

Our plan for treating everyone fairly



This is the easy read
version of our
Equality Policy
2024-2027



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1. Explaining some words we use



In this easy read document, some words are in **bold blue writing**. Those words are explained here.

Councillor

Someone elected to work with Herefordshire Council and make decisions.

Public bodies

These are organisations that include government departments, schools, hospitals and councils.

Objectives

Objectives are actions that are planned. They are things that a person or group can work towards achieving.

Hate crime

Hate crime is when someone has treated someone badly because they are different. For example, because they are from a different country or background.

Equality

This means everyone having the same chances to do things. Some people may need extra help to get the same chances. Equality is also recognising and valuing people who are different to you.

- Discrimination** Discrimination is when someone is not treated fairly.
- Civil partnership** A legal relationship between two people who aren't related to each other (a bit like a marriage).
- Inclusive** Open to everyone and everyone is welcome and included.
- Decision** A choice that you make about something.
- Census** Every 10 years the government counts how many people live in the country and asks them lots of questions about their lives.
- Characteristic** A special quality or appearance that makes a person or a group different from others.
- Armed forces** The army, navy, and air force.

2. Introduction



Every person in Herefordshire is different, and we know that a lot of people do not have the same chances as other people.



Some people are not treated fairly.

Some people cannot get the services they need.

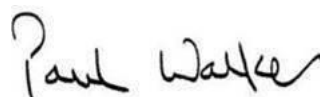


This document shows how we are going to try to change that.

We think that everyone in Herefordshire is important and should be treated with respect, dignity and fairness.



Councillor Pete Stoddart
Cabinet Member Finance and
Corporate Services



Paul Walker
Chief Executive Officer
Herefordshire Council

3. What the law says



The Equality Act 2010 is the law which protects people from **discrimination**.

The Equality Act means that **public bodies** must think all the time about how they can support **equality**. This could be through their services, through their jobs and through the money they spend.



All **public bodies** must think about treating people from different groups fairly and equally. This is called the Equality Duty.



If an organisation has 250 or more workers, it has to publish information about what it pays men and women.



The Equality Act protects carers of disabled and older people.



There is a law to make sure that all websites and apps are easy to access. This is called the accessible information standard.

4. The protected characteristics

Everyone is different, but some differences mean that people are protected by the Equality Act.

These differences are called “protected **characteristics**”, and there are 9 of them:



What age a person is.



Sexual orientation is who you are attracted to. Some people fancy people from a different sex. Some people fancy people from the same sex. Some people fancy both men and women.



What sex a person is. A man or a woman.



What race a person is from. This could mean the colour of their skin, the country they come from, or the language they speak.



Gender reassignment means a person changes the sex they were born with.



What faith or religion someone has, or what they believe or don't believe.



If someone is disabled.



Pregnant, or a mother who has recently had a baby.



Married or in a **civil partnership**.

5. What changes are happening in Herefordshire?



There is now up-to-date information about who lives in Herefordshire from the **Census** which was done in 2021.



In December 2021, Herefordshire started to look after families from Afghanistan who had to leave their homes due to war.



In March 2022, Herefordshire started to look after people from Ukraine who were forced to leave their homes due to war.



A lot more **hate crime** is being reported to police across the country.



Like many other councils across the country, Herefordshire Council doesn't have enough money to do all the things it would like to.

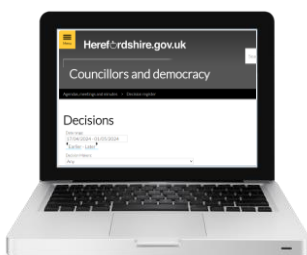
6. Our equality objectives



Objective 1) We will improve the way we plan our services

All our managers have to fill in a form every year to help them plan how they are going to provide their services.

We are going to include **equality** on this form. This will make sure that all managers and teams have to think carefully about fairness and equality in their everyday work.



Objective 2) We will improve the equality information on our website

The council has to make a lot of **decisions** every day. These decisions could be about things like changing a service or improving a public building.

The law says that we must consider **equality** when we make every decision. Also, anyone who wants to see what we have considered must be allowed to.

We are going to improve our website so that it is easier for people to find equality information.

7. What else will we do?

Herefordshire Council does lots of other work every day to make Herefordshire a safe and happy place to live.

There is so much going on, that it won't all fit in this Equality Policy!

Below are some examples of this work.



We will work with other organisations to stop people hurting women and girls.



We will work towards stopping **hate crime** and make Herefordshire a safer place to be.



We will work with other organisations to improve the health and well-being of people in Herefordshire.



We will ensure that people feel safe and respected in their communities.



We will find suitable housing for the people who need it. We will also work with other organisations to help people who are homeless.



We will offer support to people who work for the **armed forces**, or used to work for the armed forces (and their families and carers).



We will continue to improve services for people, families and carers living with autism.



HEREFORDSHIRE'S
LEARNING DISABILITY
PARTNERSHIP BOARD
everything about us but not without us

We will continue to support people with learning disabilities to have choice and control and live healthy lives.



We will make the council a great place to work by making it **inclusive**.



We will make all of our buildings easy to access, particularly for disabled people.



We will continue to provide information and services in other languages for people who don't speak English as their first language.



We will ensure that all our websites, apps and documents are accessible.