

Inclusion Plan

Introduction

Equity means treating people fairly. Diversity means understanding that everyone is different. Inclusion means that everyone is included and feels welcome. It is about seeing and valuing people's differences. Inclusion also means supporting people and providing help in different ways when people need it.

The Torbay Inclusion Plan has been written to make sure that this is a place where everyone is treated fairly. This plan is for everyone who works at the Council including our councillors. It includes our services and how we work and support our staff and how we work with different organisations.

The Torbay Inclusion Plan follows the Racism Review which looked at how we can make Torbay a welcoming place for everyone. The Inclusion plan supports work such as Child Friendly Torbay, the Carers Strategy, Age friendly and others.

Our legal duties

We must follow the Equality Act to make sure that we treat people fairly and with respect. You can read more about our legal duties on our website.

We must make sure that we do not treat people unfairly because of their background, identity or experience. These are known as the protected characteristics which are:

- age
- Care experience
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

We treat care experience as though it is a protected characteristic as we know that people who have been in care face lots of challenges. We also make sure that we promote equality and do not treat members of the armed forces community unfairly under our Armed Forces Covenant Duty.

To be inclusive we will:

- Treat people fairly and with respect
- Challenge unfair treatment
- Help people to feel safe and welcome in Torbay
- Help people to have easy access to our services.
- Help people from different backgrounds to have similar life chances

- Create good relationships between communities in Torbay
- Change the way we do things to meet different people's needs
- Look at how our policies may effect different groups of people

How we will be inclusive

The Equality Framework for Local Government

We have used the Equality Framework for Local Government and its different areas to help us write this Plan. The Equality Framework for Local Government was created by the Local Government Association to help local councils be more inclusive.

Understanding and working with your communities

To help us meet the needs of different communities in Torbay and to support us to work well together we will:

- Collect and share information about our communities
- Use inclusion data to help us to decide what to do
- Identify how we will listen to different communities
- Support good relationships between communities and with the Council
- Support people to volunteer and get involved in their communities

Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment

To show that our leadership and our partners are inclusive we will:

- Support councillors and senior leaders to support and raise awareness of inclusion
- Work with our partners and support them to be inclusive
- Look at the effects of our decisions on different groups of people and complete an equality impact assessment
- Support councillors to feel confident to understand the possible inclusion impacts of a decision
- Publish an annual report to show where progress has been made
- Celebrate the different communities living in Torbay

Responsive services and customer care

To show that our leadership and our partners are inclusive we will:

- Buy our services and products in an inclusive way
- Look at our equality objectives when planning services
- Change the way we deliver services to meet the needs of different people
- Provide information, advice and guidance in a way that is easy for everyone to access and understand

Diverse and engaged workforce

We have a People Strategy which is the plan for how we will be an even greater place to work. To help make this an inclusive place and to support the People Strategy we will:

- Support people from different backgrounds who work here
- Put in place policies that meet the needs of our workforce
- Look at our workforce data
- Provide different training and learning opportunities to help our staff understand equality and diversity
- Put in place reasonable adjustments
- Make this a welcoming place to work

Making it happen

To make our services welcoming and inclusive in Torbay we will focus on key areas. These areas are known as our equality objectives and are:

- Listen to different people and communities when the Council makes a decision.
- Be clear with the organisations and people that the Council buys services and products from that inclusion is important to the Council.
- Continue to complete the actions from the Racism Review.
- Support our staff to understand what they need to do and how they need to behave to be inclusive.
- Continue to raise awareness of the importance of reasonable adjustments.

More information about our equality objectives can be found on our website.

Reasonable Adjustments: Small Changes - Big differences

Reasonable adjustments are small changes which the law says must be made so that people with disabilities can use services as easily as everyone else. They may be small changes but they make a big difference to the lives of people with learning disabilities.

Having reasonable adjustments can help people to take part in their community, give them more independence, get better health care and live longer. Services which must be provided (statutory) should be showing other organisations how to make reasonable adjustments so everyone can see how important they are and what a difference they make.

The Learning Disability Ambassadors have told us that having reasonable adjustments can help people to take part in their community, give them more independence, get better health care and live longer. The work we do to deliver our Inclusion Plan will support The Big Plan and will include reasonable adjustments in everything that happens.

We also know that other groups of people may benefit from support to access our services. For example, someone who speaks English as a second language and needs to use an interpreter. We are working hard to make sure that our services are accessible.

The Torbay Inclusion Partnership

The Torbay Inclusion Partnership is being set up to help us listen to the needs and views of different groups of people when it makes decisions. It will also help us to deliver this Inclusion Plan. The group will be made up of organisations working with different communities and people who make decisions within the Council.

The Partnership Board aims to:

- Promote fairness and respect
- Promote partnership working
- Listen to their views and needs of different groups
- Act as a 'critical friend' on inclusion issues
- Help us to understand the impacts from our decisions.

Making the Inclusion Plan happen in Torbay

Making everything inclusive will take time. The Torbay Inclusion Partnership Board will agree the actions to be completed each year. The Council's Senior Leadership Team will oversee this. The action plan will then be approved by the Council's Director of Corporate Services who will be updated every three months with progress.

The Council's Partnerships and Inclusion Manager will write the actions and report on behalf of the Partnership Board. They will also write an annual report about the work that has been done and the progress that has been made. There will be actions which other groups need to take to make sure The Inclusion Plan happens. It is important for everyone to work together to make change happen. The annual report will need to include information from other plans too.

Policy and legislation (Laws)

The Inclusion Plan includes work which the Government has written about and made laws about.

These include:

- The Human Rights Act (1998)
- The Equality Act (2010)
- The Armed Forces Covenant (2021)
- The Accessible Information Standard (2017)

For more information please contact us:

By email:

engagement@torbay.gov.uk

By telephone:

01803 201201

By post:
Policy, Performance and Community Engagement Team
Town Hall
Castle Circus
Torquay
TQ1 3DR