

Somerset Equality Objectives 2019 - 2023

What is this

In Somerset public bodies have decided to work together on equality and diversity. We are doing this through a partnership called Somerset Equality Officers Group (SEOG). This group is made up of County and District Councils, Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group, Taunton Musgrove and Yeovil Hospitals, Somerset Partnership and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue. Part of the work we have done together over the last year is looking at the documents and policies we have. We have created a single equality policy and equality impact assessment process. This creates consistency in what we are doing and makes it easier for the public to understand what public bodies are committed to for equality and diversity. This document sets out the Equality Objectives that these public bodies have committed to and the actions they will undertake to complete them. **(South Somerset specific actions are highlighted in green)**



Where they came from

The objectives were created over a 6-month period. Firstly, SEOG pulled together their collective knowledge to of areas of work and inequality. They also reviewed evidence and data to establish what this was telling them about local need. This was then used to inform a long list of potential objectives for SEOG to consult with the community on. We did this over a three-month period sharing the objectives with over 150 equality and diversity groups, providing an online consultation and going to four community events. Based on this information we selected 5 objectives that we could collectively contribute towards.

How it Works

Each member of SEOG has agreed to adopt 5 collective equality objectives. These we will work together on to achieve a greater impact. These objectives will have joint and individual actions underneath them. SEOG member organisations are also able to adopt their own organisational objectives. We will list these below as well, so all objectives can be looked at together.

How will they be monitored

As these objectives are being completed collectively at a county wide bases we need to consider how they will be carefully monitored. Each action that supports the objectives will have a lead officer connected to it. This officer will be responsible for this actions completion. We will then provide feedback on the objectives in the following ways:

- Year one – A report indicating completion and progress on actions. This can then be shared with partner organisations and interested partners.
- Year two – A consultation event with communities to establish if the objectives are making a difference.
- Year three – A report indicating completion and progress on actions. This can then be shared with partner organisations and interested partners.
- Year four – Consultation and engagement on new objectives.

Objective 1		Work with Communities to improve the opportunities for integration and cohesion.				
Organisations committed to this Objective						
	Action	Lead Organisation	Responsible and support officers	Completion Date	Status	Commentary
1.1	Work with the Lesbian, Gay Bisexual and Transgender community about support that is needed and opportunities that are available for better integration opportunities.		Tom Rutland and Angela Farmer	2020 – Partnership in existence and way forward agreed		
1.2	Work with the Faith and Belief community about support that is needed and opportunities that are available for better integration opportunities		Tom Rutland and Angela Farmer and Lucy Nicolls	March 2019 – a way forward will be agreed with the community		
1.3	Undertake county wide Faith Audit		Angela Farmer and Tom Rutland	2021		Update of current audit
1.4	Review how Somerset Authorise marks Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD). Work with partners to create a larger joint response.		Tom Rutland	2020		

	Action	Organisational Lead	Responsible and support officers	Completion Date	Status	Commentary
1.5	Work with Hate Crime support organisations, Hate Crime Champions and Community Groups to create a hate crime event in Somerset		Tom Rutland	November 2020		Connect Somerset Community Cohesion and Hate Crime Action Plan
1.6	Support the BME Community around creating a Multicultural Forum in Somerset.		Tom Rutland, Angela Farmer and Lucy Nicolls	Ongoing		
1.7	A publicly available list of equality community and VCS groups in Somerset.		David Crisfield	April 2019 – Then reviewed Annually		For people to be able to identify support and for groups to identify connections.
1.9	Work with ESOL providers in Somerset to create a single website to identify all ESOL provision in Somerset		Angela Farmer and Tom Rutland	September 2020		
1.10	After retendering translation and interpretation contract promote their use internally.	Somerset County Council	Tom Rutland	October 2019		
1.11	Review how Somerset County Council engage with equality communities and work with Partners on more efficient engagement mechanisms	Somerset County Council	Tom Rutland	December 2019		

	Action	Organisational Lead	Responsible and support officers	Completion Date	Status	Commentary
1.12	Issue regular newsletters to communities across Somerset, identifying: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress in the delivery of the objectives • Events going on • Consultation and engagement opportunities at local and county level 	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer All	April 2020 – annual review to ensure remains fit for purpose		
1.13	Determine how websites can be used to hold better information and support for communities, delivering a common approach that can be replicated	Sedgemoor District Council	All	April 2020		
1.14	Seek agreement to long term funding for English Classes at the Skills Café	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer	September 2019		
1.15	Hold 5 Sedgemoor Conversation events to June 2020	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer	July 2020		
1.16	Determine involvement of Spark in future work for the Council	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer	July 2020		
1.17	Hold 2 Sedgemoor Older Persons' forum each year	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer	April 2023, although annual review to ensure numbers are adequate to continue		

1.18	Hold an event and a forum with the Disabled community in Sedgemoor during 2018	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer	December 2019		
1.19	Determine basis for engaging with the Disabled community in Sedgemoor long term	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer	December 2019		
1.20	Determine a local approach to Carer's group to understand their issues and concerns	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer	December 2019, review progress to determine continuation		Determine how any Council related issues and concerns can be resolved. To connect to Somerset Partnership.
1.21	Hold 4 quarterly meetings with Elected Member each year	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer	April 2023		
1.22	Work with Customer Services Managers to develop and deliver a Customer Panel to support the Council's transformation work on customer access	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer	April 2020, review progress		
1.23	Assess future role and composition of the moribund South Somerset Equality Forum and bring forward action plan as appropriate.	South Somerset District Council	Richard Birch - Lead Specialist Dave Crisfield - Specialist	December 2019		
1.24	Design and deliver new Equalities module as part of SSDC staff Induction training, and more detailed ongoing Equalities Training for both staff and elected members.	South Somerset District Council	Dave Crisfield - Specialist HR Specialist	June 2019		

1.25	Enhance community integration and cohesion through improved delivery of the Public Sector Equality Duty by delivering a process that will achieve greater compliance with the requirement to undertake Equality Impact Assessments.	South Somerset District Council	Dave Crisfield - Specialist Case Officer	February 2019		
1.26	Around the World at YDH – diversity celebration event at Yeovil Hospital 25-26 March 2019. Invitation will be extended to external partners following previous discussions, e.g. Council	Yeovil District Hospital	Elaine Cox	March 2019		
1.27	YDH holding internal Domestic Abuse Awareness training day for its staff in April 2019	Yeovil District Hospital	Elaine Cox	April 2019		If places for external partners become available, to be shared
1.28	Support specific communities to plan for, respond and recover from emergencies.	Devon & Somerset Fire and Rescue Service	Audrey Gilding-deKort	Ongoing		
1.29	Actively seek partnerships that reach our targeted vulnerable groups	Devon & Somerset Fire and Rescue Service	Audrey Gilding-deKort	Ongoing		

Objective 2

Improve public understanding of mental health

Organisations committed to this Objective



	Action	Lead Organisation	Responsible and support officers	Completion Date	Status	Commentary
2.1	Work with youth groups to improve knowledge of and destigmatise eating disorders	Somerset CCG	Lee Reed	December 2020		
2.2	Agreement on the definition of a mate crime across Somerset	Somerset County Council	Tom Rutland	September 2020		Connected to the Somerset Hate Crime and Community Cohesion Group
2.3	Work with Mental Health charities in Somerset to identify training materials and opportunities for staff.	Somerset County Council	Tom Rutland	December 2020		
2.4	Deliver training to core partners (Police, Social Care, Housing Associations, Hospital Staff) on mental health conditions		Tom Rutland	April 2023		
2.5	Create a mechanism to reach agreement on what Public bodies publish about Mental health	Somerset County Council	Tom Rutland	April 2021		

2.6	Use of social media to spread information about mental health conditions	Somerset County Council	Lucy Nicolls and Tom Rutland	April 2023		Prioritising TimeToTalk Day in February
2.7	Training opportunities for staff to improve understanding around mental health	Somerset County Council	Michelle Anderson	April 2023		Mental Health First Aid training ongoing for staff at YDH
2.8	Develop a 3 year training programme using the Sedgemoor Bitesize initiative on Disability Awareness which will include sessions on Mental Health awareness and threat of suicide	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer	April 2020		
2.9	Develop the internal Intranet site to allow staff access to information on disability and mental health conditions, including links to local support and community groups,	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer	April 2020		This links to the action above
2.10	Update the Council's action plan around Disability Confident Employer, producing an update report for Assistant Directors	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer People Team	April 2020		
2.11	To refresh and update the Supporting Attendance Policy for Sedgemoor including extending the support available to include mental health support through Working Minds	Sedgemoor District Council	People Team			
2.12	Contribute to the delivery of improved mental health services in Somerset by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in the local South Somerset Health and Wellbeing 	South Somerset District Council	Dave Crisfield - Specialist Ian Potter – Lead Specialist	Ongoing		

	forums and the development of local projects. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic influence through the South Somerset Strategy Group 		(Vulnerable People)			
2.13	Achieve Disability Confident Level 2		Audrey Gilding-deKort	Dec 2019		Currently Disability Confident Committed
2.14	Create promotion activity and community support around a mental health day at Mendip District Council Shepton Mallet offices.	Mendip District Council	Tom Rutland and Nataliya Wills	May 2020		
2.15	Promote Purple Tuesday to Businesses in Mendip. Help to promote those that are taking part to the disabled community.	Mendip District Council	Tom Rutland and Jenny Pitcher	November 2019		
2.16	Work with Businesses in Mendip to provide Mental Health first aiders	Mendip District Council	Tom Rutland and Jenny Pitcher	November 2020		
2.17	Create a network of Mental Health Ambassadors in Somerset	Somerset County Council	Michelle Anderson	April 2023		

Objective 3		Work with the Gypsy and Traveller community to improve relationships and the provision of pitches				
Organisations committed to this Objective						
	Action	Organisational Lead	Responsible and support officers	Completion Date	Status	Commentary
3.1	Work across Somerset to identify pitch/plot provision for Gypsies and Travellers (including temporary and transit pitch provision)		Angela Farmer and Tom Rutland	December 2019		
3.2	Work with support services to create a companion document for the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) focusing on services		Tom Rutland and Angela Farmer	June 2019		
3.3	With the Community create an informed Illegal encampments process for Somerset		Angela Farmer and Tom Rutland	December 2019		
3.4	Work with the Community to create briefing sheets for staff around understanding of the community in relation to service delivery		Angela Farmer and Tom Rutland			

3.5	Work to find suitable funding to create Gypsy Liaison Officer role for Somerset		Tom Rutland and Angela Farmer			
3.6	Work with the community to create a functioning Gypsy and Traveller Forum		Angela Farmer and Tom Rutland			
3.7	Determine which land parcels Sedgemoor will take forward based on SCC land identification work	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer	April 2019		
3.8	Seek agreement from Senior Leadership team about the plots to take forward including the actions that will be needed to deliver the sites and budgetary requirements	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer	April 2019		
3.9	Seek agreement from the Executive to the approach agreed	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer	December 2019		
3.10	Support Planning Policy team in the delivery of Development Plan Document for Gypsy and Traveller sites in Sedgemoor	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer Planning Policy Team	April 2021		
3.11	Provide training for the Planning Board on Gypsy and Traveller issues in relation to planning. Using this opportunity to remind them of their responsibilities in this area.	Mendip District Council	Tom Rutland	November 2019		

Objective 4	Create an Equality Working group for staff in the Public Sector in Somerset
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Organisations committed to this Objective




	Action	Organisational Lead	Responsible and support officers	Completion Date	Status	Commentary
4.1	Create a pilot staff equality working group in South Somerset made up of multiple public bodies	Somerset County Council	Michelle Anderson	December 2019		YDH keen to promote this eventual group to staff, as alternative to its own Staff Minorities Network
4.2	Work with HR to reassess the role of the Staff Forum in Sedgemoor. Report to Assistant Directors to discuss the proposed changes and agree a way forward	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer People team	October 2019		

Objective 5		Implement and review the Accessibility Information Standard to create consistency around its implementation.				
Organisations committed to this Objective						
	Action	Organisational Lead	Responsible and support officers	Completion Date	Status	Commentary
5.1	Create a Sensory Loss Charter for Somerset, recognising the Accessibility Information Standard		Tom Rutland and Angela Farmer			
5.2	Sensory Loss Action Plan		Tom Rutland and Angela Farmer			
5.3	Deliver the work necessary to meet the accessibility requirements within Bridgwater House	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer and Sedgemoor Property Team	April 2020		
5.4	Undertake a review of the Council's website in light of EU accessibility requirements for websites	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer and Web Manager	April 2020		
5.5	Work to deliver an agreed approach to translation and interpretation in Sedgemoor	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer	April 2020		

5.6	Work to improve information to staff around accessibility requirements, how to respond and what provider the Council has agreed to use	Sedgemoor District Council	Angela Farmer	April 2020		
5.7	Deliver an accessible new SSDC website as part of the Transformation Programme	South Somerset District Council	Jess Power Dave Crisfield	January 2019	Website design complete with input from equality stakeholders.	Website will comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA (Intermediate) as a minimum standard. Current BSL videos being checked for ongoing accuracy and usefulness
5.8	Monitor new website in its first 12 months of operation to address any initial accessibility teething problems.	South Somerset District Council	Dave Crisfield	December 2019		
5.9	Produce an accessibility standard for Mendip District Council	Mendip District Council	Tom Rutland	December 2019		
5.10	Complete an access audit on all Mendip Council buildings	Mendip District Council	Tom Rutland	December 2020		
5.11	Identify work to be completed to make Mendip buildings More accessible for staff and the public.	Mendip District Council	Tom Rutland	December 2020		

Objective	Actions to address the effects of low income and rurality on Social Mobility				
Organisations committed to this Objective	 <p data-bbox="1227 544 1554 628">South Somerset District Council</p>				
Action	Organisational Lead	Responsible and support officers	Completion Date	Status	Commentary

Objective	Work with communities and Voluntary Sector Groups to minimise the impacts of austerity on Low income families and individuals				
Organisations committed to this Objective					
Action	Organisational Lead	Responsible and support officers	Completion Date	Status	Commentary