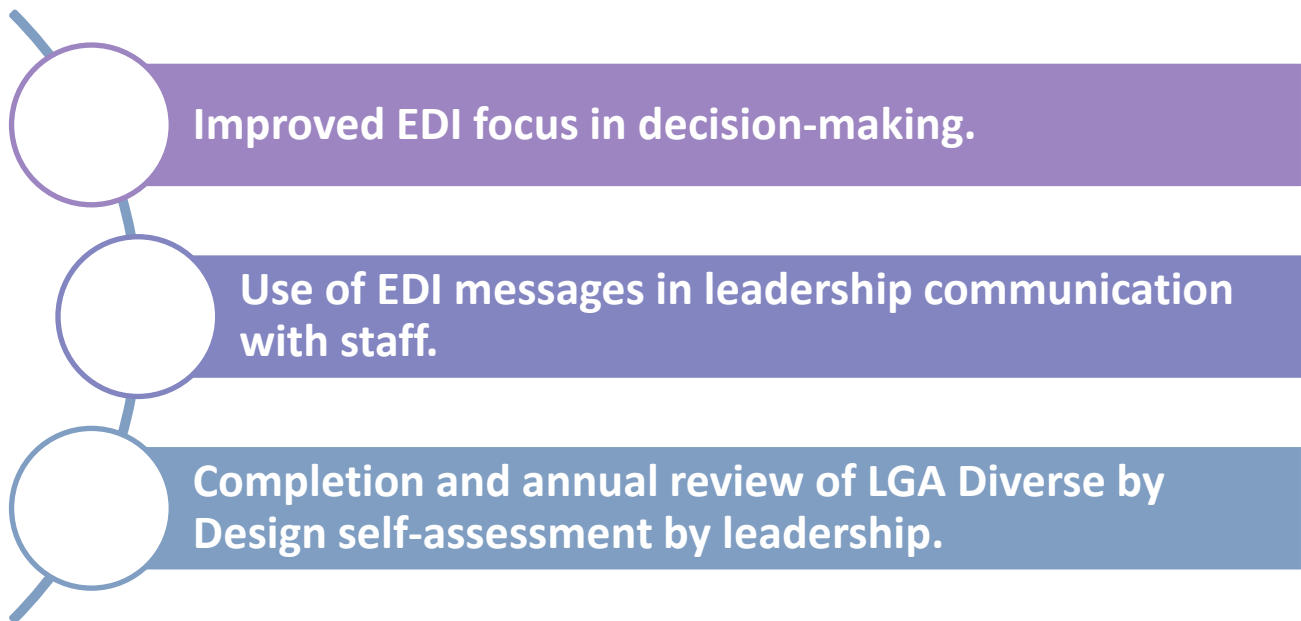
Our four priorities


Priority 1: Leadership on equality and demonstrating commitment

Leadership is key to establishing a strong vision for equity and improving equality outcomes laid out in this strategy. Our handling of equality and inclusion through visible leadership, strong organisational culture and partnerships will reach the high standards we expect of ourselves and others will look to us as a source of good practice.

Our strategic leadership will continue to play a central role in ensuring that equality issues are integral to our performance and strategic aims and continue to promote a culture where positive relationships are built and people are supported, valued, and respected for who they are.

Objectives

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- Improved EDI focus in decision-making.
 - Use of EDI messages in leadership communication with staff.
 - Completion and annual review of LGA Diverse by Design self-assessment by leadership.



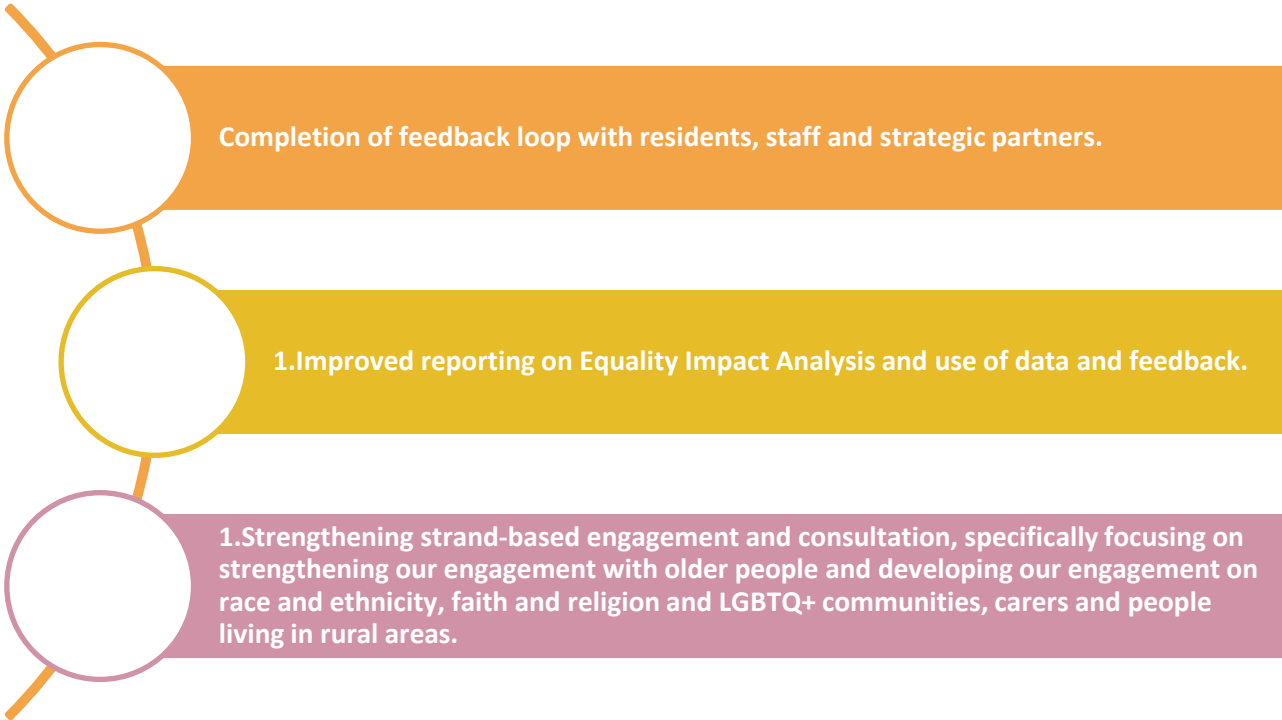
Impact statement - Everyone knows that equality diversity and inclusion is central to our work and we can see this reflected in departmental culture and in our Quality Assurance mechanisms.

Priority 2: Engage effectively to make improvements

We want to continue to understand the diverse needs of our communities and how to meet them effectively. To do this, we will actively engage, encourage and support local people, groups and organisations to participate in the work we do to improve opportunity and inclusion. We are committed to co-producing services with people with lived experience, recognising the improved quality, relevance and efficacy of services where the voice of people who are experts in their own lives has been central to the design and commissioning process.

We will strengthen our existing forums and create new forums for engagement, including on race and ethnicity, faith and religion and LGBTQ+. We will also enhance our engagement with our older population to ensure we are carefully thinking about intersectionalities and the impact on people from different backgrounds.

Objectives



Impact statement – Service design will be inclusive by design and will reflect flexible approaches to ensure services meet the needs of all people. Our feedback from clients, carers and partners will be evident in how we have identified priorities and made decisions.

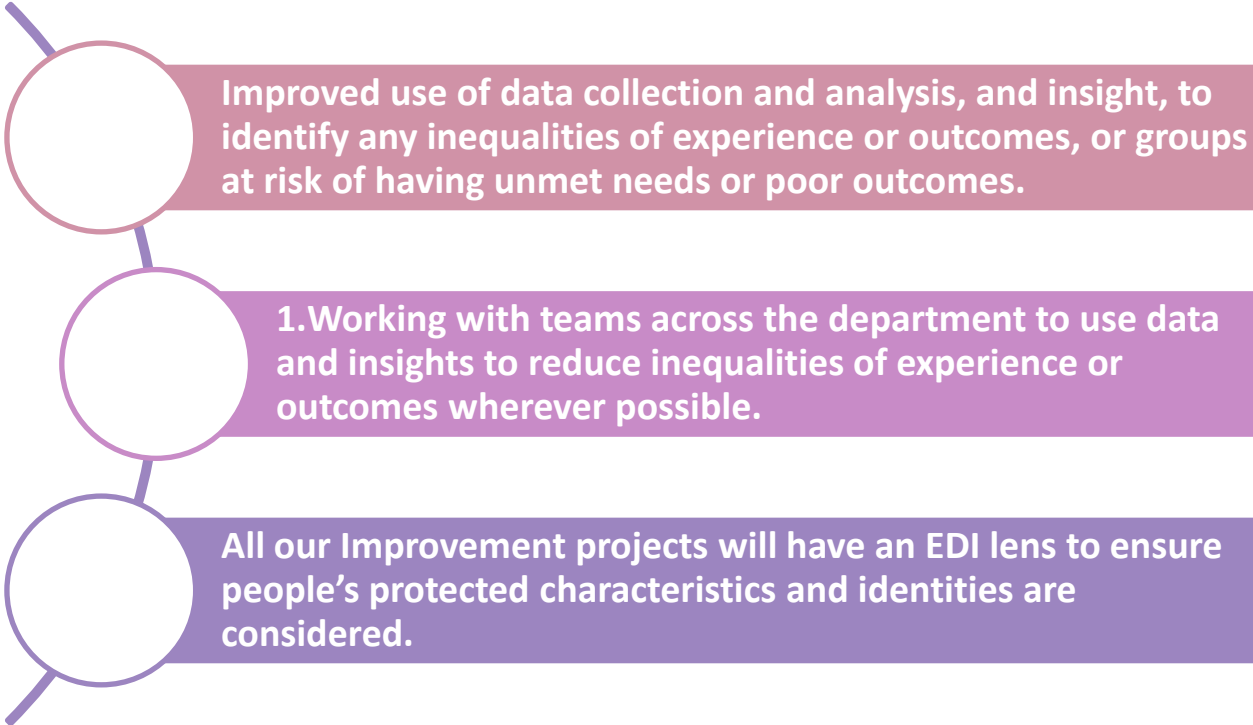
Priority 3: Quality services taking into account diverse needs of local people

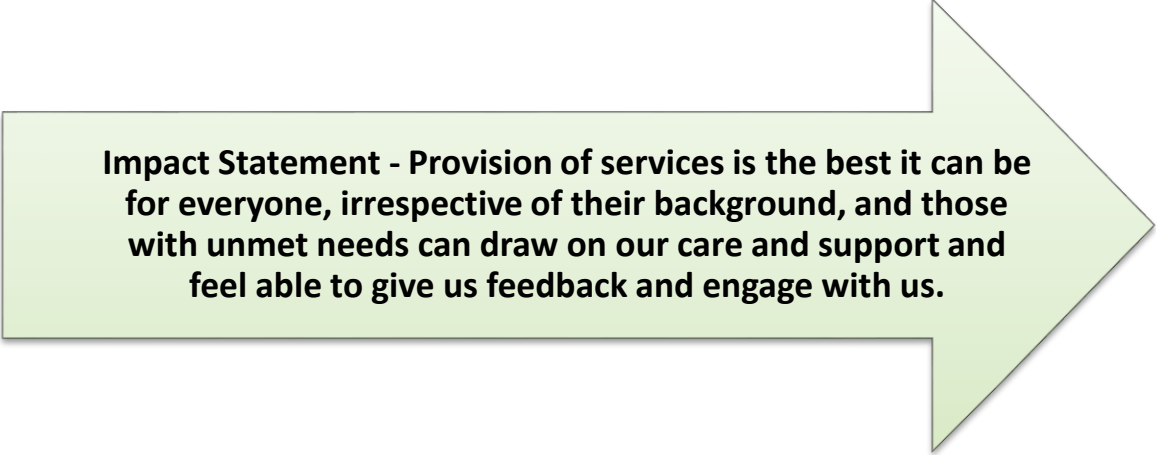
Recommendations for the seldom heard communities and people review committed us to an equality, diversity and inclusion reset of all our work. We would like to dig down deeper into the data on who uses services and where the gaps are. This is

increasingly possible now that we have made improvements in data recording over the last three years.

We will make sure we support and promote inclusive behaviour with residents and service users by setting and maintaining clear expectations, ensuring that we are role models for this behaviour ourselves in all interactions with our community. We will co-produce, where we can, and provide inclusive and accessible services that improve outcomes for our diverse local population, particularly for our seldom heard people and communities.

Objectives





Impact Statement - Provision of services is the best it can be for everyone, irrespective of their background, and those with unmet needs can draw on our care and support and feel able to give us feedback and engage with us.

Priority 4: Diverse workforce with equality confidence, knowledge and skills

We want an engaged and diverse workforce. We know that workplace diversity brings different perspectives on how to approach tasks, creating a wealth of ideas. We will work to create an inclusive environment for a diverse range of people to work in, valuing their health and wellbeing. Linking with the workforce programme and HR initiatives will help identify our priorities to ensure that the recruitment, retention and wellbeing of our staff has inclusion at its core.

Objectives



Impact statement – All our staff will feel like they belong and that they are accepted for who they are. This will impact positively on recruitment and retention. Actively demonstrate strengths-based practice at its core with a kind and communicative workforce.

How will we know this strategy is making a difference?

This strategy has an annual EDI action plan which was co-developed with help from a range of internal and external stakeholders including our partners, residents and our staff. The action plan sets out actions against each of our equality priorities

contained in this document. It includes baseline measures and will be used to monitor progress and evaluate whether outcomes are on track and delivered. The action plan will be monitored throughout the year by our Performance Board and progress will be published annually on our intranet and external webpages.

Getting in touch

If you have any feedback, or want to find out anything more about this strategy and the accompanying Action and Implementation Plan, please do get in touch with the Equality and Inclusion Team at ASC.EqualityTeam@eastsussex.gov.uk or **phone number**.