

The Fourteenth Annual Report on Equality 2012–2013



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

www.cymru.gov.uk

Working for Equality in Wales

Contents

Chapter 1

Introduction 6

Chapter 2

Meeting Our Equality Duties 11

Chapter 3

Progress Against the Strategic Equality Plan Objectives 29

Chapter 4

Looking Ahead 80

Foreword from Minister



I am pleased to present our fourteenth Annual Report on Equality which provides a clear picture of what the Welsh Government has been doing to promote equality and deliver on our statutory duties under the Government of Wales Act 2006, the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty and our Welsh Specific Equality Duties.

The Welsh Specific Equality Duties provide a unique opportunity to drive equality of opportunity forward to make Wales a fair and inclusive place to live, work and play.

These duties are designed to ensure that public services and employment are fair and accessible to individuals with protected characteristics of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex; and sexual orientation. There are barriers which need to be removed to ensure that we all have equal opportunities. This report highlights how Welsh Government has tackled inequality and what we have achieved in the twelve months between April 2012 and March 2013 to make a difference to the lives of people across Wales.

This is my first annual report since becoming Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty and it is also our first year of reporting on progress against our four year Strategic Equality Plan and Equality Objectives.

Our Strategic Equality Plan was formulated following extensive public engagement which strongly supported the equality objectives contained within the plan, reinforcing that they reflected the priorities of those with protected characteristics in Wales. The plan sets out eight equality objectives for the Welsh Government in areas such as: reducing the incidence of domestic violence and hate crime; supporting disabled people to live independently and identifying and addressing the causes of gender, ethnicity and disability pay differences.

I am pleased to report on actions we have taken and progress that we have already made to deliver these objectives. These include our review of advice services which we undertook in response to the difficult economic climate, changes to welfare and legal aid reforms. Also the development of the “Tackling Hate Crimes and Incidents: A Framework for Action” which helps us protect those who are most likely to experience harassment in society.

We have been working with partner organisations to improve the wider engagement of our young people in science and mathematics which is essential to building a stronger economy. We are also committed to improving the affordability and accessibility of childcare through our funding streams, supporting parents, especially women, to access employment and training opportunities.

We have started making inroads to improving the gender balance in public appointments as demonstrated in the Sports Wales case study. Wales is a diverse country and we are committed to ensuring that this diversity is reflected in our public appointments.

As a public body, we want to lead the way in ensuring that our decision making takes every opportunity to advance equality. To this end, our policies and practices are impact assessed for equality, identifying positive and negative impact, the potential for mitigation and for the promotion of equality.

Equality and inclusion are at the heart of Welsh Government and will remain an important priority. This year's annual report is positive evidence of the progress that is being made in Wales which we will continue to build upon year on year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Cuthbert', written in a cursive style.

Jeff Cuthbert

Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty

Chapter 1: Introduction

This is the fourteenth Welsh Government Annual Report on Equality and covers the financial year April 2012 to March 2013.

This combined report is presented under our statutory reporting requirements encompassing section 77 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 and regulation 16 of the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011.

Government of Wales Act 2006

Section 77 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 states that:

- (1) Welsh Ministers must make appropriate arrangements with a view to securing that their functions are exercised with due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people.
- (2) After each financial year the Welsh Ministers must publish a report containing:
 - (a) a statement of the arrangements made in pursuance of subsection (1) which had effect during that financial year, and
 - (b) an assessment of how effective those arrangements were in promoting equality of opportunity, and must lay a copy of the report before the Assembly.

The Equality Act 2010 replaced previous anti-discrimination law, consolidating it into a single act. The Act covers discrimination because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. These categories are known in the Act as 'protected characteristics'.

The Act places a duty on the public sector (also known as the public sector equality duty and as the 'general duty'), to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those that do not.

In order for public bodies to better perform and demonstrate their compliance with the public sector equality duty, the Welsh Government legislated to bring in specific equality duties as set out in Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 (also referred to as the Welsh specific equality duties).

The Welsh specific equality duties place responsibilities on the public sector covering engagement, equality impact assessments, pay differences, procurement, equality and employment information, review and reporting arrangements.

Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

Regulation 16 of the Equality Act (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 states that:

- (1) An authority must, in respect of each reporting period, publish a report not later than the relevant date in the year following the year in which that reporting period ends.
- (2) The report must set out–
 - (a) the steps that the authority has taken to identify and collect relevant information
 - (b) in respect of relevant information that it holds, how the authority has used that information for the purpose of complying with the general duty and the duties in these Regulations
 - (c) the authority's reasons for not collecting any relevant information that it has identified but does not hold
 - (d) the progress that the authority has made in order to fulfill each of its equality objectives
 - (e) a statement by the authority of the effectiveness of–
 - (i) its arrangements for identifying and collecting relevant information; and
 - (ii) the steps it has taken in order to fulfil each of its equality objectives; and
 - (f) the information that the authority is required to publish by regulation 9(4) unless the authority has already published that information.
- (3) The authority may, if it considers it appropriate to do so, include in a report any other matter that is relevant to compliance by the authority with the general duty and the duties in these Regulations.
- (4) The authority may comply with the duty to publish a report under paragraph (1) by setting out its report (including any matter referred to in paragraph (3)) as part of another published document or within a number of other published documents.

Programme for Government

The Programme for Government is our plan of action setting out what Ministers want to achieve over the period 2011–2016 and making clear our plans to improve the lives of the people of Wales.

Our commitment to social justice and equality of opportunity is confirmed in the Programme which has equality as a main theme with chapter eight dedicated to 'Equality' as well as being mainstreamed throughout the Programme for Government. The Welsh Government's second annual report on its Programme for Government was published in June 2013 and outlines how and what the Government has delivered on its commitments.

The Programme for Government is available to download on the Welsh Government's website: <http://wales.gov.uk/about/programmeforgov/?lang=en>

The Strategic Equality Plan

In line with our public sector equality duties under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, we published our Strategic Equality Plan in April 2012. At the heart of the Plan are eight outcome focused objectives which have been developed following extensive engagement across Wales and aim to reflect the priorities of those with protected characteristics protected under the 2010 Equality Act.

Each objective has a specific focus in order to prioritise action to have the greatest impact. The detailed actions within the objectives span across Welsh Government departments and include actions to address:

- access to advice services
- improving the educational attainment of children from protected groups and the need for affordable childcare
- pay and employment differences
- the reduction in the number of young people who are not earning or learning
- safeguarding those from protected groups against all forms of violence and hate crime
- supporting independent living for disabled people and
- that our essential public services are accessible to all.

The Strategic Equality Plan is available to download on the Welsh Government's website:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/equality/equalityactatwork/?lang=en>

Chapter 3 of this report provides details of the progress we have made against each objective.

The Tackling Poverty Action Plan

Against the backdrop of the current economic climate, public spending cuts and rising living costs, combined with the UK Government's welfare reform programme, the Welsh Government published its Tackling Poverty Action Plan 2012–2016 in June 2012. The Plan sets out what we are doing to build resilient communities and to help prevent and reduce poverty in Wales.

The key objectives focus on:

- preventing poverty by reducing inequality at the earliest possible stage and giving children the best possible start in life;
- helping people into work, recognising that the best route out of poverty is through employment; and
- mitigating the impact of poverty here and now through fair access to services, including advice services, healthcare and housing, support for sources of affordable credit and access to the internet.

By recognising the close inter-relationship between poverty and the inequalities faced by people with protected characteristics, especially in light of the economic downturn, we have ensured that the actions in both the Strategic Equality Plan and Tackling Poverty Action Plan complement each other and are delivered in ways that are tailored to take account of the varying needs and circumstances of people. A number of the actions described in this report are supported by Communities First, which has been refocused as a tackling poverty programme.

The Tackling Poverty Action Plan was refreshed in July 2013 and is available to download on the Welsh Government's website:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/socialjustice/publications/taking-forward-tack-pov-plan/?lang=en>

Sustainable Development

Sustainability is at the heart of Welsh Government and has been adopted as our central organising principle. Sustainable development covers the breadth of the work of the Welsh Government to promote long term economic, social and environmental well-being in order to enhance people's quality of life. This commitment is enshrined in Section 79(1) of the Government of Wales Act (GOWA) 2006 that places a duty on Welsh Ministers to have a scheme setting out how they propose to promote sustainable development in the exercise of their functions. The Welsh Government's Sustainable Development Scheme **One Wales: One Planet** confirms that the Welsh Government's vision of a sustainable Wales and its definition of sustainable development will be the overarching strategic aim of all Welsh Government policies and programmes, across all Ministerial portfolios.

Equality is one of the main strands underpinning sustainable development. A strong, healthy, inclusive and just society where every individual has equal rights, respects each other, and plays a role in which they can fulfil their potential is key to a sustainable society and to the wellbeing of Wales.

The Sustainable Development Scheme is available to download on the Welsh Government's website:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/sustainabledevelopment/publications/onewalesoneplanet/?lang=en>

In line with section 79(6) of GOWA 2006 we report annually on how the proposals set out in the Sustainable Development Scheme have been implemented in that financial year.

The latest report can be read on the Welsh Government's website:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/sustainabledevelopment/publications/annualreport1112/?lang=en>

The next Annual Report is due to be published in December 2013.

Under the First Minister's legislative programme, the Welsh Government has committed to produce a Bill to embed sustainable development as the central organising principle of the wider public service in Wales and create an independent sustainable development body.

Welsh Language

The Welsh Government wants Wales to be a truly bilingual nation: a country where people can choose to live their lives through the medium of either Welsh or English.

In order to help fulfil that vision, the Welsh Government has made a commitment – in its current Welsh language strategy, ‘A living language: a language for living Welsh Language Strategy 2012–17’ which sets out a clear responsibility for the whole of the Welsh Government to lead on the future of the Welsh language.

Our vision is to see the Welsh language thriving in Wales. The Welsh Government will take the lead on delivering that vision. We will work with a wide range of partners who will play a full part in ensuring that it is realised.

Equality of opportunity is a cross-cutting theme integral to the Welsh language strategy. No one, in any part of Wales, should be denied opportunities to use the Welsh language, nor denied the opportunity to learn Welsh because of their race, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation, age or religion. Welsh-language services should be available to, and accessed by, all communities, including those characterised by disadvantage and ethnic diversity. The Strategic Equality Plan does not specifically include the Welsh language as Welsh language rights are led by the Welsh Language Division within Welsh Government and reported on separately.

The Strategy is available to download on the Welsh Government’s website:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/welshlanguage/publications/wlstrategy2012/?lang=en>

Chapter 2 – Meeting Our Equality Duties

This chapter details some of our actions which have resulted from the Welsh Government having due regard to:

- the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people, as set out in section 77 of the Government of Wales Act (GOWA) 2006, and
- the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty, as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. This chapter also reports against our responsibilities in the Welsh Specific Equality Duties.

Section 77(1) of the Government of Wales Act 2006 specifically focuses on the principle of 'equality of opportunity'. It is therefore closely linked to the second aim of the public sector equality duty.

The public sector equality duty came into force in April 2011. It aims to ensure that public authorities and those carrying out a public function consider how they can positively contribute to a fairer society in their day to day activities through the three aims of the duty:

- eliminating unlawful discrimination
- advancing equality of opportunity
- fostering good relations

Section 77(2) of the Government of Wales Act 2006 requires the Welsh Ministers to report on how they have met the duty in section 77(1), including how successful they have been in promoting equality of opportunity for all people.

Promoting Equality of Opportunity

The Equality Act 2010 explains that this involves removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics, taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from other people and encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

Strategic Actions

Our commitments in complying with both the public sector equality duty and the duty in section 77 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 are reflected in our Programme for Government and our objectives in the Strategic Equality Plan. The respective commitments mutually reinforce our dedication to social justice and equality of opportunity as well as reflecting what our top priorities are for tackling inequality.

Our strategic actions in both the Programme for Government and Strategic Equality Plan reflect what stakeholders from protected groups consider to be priority areas for action. These include ensuring that within Wales we have a more representative pool of decision makers which is reflective of our diverse population; to reduce the incidence of domestic violence and hate crime; supporting disabled people to live independently and identifying and addressing the causes of gender, ethnicity and disability pay differences. Progress against these objectives is reported in Chapter 3 in more detail.

Our actions to promote equality of opportunity can also be seen across other policy commitments; in our funding arrangements; Ministerial engagement with stakeholders from protected groups; our procurement policy and in our equality impact assessments of our policies and spending decisions.

Policy Commitments

As well as our strategic actions, there is a whole range of work from across Welsh Government which actively promotes equality of opportunity. A number of examples are briefly outlined below.

Together for Mental Health – A Strategy for Mental Health and Wellbeing

The Welsh Government's Together for Mental Health – A Strategy for Mental Health and Wellbeing in Wales was launched in October 2012. The Strategy centres on improving the mental wellbeing of everyone in Wales, providing early help for people at risk of mental health problems and supporting those with mental illnesses, including those who are vulnerable groups and with protected characteristics under the Equality Act.

Addressing inequalities, stigma and discrimination is one of the underpinning values of the Strategy. It contains the specific outcome to support people with protected characteristics and vulnerable groups to experience equitable access and ensure that services are more responsive to the needs of a diverse Welsh population. The supporting Delivery Plan includes specific actions to ensure that this is delivered.

The new Primary Care schemes introduced under the Mental Health (Wales) Measure 2010 will play an important part in ensuring that access to services is based on need. An important element of the Strategy is training and development. Ensuring that staff are aware of the needs of protected groups has been prioritised under the Strategy.

The NHS Centre for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR) is working with the all Wales Mental Health Promotion Network Board on tackling discrimination as a mental health promotion intervention.

Equality data will be included in the first phase of the new nationalised core mental health data set which will enable us to monitor progress. Public Health Wales will shortly be undertaking a major scoping exercise on the mental health needs of people with protected characteristics.

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill includes proposals to introduce a coherent legal framework to protect adults at risk and to establish statutory Adult Protection Boards.

In a Written Statement made in October 2012, the Deputy Minister for Social Services reinforced plans to improve safeguarding and protection arrangements for people – both children and adults via provisions within the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill.

These arrangements will, for the first time, provide a comprehensive legal framework for protected adults who have care and support needs. Provisions will also include legal duties which require practitioners to report, investigate, cooperate and share information between agencies.

Protecting Black and Minority Ethnic Children: An investigation of Child Protection Intervention

The Welsh Government currently funds a research project led by the Black Association of Women Step Out (BAWSO) entitled 'Protecting Black and Minority Ethnic Children: An investigation of Child Protection Interventions'. The project aims to inform policy and practice in safeguarding children, in the light of evidence suggesting that children within BME communities may be at increased risk of receiving inappropriate or inadequate interventions. BAWSO interviewed families of children who have been placed on the child protection register to look at patterns of registration, de-registration and ongoing support provided to the families.

Health Checks for Older People Identifying as Over 50

This is a scheme run by Public Health Wales in conjunction with Welsh Government. The health checks programme provide efficient and convenient access to a range of services, from the provision of self-help opportunities through to helping over 50s access evidence-based preventive services, such as smoking cessation. By undertaking the health check assessment, individuals will receive information and advice on a range of health and social issues, to help them gain greater control over their health and wellbeing. It will also help them to identify when they need to access professional medical services. Community based support for accessing the health checks will be developed in Communities First Clusters.

Learner Transport

The Welsh Government guidance for local authorities on assessing learner travel needs has been evaluated during 2012–13. A local authority must consider a pupil's special educational needs (SEN) when deciding on a suitable school place. Suitable schools for SEN pupils are often further away than the nearest local school with a high proportion of pupils entitled to free transport.

The transport requirements of disabled pupils or those with SEN will depend on individual needs and the route they must travel. If a pupil cannot walk to school because of the nature of his/her special education needs or impairment the local authority must provide free home to school transport even if the distance is less than the statutory limit.

Provision of inclusive and anti discriminatory services to older lesbian, gay, bisexual (LGB) identifying people in residential care environments in Wales

A research project funded by Welsh Government looked into how older people who identify as lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) are included and supported in residential care homes in Wales. Following consultation with the transgender community prior to the start of the project, it was agreed that the project would focus specifically on LGB. The transgender community felt that it was not appropriate to look at LGBT all together in a single project.

The project found that older LGB residents' sexual health and social needs are often overlooked or not recognised in policy and practice. The findings will inform service providers about how they can provide equal, respectful and inclusive care to LGB residents. This information will help develop staff training and assist care homes in providing anti-discriminatory services in line with the new Equality Act 2010.

Street Games

The Street Games charity continues to work with young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods to change lives and communities through sport. Street Games, working with Communities First, has developed a national programme to help tackle poverty through sport and deliver doorstep opportunities to some of the most deprived children and young people in Wales to participate in sport and physical activity.

Developing Opportunities in ICT

During 2012/13, Welsh Government has worked with our partners and Anchor companies to develop key relationships that will enable us to promote careers in blue chip organisations to girls. For example, the e-skills UK 'Computer Clubs for Girls' initiative inspires girls from primary age upwards to consider future careers in IT by bringing technology to life through topics they enjoy such as fashion, music and sport. This initiative is supported by partners such as BT who, in 2012, provided sponsorship of clubs at Lakeside Primary School, Cardiff and Gors Community School in Swansea.

Mostly Women Doing Digital

Welsh Government sponsored the Mostly Women Doing Digital event in March 2013. The aim of the event was to address the low level of women working within the digital industry, through a one-day workshop which included a number of motivational speakers and participative sessions.

Disability Sport Wales

The Disability Sport Wales National Community Development Programme is a joint initiative between Sport Wales, the Federation of Disability Sport Wales and the 22 local authorities across Wales. The scheme is aimed at developing quality community based sporting and recreational opportunities for disabled people throughout Wales.

In the reporting period, Disability Sport Wales stated that it provided over 1 million participation opportunities for disabled people to take part in sport. In 2002 there were only 31 registered disabled people's sports clubs and now there are over 330. Disability Sport Wales report that it now has over 1700 coaches across Wales.

Disability Sport Wales has worked hard to build upon the momentum gained from the London 2012 Paralympic Games and demonstrated that having the right infrastructure in place, having a clear vision and working with a range of partners can gain results; this is reflected in the growth in both the number of disabled people's sports clubs being established and club members in Wales.

Promoting Equality of Opportunity Through Our Funding

Inclusion Grant and Advancing Equality Fund Grant

Our commitment to the principles of equality and fairness is reflected in our current Inclusion Grant (IG) and Advancing Equality Fund (AEF) grant programmes. Originally set as a three year grant cycle ending 31 March 2013, an extended year of funding to both programmes was agreed by the Minister for Equalities during 2012–13, whilst a full review and consultation on future equalities funding in Wales took place.

The grant programmes provide funding to third sector groups and organisations to assist them in promoting equality, tackling discrimination and encouraging cohesive and inclusive communities across Wales.

The extended year of IG and AEF funding, has given 19 third sector organisations support to further develop many exciting projects operating in our diverse communities across Wales, reaching seldom heard groups and communities, evidencing strongly how their activity and hard work has benefitted individuals and communities in Wales and made tangible improvements to their lives.

The funding has a positive impact on equality because of its direct benefit to people who often face exclusion, disadvantage and discrimination, and because of the important work of the third sector in contributing to the Welsh Government's delivery of its Strategic Equality Plan and objectives. As this funding continues, the positive impacts for each of the protected groups will be protected.

Community Facilities and Activities Programme (CFAP)

The final round of the CFAP capital grant scheme closed at the end of July 2012. This round provided grants of £7.6 million to 44 projects across Wales. The scheme was targeted at community and voluntary organisations, and is providing funding for the provision and

improvement of community facilities which in turn host activities to engage local people. Access to such facilities helps to promote the regeneration of communities.

CFAP funded projects in 2012/13 include:

- A £200k grant to Women Connect First to purchase the building they currently rent. This group sets up classes in basic skills which are aimed at women from minority ethnic groups who are traditionally restricted from socialising with men outside the family.
- A £8k grant to Pedal Power to supply bikes and tandems designed to allow disabled people to participate in cycling activities, they also run schemes for young people, over 50s and those without the financial means to purchase a bicycle.

The Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty will shortly announce details of a new capital grant programme for 2014/15. The Community Facilities Programme will provide funding for strategic, community led projects which focus on tackling poverty in our communities.

Specific Grant for the Education of Gypsy and Traveller Children

A mobile lifestyle means that many Gypsy and Traveller children have interrupted learning and poor attendance rates. The Welsh Government is committed to ensuring that Gypsy and Traveller children receive a full education.

An annual Welsh Government Grant for the education of Gypsy and Traveller Children part funds the work of Traveller Education Services to improve school attendance for Gypsy and Traveller children from 3–19 and, to encourage their progression to secondary education. The grant meets 75% of programme costs with the remaining 25% coming from the local authority. In 2012–13 the grant stood at £1million and supported 2,045 learners in 19 local authorities.

European Funding in Wales 2007–2013 Programmes

Equal opportunities, is one of the two cross cutting themes integrated into the 2007–13 European Union Structural Funds programmes, in accordance with the requirements of the European Commission. In Wales, the equal opportunities cross cutting theme also includes the Welsh Language.

In March 2013, 83% of approved projects had achieved either 'High' or 'Medium' cross cutting theme ratings for both equal opportunities and environmental sustainability, which is a significant achievement.

Wales European Funding Office has focused resource on supporting project sponsors to deliver real and practical actions that directly improve equality 'on the ground'. Examples of projects which have made a significant contribution to equality activity include:

The Cyrenians, Supported Employment and Training Programme in Swansea, works with vulnerable adults with chaotic lifestyles and through a range of activities and support mechanisms, encourages individuals to take up vocational training targeted at particular categories of work.

Increasing **Black Minority Ethnic (BME) Employment and Tackling BME Economic Inactivity** is a project run by SOVA which supports economically inactive or unemployed Black and minority ethnic participants. The project offers skills development and confidence building to BME people, alongside engagement with employers to enable recruitment, sustain people in employment and develop equality and diversity strategies.

The **Agile Nation** project led by Chwarae Teg aims to promote gender equality and career advancement in the labour market by encouraging and assisting women to achieve their full potential in the workplace.

The **WAVE project** (Women Adding Value to the Economy) led by the University of Glamorgan, is primarily focused on tackling the issues of equal pay, sex role stereotyping in employment and employment poverty and part time workers.

More information can be found on the WEFO website:

<http://wefo.wales.gov.uk/publications/guidance/crosscutting/67553091/?lang=en>

Engagement

Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

Regulation 5 of the Equality Act (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 states that:

- (1) The provisions in paragraph (2) are referred to in these Regulations as “the engagement provisions”.
- (2) Where any provision of these Regulations requires an authority to comply with the engagement provisions in carrying out any activity, compliance with those provisions means that in carrying out that activity the authority
 - (a) must involve such persons as the authority considers
 - (i) represent the interests of persons who share one or more of the protected characteristics; and
 - (ii) have an interest in the way that the authority carries out its functions;
 - (b) may involve such other persons as the authority considers appropriate;
 - (c) may consult such persons as the authority considers appropriate.

This engagement must take place in relation to:

- Setting equality objectives.
- Preparing and reviewing a Strategic Equality Plan.
- Identifying how an authority's work and activities may contribute to meeting the general duty.
- Assessing the likely impact on protected groups of any policies or practices being proposed or reviewed.

The Welsh specific duties state that public sector bodies must 'involve people who it considers representative of one or more of the protected groups and who have an interest in how an authority carries out its functions'. This duty to engage provides Welsh Government with expert support and advice in terms of understanding the key issues and barriers facing people with protected characteristics. This intelligence can then be used to achieve shared aims and to deliver better decision-making, for example, in policy and service development and in setting priorities for action.

Throughout the year, Ministers have engaged regularly at many events and meetings with groups representing people with protected characteristics, to understand their priorities and what challenges they face on a daily basis. Welsh Government also has several established forums through which we engage with groups representing people with protected characteristics. These are the Faith Communities Forum, Wales Race Forum and the Disability Equality Forum.

The Faith Communities Forum

The Faith Communities Forum is made up of faith community leaders who consult with the Welsh Government on issues of policy and strategy. The First Minister is Chair of the Forum and during 2012/13 the Minister for Finance and Leader of the House, with responsibility for equalities issues, was the Deputy Chair. The Faith Communities Forum facilitates dialogue between the Welsh Government and the major faith communities on any matters affecting the economic, social and cultural life in Wales.

Some of the issues discussed at meetings during this period included the Tackling Poverty Action Plan where the Forum considered what they could do to engage with the Communities First programme. The Forum also discussed organ donation because for some people, their faith will be significant in determining decisions relating to organ donation.

The Community Cohesion Strategy sets out the important role faith communities have in promoting community cohesion. Interfaith research was commissioned by the Welsh Government to gain a better understanding at grassroots level of the extent of inter-faith activity across the different faith communities. The research findings provided the Faith Communities Forum members with a range of possible actions for the members to decide how the possible actions could be taken forward. These included building

a network of interfaith mentors, providing targeted support materials and improving mechanisms to hear from the grassroots.

Wales Race Forum

The Wales Race Forum was established to help the Welsh Government understand the key issues within BME communities and to enable the Welsh Government to engage on an ongoing basis. The inaugural meeting of the Forum took place on 22 February 2012.

The membership of the Forum consists of Welsh Government officials and representatives from the main race organisations and equality councils from across Wales. The Forum meets bi-annually. In 2012–13 the Forum was chaired by the Minister for Finance and Leader of the House with responsibility for equalities.

Agenda items discussed during 2012–13 included the Welsh Government Race Hate Crime Action Group, equality impact assessment of the draft budget and tackling poverty.

Disability Equality Forum

The Disability Equality Forum is the successor to the Disability Equality Advisory Group.

The Disability Equality Forum is chaired by the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty and is made up of disabled and non-disabled people who are active in making progress in disability equality, and belong to different fields of expertise, and relevant Welsh Government officials. The Forum provides an opportunity for stakeholders to advise the Welsh Government on the key issues that affect disabled people in Wales. It is also a forum for dissemination of best practice in addressing those issues.

The Forum meets twice a year and topics discussed in 2012–13 included bus driver training, media coverage of disabled people, welfare reform and the development of the Framework for Action on Independent Living for disabled people. The Framework takes a strategic approach to disability in Wales and sets out what the Welsh Government is doing to promote an inclusive and enabling society.

Ministerial Meeting with Equality Third Sector Organisations

Throughout the year Ministers have engaged regularly with groups representing people with protected characteristics at many events and meetings. Their views have been taken into account and reflected in the draft budget. These groups include Women's Equality Network (WEN) Wales which captures the voice of women across Wales.

As part of the third sector scheme each Welsh Government Minister is committed to meeting with representatives of the relevant networks of third sector organisations covering their areas of responsibility twice each year.

In 2012–13, the Minister for Finance and Leader of the House with responsibility for equality, met with Equality organisations in May and November. These meetings included discussion on Equality Impact Assessment of the budget, hate crime, digital inclusion, Strategic Equality Plan, consultation on the Advancing Equality Fund and Inclusion Grant schemes and EU structural funds.

As part of these discussions, it was agreed to set up a group to oversee the Strategic Equality Plan which would meet twice a year. The Strategic Equality Plan Board was set up and held its first meeting in March 2013 where the terms of reference and membership were agreed.

Budget Advisory Group for Equality

In the Equality Impact Assessment of the Draft Budget 2013–14 the Welsh Government committed to establishing a Welsh Government Budget Advisory Group on Equality (BAGE). This was established in December 2012 and held its first meeting in March 2013. The Group is made up of a number of internal Welsh Government representatives and external representatives from the third and voluntary sector equality organisations as well as an academic economist as an adviser appointed by Welsh Ministers. In 2012–13, the BAGE was chaired by the Minister for Finance and Leader of the House, who had responsibility for equality (from July 2013 the group has been co-chaired by the Minister for Finance and the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty).

The Group has a key role in supporting the continuous improvement of the Equality Impact Assessment of the Welsh Government's Budget. It provides a forum for sharing and discussing the nature of inequalities in Wales and is a valuable source of advice and a key channel for engagement.

The Evidence Base

We are aware that the evidence around particular protected characteristics is very limited, which makes it difficult to assess accurately the potential impact of our policies, strategies and spending decisions on those protected groups. Despite these gaps, we are seeking to make progress strengthening the evidence base. Our collation of equality information as part of the actions within our Strategic Equality Plan, and our continual equality impact assessment of our policies and strategies, together with engagement with protected groups aim to make best use of the existing evidence base.

Knowledge and Analytical Services within the Welsh Government has compiled a summary of evidence by protected characteristic. This is included as an Annex to this report. During 2012–13 updates were also published for the following relevant statistical outputs:

- Older People in Wales, 2012.
- Equality Data for Social Housing Tenants, 2010.
- 2011 Census – Results for Ethnicity, National Identity and Religion for Wales.
- StatsWales tables with data on equality strands (eg Annual Population Survey data).

We continue to collect data by protected characteristic where practicable, for example gathering details of age, gender, ethnicity and disability on household surveys and administrative data collections.

However there are obstacles to collecting equalities information which limit the availability of evidence for particular groups, for example:

- large-scale, high-quality sample surveys are costly, and the population subgroup is often so small that the sample would have to be very large to collect robust information;
- it can be difficult to identify well-tested questions, or formulate new questions that produce accurate results: for example, respondents may not understand what is being asked or may not wish to provide the information asked for;
- asking about some sensitive topics can offend respondents. This could lead to complaints, negative media coverage, and even to reduced response rates.

Equality Impact Assessments

The Welsh Government, as with other devolved public bodies covered by the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, is required to carry out equality impact assessments in respect of protected groups, across its proposed policies and practices, those that it has decided to review, and changes that it proposes to make.

Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

Regulations 8(1)(a) and 8(1)(b)

A listed authority must make appropriate arrangements for assessing:

- the likely impact of proposed policies and practices on its ability to comply with the general duty
- the impact of any policy or practice which is being reviewed on its ability to comply with the general duty, and
- the impact of any proposed revision to a policy or practice on its ability to comply with the general duty.

Any such assessment must engage with appropriate persons and have due regard to relevant information that the listed authority holds.

This duty to carry out an equality impact assessment does not include existing policies and practices which the listed authority has not decided to review, however those existing policies must still be monitored.

Regulation 8(1)(c)

The listed authority must also monitor the impact of policies and practices on its ability to comply with the general duty.

Assessing the impact on protected groups of policies and practices is one of the key ways in which public authorities can demonstrate that they have had 'due regard'. Our impact assessment arrangements are also a key part of meeting our duty under section 77 of the Government of Wales Act 2006. The Welsh Government's approach to Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) ensures that our policies and practices better meet the needs of the people of Wales. It ensures that the work that we do takes every opportunity to advance equality and inclusive outcomes for all the citizens of Wales.

What is an Equality Impact Assessment?

Equality Impact Assessment is the formal, systematic and thorough analysis of proposed or existing policies, practices, action plans and budget processes. It is a structured approach which establishes and records whether the policy affects different groups of people in different ways, and takes action to eliminate or minimise any negative impacts where necessary. Impact assessment also looks for opportunities to advance equality of opportunity.

EIA within the Welsh Government

Our commitment to EIAs, alongside our statutory duty, can be seen in our Programme for Government where we have promised to:

“Undertake Equality Impact Assessment of budgets and proposed and reviewed policies and practices”.

The Welsh Government has 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different equality groups, when it takes its decisions. The EIAs undertaken by the Welsh Government are its mechanism for having due regard. The Welsh Government's systematic approach to an EIA ensures that our policies and practices better meet the needs of the people of Wales.

Upon completion, where the impact on equality is considered to be substantial, the EIAs are published on the Welsh Government website at the link below:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/equality/inclusivepolicy/impactassessments/?lang=en>

The Welsh Government actively works to embed the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duties and the principle of equality of opportunity for all people in its spending plans and budget processes and was the first administration in the UK to publish an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) alongside its budget in 2010 and has continued to do so year on year.

We have taken active steps to improve our process of equality impact assessing our budget and have reviewed our internal guidance and model template for officials. The comprehensive guidance advises that an EIA is undertaken at the earliest stage of policy development. The template published in November 2012 records engagement activity undertaken and evidence collected and used throughout the assessment process. This will be supplemented with training for officials which will be introduced in 2013.

To progress our Programme for Government commitment and fulfil our statutory obligation, the Welsh Government commissioned the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to undertake an appreciative inquiry into the way which the Welsh Government has conducted previous EIAs of the Welsh Government Budget. The findings and recommendations of this review were published in November 2012 and have informed our approach to the EIA for 2014–15, including the decision to take a thematic approach to the EIA.

EIA of the Budget

The Equality Impact Assessment of the Draft Budget 2013–14 was published on 8 October 2012 and was scrutinised by the National Assembly for Wales. In conjunction with this, we also liaised with the Equalities and Human Rights Coalition, the WCVA and the Women’s Equality Network Wales (WEN) on the Draft Budget EIA.

The changes to spending decisions that occurred between the Draft and Final Budget 2013–14 have also been captured and published in an equality impact assessment alongside the Final Budget 2013–14, as an annex. These changes include Capital Allocations, Public Sector Land for Housing, Wales Economic Growth Fund, Extending Support for Apprenticeships in Wales, Support for the creation of a Science Park and the Pupil Deprivation Grant.

Improvement through Assessment

A clear theme emerging from completing EIAs across the organisation, both for the budget and policy decisions, is the lack of evidence available for particular protected characteristics including: religion and faith, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) groups. A requirement of completing an EIA is not only to outline the evidence sources used, but also to recognise and identify where there might be a lack of evidence. Through this emerging trend of evidence gaps for these characteristics, more departments are seeking to build in evidence collection within their policy evaluation and monitoring that focuses on the protected groups.

Monitoring the Impact of our Policies and Practices

Within our Welsh specific equality duties, listed bodies must also ensure that they continue to monitor the impact of its policies following an equality impact assessment.

EIAs are live, continuous assessments that last the lifecycle of the decision or policy and, in some cases beyond. In Welsh Government, on completion of EIAs, an action plan is developed and a review date is set. At this review date, the original assessment of impact on protected characteristics must be reconsidered and evaluated. Where new impacts are identified, or evidence has been gathered that supports our original assessment of impact, these are incorporated into the assessment.

Case Study

Framework for Action on Independent Living

In developing the Framework for Action on Independent Living an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was undertaken in September 2012. The Framework supports the Welsh Government's Strategic Equality Plan and Objectives, and focuses on practical action in relation to the priorities identified by disabled people. The EIA was undertaken at the start of the design process, enabling potential impacts that the Framework may have on people with protected characteristics to be identified.

Engagement as part of an extensive consultation period allowed for a detailed review of the EIA in July 2013. No negative or adverse impacts on any of the protected groups had been identified but a number of issues were raised which might enhance the positive impacts of the Framework on people from some of the other protected groups, such as those experiencing domestic violence, or people from Black or ethnic minority backgrounds. Responses to the consultation identified that public authorities in Wales should be pro-active in recognising that disabled people may have one or more of the other protected characteristics. This has now been incorporated within the Framework, which suggests that public authorities should address this in their Strategic Equality Plans.

Procurement

Public service bodies in Wales spend around £4.3 billion each year on buying goods and services from suppliers. It is important that every pound that is spent is done so wisely, achieving best value for the people of Wales.

Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011

Regulation 18

- (1) Where an authority that is a contracting authority proposes to enter into a relevant agreement on the basis of an offer which is the most economically advantageous it must have due regard to whether the award criteria should include considerations relevant to its performance of the general duty.
- (2) Where an authority that is a contracting authority proposes to stipulate conditions relating to the performance of a relevant agreement it must have due regard to whether the conditions should include considerations relevant to its performance of the general duty.

What is Procurement?

Procurement is the contractual process by which a public authority agrees for another external organisation to carry out works and/or to provide goods and/or services on its behalf.

Our Procurement Policy

Through compliance with the public sector equality duty, Welsh Government can ensure that the goods and services we procure are fit for purpose and thus ensure that they meet the needs of our diverse citizens and communities.

As part of our statutory Welsh specific equality duties, public bodies in Wales must:

- have due regard to whether it would be appropriate for the award criteria for that contract to include considerations to help meet the public sector equality duty
- have due regard to whether it would be appropriate to stipulate conditions relating to the performance of the contract to help meet the 3 aims of the public sector equality duty

The specific duty on procurement only applies to contractual arrangements that are 'relevant agreements', which in this context means either the award of a 'public contract' or the conclusion of a 'framework agreement', both of which are regulated by the Public Sector Directive (Directive 2004/18/EC).

Fulfilling The Procurement Duty In Our Welsh Specific Equality Duty

In December 2012, the Finance Minister announced the Wales Procurement Policy statement. This brought together nine key principles that all Welsh public sector organisations should adhere to when delivering their procurement activity. Embedded within the policy statement are a number of key drivers that influence the delivery of equality considerations including:–

- Simplifying the procurement process for bidders through use of the Supplier Qualification Information Database (SQulD).
- Advertising opportunities through www.sell2wales.gov.uk
- Increasing the use and reporting of community benefits.
- Systematic application of the Sustainability Risk Assessment (SRA) tool.

Furthermore, within the Wales Procurement Policy Statement, two of these principles directly promote the equality and diversity agenda in Wales.

Principle 3, 'Economic, Social and Environmental Impact' sets out for the first time a formal definition of Value for Money in Wales:

'Value for Money should be considered as the optimum combination of whole-of-life costs in terms of not only generating efficiency savings and good quality outcomes for the organisation, but also benefit to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment.'

Principle 4, 'Community Benefits' takes this a step further, making delivery of added value through Community Benefits policy an integral consideration in public procurement. Equality and diversity is a key aspect of Community Benefits, promoted by Value Wales as part of this policy. The Community Benefits policy is championed by a Community Benefits Task and Finish group, set up by the Minister for Finance and chaired, in a personal capacity, by the General Secretary of the TUC Wales.

A primary focus of the Community Benefits policy is to encourage the targeting of disadvantaged groups furthest from the labour market in our communities and it is a key part of the Tackling Poverty Action Plan.

Grants

Community Benefits is now included in the Welsh Government's 'hypothecated' grants process as a standard condition of grant funding. The Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan (WIIP) is committed to incorporating Community Benefits into the contracts involved.

Training

Community Benefits training sessions have been delivered by Value Wales across the public sector in Wales throughout 2012–13 to help buyers build Community Benefits into contracts and frameworks.

Results

In the period up to the end of 2012/13, 80 projects and frameworks worth over £4.2 billion had incorporated community benefits into the procurement process. The Community Benefits measurement tool has captured the following data from the first 18 projects:–

- 18 projects have submitted Community Benefits Measurement Tools covering £282m in contract value.
- Of the £282m in contract value, 82% has been retained in Wales as either revenue to Wales-based businesses or salaries to people based in Wales.
- 384 disadvantaged people have been supported into employment.
- 12,500 weeks of training have been delivered.

Mainstreaming And Embedding Equality Within Procurement

The Welsh Government has been at the forefront of the delivery of the procurement policies that drive equality for a number of years. In 2012–13 this meant that:–

- Use of the Supplier Qualification Information Database (SQulD) was rolled out to apply to all tenders let across the Welsh Government. This has allowed the Welsh Government to explore the track record of bidders in delivering equal opportunities by requesting disclosure of any infractions incurred and the remedial actions undertaken. In addition, the use of the SQulD has contributed to reducing barriers to procurement identified across a range of Welsh small to medium enterprises.

- The Sustainability Risk Assessment approach was applied to all tenders for goods and services undertaken above £25,000. This has seen a number of tenders developed that have allowed for an evaluation of key equality requirements.
- Sell2wales continues to be used to routinely deliver our commitment to advertise all tenders above £25,000.
- Community benefit approaches saw a number of tenders and contracts deliver significant benefits from job creation, retention and work experience within the Next Generation Broadband tender to the ever growing use of both fair trade and home grown products within the WG catering contract.

The example below highlights key equality requirements included in a tender.

Youth Entrepreneurship Services

Date awarded: December 2012

Value: £5 million

The aim of the Youth Entrepreneurship Services is to work directly with young people under 25 in Wales and with partners in Schools (Primary and secondary); Colleges, Universities, youth and community groups to encourage entrepreneurship.

Equality considerations have been embedded through:

- Bidders track record in terms of compliance with equality legislation was explored through the use of SQulD.
- The tender specified the following Equality requirements:

As part of the Welsh Government's commitment to providing an inclusive service to individuals, providers (and sub contractors) will be required to:

- train and develop their staff to identify and help overcome any barriers individuals may face in participating in youth entrepreneurship activities
- operate and run events out of accessible venues and locations
- target campaigns and marketing to broaden participation in youth entrepreneurship activities to under represented groups
- deliver a bilingual service ensuring all literature (including websites and publicity) is produced bilingually
- recruit Dynamo Role Models to reflect the diversity of the Welsh population and encouraging participation by under-represented groups in business
- achieve and retain a recognised and accredited equality award within 12 months of securing the contract. Examples of recognised equality kite-marks include:-
 - Committed2Equality (C2E).
 - Investors in Diversity (IiD).
 - Diversity Excellence Model (EFQM).
 - Equality Standard, Local Authorities (ESLG).
 - Equality North East.

As the requirement was core to the contract, bidders ability to provide the equality requirements noted was subject to formal evaluation.

Our International Obligations

The Welsh Government is committed to meeting our international obligations. We work alongside the UK Government to ensure Wales is fully represented in the presentation of reports to meet our United Nations (UN) and European obligations.

The Welsh Government has been providing periodic evidence on the Universal Periodic Review which involves a review of the human rights records of all 192 UN Member States every four years. It provides an opportunity for each State to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situations in their countries and to fulfil their human rights obligations. The ultimate aim is to improve the human rights situation in all countries and address human rights violations wherever they occur.

The Universal Periodic Review provides the Welsh Government with an opportunity to demonstrate the unique approach that has been developed to human rights in Wales to meet these obligations and the needs of the Welsh people. The Welsh Government has engaged its stakeholders in Wales and the UK Government to ensure that this position is reflected in the UK State Report for the Universal Periodic Review Report. Since the 2008 Review, we have been able to demonstrate a number of real successes in Wales such as embedding the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into Welsh Law and the development of the first strategic national policy to ensure equality of opportunity for the Gypsy and Traveller community.

The Welsh Government also prepared for the UK Government's appearance at the United Nations Committee Against Torture (UNCAT) that was scheduled to take place in May 2013. Whilst the vast majority of this work is non-devolved, the Welsh Government contributed in the areas of violence against women, trafficking and corporal punishment.

The Welsh Government is fully committed to adhering to the principles of the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). As part of the UK State Party which has ratified this convention, the Welsh Government provided an update in January 2013 following a list of issues and questions in relation to the Seventh Periodic Report from the United Nations. The UK Government is due to be examined against the report by the United Nations in July 2013. The Welsh Government will be part of the UK delegation.

The United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) commits State Parties to work towards the granting of economic, social, and cultural rights to individuals, including labour rights and rights to health, education, and an adequate standard of living. The Welsh Government provides contributions to the UK periodic reports to the United Nations Committee on ICCPR. In 2012, the Welsh Government reported on the Rights of Children and Young Persons Measure, Welsh Language, Welsh Language Education, Domestic Violence, the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and Devolution in Wales.

Chapter 3 – Progress Against the Strategic Equality Plan Objectives

This chapter fulfils regulation 16(1)(d) of the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, which requires us to report on the progress we have made to fulfil our equality objectives. It is retrospective and covers the financial year 2012–13.

The Welsh Government published its Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) on 2nd April 2012 following extensive public engagement which strongly supported the Welsh Government's equality objectives, reinforcing that they reflected the priorities of those with protected characteristics in Wales.

Detailed actions within the overarching objectives were formulated, based on work across Government portfolios. This approach in Wales is only the beginning and the Equality Objectives will not remain static; they will evolve and reflect how equalities and inclusion work will be developed and delivered in the future.

The Welsh Government equality objectives are:

Equality objective 1: Strengthen advice, information and advocacy services to help people with protected characteristics understand and exercise their rights and make informed choices.

Equality objective 2: Work with partners to identify and address the causes of the gender, ethnicity and disability pay and employment differences.

Equality objective 3: Reduce the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Equality objective 4: Reduce the incidence of all forms of violence against women, domestic abuse, 'honour' based violence, hate crime, bullying and elder abuse.

Equality objective 5: Tackle barriers and support disabled people so that they can live independently and exercise choice and control in their daily lives.

Equality objective 6: Put the needs of service users at the heart of delivery in key public services, in particular health, housing and social services, so that they are responsive to the needs of people with protected characteristics.

Equality objective 7: Improve the engagement and participation of under-represented groups in public appointments.

Equality objective 8: Create a more inclusive workplace that promotes equality of opportunity for staff with protected characteristics through improved employee engagement and increase awareness of learning and development opportunities that are accessible to all staff.

Indicators

The majority of the indicators referred to in this report are drawn from the Programme for Government which is our overarching plan on what Ministers want to achieve across the whole remit of Welsh Government in order to improve the outcomes for the citizens of Wales. The Programme for Government sets the context for the Welsh Government's decision-making during this Assembly term, and provides transparency as to whether actions are being implemented and are having the intended effects. Reports on progress with the Programme are published annually.

The objectives within our Strategic Equality Plan are also key priorities within our Programme for Government and actions are being taken forward jointly, hence the use of the Programme indicators. The remaining indicators are drawn from individual work streams.

We have only a comparatively short period of data for many of our indicators, and for some of these indicators the data is one to two years out of date. In future, these series will be collected annually, so in these cases the current data will serve as a baseline for measuring future progress.

In general, the progress against a large number of the indicators is often broadly unchanged and where there have been changes these are often slight. This is reflective of the nature of indicators where movements occur gradually and over a prolonged period. The indicators should therefore be taken in their entirety, providing an overall sense of direction.

We acknowledge that there are limitations to data due to small sample sizes in Wales and therefore disaggregating data by ethnicity and disability, for example, is not always possible.

However, we are committed to reviewing our set of equality indicators as our Strategic Equality Plan evolves and changes.

Objective 1

Strengthening advice, information and advocacy services to help people with protected characteristics understand and exercise their rights and make informed choices

Advice Services Review

Introduction

Not for Profit advice providers are facing exceptional challenges as a result of Legal Aid funding cuts; Welfare Reform and a growing demand for services due to the current economic downturn. All of these threaten the capacity of advice services in Wales. The Welsh Government recognises that advice services play a significant role in our efforts to tackle inequality and poverty.

Why is access to advice and information important?		
 acts as an enabling and preventative resource (helps citizens make informed decisions relating to their lives)	 improves health and wellbeing	 reduces reliance on public services

Particular groups with protected characteristics are more likely to be living in poverty. These include lone parents, who are predominantly women (43% of households with single adults with children had incomes below 60% of contemporary median net disposable household income) and disabled people (23%) and families with disabled children (27%) as well as certain ethnic minority groups (Asian households 40% and 38% of Black African Caribbean households). Those living in poverty, in turn, are more likely to require advice, information and advocacy.

In addition, particular groups, for example some Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) people may have difficulty in accessing advice services for language and cultural reasons; some disabled people because of inaccessibility of services and some women because of inaccessibility of services and lack of childcare. Given the over-representation of some of these groups amongst those who are living in poverty, it is important to factor their access to advice, information and advocacy into the way services are planned and delivered. Furthermore, these groups are more likely to face discrimination in the workplace which may lead to unemployment and therefore focused expert discrimination advice is required.

Our Actions

Ministers commissioned an Advice Services Review in June 2012. The vision for this sector is a collaborative network of independent advice services structured to respond to the needs of the citizens of Wales, empowering people to find long-term and sustainable solutions to the issues they face. Discrimination advice was included within the scope of the Advice Services Review as part of fulfilling Objective 1 of the Strategic Equality Plan.

The review looked at how a stronger advisory network could be developed, that improves the quality of service and provides people with support on all aspects of financial, housing, discrimination and other related needs. The review also considered how services can be delivered consistently and universally across Wales.

The review comprised of four stages:

Stage 1 Literature review – A desk based review of published literature on advice services was carried out. Some of the findings of the literature review were that:

- People experiencing multiple justiciable problems (those with a legal remedy) are more likely to be from protected characteristic groups, on low incomes or have long standing ill health or are disabled.
- Employment advice is predominantly used by those from protected characteristic groups who are more likely to experience unfair treatment or discrimination in the workplace.
- Discrimination advice in Wales is patchy, with limited access for the general public or advisors to seek specialist advice and guidance. Funding for this area of work is insecure. However, the Welsh Government commitment to achieving equality in Wales as seen through the Strategic Equality Plan offers opportunities to ensure that this specialist advice is retained in Wales.

Stage 2 Mapping Exercise – to map the current range, location, hours and method of advice services being delivered by both generalist and specialist advice services through self reporting by Local Authorities and advice provider organisations and networks.

Stage 3 Stakeholder Consultation – Advice providers and interested parties were contacted and asked to comment on the advice review's terms of reference. From the consultation, respondents felt that responsibility for ensuring the citizens of Wales are able to access and exercise their legal rights rests with the Welsh Government as having the national strategic lead with local delivery, oversight and responsibility commonly identified as remaining with Local Authorities. Comments also included the need for a balance of delivery methods, funding to be awarded on a 3 year basis and investment required in specialist welfare benefit support which could help mitigate against the impact of welfare cuts and support the production of case law for the new benefits which was seen as a priority area.

Stage 4: Final Report – The Review findings and its 10 recommendations were published on 13th May. These responded to the identified need to develop advice networks, improve the coordination of funding, commissioning and delivery of Advice Services as well as developing national standards. One of the recommendations specifically addresses the need to strengthen the provision of specialist discrimination advice in Wales in response to

the estimated increase of between 12–14% in the demand for such advice per annum until 2017. The Welsh Government's response, including the actions which it resourced, will be documented in next year's annual report.

The final research report is available for download at:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/research/community/advice-services-review-final-research-report/?lang=en>

Indicators

Indicators are currently in development as part of the Advice Services Review and will be formulated following engagement with the advice services sector.

Objective 2

Work with partners to identify and address the causes of the gender, ethnicity and disability pay and employment differences

Introduction

There are many influences at play during an individual's lifetime which will impact on their participation in the labour market. For those from certain protected groups, there are many more factors that shape their ultimate choice of employment.

This objective is reinforced in our Programme for Government commitment to **“identify steps that can be taken to close the ethnicity and disability pay gaps”**.

The actions taken as part of Objective 2 also contribute towards progressing our Programme for Government commitment.

What are the causes of these pay and employment gaps?		
Gender ↓ <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Role as carers and/or motherhood• Education choice• Stereotyping or discrimination	Ethnicity ↓ <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education choice• Cultural differences• English language competence	Disability ↓ <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lower educational achievement• Disability itself• Disability increases with age

The actions under this objective are working towards addressing these causes which will help to ensure a level playing field for all.

1. Early Years

Although the gender pay gap has been steadily declining, it still remains. More often it is the mother who stays at home to look after the children, limiting the choice of employment. Family responsibilities can also affect a parent's ability to participate in the labour market, and can impact on the hours they can work and career progression. Childcare, in its broadest sense, is a vital building block to ensuring that parents are able to access employment opportunities and childcare itself also offers employment opportunities. High quality early education and childcare provision have positive effects on child development. Childcare is one of our top priorities and the actions below demonstrate our commitment to ensure that we enable parents to participate in work or education and thus avoid social exclusion.

Our Actions: Childcare

Childcare Sufficiency Assessments

The Childcare Act 2006 requires local authorities to prepare an assessment on the childcare sufficiency in their area. Each local authority must undertake a childcare sufficiency assessment every three years with a refresh each year in between. This analysis enables local authorities and their partners to identify gaps in childcare provision in their area. The assessment includes consideration of any shortfalls in provision of childcare for particular groups of parents/carers, such as those with disabled children; those from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds or those who are lone parents/carers. An assessment of Welsh-medium childcare provision is also conducted.

An analysis of the data from the last full assessment identified gaps in the availability of affordable childcare and the provision of Welsh medium settings.

Local authorities identified a number of groups for whom affordability had an acute impact. These included:

- parents of disabled children
- parents/carers seeking employment
- lone parents
- parents with irregular working patterns
- parents/carers from Black minority ethnic backgrounds
- disabled parents/carers
- low income families.

These findings will help to inform future Welsh Government childcare policy.

The Out of School Childcare Grant Scheme (OSCGS)

The Out of School Childcare Grant scheme assists local authorities in providing quality, affordable and accessible wrap around childcare provision during out of school hours and holiday periods.

The 2011 Childcare Sufficiency Assessments found that the provision of affordable childcare was the most significant childcare gap in Wales. To address this some local authorities used their Out of School Childcare grant to offer sustainability grants to childcare providers, to help enable them to set their childcare costs at an affordable level. The grant was also used to fund the Assisted Places Scheme which is designed to make childcare more accessible for children from low income families. Funding was also provided for the Extra Hands Scheme for Disabled Children or Children with Additional Learning Needs.

This scheme provides for 1:1 childcare provision, allowing children with specific needs to access and participate fully within a quality registered childcare or play facility. This is achieved by providing funding to the provider to employ an extra worker to ensure the child's needs are met in partnership with the wishes of parents.

Children and Families Organisations Grant

The Grant is paid to key childcare and play voluntary organisations to support the delivery of sufficient quality, affordable and accessible childcare across Wales.

Forward Welsh Government childcare policy development and activities to address national themes are being taken forward in the Early Years and Childcare Plan. This includes activity to address the issue of Welsh Medium provision, quality, affordability and flexibility. Plans are also in place to run two pilots to encourage additional private sector child care businesses to set up thorough offering a comprehensive service of business advice, training and advice on regulation.

Flying Start

Flying Start is the Welsh Government's flagship early years programme and supports families with children under the age of four in some of our most deprived areas. It is part of a range of interventions aimed at addressing child poverty and reducing health and educational inequalities, recognising the link between multiple deprivation and low achievement. Flying Start builds on international evidence that positive, high-quality, interventions in the early years, with support for parents and carers, can significantly improve a child's outcomes, both for school and in the longer term.

The programme encompasses free, quality, part-time childcare for two-year olds, intensive health visiting, support for parents and early language development. This entitlement is universally available to all children and their families in the targeted areas in which it runs.

Local authorities are required to submit 3 year strategic plans detailing childcare arrangements for children who require special care, including additional needs. The plans detail arrangements for providing childcare through the medium of Welsh where this has been requested. Local Authorities should ensure that children are assessed (currently by using the Schedule of Growing Skills (SOGS) and use this to identify any additional support that may be required by children.

Local Authority Plans should also place particular emphasis on hard to reach groups which may vary from authority to authority, and the most vulnerable (including for example, teenage parents, lone parents and victims of domestic abuse).

From April 2012 the Flying Start team have been collating a wide range of statistics from local authorities.

The Flying Start Monitoring Form collects data on:

- Ethnic minority families.
- Families where English/Welsh is not the first language.
- Children with additional needs.
- Teenage parents.
- Disabled parents/carers.
- First-time parents.

This is the first year of the collection of the data; it will be used to establish a baseline for future years. The data will provide us with information concerning the extent to which the hardest to reach are engaged with the programme.

2. Education

The subject choices that young people make, and the subsequent level of qualifications gained, has a significant impact on their future employment prospects and earning potential. Welsh Government action focuses on improving the attainment of protected groups and supporting and encouraging young girls into traditionally male dominated subjects such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Widening the gender profile in these fields opens up a wide range of professional career opportunities for young women as well as contributing to economic prosperity and creativity.

Our Actions

Minority Ethnic Achievement Grant

All children and young people should be encouraged to achieve their potential, whatever their ethnic or cultural background, so that they may fulfil their career aspirations and contribute to the economic life of the country. However, significant differences exist in attainment levels between pupils grouped by ethnicity, which could hold some children back.

The Welsh Government's Minority Ethnic Achievement Grant (MEAG) makes funding available to support the educational attainment of minority ethnic learners. The grant, which was worth £10million in 2012–13, aims to raise the educational attainment of children and young people from minority ethnic backgrounds aged 3 to 18. In 2012–13 it supported 38,204 learners in all 22 local authorities and the majority of it was used to support children with their English language acquisition so that they could fully access the curriculum and maximise their attainment.

The Welsh Government is currently working with local authorities to better capture the range of work being undertaken to support minority ethnic learners in school. This is in addition to exploring how to more effectively target the grant towards those initiatives, which have the greatest positive impact on the educational attainment of minority ethnic learners.

The Minority Ethnic Language and Achievement project is a Welsh Government led project in which nine local authorities are participating. The project is worth £4.8m; it was approved in August 2010 and will run until December 2013. The main objectives are to build on

current support being provided by local authority Ethnic Minority Achievement Services, expanding the activities available, whilst focusing on innovative and creative ways of raising attainment of minority ethnic pupils in secondary schools.

Grant for the Education of Gypsy and Traveller Children

The Welsh Government's approach to education is an inclusive one which supports all children including Gypsy and Traveller children who are the lowest attaining learner group. Certain cultural norms within their own communities can prevent these children from benefitting from school life and having a full career choice with self employment the traditional option. A mobile lifestyle can also mean that many Gypsy and Traveller children have interrupted learning and poor attendance rates. The Welsh Government is committed to ensuring that these children receive a full education.

An annual Welsh Government Grant for the Education of Gypsy and Traveller children part funds (the grant meets 75% of programme costs with the remaining 25% coming from the local authority) the work of Traveller Education Services with the aim of supporting Gypsy and Traveller children, aged from 3 to 19, by improving their school attendance and, in particular, encouraging their progression to secondary education. In 2012–13 the grant stood at £1 million and supported 2,045 learners in 19 local authorities.

A consortium of six local authorities attracted £2.3 million additional funding for a project which supported local Traveller Education Services in their work on attendance and attainment with secondary age Gypsy and Traveller learners. The Convergence project closed in September 2012. The evaluation of the project indicated that it had a positive impact upon Gypsy and Traveller young people's attitudes towards education and training with modest improvements in attendance. Overall the project has been successful in supporting Gypsy and Traveller young people into employment.

Additional Learning Needs Framework

The legislation surrounding the Special Educational Needs (SEN) framework is over 30 years old and there is plenty of evidence across Wales to prove it needs reforming.

We are proposing to replace the current statutory framework for the assessment and planning of provision for children and young people with SEN with a simpler, more person centred and integrated system. It is believed that this will:

- lead to increased trust and confidence of parents and carers in the system
- provide greater consistency between schools and local authorities, and
- foster more effective partnerships between agencies.

The pre-legislative consultation, 'Forward in Partnership for Children and Young people with Additional Needs', detailing proposals for reform of the legislative framework for special educational needs, ended on 19 October 2012. Responses have been analysed and a Ministerial statement and a summary of the consultation responses were issued on 17 July 2013.

In response to requests for more detail on the consultation proposals, wider SEN Reform is not now included in the Education (Wales) Bill 2013. However, proposals in relation to further education provision for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities are part of that Bill.

Welsh Government officials are undertaking further discussion with key stakeholders in order to develop the proposals in more detail.

A legislative bid to bring forward Additional Learning Needs (Wales) Bill has been accepted by the First Minister. Legislation would be introduced once the second phase of consultation is complete.

The former Minister for Education and Skills agreed further steps following conclusions drawn from the Additional Learning Needs Pilot Projects. These next steps will include work to take forward processes and tools developed and tested through the Pilots.

English for Speakers of Other Languages

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) is provision for learners whose first language is not English, and who have for a variety of reasons come to live in the UK. In Wales, ESOL is delivered by a number of different organisations, including public sector, private sector and Third Sector organisations. Publicly funded provision is available to learners through Further Education Institutions and Local Authorities. ESOL provision attracts learners from a variety of backgrounds, who have a wide range of both ability and previous experience of education.

The policies which provide the framework for ESOL provision in Wales are predominantly determined by the UK Government which has responsibility for Immigration. However, the provision of ESOL as an element of Lifelong Learning is the responsibility of the Welsh Government. In June 2012 the Home Office announced a Statement of Intent with regard to Family Migration. The new settlement arrangements announced by the UK Government could potentially increase demand for ESOL provision in Wales.

In October 2012, the Minister for Education and Skills agreed the development of an ESOL policy for Wales. This policy is currently being developed in consultation with the ESOL Advisory Group, and is intended for publication by the end of 2013. Events were held in South and North Wales on 25 September and 2 October respectively, to enable stakeholders to engage in the final policy development process.

The meetings that have taken place with the ESOL advisory group over the last year have focused on setting out the process for developing the policy. This included setting up a selection of working groups, chaired by individual members of the Advisory Group, which looked at different aspects of ESOL policy. The group has also had discussions with the UK Home Office on the process for submitting bids for European Investment Fund (EIF) funding, and discussion on monitoring and recording progress for ESOL learners.

The Effects of Assessment Type on Boys and Girls Research

Welsh Government commissioned research on 'The Effects of Assessment Type on Boys and Girls' as part of the Review of Qualifications which indicated that boys may be disadvantaged if modular assessment was not retained in GCSEs. This was taken into account when formulating the Review of Qualifications recommendations, which were also subject to equality impact screening before the Review of Qualifications reported to Ministers.

Ministers have now accepted the recommendations of the Review of Qualifications, including that modular assessment should be retained in GCSEs in Wales. Implementation of the Review of Qualifications recommendations is in its early stages and the potential for gender bias in assessment methods will be borne in mind as new and revised qualifications are developed.

Get on With Science

Led by Communities and Schools Together (CaST) Cymru and Chwarae Teg, the principal aim of the 'Get on With Science' (GOWS) project is to encourage wider engagement of children and young people in science through helping improve the way science is delivered both in primary and secondary schools to better reflect the needs of girls. During its pilot phase, project involved 28 schools from 8 clusters (secondary schools and their feeder primary schools) in 3 cohorts in Northeast Wales, Anglesey and North Powys.

Pilot work, which commenced in January 2012 and ended in March 2013, aimed to specifically widen the engagement of girls in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education but did not exclude boys. The focus of the work aimed to increase the numbers of girls pursuing careers in science by helping to address the negative perception that girls are ill suited to STEM subjects, a perception that is often developed early on in life. The project looked to attract 'Science Champions', particularly women with successful careers in STEM industries, to help break down gender barriers in schools to encourage wider engagement by girls in following STEM subjects and careers. Outside of schools, GOWS also aimed to engage with parents/families and the wider community, with a view to influencing the gender stereotypes which are commonly reinforced outside school life. The emerging good practice identified has been shared with schools across Wales.

The headlines/statistics on outputs and key beneficiaries of this work are as follows:

- A wide range of activity days developed for children and families to facilitate research on attitudes to science and aspirations
- 8 school clusters established, involving 28 schools in North/Mid Wales
- 980 Year 6 pupils directly involved in GOWS activities (with Champions, Super Science Days, visits etc), and 600 pupils from other year groups
- 7,000 pupils indirectly benefiting from enhanced science education through GOWS involvement
- 170 parents/families involved in GOWS activities
- 5 Science Champions recruited and inducted

- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme for practitioners developed and delivered – including a wide range of industry visits for teachers – with very positive responses received
- Sector Skills Council links, and a wide number of industry links have been established and promoted to schools
- Guidance on gender lensing developed and resources/good practice materials identified (will be sign-posted/shared with schools across Wales through Hwb, the all Wales learning platform, website).

National Science Academy (NSA)

The NSA was established in Wales to help deliver a stronger, more sustainable and resilient economy. It promotes the take-up of mathematics STEM subjects at all levels to ensure Wales has a continuous pipeline of people graduating from colleges and universities with STEM-related qualifications and skills. NSA grant funding focuses upon STEM engagement and enrichment activities targeting an age group from 3 to 19 years.

The NSA launched a competitive grant scheme resulting in 52 bids being assessed with 21 projects eligible for NSA grant funding totalling approximately £639k. Several of the funded projects delivered a variety of STEM related activities to a wide ranging audience drawn from students of lower ability and with a learning difficulty, Year 12 students from Communities First Wards, care leavers, students in receipt of free school meals or educational maintenance allowance. These included a series of science workshops/demonstrations targeting children with learning difficulties.

Swansea University led “widening access” initiative titled “S4 Summer School” project. The project resulted in 25 Year 12 pupils attending a 5 day Summer School event engaging several STEM disciplines. The project’s widening access aspect featured the project specifically targeting Communities First Wards. Consequently, participation numbers reveal that 95% of applicants came from a ‘Communities First’ school (91% – original target list) in addition to 22% of participants received an Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

3. Workplace

Welsh Government is working with nine key business sectors to encourage more people from protected groups into roles where they are under represented.

Our Actions

Sector Panels

Each business sector has a sector panel whose role is to provide advice to Ministers on the opportunities and need of the different sectors. They are to use their private sector success and experience to help the Welsh Government identify the best opportunities for business growth.

For example, Welsh Government has consulted with the ICT sector panel throughout 2012/13 on the ICT skills gap in the workforce which identified the need to upskill/move women into the sector which enjoys a higher than average Gross Value Added (GVA) in Wales.

The ICT panel is fully aware of equality issues and routinely consider the need to better engage with our anchor companies to address the proportion of women moving into the ICT profession and at the higher level.

The ICT Sector Panel continues to provide a steer and has supported the following actions:

- Awareness raising at a number of stakeholder events in Wales
- Promoting ICT career opportunities to girls in blue chip organisations (e.g. computer clubs for girls)
- Involvement in re-developing the ICT curriculum at school level
- Supporting a bespoke training for around 30 employed women from lower paid positions to train in web design and social media for business.

Careers in Engineering – Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Sector

An Advanced Materials and Manufacturing revenue budget of £40k has been set aside to take forward initiatives to encourage girls into careers in engineering. Research has highlighted that there is a serious shortage of women as role models in all levels of manufacturing and this is a shared concern with some of the stakeholder key anchor companies. This also fits with the Programme for Government commitment to encourage more young people into careers in engineering. Initiatives will be undertaken in partnership with the AM&M sector Anchor and other regionally significant companies.

Examples of the initiatives:

Ford Saturday Club

£17k funding has been committed to run two x 12 week Saturday morning courses for 48 Year 10 and 11 students to undertake modules in engine build, systems control and electrics. Funding was approved on the basis that the messages to schools would encourage girls to take part. 7 of the first cohort of 24 students were girls and we hope to improve on this for the second cohort. Students graduate with a Bronze or Silver Crest award.

Airbus Industrial Cadets Programme

£15k has been committed to launch an all girls cohort to the Industrial Cadets programme in North Wales this November. This will give 60 female students aged 11–14 access to a 10 week programme working on a real industrial project with mentors from Airbus. Students will graduate with a Silver Crest award.

European Structural Funds Programmes

A series of priority papers detailing the proposals for activity to be funded in the 2014–2020 programmes that contribute to the reduction of the skills and employment gap of those with protected characteristics have been drafted by Wales European Funding Office (WEFO) and received by the European Programmes Partnership, Work streams and Internal Welsh Government Policy group. The papers went through a number of version changes as stakeholders were canvassed for their opinion. The proposals which all included objectives, targets and activity and are currently being negotiated with the European Commission cover the following areas:

European Social Fund

- Tackling Poverty through Sustainable Employment
- Skills and Growth
- Youth Unemployment and Attainment

European Regional Development Fund

- SME Competiveness
- Infrastructure
- Research and Innovation
- Energy and Energy Efficiency

All of these priority papers were included in the public consultation **Wales and the EU: Partnership for Jobs and Growth** which took place from January 2013 – April 2013.

They focus on:

- Investing in skills as the key driver for the 2014–2020 European Structural Fund programmes in Wales recognising that higher levels of qualifications are associated with higher levels of employment and higher wages.
- Balancing basic skills with the delivery of higher level and subject specific skills, particularly Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics skills, facilitating career progression, improve income levels and help address in-work poverty.
- Developing skills to break down barriers to engagement with technologies, such as digital skills, reducing social isolation and increasing access to work profession opportunities on-line.
- Interventions within the programmes will specifically aim to address gender inequalities, particularly in relation to the under representation of women in senior positions and in growth sectors and gender stereotyping and increasing participation of both men and women in non traditional work areas, factors which significantly contribute to the gender pay gap but also the pay gap experienced by many disabled people and Black and minority ethnic people.
- Supporting the development of children and young people to positively reinforce choices and actions which break down traditional stereotypes in employment and learning, broadening horizons for non traditional job roles or employment sectors.

- Actions which support the prevention or reduction in the levels of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training, tackling structural issues of youth unemployment and as a preventative long term investment.
- Investing in the skills of the childcare and early years workforce, improving the quality and reducing the likelihood of children in disadvantaged areas from falling behind.
- Addressing specific barriers that discourage some groups with protected characteristics from starting and progressing in business and working with employers to raise awareness of the issues affecting progression.

Challenging inequality both in the development of skills and in tackling the under-representation of some groups in key sectors will need a multi-faceted approach across the programmes.

Full Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) have been carried out on the draft 2014–2020 Structural Funds programmes in Wales. The findings and recommendations from the EIA's are being built into the developing programmes and the Equality and Human Rights Commission will give a formal 'opinion' of the specific actions to promote equality.

Indicators: Childcare

Flying start:

3,113 children benefitted from Flying Start nursery provision in 2012/13.

Indicators for childcare are currently in development as part of the Early Years and Childcare Plan.

Education

School attendance rates:

The data for school absenteeism is quite complex, and further complicated by the skewing effect of persistent absenteeism. For primary schools in 2011/12, 3% of pupils were persistent absentees, but these account for 12% of all half-days missed due to absence. For secondary schools, 7% of pupils were persistent absentees, accounting for 30% of all half-days missed due to absence.

There does not appear to be an effect of gender on absenteeism in primary or secondary school. Those eligible for free school meals appear to be more likely to be absent than others – 8.6% of half days missed in primary, and 12.7% in secondary (3% and 6% points higher than other pupils, respectively). Primary students with Special Educational Needs are roughly 2 percentage points more likely to be absent (2–4% points in secondary).

A breakdown by ethnicity reveals some striking figures. Travellers and Gypsy/Roma students miss 23% and 18% of half days in primary (30% and 17% in secondary). There are some smaller spikes in primary school for Bangladeshi and Pakistani students (both 8%) and 'white and Black Caribbean' students in secondary school (9%).

% of pupils aged 15 achieving level 2 threshold including GCSE (A*–C) in maths and either English or Welsh as a first language:

There are some clearly observable inequalities in the achievement of a level 2 threshold (including GCSE grade A*–C in English/Welsh and Mathematics). In the most recent year (2012), 47% of boys and 56% of girls achieved this standard. Both these figures have increased by approximately 5% points over the previous five years.

A breakdown of ethnicity reveals significant inequalities in achievement of this standard. Chinese/Chinese British students are the highest achievers on this measure (77% achieving the standard). Other Asian backgrounds vary between 49% and 63%, while those of mixed ethnicities vary from 37% to 64%. Around 42% of Black students achieve the standards, though 51% of Black Caribbean students do so. Finally, 50% of white students achieve this standard (50% also being the population average), though this obscures the fact that only 13% of Gypsy/Gypsy Roma do so.

Students learning English as an additional language demonstrate a pattern whereby those in ‘early acquisition’ or ‘developing competence’ have lower than average achievement (9% and 31%, respectively). However, those who are competent or fluent have higher than average achievement (59% and 63%, respectively).

Students with Special Educational Needs have lower than average achievement (average of 17%). 8% of those who are statemented achieve the standard, whereas achievement is higher both for those under School Action Plus (14%) and School Action (21%). These figures have shown moderate improvement over the preceding years.

Students eligible for free school meals have significantly lower levels of achievement on this measure (23% against 57%). Both these figures have increased over the preceding five years.

Finally, absenteeism data reveals a predictable effect on achievement of this standard. It was achieved by 66% of those with almost full attendance (greater than 96% attendance), but only 3% of those with major absenteeism (missing more than 50% of days available) achieved the standard.

% of working adults qualified to level 2/3/4 threshold:

In 2012, the Annual Populations Survey estimates the general pattern for working age adults was as follows:

- 11% have no qualifications,
- 75% have level 2 or above qualifications,
- 54% have level 3 or above qualifications,
- 33% have level 4 or above qualifications.

There is some variation by protected characteristic. 20% of working age disabled adults have no qualifications (with corresponding lower ratios for levels 2–4 or above), and 15% of non-white working-age adults have no qualifications. However a higher proportion (47%) of non-white working age adults have level 4 or above qualifications. Females appear more likely to have level 4 or above qualifications than males (36% compared to 30%).

Reduced inequality in education and skills outcomes for gender/disabled people:

The percentage of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) who attain the Level 2 threshold at Key Stage 2 has improved significantly between 2009/10 and 2011/12 (from 38.5% to 49%). The percentage of SEN pupils achieving the Level 2 threshold at Key Stage 4 has also increased, albeit more slowly (from 12.9% to 16.5%).

Despite slight improvements in attainment, the gap between male and female students at KS2 and 4 remains constant. At KS2, relatively more (6.6% points) females achieve a level 4 qualification than males (86% & 79.4%, respectively). At KS4, the gap is wider at 8.6% points (55.5% for females, 46.9% for males) while overall attainment is lower.

In 2012, 20.3% of working-age disabled adults (Disability Discrimination Act and/or work-limiting impairment) reported having no formal qualifications compared to only 7.4% of those non-disabled). A higher percentage of non-white working age adults (15.4%) have no formal qualifications than white (11%), however a higher proportion of those who are non-white (47%) have level 4 or above qualifications. There is only a slight difference between males (10.8%) and females (10.2%).

Workplace

Pay differences for gender/disability/ethnicity:

The gap between the average full-time hourly earnings for men and women in Wales has been narrowing over the past decade, with women's pay standing at 92.1% of men's in 2012.

Data for disability and ethnicity is constrained by the availability of Wales-specific data. The following data has been drawn from the Wales Institute for Social and Economic Research, Data and Methods (WISERD) "An Anatomy of Economic Inequality in Wales". Several markers are available in this report, for 2011. In Wales, 26.1% of all workers have hourly earnings that are less than 2/3rd of the UK median (32.3% for women in Wales). For disabled people the number is 33.2% (37.7% for disabled women). Data on ethnicity is not necessarily comparable due to the relatively low numbers involved. For each of the following ethnicities we note the overall and female percentage of workers earning less than 2/3rd of the UK median hourly earnings. Two groups have percentages lower (better) than the overall Welsh figures: Indian (22.4%/22.8%) and Black African/Caribbean (21.7%/26.4%). The remaining ethnicities generally have higher (worse) percentages: mixed (28.6%/29.4%), Bangladeshi & Pakistani (51.4%/52.5%), other Asian (40.5%/46.7%), Chinese (36.2%/41.2%), and other (30.5%/22.6%).

Alternatively, we can compare pay differences in terms of the absolute position of each groups mean earnings relative to the UK. Mean earnings for white male workers fall in the 51st percentile, while those for non-white males are at the 40th. This pattern is reversed for female workers, whose means lie at the 36th and 40th percentiles. Finally, male disabled workers fall in the 40th percentile, while those without are at the 51st (30th and 36th for women).

Employment rates by gender/disability/ethnicity:

Large differences in employment rates exist in Wales. Data for the first quarter of 2013 shows that 71% of men aged 16–64 are employed, compared to 64% of women. Similarly, 75% of non-disabled people are employed (44% disabled people). Finally, 68% of white adults aged 16–64 and 53% of non-white adults are employed.

% of Steps to Employment leavers progressing into either employment or further learning:

In 2011–12, the Steps to Employment scheme assisted many users into employment (including volunteering) or further learning. There was no difference in progression by gender (48% of men were successful and 47% of women). Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) leavers appeared to be more successful than white leavers (55% against 47%), but BME leavers accounted for only 6% of the total, so the comparison is unlikely to be valid. Finally, non-disabled leavers also appeared to be more successful than disabled leavers (48% against 41%) but again the size of the disabled cohort may be too small for a valid comparison.

Further education learning activity success rates:

In 2011–12, there were no appreciable differences in further education learning activity success rates by gender (both 82%), ethnicity (BME 83%, white 82%), or whether disabled (disabled 83%, non disabled 82%).

Objective 3

Reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)

Introduction

There is a significant proportion of young people in Wales who are classed as not in education, employment or training (NEET) with the number of young people who are NEET higher for those people classed as disabled and from certain ethnic minority groups.

Against the current economic climate, it is even more important to help, support and guide our young people when they are making the transition from school, college or university into employment. Welsh Government is committed to ensuring the best possible opportunities exist for maximising youth engagement and progression into education, employment or training in Wales.

Influences on Young People Becoming NEET			
 Low level of qualifications	 Lack of vocational skills	 Family disadvantage and poverty leading to disengagement	 No formal experience/training

Our Actions

The actions underway to improve the educational attainment of protected groups are intended to progress both Objective 2 and Objective 3 of the Strategic Equality Plan. The detail is currently included in Objective 2.

Actions to improve the employability of young people are outlined below.

Means-tested grants

We have provided financial means-tested support to help young people fulfil their potential through further or higher education, for example, through our Education Maintenance Allowance and the Assembly Learning Grant for Further Education which is administered through the Student Loans Company.

Welsh Government Programmes

For non-employed people, a key priority for the Welsh Government is to progress young people and adults into employment at the earliest opportunity. To take forward this agenda, and as part of the Programme of Government, the Welsh Government has established:

- The **Jobs Growth Wales Programme** which commenced in April 2012.
- A new employability programme, **Traineeships** (for 16–18 year olds), in August 2011.
- Outlined key commitments in relation to increasing **Apprenticeship** opportunities for young people.
- Work Ready (for 18 plus) is a newly established programme to replace the Steps-to-Employment adult programme.

Jobs Growth Wales

Jobs Growth Wales will give unemployed young people aged 16–24 work experience for a 6-month period. This will be paid at or above the National Minimum Wage for a minimum of 25 hours per week. The programme aims to create 16,000 jobs over four years for job ready young people throughout Wales.

Jobs Growth Wales has been developed to ensure opportunities are available for all job ready young people and will also provide access to opportunities which offer experience through the medium of Welsh.

As well as creating job opportunities for unemployed young people, the posts created by Jobs Growth Wales are new positions and therefore can help Welsh businesses grow and the ambition for the programme is that the job opportunity will be sustained by the host employer following the completion of the 6 months. Jobs Growth Wales is also a key commitment within the Welsh Government's Programme for Government.

In April 2013, Jobs Growth Wales exceeded its first year target, creating 6,000 job opportunities for young people across Wales and getting more than 4,000 unemployed young people into work.

Traineeships

The Traineeship programme aims to support young people gain sustained employment by helping their confidence and motivation, improve their skills levels through the delivery of NVQs in any chosen occupational area, as well as gaining employability skills and valuable work experience, aiding transition into employment.

Traineeships allows for the identification and addressing of learning barriers that prohibit the young person from progressing into employment, vocational or other learning at Level 2 or above. The programme includes the use of employer work placements, community projects, voluntary work and centre based learning opportunities to deliver the NVQ learning. Learners are also able to take Essential Wales Skills qualifications up to Level 2.

Young people on Traineeships receive a training allowance of between £30 – £50 (dependant on what level they engage with the programme and the hours undertaken) to help the young person remain engaged whilst undertaking training and to meet necessary expense incurred whilst undertaking the training. In addition, learners also receive financial help towards travel costs, and childcare support may also be available, subject to eligibility and other terms and conditions.

Apprenticeship Programme

Our Apprenticeship programme offers individuals the opportunity to earn money while they learn, obtain vocational training and build a sustainable career. Apprenticeships also help employers to build a professionally skilled workforce, equipped with the knowledge and experience that their business needs to succeed and compete. Apprenticeships are available at all levels in a wide range of occupations at Foundation (level 2), Apprenticeships (level 3) and Higher Apprenticeships in certain occupations at levels 4 to 6. Some Higher Apprenticeships may include options to study Higher Education qualifications such as HNC, HND or Foundation degrees.

Welsh Government has allocated a further £20 million per year to the Apprenticeship budget for financial years 2013–2014, 2014–2015 and 2015–16 to enhance current initiatives and support new ones.

Young Recruits Programme

One of our current initiatives, the Young Recruits Programme, is an all Wales programme that provides funding to employers offering high quality apprenticeship programmes who recruit and train additional young apprentices (16–24 years old). Additionally, small to medium sized employers could also be eligible for a one off payment of £500 to help cover the cost of recruiting an apprentice.

Steps-to-Employment (now Work-Ready)

Work Ready (for 18 plus) is a newly established programme to replace the Steps-to-Employment adult programme. Work Ready offers two defined strands:

- Work Focused Training – this aims to allow learners to confirm an occupational focus, undertake vocationally focused learning at Levels 1, 2 and 3, address barriers to learning (e.g. essential skills in numeracy and literacy) and gain the breadth and flexibility of skills required to enter employment, further learning or Route-ways to Work.
- Route-ways to Work – this option links ‘job ready’ participants with recruiting employers or equips individuals to meet a specific local labour market need through bespoke training for up to eight weeks duration.

European Social Fund

The Fund supports young people, unemployed people and others at a disadvantage and at risk of poverty in finding work and in gaining skills. Since 2007, the Fund has supported over 30,000 young people in Wales who are not in education, employment or training. The future 2014–2020 Structural Funds programmes in Wales will continue to invest in growth and jobs, supporting actions that will help people access and maintain sustainable employment, address barriers to employment and causes of underemployment, and develop their skills. We will invest at least 20 per cent of our European Social Fund into actions which target poverty and social inclusion through sustainable employment.

Communities First

Communities First is a community focused programme that supports the Welsh Government's Tackling Poverty agenda. It supports the most disadvantaged people in our most deprived areas with the aim of contributing to alleviating persistent poverty. Communities First aims to contribute to narrowing the education/skills, economic and health gaps between our most deprived and more affluent areas.

All Clusters (areas) are required to report on the outcomes of their individual projects. This will allow us to collect and monitor data on the projects i.e. what difference are the projects making to peoples lives. All 52 Clusters were approved by March 2013.

The Outcomes Framework is based on the three Strategic Objectives of Healthy Communities, Learning Communities and Prosperous communities. Under the Outcome of Prosperous Communities there are several priorities which include working with young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), in particular:

- Helping people to develop employment skills and find work.
- Reducing youth unemployment and disengagement.
- Supporting Enterprise and Timebanking.
- Reducing the risk of youth offending.

The new monitoring arrangements have been agreed and are in the process of being implemented.

Tackling Poverty Action Plan

Our Tackling Poverty Action Plan was launched in June 2012 and refreshed in June 2013. It includes targets to reduce the percentage of 16–24 year olds who are NEET. As poverty and equality are inter-woven, the actions in the Tackling Poverty Action Plan which are aimed at strengthening employability skills through the curriculum and working with employers to increase job opportunities are also relevant to equality objectives 2 and 3.

Indicators

% of 16–18 year olds who are NEET:

The proportion of 16 to 18 year olds who are NEET had remained fairly constant at a rate of between 10–12% over the years 1999 to 2012. The 2012 figures are 11.8% for males, and 8.4% for females. Figures for disabled young people are only available from an alternative source, the Annual Population Survey, and due to the low absolute numbers, it is necessary to average across three quarters of data. For the average of Q2 (year to June) 2011, 2012 and 2013 21.7% of disabled (Disability Discrimination Act and/or work limiting disability) 16 to 18 year olds were NEET, compared with 11.4% of those who are non disabled.

% of 19–24 year olds who are NEET:

As at December 2012, the proportion of 19 to 24 year olds who are NEET was 21.5% for males, and 24.5% for females. Figures for disabled young people are only available from an alternative source, the Annual Population Survey, and due to the low absolute numbers it is necessary to average across three quarters of data. For the average of Q2 (year to June) 2011, 2012 and 2013, 44.0% of disabled 19 to 24 year olds were NEET, compared with 19.2% of those who are non disabled.

% of Steps to Employment leavers progressing into either employment or further learning:

48% of leavers from Steps-to-Employment had a “positive progression”, though it should be noted that this includes those entering self-employment, higher education and voluntary work, as well as into regular employment.

Number of people benefitting from Job Growth Wales:

By April 2013, 6,000 job opportunities had been created across Wales, getting 4,000 unemployed young people back into work.

Number of apprenticeship opportunities available through Young recruits Programme:

Demand for the programme has increased in recent years. In 2012–13, 2,160 opportunities were available (up from 185 in 2009/10).

Apprenticeship success rates:

The Apprenticeship Framework success rate has shown steady improvement over the last four years, reaching 85% for 2011/12. No large differences were observed by gender (female 86%, male 84%), ethnicity (BME 88%, white 85%), or disabled (disabled 85%, non disabled 81%).

% of traineeship leavers progressing to either further learning or employment:

67% of those leaving traineeships (in 2011/12) had a “positive progression”, though it should be noted that this includes those entering self-employment, higher education and voluntary work, as well as into regular employment. Slight differences were observed on some measures, though it is unclear if these are significant. 68% of male trainees had a positive progression, compared to 64% of female trainees. 75% of BME trainees were successful (compared to 66% of white trainees), though BME trainees only account for 3.5% of the total number of trainees. Finally, disabled trainees were similar to those non disabled (65% and 67%, respectively).

Objective 4

Reduce the incidence of all forms of violence against women, domestic abuse, ‘honour’ based violence, hate crime, bullying and elder abuse

Tackling Hate Crimes and Incidents: A Framework for Action

Introduction

The Crown Prosecution Service and Association of Chief Police Officers define a hate crime as any criminal offence that is motivated by the perpetrator's hostility or prejudice based upon the victim's disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or transgender status. Offences may include physical assault, damage to property, bullying, harassment, verbal abuse or insults, or offensive graffiti or letters.

Tackling hate crime is a key commitment for Welsh Government within the Programme for Government and its Strategic Equality Plan. Tackling hate crime has also featured as an equality objective in many Public Sector SEPs across Wales including 20 local authorities. This, together with available evidence, has highlighted the need for a joined-up approach to tackle hate crime in Wales.

The Tackling Hate Crimes and Incidents Framework is a strategic driver for partnership work across Wales to tackle hostility and prejudice and to influence real change.

The Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty launched 'Tackling Hate Crimes and Incidents: A Framework for Action' for consultation during July 2013. This has substantially taken forward the Strategic Equality Plan objective to tackle hate crime, which also incorporates tackling bullying, particularly around prevention based work in educational settings.

Key themes in tackling hate crime				
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
<p>Leadership Organisations to take the lead to challenge and tackle discrimination both in the workplace and in our communities</p>	<p>Partnership Working To work together to improve outcomes for people and to increase reporting</p>	<p>Education Tackling stereotypes and negative attitudes should take place with children and young people to increase awareness of the impact of hostility and prejudice</p>	<p>Tackling Hate Incidents Low level harassment can have a detrimental impact on people. Early intervention is effective</p>	<p>Promotion of Human Rights Support the FREDA (Fairness, Respect, Equality, Dignity and Autonomy) principles</p>

The Framework aims to tackle hate crime against a high level outcome so that ‘individuals and communities are enabled to be resilient, cohesive and safe to tackle hate incidents and crimes’. To achieve this aim then three supporting objectives have been identified around prevention, supporting victims and increasing the operational response. The Framework extends across the protected characteristics of race, religion, disability, sexual orientation and gender reassignment, which are currently recorded through police statistics. However, the Framework also identifies further key emerging areas around alternative subcultures, older people, mate crime, cyber bullying/hate and far right hate.

The Framework is a commitment across a number of key Welsh Government portfolio areas to tackle hate crimes and incidents. There are key contributions around education, health, social services, housing, communities, community safety, transport, sport, media and culture. A key dynamic is being developed across non-devolved Welsh Government areas particularly around criminal justice.

A strong ethos which sits across the Framework is around the FREDA principles of Freedom, Respect, Equality, Dignity and Autonomy. These are underlying areas which will be considered in the development of future work and how a human rights based approach is being built into the development of future work.

Our Actions

The development of the Framework has been driven by a Task and Finish Group during 2012–13. This group has consisted of 22 key internal and external partners, including representation with statutory and third sector organisations across the protected characteristics. The Group has considered each of the three objectives and identified the key areas and focus to develop and take work forwards across Wales. A report and findings has been written up and fed directly into the content and delivery within the Framework.

This engagement has been supplemented by working with organisations and stakeholders to form consultation groups across the five protected characteristics. This has included working with an all Wales Disability Hate Crime Action Group, stakeholder meetings around gender reassignment, focus groups with Gypsy and Traveller, migrant, refugee and asylum seeker organisations, interfaith focus group and consultation with existing LGB forums and a bespoke on-line survey with Stonewall Cymru.

This evidence was also supplemented with a pre-consultation on-line survey which gave people across Wales the chance to feed views into the early development of the Framework. This yielded 167 responses and a final summary report was developed and fed in as key evidence.

During the reporting period from 2012–2013, there has been a strong emphasis on engagement and ensuring that future work reflects the available information and evidence to support delivery. There has been positive engagement from a range of internal and external partners across Wales and established links across essential internal Welsh Government policy areas. Work in this period has set the foundations for future work to develop the Framework and ensure that it is reflective and innovative in the development stage.

The Welsh Government has commissioned research in 2012–2013 around identification of the motivations for perpetrators of hate crimes.

The Framework will be taken forward on a national as well as at a local level to ensure that key messages and interventions are consistent and based on emerging effective practice and innovation.

Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women

Introduction

Violence against women and domestic abuse affects people from all walks of life, and from all cultural, social and ethnic backgrounds, the well off as well as the poor. It affects those in work and those out of work, the young and the old, in all parts of Wales.

We want Wales to be a self confident, prosperous healthy nation which is fair to all. To achieve this we must not tolerate the enduring social problems of domestic abuse, sexual harassment, rape, forced marriage, trafficking, honour crimes (including murder) and female genital mutilation.

Domestic abuse can include all kinds of psychological, physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and can occur within all kinds of intimate relationships, including same sex relationships. Women and children suffer in particular but men can also be victims.

Violence against women and domestic abuse must not be tolerated in Wales on any level. The Welsh Government is determined to hold perpetrators accountable for what they do and is committed to protecting and supporting the victims of domestic abuse. This commitment is demonstrated by Programme for Government pledges to bring forward legislation to tackle these issues and deliver the 10,000 Safer Lives Project.

Our Actions

10,000 Safer Lives

The aim of the 10,000 Safer Lives project is to make sure all relevant public service providers and organisations in Wales are able to identify and deal effectively with individuals experiencing domestic abuse (medium and standard risk), to ensure the safety of the individual and their family.

The project's aims are a commitment of the Welsh Government's Programme for Government 2011–2016 and the project features in the implementation plan associated with "The Right to be Safe" – the Welsh Government's strategy for tackling all forms of violence against women and girls. The 10,000 Safer Lives project is seeking to improve the multi-agency service provided to victims of domestic abuse in standard and medium-risk cases. 10,000 Safer Lives is paving the way for the changes in domestic abuse policy set out in the proposed Bill.

In April 2012 the report on the project identified 11 minimum standards; five of which link to the proposals in the legislation and/or Right to be Safe Strategy and are being taken forward as part of these workstreams. Public Service Leadership Group has identified three areas for immediate action:

Workplace policies – Public Service employers should have a workplace policy in place which is regularly reviewed and supported by training. Public Service organisations have committed to have in place their policy by the end of September 2013. Welsh Government held workshops in North and South Wales recently to support organisations in achieving this.

Sharing personal information – this is linked to wider work underway to secure a collective leadership commitment which encourages routine information-sharing to protect vulnerable individuals and deliver joined-up services; and

Service user groups – regional service user groups should be established to help ensure violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence services are developed to meet the needs of service users. These groups should report to Local Service Boards and the Domestic Abuse Champion. Welsh Government will be issuing good practice guidance to Public Service Leads in the autumn. Establishment of these User Groups will be monitored through the VAWDA grant to Community Safety Partnerships.

Right to be Safe Strategy

Violence against women constitutes a serious violation of the human rights of women and girls and is a major obstacle to the achievement of equality between women and men and therefore Welsh Government published its 6 year integrated strategy "The Right to be Safe".

The 3rd Annual Report on the Right to be Safe Strategy was published in August 2012. The Report provides an update on delivery against the Strategy's four original priority areas. Of the 89 actions in the Implementation Plan, good progress is being made with over two thirds of the actions having been completed, with 23 outstanding. We are taking forward the outstanding actions as part of the new proposals for legislation; as a stand alone one year action plan or as part of the implementation of the 10,000 Safer Lives project.

The Report also provides an update on how Welsh Government has consulted on legislative and policy proposals aimed at ending violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. These proposals will form the basis of the future strategic direction of Welsh Government policy in this area.

Domestic Abuse Bill – Legislation To End Violence Against Women And Domestic Abuse

November 2012 saw the launch of a formal consultation on a White Paper seeking views on policy and legislative proposals aimed at ending violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. The consultation period ended on 22 February 2013.

The Government is considering the responses to the consultation which will be used to inform the ongoing development of the Bill. The consultation responses will be published in full on the Welsh Government website, together with a summary report outlining next steps.

The proposed Bill will help Wales take significant steps forward in achieving the aim of ending violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. The proposals focus on three specific areas; improving leadership and accountability, improving education and awareness, and strengthening services in Wales.

The proposed legislation will not seek to address criminal justice issues – it will, however, seek to complement existing criminal law, focusing on the social issues within the elements of prevention, protection and support.

Anti Human Trafficking Co-ordinator

It is the aim of the Welsh Government to make Wales hostile to Human Trafficking and to provide the best possible support to victims who have been trafficked.

Tackling Human Trafficking requires co-ordinated action cutting across the boundaries of the four Governments in the UK. The response in Wales has been bolstered by the appointment of the second Anti Human Trafficking Co-ordinator (AHTC) in November 2012 to make Wales a hostile place for Human Trafficking to exist and to co-ordinate the best possible support for victims.

The AHTC has informed key agencies of the scale, types and location of Human Trafficking in Wales and this will improve the sharing of intelligence and recording of incidents in Wales using the National Referral Mechanism (NRM).

A Wales Anti Human Trafficking Leadership Group has been established with the following Strategic Objectives:

- To build an evidence base using ‘primary and secondary’ data sets to better inform the Leadership Group on the scale of human trafficking in Wales.
- Scope a training needs analysis of the current training being delivered in Wales and future requirements.
- Develop Intelligence/information Sharing protocols.
- Develop a Wales Anti Human Trafficking Communications Engagement Plan.
- To develop a ‘victim Care pathway’ for Wales.

The AHTC provided support to the Chief Executive of Anglesey Council who has led a bid, jointly on behalf of the six North Wales Local Authority Chief Executives, to the Welsh Government Regional Collaboration Fund for a North Wales Regional Anti Human Trafficking Co-ordinator.

Indicators

Hate Crime

Indicators are currently in development as part of the Tackling Hate Crimes and Incidents: A Framework for Action.

Violence Against Women

% of successful prosecutions and convictions in cases of violence against women:

78.1% of prosecutions in cases of violence against women were successful in 2012–13. This follows an increase from around 71.1% in 2007–08 to 74.8% in 2011–12.

Incidence of hate crime/domestic abuse/sexual crime:

In 2011–12, 1,809 incidents of hate crime were reported to Welsh police forces. This statistic is likely to be an underestimate, due to under-reporting of this issue.

48,576 incidents of domestic abuse were recorded by police in 2011–12. This is similar to the previous year, and is likely to underestimate the issue as not all incidents are reported to the police.

In 2011–12, 2,516 sexual offences were recorded in Wales – little change on the previous four years. This figure increased in 2012–13 to 2,873. Again, these figures are likely to underestimate the issue.

Number of people referred to MARAC:

Those referred to multi-agency risk-assessment centres (MARAC) represent the most serious cases of domestic abuse presenting to local agencies, with the proportion of repeat cases giving an indication of the effectiveness of interventions. In 2012 there were 5,074 cases referred. There were 6,540 children in these households and there were 1,312 repeat referrals (25.9 per cent) during this period. The total 2012 figure represents an increase on the previous two years (2011: 4,295; 2010: 3,632).

Number of callers supported by All Wales Domestic Abuse Helpline:

The number of calls from those experiencing abuse increased from 3,079 in 2011 to 3,223 in 2012. The total number of calls in 2012–13 (including agencies and concerned others) was 29,718. The overwhelming majority of the 29,718 calls come from service providers hence the number of calls from those actually experiencing abuse is small in comparison.

Objective 5

Tackle barriers and support disabled people so that they can live independently and exercise control in their daily lives

Framework for Action on Independent Living

Introduction

The actions outlined in the Strategic Equality Plan are being taken forward as part of the Framework for Action on Independent Living. This initiative was a result of the Finance Minister's commitment to develop a Framework for Action on Independent Living, given to the Petitions Committee in October 2011. This was in response to the campaign **Independent Living Now** conducted by Disability Wales, the umbrella body for disability organisations in Wales. The detailed areas for action were identified in Disability Wales' Manifesto for Independent Living (March 2011) which gained cross-party support.

The assumptions underlying the commitment to develop the Framework for Action	
	
Action is needed to strengthen the rights of disabled people to live independent lives as set out in Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People, i.e. the right to independent living.	People in Wales are disabled by environmental, institutional and societal barriers which lead to social exclusion and dependence and prevents them from full participation in Welsh society.

Our Actions

The project to develop the Framework took a broad, cross-cutting and problem-solving approach with a focus on identifying specific actions to make Wales a more enabling society, by tackling the barriers that currently impede the full inclusion of disabled people.

A National Steering Group, made up of representatives from national disability organisations, was established. The Group agreed that we should build on the Manifesto for Independent Living produced by Disability Wales in 2011, and identified 7 key areas for further examination. These were:

- Information, advice and advocacy
- Housing
- Personalised care and support
- Person-centred technology

- Transport
- Access to the built environment
- Employment

The National Steering Group met several times during 2012/13. These meetings brought together disabled people from each of the workgroups and representatives of the national disability organisations. The group reviewed the progress made on each issue, and also considered some wider messages. These included the role of local disabled people's organisations in working with local public services to help them do a better job of meeting people's needs and challenging them where necessary. The group agreed that this should be one of the key cross-cutting messages in the Framework.

The greatest achievement was the extent of engagement with disabled people and their representative organisations across Wales.

The Framework for Action on Independent Living for disabled people was published for consultation from September to December 2012. During that period seven consultation events were held across Wales and we received 70 written responses. A summary of consultation responses was published in March 2013. The final Framework for Action was published on 19th September 2013.

We investigated specific issues and opportunities for progress through working groups focused on each of the following:

- Information, advice and advocacy
- Housing
- Person-centred technology
- Transport
- Employment

The five working groups consisted of policy officials, representatives of stakeholder organisations, and disabled people. The stakeholder organisations that took part in the groups provided expertise in each of the relevant topics e.g. Citizens Advice and DEWIS in the Information work group, British Association for Supported Employment, Shaw Trust and Working Links in the employment workgroup. The groups looked at how the aims of the Framework fitted with Welsh Government policy objectives, value for money considerations, and the impact of the issues in these policy areas on disabled people, their families and Welsh society more widely.

Personalised care and support was being considered in 2012 by the consultation around the Sustainable Social Services agenda, and disabled people's organisations were already engaged with that work. It was therefore decided that we would not replicate this evidence-gathering exercise but would tap into the outcomes of their engagement.

We had direct engagement with disabled people through seven regional workshops held in 2012. These workshops were well attended and gave disabled people the opportunity to tell us what independent living meant to them. We also discussed the issues that affected them and provided attendees with updates on progress as the project developed.

We undertook analysis of existing research evidence and statistics around each of the key priority areas. All sources used were referenced in the consultation document that was published in September 2012.

Indicators

Indicators are currently in development as part of the Framework for Action on Independent Living.

Objective 6

Put the needs of service users at the heart of delivery in key public services in particular health, housing, and social services, so that they are responsive to the needs of people with protected characteristics

Introduction

Public services that are focused on the needs of all its customers and citizens, rather than providers, will result in the delivery of better public services. Focusing on the needs of customers and citizens is therefore a key challenge for all public service organisations. The aspiration of the Welsh Government is to ensure that public services are responsive to the needs of customers and that public policy reflects the views and expectations of its citizens.

What are the benefits of engaging with citizens:					
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
It can help inform the development of policies and strategies	It can help in planning the development of new services	It can inform decision making about setting priorities and the allocation of resources	It can be used to monitor attitudes and perceptions about how organisations are performing	It can inform decision making about individual projects or programmes that will impact upon local communities	It can help build closer links between organisations and citizens by involving them in decisions that effect them

It is through engaging with its citizens that Welsh Government will ensure that key public services take account of the needs of its services users in order to deliver services which are right for everyone and ensuring that our citizens have confidence in their public services.

In developing this objective we identified that we need to strengthen our evidence base to understand who is accessing our key public services to inform us of users requirements. Actions can subsequently be put in place to ensure that the needs of all users are built into the delivery of public services.

1. Health

Our Actions

Health and homelessness standards

The Standards were launched on 22 March 2013 at the annual conference of Cymorth Cymru. The Health and homelessness standards ensure homeless and vulnerable people are able to access primary health services, including substance misuse services.

The revised standards have been summarised to improve their clarity and focus, and to reflect the latest policy developments. They promote fair access to health services for homeless and other vulnerable groups of people.

They were approved by the national Health of Homeless People Working Group and formally agreed by both the Minister for Health and Social Services and the Minister for Housing and Regeneration.

To support and monitor delivery of the standards, we will be working with

- Public Health Wales.
- Cymorth Cymru and the
- Welsh Local Government Association.

Public Health Wales has agreed to collate information on local actions in response to the standards, facilitated through the Health and Homeless People Advisory Group. Each Local Health Board will be asked to provide an update of the implementation using the template provided in the Standards document by the end of December 2013. Public Health Wales will not undertake a formal monitoring role but will provide this report to Welsh Government for their information.

Together for Mental Health

Together for Mental Health was published in October 2012. The strategy has a focus on helping people at risk of mental health problems, including those who are vulnerable, such as Gypsies and Travellers.

The Strategy's supporting Delivery Plan (2012–2015) includes an outcome on people with protected characteristics and vulnerable groups to ensure that they experience equitable access to services. This is supported by actions to reduce inequalities for vulnerable groups with mental health needs, ensuring equitable access and provision of mental health services.

To support this:

- Local Health Boards and Local Authorities will need to routinely meet their obligation under the Public Sector Specific Duties (Wales) addressing the diverse needs of their local populations in service redesign and commissioning.
- Local Health Boards will need to carry out and publish Equality Impact Assessments on service delivery plans.
- Local Health Boards and Local Authorities will also provide culturally appropriate assessment responding to communication needs.

Achieving Excellence – The Quality Delivery Plan for the NHS in Wales 2012–16

This plan which was published in May 2012, sets out our ambitions for achieving excellence in Welsh healthcare by 2016. Our vision is for a quality driven NHS, focused on providing high quality care and excellent patient experience, including across all the protected characteristic groups. The best judge of quality of service given is the recipient. It is important that the users of the NHS are empowered to describe their experiences to those who provided their care so that there is a clear understanding of what is working well and what is not.

Therefore, within the Plan, the actions to drive quality improvement include giving the public a bigger voice in driving up care quality by developing a national approach to measuring healthcare user experience. In addition, we will be developing a comprehensive framework of population outcome indicators and performance measures to track progress and monitor delivery. The year 2012/13 year will be one of transition as the new approach in the Plan is introduced.

Healthy Working Wales

Healthy Working Wales is the Welsh Government's health and work programme which aims to improve health at work; reduce the impact of ill health at work; and to encourage early intervention to retain people in work with a health issue, including disabled people.

As part of this programme employers can access free advice, support and recognition to help improve the health and well being of their staff through the Corporate Health Standard and Small Workplace Health Awards. It includes a targeted approach to improving men's health for employers with a high proportion of male employees.

Currently, over 500 employers are engaged in the programme, employing over 25% of people who work in Wales.

Linked to Healthy Working Wales, Rhyl Fit for Work Service and the Well being through Work Project are piloting models of early intervention to health services. Funding has been provided by the Welsh Government to support the extension of the Fit for Work project in Rhyl, to further develop the evidence for early intervention.

Developing Health Indicators for Gypsies and Travellers – Scoping Document

Travelling to a better future, the Welsh Government Gypsy and Traveller framework for action and delivery plan noted the absence of data on health and lifestyle for this community. Without baseline health and service use data it is difficult to evaluate efforts to improve the health of Gypsies and Travellers. Objective 16 of **Travelling to a better future** sets out a requirement to establish baseline information on the health status of the Gypsy and Traveller community in Wales and establish a system for the continued collection of data on Gypsy and Traveller health.

Public Health Wales was asked to establish options for developing routine collection of data on Gypsy and Traveller health and wellbeing. **Developing Health Indicators for Gypsy and Travellers** set out the current available evidence, identified potential data sources, examined strengths and weaknesses of approaches, and made recommendations for taking this work forward.

The available evidence suggests that the health of Gypsies and Travellers is worse than that of the general population and poorer than that of non-Travellers living in deprived areas. Gypsies and Travellers find it difficult to access health services, the reasons for this are seen as complex; a combination of discrimination, marginalisation, and lack of trust. This lack of access is not simply because of mobility; settled Gypsies and Travellers experience the same problems. High levels of mobility may also be a consequence of frequent evictions and this is a source of considerable uncertainty and anxiety.

Welsh Government will now consider the range of options put forward by the PHW Report and decide on next steps.

2. Housing

Housing plays a fundamental role in everyone's life. Homes and the communities in which they are located, directly influence our access to key social and economic opportunities as well as affecting our well being.

Striving for greater diversity will ensure that the housing sector provides the right services and meets the right needs and aspirations of their customers in their diversity.

These challenges include meeting the demand for quality affordable housing, tackling growing homelessness, and the supply and need for housing from a population growing in a diversity of tenures.

Our Actions

Tai Pawb – self-assessment toolkit for social landlords

The Tool Kit funded by Welsh Government was published in March 2013 and developed by Tai Pawb with input from the housing association members of its steering group and Welsh Government.

The Tool Kit came into being as a direct result of findings in our Housing Association Regulatory Assessments where we found that a large number of associations were not able to clearly demonstrate fairness in lettings. This prompted a number of associations to approach Tai Pawb for support to improve their approach. Tai Pawb has done some specific project work with some associations and also formed a steering group involving a number of associations to work up a tool kit for general use.

Whilst the Tool Kit is aimed at housing association landlords, it is intended to be useful to all social landlords. The aims of the Tool Kit are set out below:

- explore the impact of allocation policies and practices on diverse groups with particular focus on groups with protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010 (Equality Act)
- inform the self assessments carried out by registered social landlords regulated by the Welsh Ministers under Part 1 of the Housing Act 1996

- meet the requirements of the Equality Act's general public sector equality duty which obliges organisations that carry out public functions to identify and tackle persistent and long standing disadvantage
- improve and deliver more appropriate services for the allocation of homes
- tackle discrimination, promote equality and lead to more inclusive and cohesive communities
- improve customer satisfaction.

Welsh Government is aware that the Tool Kit is being used by a range of social landlords and we are recommending its use to landlords who are seeking to improve their performance in relation to equalities, particularly in the area of lettings. Whilst the Tool Kit is looking specifically at lettings, some of its approaches could be applied to any service area.

3. Social Services

In Wales, 150,000 people use social services every year and demand is growing as society changes. Each individual service user is part of a network of their family friends and community and so social services reaches out beyond the individual user to that broader community too. It is even more important to ensure that services are responsive to its users and particularly in that broader context. Care and support is delivered to the people of Wales through a partnership of local authorities and the independent sector, with support from the Welsh Government.

In our Programme for Government we reconfirmed our approach that:

“Better social services will be delivered by ensuring citizens have a much stronger voice and greater control over the services they receive. We will make the way that services are delivered simpler, and by working collaboratively with others we will focus on improving the well-being of all our citizens. We will lead a shared approach with our partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors to deliver the transformational vision set out in Sustainable Social Services.”

The White Paper, Sustainable Social Services, was published in February 2011 and set out a new vision based on providing improved support leading to the best possible outcome.

Our Actions

The Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Bill

Subject to its successful passage through the National Assembly, the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Bill will:

- Strengthen powers for safeguarding of children and adults, so that vulnerable people at risk in our society can be protected more effectively.
- Allow Welsh Ministers to consider extending the range of services available by direct payments, meaning people will have more control over the services they use.

- Introduce national eligibility criteria and ensure people are assessed on what they need, rather than just on what services are available locally.
- Introduce portable assessments, which means if people move from one part of Wales to another they will not require their needs to be re-assessed if these haven't changed.
- Introduce a National Outcomes Framework to set out very clearly what children and adults can expect from social services, to measure achievements and see where improvements are needed.
- Introduce equivalent rights for carers so that people who care for someone such as an elderly or disabled relative or friend would get similar rights to the people they care for; and
- Establish a National Adoption Service to improve the outcomes of children in need of a permanent family.

The Bill will promote equality, improve the quality of services and the provision of information people receive. It will also encourage a renewed focus on prevention and early intervention.

The Bill will transform the way social services are delivered, promoting people's independence to give them stronger voice and control.

A New Improvement Framework

As part of the new improvement framework project, Welsh Government has published a well-being statement for people who need care and support and carers who need support. This has been developed with a range of stakeholders with a focus on looked after children as the first priority. A rights based approach, based on United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, has been used to develop the work. It will be an important driver in the shift to an approach which puts people at the centre, the outcomes they wish to achieve, and in giving them greater voice and control.

The Deputy Minister for Social Services published a well-being statement for people who need care and support and carers who need support on 16 April 2013. It is available on the website at:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/health/socialcare/well-being/?lang=en>

These describe what makes up well-being and the measures we will use to establish what progress is being made. These clear statements are at the heart of what we are trying to secure in delivering sustainable social services for the future. We will next look to work with carers, older people, and people with mental health issues to build a framework that is based on what matters to people and achieving positive well-being outcomes.

New Integrated Assessment for Older People

Ministerial commitment has been given to fast tracking the development of a new integrated assessment process for older people as a replacement for the Unified Assessment Process. A Task and Finish group has been established with a view to developing a streamlined assessment process, universally owned and adopted across the health and social care sector. The purpose of the work is to provide a more responsive/flexible assessment process which seeks to place the citizen/client at the centre – identify the outcomes they wish to achieve through an informed conversation, and allow for a more proportionate response and support to be made available.

The intention is to create an integrated process that would be capable of being used by requiring support for their social care needs, mental health needs and continuing health care needs. The new process will be developed and tested with stakeholders and consulted upon at two national events in Wales before being implemented by the end of the year.

Indicators

Health

Indicators are currently in development as part of the Quality Delivery Plan for the NHS in Wales 2012–16.

Public services satisfaction rates:

Health Services

The Welsh Government aims to promote, protect and improve the health and well-being of everyone in Wales by adhering to the core values that underpin the NHS in Wales, and which will help ensure the achievement of the highest possible standards in all that the NHS in Wales does.

For 2012–13, 54% of people surveyed reported that they were highly satisfied with health services in Wales. 16–24 year olds and over 75s had the highest levels of satisfaction (65% and 68%, respectively). Less than 50 per cent of both 25–44 year olds and 45–64 year olds reported being highly satisfied. Men tend to be more satisfied with health services than women (57% compared to 50%). Overall satisfaction rates for people with a long-standing illness, disability, or infirmity were not discernibly different to the rest of the survey population.

GP Access:

In 2012, 94% of GP practices now offer appointments between 5.00pm and 6.30pm at least two week nights per week. In addition, 68% of GP practices met the core hours criteria and the number of GP practices closed for half a day on one or more week days decreased from 19% in 2011 to 11% in 2012.

Housing

Number of additional affordable housing units delivered:

2,432 additional affordable housing units have been delivered in 2011–12. The average in the previous four years was 2,272. In 2012–13, the figure dropped to 2,042.

Number of empty homes brought back into use via action by Local authorities:

The number of houses brought back into use by Local authorities has risen in each of the last 4 years. In 2012–13 1,102 houses were brought into use, up from 596 in 2009–10.

Number of homeless acceptances per 1,000 households:

4.4 households per 1,000 were accepted as homeless in 2012–13. This figure has changed only slightly in the previous three years (4.3, 4.7 and 4.9, chronologically).

Social Services

Indicators are currently in development as part of the Social Services National Outcomes Framework.

Objective 7

Improve the engagement and participation of under-represented groups in public appointments

Introduction

Welsh Government is committed to increasing the number of women and other under-represented groups such as disabled people and those from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds appointed to public bodies, which include health boards, art organisations and sports bodies. We are working with a range of organisations to remove the barriers that prevent many from applying for such roles.

Why is diversity important in public appointments?			
 the key resource that organisations have are its people and therefore boards need to find and appoint the best talent	 diverse boards benefit from a range of experiences and are therefore more adaptable to new situations, providing better services to customers and stakeholders	 diverse boards are more effective, have better governance, and will improve the performance of the organisation	 boards of public bodies should reflect the people they serve if they are to be credible and command public confidence

Our Programme for Government includes commitments to:

- Identify steps to deliver a more representative pool of decision makers in public appointments.
- Seek to introduce Norwegian-style gender quotas for appointments to public bodies in Wales, ensuring that at least 40 per cent of appointments are women.

Our Actions

Sport Wales Public Appointments Case Study

By appointing more women into high profile roles we can set the right example for young girls as they look ahead to their future careers. In recent years, more women are filling key roles in both the public and private sectors, but women still make up the minority in these positions.

The Sport Wales Case Study project was established as part of the Welsh Government's commitment to increase the number of women in public appointments in Wales.

The aim of the study was to identify how changes made to the public appointments process for appointments to the Sport Wales Board in 2012 affected the outcome and to understand the reasons. The case study also aimed to determine if the changes to the process made a difference to the numbers of women who applied/who were appointed and to subsequently formulate possible next steps for addressing the under-representation of women in public appointments in Wales.

Four women and one man were appointed to the Sport Wales Board during their last appointments round.

The Sport Wales case study found that the extensive informal and formal engagement processes used in this appointments round made a difference in reaching women and in encouraging them to apply. In undertaking this, there was an understanding that many women did not see themselves as potential board members and that they lacked the confidence to apply.

The case study report was published to the Welsh Government website in December 2012. As part of their ongoing commitment to increasing the number of women in public appointments, Sport Wales have helped to develop the experience of those women who were not appointed.

Following publication of the Sport Wales case Study, Ministers wrote to Chairs of Public Sector Boards in Wales in February 2013 asking them to discuss the good practice contained in the Sport Wales Case Study with their Boards and to take action to increase diversity on their Boards. Chairs were asked to respond to Ministers by July 2013.

Indicators

% of new public appointments who are women, disabled people and ethnic minorities:

Regulated public appointments in 2012–13 show mixed fortunes for each of the protected characteristics. 54% of those appointed were women, but only 12% identified as disabled (note that 23.1% of the working-age population of Wales is disabled). Lastly, 4% of appointments were from ethnic minorities, which compares favourably to the overall number of ethnic minority people in Wales (4.2%).

Number of new public appointments disaggregated by gender/disability/ethnicity:

In 2012–13, there were 99 new public appointments. Of these, 53 were female (54%), 12 were disabled (12%) and 4 were Black Minority Ethnic (BME) (4%). These numbers are largely in line with the population breakdown, except for the disability category which is under-represented here.

Number of public reappointments disaggregated by gender/disability/ethnicity:

Public reappointments show a less even pattern in 2012–13. Out of 36, 9 were female (25%), 3 were disabled (8%) and there were no reappointments of ethnic minority people.

Number of people who apply for public appointments disaggregated by gender/disability/ethnicity:

In 2012–13, 748 people applied for public appointments. 276 of these were female (37%), 68 were disabled (9%) and 29 were from ethnic minority backgrounds (4%). Thus females and disabled people are under-represented in applications to public appointments.

Success rates at the recruitment intervals disaggregated by gender/disability/ethnicity:

As previously noted, in 2012–13 there were 748 applications for public appointments, and 99 appointments were made. Females were more successful than males (7.1% to 6%). The success rate for those who are disabled is much lower (1.6%), but still higher than the success rate of BME applicants (0.5%).

Objective 8

Create a more inclusive workplace that promotes equality of opportunity for staff with protected characteristics through improved employee engagement and increase awareness of learning and development opportunities that are accessible to all staff

Introduction

The Welsh Specific Equality Duty includes a requirement to collect and publish data on the number of people employed, recruitment information (both externally and internally), employment information by gender, training, grievances and disciplinary procedures and employees leaving the organisation. The Welsh Government captures and reports this data in its annual Employer Equality Report.

Welsh Government is committed to ensuring that staff understand the importance of equality and diversity in our organisation as soon as they join. All new permanent members of staff are required to attend a mandatory induction course which includes one day training on equality, diversity and human rights awareness which links with Welsh Government policies including our 'Dignity at Work' policy.

The organisation has an Equalities Champion, who sits on the Welsh Government Board. In addition to this, each Directorate has an Equality Lead who is responsible for supporting the delivery of a progressive diversity agenda within their respective business area. The role is wide ranging and responsibility varies within each Directorate, from co-ordinating training events, ensuring that key equality messages are shared with colleagues to advising on the impact of equality legislation within their departments. This year they have been actively engaged in refreshing and updating the equality impact assessment (EIA) template and associated guidance as well as piloting the new EIA training to ensure that the training is accessible, easy to understand and covers all relevant information in the EIA process from a layman's perspective.

Our Actions

Following the introduction of our Welsh Specific Equality Duties, Welsh Government has continued to take steps to advance equality and diversity in our workplace ensuring that all staff have equality of opportunity to learn and develop.

Civil Service Diversity Strategy

We have delivered a number of actions this year which reflect the principles within the Civil Service Diversity Strategy. These include:

- A Positive Measures Action Plan, agreed by the Board in April 2013. This included a commitment to develop a Welsh Government Diversity Strategy for implementation in

2014. This Strategy will co-ordinate all work streams for advancing workplace equalities and communicate a meaningful and visible direction to staff.

- Our Public Service Leadership Group recommended that public service organisations in Wales should have a domestic abuse workplace policy in place. In response we have strengthened our Domestic Abuse Policy to broaden inclusion of the issues of violence against women and sexual violence. This also reflects the scope of the proposals in the Government's White Paper on legislation to end Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence.

Diversity Networks

The Welsh Government supports and encourages four Staff Diversity Networks. These networks give under-represented groups a voice. They offer networking opportunities to provide a different sort of support to colleagues than is normally available. It's a chance to meet others in the same position, and to share issues and ideas. They also act as an advisory body to internal policy makers, and offer opportunities for staff to gain or develop new skills.

Our four staff networks are:

Disability Awareness and Support (DAAS)

DAAS has been in existence since 2002. The group acts as a support network for disabled staff as well as providing support to Welsh Government policy makers.

The Minority Ethnic Staff Network (MESN)

MESN is the network for staff from minority ethnic backgrounds. The network actively seeks to support its members to achieve their full potential; to contribute to making their experience of working for the Welsh Government one that positively benefits our communities as well as helping to develop individual learning. We promote a zero tolerance position towards racism.

Women's Network (Women Together)

Women Together, the Welsh Government women's network is an inclusive network for men and women working at all levels of the organisation. Through the range of events and activities hosted, the network aims to provide opportunities to help individuals to fulfil their potential through connecting, learning and sharing with others.

Rainbow Network

The Rainbow Network is the Welsh Government's sexual orientation and gender identity staff network that supports staff who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or gender variant.

The Rainbow Network supports lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and gender variant staff. We work in partnership with the organisation to create a safe, inclusive and diverse working environment that encourages a culture of respect and equality for all in order that everyone can reach their full potential without fear of discrimination.

The network provides confidential advice, support and developmental opportunities, as well as offering social networking opportunities for members.

To support the Welsh Government commitment to engaging with staff and ensuring inclusive workplace practices, a Partnership Agreement has been put in place with the Staff Diversity Networks. Furthermore, we have given additional support to the Staff Diversity Networks, with an agreed £1000 budget allocated to each network, as well as 10 hours of organisational time for each network to undertake its activities.

Work Placements

We are currently participating in the following placement schemes:

Windsor Fellowship

This is a 8 week and 50 week placements for BME undergraduates who complete 8 weeks in their second year at university and when they graduate a 50 week placement. We have 2 students each year on a rolling programme. One student would be on their 8 week placement and the other on their 50 week placement.

Cabinet Office Summer Diversity Internships

These are 9 week placements for undergraduates/recent graduates who are thinking of applying for the Fast Stream and are from ethnic minority backgrounds or from socio-economically deprived backgrounds.

People Survey 2012

An engagement exercise with disabled colleagues was undertaken in April and May 2012 in response to the continued lower scores posted by disabled staff in the People Survey. Feedback focused on a perceived lack of understanding and awareness of disability by line managers and the need for more engagement with disabled colleagues before policies/processes are implemented. As well as the actions described below under “Learning & Development”, a HR Quality Assurance Stakeholder Reference Group has been established in order to improve engagement with disabled colleagues.

In the People Survey, 7% of staff said they had experienced discrimination at work, and 6% said they had experienced bullying and harassment over the past 12 months.

In response to this action, all HR Case Advisors have had Equalities and Diversity training in order to be able to assist individuals who report these cases and provide the correct advice and support.

Diversity Awards

In October 2012, the Welsh Government-led HRCymru project won a prestigious national award for its work in joining up the Human Resources (HR) community across public service organisations in Wales.

The Award was for the ‘Managing HR Across Boundaries’ category for the HRCymru project, delivered by People Places and Corporate Services, in conjunction with HR colleagues from across the public services in Wales.

Mind Matters, the Welsh Government's peer-led support group for good mental health, won the 'Innovation in Employment Practices' category in the Civil Service Diversity and Equality Awards in September 2012.

Learning and Development

Development of an e-learning update course on Equality and Diversity is underway, to be delivered from December 2013 and revisited every two years. A proposal is being developed to make this mandatory for all staff.

Employer Equality Annual Report 2012–13

Regulation 9 of the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, requires listed authorities to collect and publish certain employment information each year for their workforce, including that information broken down in respect of each protected characteristic. Regulation 16(2)(f) permits the employment information to be captured in a separate report from the Annual Equality Report, providing that separate report has already been published by the time the Annual Equality Report is published.

The Welsh Government publishes its Employer Equality Annual Report by 31 March each year which provides an overview of the work undertaken to progress equality and diversity in the workplace. This includes:

- Workforce data.
- Recruitment and outreach activity.
- Training provision.
- Activities aimed at supporting an inclusive environment.

The Employer Equality Annual Report for 2012–13 is anticipated to be published as a separate document in March 2014 and will be annexed to this report when it is published.

Indicators

People Survey engagement index by protected group:

The People Survey is a tool for measuring staff engagement levels. The engagement index is calculated from the responses to the following statements:

- I am proud when I tell others I am part of the organisation.
- I would recommend the organisation as a great place to work.
- I feel a strong personal attachment to the organisation.
- The organisation inspires me to do the best in my job.
- The organisation motivates me to help it achieve its objectives.

The mean engagement index for the Welsh Government was 61%. The index for males was slightly lower than females (59% : 64%). Those who reported a long-term illness (physical or mental health) also had a slightly lower index (59% : 62%). No effect was observed for working pattern (full/part-time) or for those with caring responsibilities for a child or adult. Some comparisons have not been reported here due to statistical and confidentiality issues associated with small group sizes.

Participation in training and talent management programmes by protected group:

Women take 56% of places in training and talent management programmes, in line with their overall numbers at Welsh Government. Non-white people account for 3.4% of places; 6.4% are disabled people; and 5.2% are not heterosexual. For these three characteristics, people from protected characteristics are slightly over-represented in training.

46% of places are taken by those who are married or in a civil partnership, excluding non-respondents. Including the latter, the figure is 31%.

37% of places are taken by Christians and 29% by those with another religion. 29% also preferred not to declare, and 2.8% had no religion.

The ages of those taking part in training is slightly younger, with a peak around the ages of 30–49 (42% of trainees), and lower numbers at the younger and older extremes.

Feedback from the implementation of reasonable adjustments:

- Welsh Government makes every endeavour to meet the needs of staff that require reasonable adjustments. Over the last two years, the number of staff who have required such adjustments has risen considerably and we have ensured that we have met the needs of staff who have been identified as requiring an adjustment.
- These adjustments have included keyboards, mice, dictation software, hearing software and mobility scooters for use within the office.
- The Occupational Health Team whose role includes leading on the implementation of reasonable adjustments, work closely with the Welsh Government's Disability Awareness and Support group who fully support their work.

Take up rate of equality and diversity courses:

More women than men take up equality and diversity courses (60%), while white people account for 98% (of declared respondents) on these courses. Similarly, 96% of attendees are non-disabled, and 97% are heterosexual. 28% of respondents are married or in a civil partnership (37% excluding non-responders).

Christians account for 44% of attendees. Those with another religion account for 20%, while those who preferred not to say account for 21%. Those with no religion are over-represented on this type of training, account for 10% of attendees.

Finally, the age profile for attendees on these courses is quite different to the overall Welsh Government distribution. Attendees peak at the younger end of the range, with 50% of attendees under 34 and 20% under 24.

Effectiveness of Welsh Government Actions to Fulfill the Equality Objectives

The equality objectives seek to address long standing, deeply entrenched and often inter-generational inequalities for those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. It is therefore imperative that the actions to address these inequalities have a long term focus; a truly equal and inclusive Wales will take a considerable time to achieve but we intend to show measurable progress towards that end.

In order to measure progress against the equality objectives, where appropriate, indicators have been established and referenced in this report. Where indicators are still in development as part of specific strategies, this is also made clear within the relevant equality objective in this report. The indicators are intended to set the baseline in this first year of reporting progress against the equality objectives. The actions which have progressed the equality objectives, considered alongside the indicators, demonstrate our effectiveness in this reporting period. We acknowledge that often significant change may not be immediate but, should nevertheless, be steady and measurable.

We are confident that the actions identified in this report to fulfil each objective are, in this first year of the Strategic Equality Plan, illustrating that they are effectively working towards the achievement of each of the objectives. It is still early days and we are aware that there is much yet to be achieved. We are committed to ensuring that we have the right actions in place to take forward and ultimately accomplish each equality objective; we will keep the actions and progress made under review and this, in turn, will inform our Annual Reports.

Chapter 4 – Looking Ahead

With the Welsh Specific Equality Duties, we have a unique opportunity to deliver practical outcomes through our Equality Objectives which really matter and which go to the heart of equality, anti-discrimination and good relations between people in Wales.

The Welsh Specific Equality Duties have only been in force for a relatively short space of time and already we can see the difference they have made on the ground across the public sector. However there are many challenges ahead as much inequality is deeply entrenched over many generations.

The Government is committed to following our own distinct equality path. We want Wales to be a country built on fairness and equality. 2013–14 will see the launch of the new Equality and Inclusion Grant 2014 – 2017. Up to £1.6m of funding will be available annually to charities and third sector organisations for projects tackling inequality and discrimination, and helping make Wales a fairer place.

Following on from our Advice Services Review, we have invited the Independent Advice Providers Forum to propose a way forward for advice services in Wales beyond April 2014. This, in turn, will help the Welsh Government develop its thinking around how advice services can best be supported and delivered in the future.

Childcare policy development and activities are being taken forward in the Building a Brighter Future: Early Years and Childcare Plan. The Plan sets the direction of travel for the early years over the next ten years. Together the actions will support our drive to tackle poverty, reduce inequalities and support economic growth. This includes activity to address the quality, affordability, flexibility of childcare along with Welsh Medium provision. As part of the Plan, we are committed to developing indicators to measure progress.

Flying Start is one of the Welsh Government's top priorities and we have committed to doubling the number of children and their families benefiting from the Flying Start programme from 18,000 to 36,000. To support this commitment, an additional £55 million funding has been made available over the course of three years.

Given the on-going economic challenges we face as a country, we are committed to ensuring the best possible opportunities exist for maximising youth engagement and progression in Wales. This will be taken forward in the new Youth Engagement and Progression Framework Implementation Plan.

Under Welsh Government's Annual Remit with Estyn for 2013–14 we have commissioned Estyn to conduct a review on engagement and participation barriers facing Black, ethnic and disabled groups entering the apprenticeship programme and simultaneously pinpoint good practice models and approaches. In addition Estyn will identify and report on any specific occupational sectors where ethnicity, disability and/or gender issues present potential barriers, including a review of gender balance within occupational sectors. The timescale for completion of this review is January 2015.

Our Tackling Hate Crime Framework will be consulted upon this autumn ensuring that the final version of the Framework will be launched in Spring 2014. This will be alongside an accompanying delivery plan which will be focussed across 8 key delivery areas within the Framework. Furthermore, we will be introducing the Ending Violence against Women and Domestic Abuse (Wales) Bill in summer 2014.

We have taken a strategic approach to disability in Wales with the publication of our Framework for Action on Independent Living. Through this Framework we are committed to taking action to bring down barriers and restrictions that prevent people achieving what they want and living how they wish.

We are aware that there are challenges in accessing and using health services for certain protected groups, for example, BME women, and this will be addressed through the more specific delivery plans, for example cancer and cardiac, as outlined in the outcome framework in the Quality Delivery Plan for the NHS in Wales.

Within Welsh Government, we will be introducing a Positive Measures Action Plan. The actions in the Plan will be wide ranging and focus on equality and diversity issues across Welsh Government. Work is already underway to improve our work placement programmes and to continue to put in place robust equalities and diversity training for all our staff.

Our actions to date could not have been achieved in isolation. The way forward is to emphasise our positive vision of the kind of country we want Wales to be for future generations. We can only achieve this working together in partnership, both within Welsh Government and across the public and third sectors to ensure we lead the way on equality, fairness and inclusion in Wales.

Annex

Relevant Information

We are aware that the evidence around particular protected characteristics is very limited, which makes it extremely difficult to assess accurately the potential impact of our policies, strategies and spending decisions on those protected groups. Our collation of equality information as part of the actions within our Strategic Equality Plan and our continual equality impact assessment of our policies and strategies together with engagement with protected groups is helping to improve the evidence base.

Gender

There remain key differences between men and women in the world of employment. Evidence shows that women in Wales face a disadvantage related to gender in terms of education, employment and earnings¹, and are more likely to state that childcare is a barrier to participation in learning or work². Economic inactivity is higher for women than men, women are three times more likely to work part time than men³ and are more likely to work in lower paid jobs (with average full-time hourly earnings 92 per cent that for men in Wales⁴). Around two thirds of public sector employees in Wales are women⁵. Conversely, unemployment is higher for men, and the employment impact of the recent recession has disproportionately fallen on men⁶.

In 2011/12, the percentage of adult females in the UK in relative low income (i.e. they receive less than 60 per cent of the average income in the year in question), after Housing Costs, was higher than adult males (38 per cent versus 35 per cent)⁷.

In terms of health outcomes, life expectancy at birth in Wales increased between the periods 2005–07 and 2009–11 for both males and females. Life expectancy at birth remains higher for females than males at 82.2 years and 78.0 years respectively (2009–11).

The Welsh Health Survey (2012) shows that 52 per cent of males (aged 16+) reported that their health in general was excellent or very good, while 19 per cent reported fair or poor general health. Compared to males, a lower proportion of females (48 per cent) reported that their health in general was excellent or very good, while a higher proportion reported fair or poor general health (28 per cent). A higher proportion of women (29 per cent) also reported having 2 or more illnesses compared to men (24 per cent).

¹ 'An Anatomy of Economic Inequality in Wales' Davies R, et al., 2011 (WISERD/RRS 002)

² 'Equality issues in Wales: a research review' Winckler V (editor), 2009 (EHRC Research Report 11)

³ Annual Population Survey

⁴ Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings April 2012

⁵ Annual Population Survey

⁶ Annual Population Survey

⁷ Households Below Average Income, 2011/12

The Welsh Government remains committed to mainstreaming tackling gender inequality in its decisions and programmes. Within our Strategic Equality Plan, Objective 2 contains actions to address the causes of pay and employment differences with accessible and affordable childcare as one of the Welsh Governments top priorities. Objective 7 seeks to improve the participation of women and underrepresented groups in public appointments and The Sports Wales Case Study project was established as part of our commitment to progress this objective.

Disability

Disabled people face different disabling barriers from inaccessible physical environments, inaccessible services and negative attitudes. The Welsh Government is committed to removing these barriers so that disabled people have the opportunity to live independent lives within their communities.

Statistical evidence is most often based on the medical model of disability rather than the Social Model (the former focuses on disabled people's impairments, the latter on those aspects of the physical environment, attitudes and services that present disabling barriers). Given the dearth of robust evidence on disability, the Welsh Government has to use data which has a medical model approach – we are seeking to be able to move to a more social model approach.

Nearly 1 in 4 people report their day-to-day activities being limited by 'a long-term health problem or disability'⁸, and around 1 in 5 of the working age population are disabled according to the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) definition⁹. The proportion of the disabled population in Wales with no qualifications is more than twice that of the non-disabled population and the proportion with a degree less than half. Research¹⁰ shows that the major impact of disability status is on employment rates: disabled people are four and a half times more likely than non-disabled people to be neither employed nor in full-time education. Those in employment are also more likely to be low paid than non-disabled people.

Disabled people are often excluded and disadvantaged in society. This inequality is often further compounded as disabled people and their families are at greater risk of living in poverty (people living in households with a disabled working-age adult face higher rates of relative low income¹¹).

In the Strategic Equality Plan objective 5 is working to tackle barriers and support disabled people so that they can live independently and exercise choice and control in their daily lives.

⁸ 2011 Census

⁹ Annual Population Survey (pre Equality Act 2010)

¹⁰ 'An Anatomy of Economic Inequality in Wales', Davies R et al. (2011) (WISERD/RRS002)

¹¹ Households Below Average Income, 2011/12

Race and Ethnicity

Wales has a rich and diverse population. Between 2009 and 2012, the proportion of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) people in Wales increased from 3.7% to 4.2%¹². The Welsh Government Draft Budget for 2014–15 reflects our commitment to promote race equality and good relations between people of different ethnic origins/backgrounds.

There are particular challenges around evidence on BME people in Wales. Analysis is difficult owing to the considerable variation between and within ethnic minority groups so that overall conclusions on 'BME people' are not particularly helpful in policy terms and that it is important to look at the different experiences or particular BME people. However, the relatively small numbers of these groups makes it difficult to identify robust data and evidence. In general, adults in non-white ethnic groups are more likely to be economically inactive students or looking after the home/family; but if economically active, are more likely to be unemployed¹³. Evidence¹⁴ suggests that it is the Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnic groups which experience the greatest level of disadvantage in Wales, and this is true across all outcomes in Wales. Across the UK, individuals living in households headed by someone from an ethnic minority faced higher rates of relative low income¹⁵, the highest level being 53% for the Pakistani ethnic group (as opposed to 19% for the White ethnic group). Some evidence suggests that ethnicity has an impact on educational outcomes at all levels in many parts of the UK including Wales. For example, Davies et al. (2011) have analysed the educational achievement of school children by ethnic background. The analysis shows that the highest achieving pupils in Wales are Chinese, and are more than twice as likely to achieve a grade C or above in all core subjects at GCSE than Black Caribbean and Black African pupils (who are the lowest achieving pupils). Furthermore, Black Caribbean and Black African pupils tend to achieve poorly at all Key Stages. Other ethnic groups also vary significantly in terms of their educational achievement. For example, Bangladeshi pupils are amongst the lowest achieving pupils while Indian pupils are amongst the highest achieving pupils.

Croke and Crowley (2007) also identify that educational attainment is significantly below average for the following groups: working class white boys, children from Gypsy and Traveller and Roma backgrounds, Black ethnic groups and some Asian ethnic groups.

EALAW (2003) found that low achievement for most ethnic minority groups is more pronounced in secondary than in primary school. They suggest that a number of factors may affect educational inequality among ethnic groups including proficiency in English; gender; Special Educational Needs (SEN); attendance; time in UK; parental education and literacy; and socio-economic background. Indeed, Briggs et al. (2006) found that few significant differences in ethnic minority students' scores in Wales are reported when poverty in particular is taken into account.

¹² Annual Population Survey

¹³ 2001 Census

¹⁴ *An Anatomy of Economic Inequality in Wales* Davies R, et al., 2011 (WISERD/RRS 002)

¹⁵ Households Below Average Income, 2009/10–2011/12

With regards to general health, findings from the Policy Studies Institute Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities (1993–1994) show that those of Pakistani origin and Bangladeshi origin were 50 per cent more likely to have described their health as fair or poor compared with whites. Those of Caribbean origin were also more likely than whites to have reported fair or poor health.

Aspinall (2006) notes that there is a lack of research comparing the generic health status of the Gypsy and Traveller Community with the population in general. One of the few studies available found the self-assessed health status of Gypsy and Travellers was significantly poorer than that in the lower socio-economic UK population group. Aspinall also acknowledges that a number of studies in the UK, Ireland and Europe have reported significantly lower life expectancy and higher perinatal and infant mortality rates amongst the Gypsy and Traveller population than the general population.

In the Strategic Equality Plan, objective 1 is to strengthen advice, information and advocacy services to help people with protected characteristics understand and exercise their rights and make informed choices. Objective 2 seeks to work with partners to identify and address the causes of the gender, ethnicity and disability pay and employment differences. The actions in objective 3 are working to reduce the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training and objective 6 puts the needs of service users at the heart of delivery in key public services, in particular health, housing and social services, so that they are responsive to the needs of people with protected characteristics.

Objective 4 is substantially being taken forward as part of the Tackling Hate Crimes and Incidents: A Framework for Action (currently out to consultation). It is intended to have positive impacts for BME people in Wales, aiming to tackle the prejudice that people might face. Positive work has been undertaken during the consultation to assess the views and experiences of BME communities in Wales, this has included consultation events with a BME forum in Swansea and focus groups organised by ABCD Cymru to assess views and to feed information and experiences into the develop of key areas for action within the Framework. Further development of key delivery areas across three objectives around prevention, supporting victims and improving the operational response is being taken forward and a final version of the Framework alongside a supporting delivery plan will be launched in Spring 2014. The views of young Gypsies and Travellers across Wales have also been taken into account during the consultation period and there will be ongoing work with the Welsh Government's Wales Race Forum which will be fed into future initiatives within the delivery plan to assess the impact across BME communities in Wales.

Age

Youth unemployment is considerably higher than that for older age groups (21% for 16–24 year olds compared to 6.1% for 25–49 year olds in 2012–13). Younger workers were particularly adversely affected during the recent recession. Children have higher than average rates of relative low income¹⁶, and households with children in the bottom half of the income distribution are the largest proportionate beneficiaries from total public expenditure¹⁷.

Youth unemployment is considerably higher than that for older age groups (21% for 16–24 year olds compared to 6.1% for 25–49 year olds in 2012–13). Younger workers were particularly adversely affected during the recent recession. Children have higher than average rates of relative low income¹⁸, and households with children in the bottom half of the income distribution are the largest proportionate beneficiaries from total public expenditure¹⁹.

There is an increasing aging population in Wales. In 2011, 18.5% of the population were aged 65 and over, but this is predicted to increase to 21.7% by 2020²⁰. Over the lifecycle of a representative household, net benefits rise when that household has children, fall when it does not and rises again at retirement (retired households receive the highest amount of health expenditure per household).

Within the Strategic Equality Plan objective 3 actions are being progressed to reduce the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training. Objective 6 puts the needs of service users at the heart of delivery in key public services, in particular health, housing and social services, so that they are responsive to the needs of people with protected characteristics.

Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB)

Information and evidence regarding the impact of our decisions on people who identify themselves as lesbian, gay or bisexual is limited. This is because of lack of information collected on sexual identity and also on the personal nature of this information and fear of discrimination which may mean some LGB people are reluctant to disclose sexual identity.

However, the integrated Household Survey 2011 provides some data on self-reported sexual identity, with 95.1% of Welsh Adults reporting themselves as heterosexual, 1.2% as gay/lesbian/bisexual, 2.6% refusing a response or responding “don’t know”, 0.9% providing no response, and 0.3% responding otherwise. Caution should be applied to estimates generated from this data, however, as reluctance to disclose may well result in underestimation of the size of the LGB population.

¹⁶ Households Below Average Income 2011/12

¹⁷ Volterra (2009) the Fiscal Landscape: Understanding Contributions and Benefits

¹⁸ Households Below Average Income 2011/12

¹⁹ Volterra (2009) the Fiscal Landscape: Understanding Contributions and Benefits

²⁰ Local Authority Population Projections for Wales, 2011

'How Fair is Wales' by EHRC in 2011 highlights that people in Wales are amongst the least likely in the UK to agree that anti-gay prejudice should be tackled, a fifth (22%) think a lesbian or gay person is unsuitable to be a teacher, 17% think it is acceptable for a bed and breakfast establishment to turn down a booking from a lesbian or gay couple, and more than a quarter (26%) would be unhappy about a close relative marrying or forming a long-term partnership with someone of the same sex.

Objective 4 within the Strategic Equality Plan specific focuses on tackling hate crime. In delivery of this, Tackling Hate Crimes and Incidents: A Framework for Action (currently out to consultation) is intended to have positive impacts for LGB people in Wales, aiming to tackle the prejudice that people might face. Positive work has been undertaken with Stonewall Cymru to assess the views and experiences of LGB communities in Wales, this has included consultation events to assess views and to feed information and experiences into the develop of key areas for action within the Framework. Further development of key delivery areas across three objectives around prevention, supporting victims and improving the operational response is being taken forward and a final version of the Framework alongside a supporting delivery plan will be launched in Spring 2014. Further consultation and views are being sought during the consultation period through existing LGB Forums across Wales and with further work and support with Stonewall Cymru. This information will be fed into future initiatives within the delivery plan to assess the impact across LGB people in Wales.

Transgender

The same difficulties that are faced in assessing the impacts on LGB people in Wales are apparent for evidence gathering and assessing the impacts of our decisions on people who are transgender. Every attempt has been made to ensure people are not discriminated against because they are transgender, and that our decisions do not have any known impacts on transgender people. Positive decisions include:

- The Time to Change policy within the Together for Mental Health Strategy, which aims to reduce and eliminate discrimination and stigma towards mental health, which is often compounded when combined with other protected groups that are more likely to experience discrimination, for example transgender and transsexual people.
- Support of the work on eradicating Violence against Women in Wales, extends to people who are transgender and experience domestic violence.
- Research has been undertaken on Hate Crime in housing, and the Hate Crime Toolkit subsequently developed will be beneficial to Transgender people.

Within the SEP objective 4 on tackling hate crime is substantially being taken forward through the Tackling Hate Crimes and Incidents: A Framework for Action (currently out to consultation). It is intended to further eliminate discrimination against transgender and transsexual people. Work has been undertaken to explore hate experienced by gender identity with two stakeholder meetings during the pre-consultation period with the support of Unique Cymru and VALREC. Further work and the impact of the framework is being taken forward during the consultation period of the Framework with local forums. This information will be fed into future initiatives with the delivery plan to assess the impact across gender identity people in Wales. The Framework identifies that gender identity is historically one of the lowest forms of recorded hate crime and research being launched by the All Wales

Hate Crime and Research being launched by the All Wales Hate Crime Research Project will identify that the most serious forms of hate crimes can take place across this protected characteristic.

Religion and Belief

In the 2011 Census, 58% of Welsh residents stated their religion as Christian, 1.5% as Muslim, and lower numbers of around 1% in total stated various other religions (32% stated “no religion”, 8% did not state a religion). Further evidence is however limited for this protected characteristic, making it difficult to accurately assess our impacts. However, continued engagement, such as that undertaken in the Faith Communities Forum which is chaired by the First Minister, has informed our decision making in many areas, and provided for us best practice to follow in future decision making and subsequent engagement.

Amongst decisions which will promote equality on religion and faith are:

- The Human Transplantation (Wales) Bill has the potential to have a positive impact on all groups in Wales, reducing the waiting time for planned organ donation in Wales and increasing the supply of organs available for donation. Differences in opinion towards organ donation because of faith or religion, have been identified and will be respected in the means of how the opt in/out function will operate and the communication of this issue.
- Local Environment Wales and Keep Wales Tidy have supported the collaborative working of church and religious groups across Wales working to improve local environmental quality.

As with other protected groups, the Tackling Hate Crime and Incidents: A Framework for Action will act to reduce and tackle discrimination against people on the basis of their faith or religion.

Positive work has been undertaken before the consultation was published which involved working with representatives of the Inter-faith Council for Wales to assess the views and experiences of faith communities. Faith groups were actively encouraged to attend consultation events which have been held throughout Wales. There will be ongoing work with the Interfaith Council of Wales which will be fed into future initiatives within the delivery plan to assess the impact across faith communities in Wales.