


# Corporate Equality Policy



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**Huntingdonshire**  
d i s t r i c t c o u n c i l

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## Further Information

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## 1. Introduction

The Council recognises that some people do not have equal access to our services or information about them. To ensure fairness and equity in the provision of our services, some services may need to be developed in the recognition of different needs.

To meet our priorities of providing high quality services and effective community leadership the Council understands that:

- Huntingdonshire is made up of many different groups of people who have different needs and aspirations
- Huntingdonshire comprises many different communities; some of these communities represent a geographical location others a shared interest or need
- equality does not mean doing the same for everyone
- to make progress we must target resources to meet the greatest needs

This policy sets out the Council's aims and objectives for equality, the accompanying action plan sets out the corporate and directorate actions and targets. This policy is supported by the more detailed policies of:

- Race Equality Scheme
- Disability Equality Scheme
- Gender Equality Scheme
- HR Employment Equality Policy

## 2. About Huntingdonshire

Huntingdonshire is a large rural district, which covers an area of approximately 910 square kilometres (approximately 350 square miles). Nearly 162,000 people live in the district, with about 45% of the population living in the 4 market towns of Huntingdon, Ramsey, St Ives and St Neots.

Overall we have a relatively low proportion of people from a black or minority ethnic background (BME) and levels of deprivation or social exclusion are generally low. We know that, generally:

- the local economy is strong
- unemployment is low
- educational attainment is above the national average (based on pupils obtaining 5 or more GCSE's grades A-C)
- income is above the national average (but below the regional average)
- our houses are in a good condition
- there are relatively low levels of crime.

More detailed information from the 2001 Census and other research can be found in appendix 4 and this suggests that deprivation and social exclusion does affect small sections of our communities. The Council therefore accepts the need to undertake further work to be able to understand the diversity of need within the district.

### 3. Our Commitment

This corporate equality policy shows how the Council will translate its statutory responsibilities into objectives and actions in respect of equalities. In particular it takes account of:

- Current and expected equalities legislation relating to gender, disability, race, religion, sexuality and age
- The Equality Standard for Local Government (Equality Standard) which has been adopted by the Council and the action plan to achieve Level 2 of the Equality Standard by March 2007
- The Council's existing Equality & Inclusion Strategy which this policy now updates and replaces.

This policy forms the basis of our commitment to the Equality Standard and allows the Council to take a coordinated approach. The Equality Standard will:

- Help us to mainstream equality with both service delivery and employment
- Help us to meet our obligations under the law
- Integrate equalities policies and objectives with Best Value/CPA
- Encourage the development of anti-discrimination practice appropriate to local circumstances
- Prevent institutionalised discrimination where it exists
- Provide a framework for improving performance over time

There are five levels to the Equality Standard and the Council is confident that it has achieved its target of reaching Level 2 by March 2007. An action plan for achieving Level 3 is currently being developed.

The Council recognises that discrimination or exclusion cannot always be dealt with as a single issue. Different strands, particularly those relating to race, disability, age, religious beliefs, sexuality orientation, rural isolation, gender and deprivation, may combine to cause inequality and social exclusion. Please refer to appendix 3 for an outline of the law relating to equality and inclusion.

This policy has incorporated a Corporate Equality Action Plan, which sets out clear targets and timetables for achieving these and shows how the Council's commitment will be translated into action.

The Council is committed to equality of opportunity in relation to employment and access to training and development. We achieve this equity and fairness by means of HR best practice which is detailed in our HR Equality Policy.

### 4. Council Objectives

Providing leadership in our communities is one of the Council's important roles. An important part of this leadership role is to promote equality, inclusion and the benefits that come from understanding and valuing diversity in our communities.

Our Corporate Plan ‘Growing Success’ includes an objective to “*strengthen our commitment and capacity to achieve equality, diversity and inclusion.* We intend to do this by:

- maintaining or establishing statutory equality schemes which consider gender, race and disability equality issues and the needs of disadvantaged groups at all levels of services, policies and practices
- ensuring that our employment practices provide equality of opportunity and do not discriminate against any individual

## 5. Activities to help us achieve our objectives

We also need to ensure that we understand the diverse needs of local people, that our services meet those needs and that they are provided in a fair and accessible way.

To contribute towards meeting these objectives we have set a target of achieving Level 2 of the Equality Standard by March 2007 and to have an action plan in place for the achievement of Level 3. This policy also identifies two outcomes that we need to achieve and two measures that will tell us how successful we are —

Outcome	Measure	Achievement 2006	Target (2008)
That our services are provided in ways that meet diverse local needs	% of local people who believe that Council services meet their needs	*	*75%
That the Council is recognised for promoting equality and inclusion in communities	% of local people who believe that the Council promotes equality and inclusion in their community.	64%	70%
* This will be a re-worded question in our next Annual Survey (2008) therefore there is no baseline data, however we do have comparative data from previous years which has allowed us to provide a target of 75%			

To help us achieve our overall objective, which is to strengthen our commitment to and capacity to achieve equality, diversity and inclusion in our communities and in the way we provide our services; we will measure our progress against the Equality Standard. To achieve this objective we have identified a number of activities to develop and improve the way we work. We will: –

- consult and engage with our communities
- plan and deliver appropriate services
- support our communities
- develop and support employees and Councillors
- monitor and evaluate our performance

## **Consult and engage with our communities, staff and stakeholder groups**

To ensure that we understand the diversity of the needs of local people, we have identified the following actions. We will:

- use appropriate methods of communication and consultation to engage with different communities and individuals, in accordance with our Consultation and Engagement Strategy
- use appropriate methods of communication and consultation to engage with trade unions, staff associations and employees on all aspects of equality policy
- use national and local data, particularly from other local authorities and community or voluntary agencies, to increase our understanding of local need
- use information from our established complaints procedure

## **Plan and deliver appropriate services**

To ensure that our services are available to all that need them and are delivered in an appropriate way we have identified the following actions. We will:

- ensure that each directorate and service area is committed to equality self assessment, scrutiny and audit
- use the information from listening, consulting and engaging with our communities to plan and deliver services
- avoid discrimination when designing, delivering or charging for services
- conduct an equality impact assessment each time the Council develops a new policy or changes an existing policy (a programme to impact assess existing policies, practices, services and functions has been developed)
- ensure that information about services is published widely and in ways that will help local people to use them
- continue to assess and review ways of making services more accessible
- ensure that our partners adopt the same approach to equality and social inclusion via our Partnership Framework

## **Support our communities**

To ensure that we promote equality and inclusion in our communities we have identified the following actions. We will:

- ensure that our communities have access to and information about our services
- consult, when relevant, local people in planning for our services
- support democratically elected representatives to support communities and individuals
- ensure that Council policies do not discriminate directly or indirectly against any groups in our community
- identify and address unmet needs and gaps in services where appropriate
- identify socially excluded groups and develop measures to promote inclusion
- ensure that community and welfare rights information is easily available

- endeavour to engage with and support voluntary, community and charitable organisations and social enterprises where appropriate.

## **Develop and support employees and Councillors**

To ensure that our employees and employment practices contribute to the outcomes of this strategy we have identified the following actions, we will:

- implement a separate HR Equality Policy, which promotes equality and diversity in our workforce. We will then be able to:
  - develop our employees and Councillors to help them promote equality and inclusion in our communities
  - identify clear responsibilities for equality within the Council (Appendix I)
  - provide guidance to help employees and Councillors ensure that policies, strategies and plans are fair
  - help employees and Councillors to recognise and prevent discrimination
  - allocate funds specifically for the purpose of equality training for employees so that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to implement this policy
  - help employees and Councillors comply with the requirements of all relevant legislation and good practice guidance.

## **Monitor and evaluate our performance**

To ensure we are making progress we have identified the following actions. We will:

- monitor our performance against Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI's) and local measures
- use self-assessment, accreditation and the scrutiny process to measure progress against the Equality Standard and corporate equality action plan
- individual services and the Equality steering group will produce annual progress reports and update action plans to ensure continued progress against the various levels of the Equality Standard
- use the Council's comprehensive performance management framework to monitor performance against this policy and actions and targets that arise out of Equality Impact Assessments
- use the Equality Standard, and Equality Impact Assessments to collect and publish evidence of good practice throughout the Council.



## Resources and Responsibilities

All Councillors, employees and others who work on behalf of the council have a duty or responsibility to implement the outcomes of this policy through the action plan. Particular responsibilities include:

### Councillors

Councillors will support this policy and work towards the promotion of equalities and social inclusion in all council and community activities.

### Chief Executive

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the implementation of the corporate equality policy and action plan for the Council as a whole.

### Directors

Directors have a duty to promote the corporate equality policy and action plan throughout their directorates. They also have responsibility to ensure the implementation, review, monitoring and performance of departmental equality action plans and targets, self assessment and audit specific to services that fall within their directorate.

### Services

Heads of service, activity managers and team leaders are responsible for implementing the policy and action plan in the day-to-day delivery of their service, including the collection of data. They will also be responsible for developing and implementing departmental action plans and targets that translate the corporate equality action plan into more detailed actions that link into the policies and services they deliver. They will also be responsible for self assessment and audit.

### Employees

All employees have a responsibility to implement the policy and action plan and work towards the provision of services that meet the goals and objectives of the policy and action plan. Appropriate training will be provided to help employees achieve this.

### Head of Policy

The Head of Policy will ensure that the policy is reviewed every 3 years and the action plan is reviewed regularly, and will evaluate and verify performance data that has been provided.

### Procurement

As part of the development of the Equality Standard we will be reviewing our Procurement Strategy to ensure that contractors and others conform to the Council's expected standards.

## Corporate Equality steering group

The cross-departmental equality steering group will co-ordinate the following action to support the achievement of this policy:

- promote a corporate perspective on equality issues including the implementation of new equalities legislation
- overseeing the progress of work against this action plan
- collecting information from each directorate on the progress being made
- produce regular reports to Chief Officers, Overview & Scrutiny Panel and Cabinet in relation to progress being made in relation to the action plan

## Review of corporate equality policy

This policy will be reviewed fully every three years. The action plan will be reviewed on an annual basis; these reviews will be conducted by the corporate equality steering group. New legislative requirements will be incorporated and best practice recommendations considered at appropriate times.

## Dissemination of the policy and action plan

- the policy will be published
- upon request a summary document will be made available in a range of formats and languages
- a copy of the policy and summary will be available for all staff
- applicants for Council posts will be made aware of the policy and it will form part of the induction programme for new members of staff

## Definitions

The Council recognises that it is important to be guided by national definitions of discrimination and harassment and the terms used in this strategy have been defined below.

Not all of the terms defined below have been used in this strategy. However, it was decided that because some of these terms are often used without explanation in other documents or reports, it would be useful to provide a definition of them here.

## Consultation and engagement

Asking for views on policies or services from staff, colleagues, service-users, general public or representatives from our communities. Different circumstances call for different types of consultation. For example, consultation includes public meetings, focus groups, surveys and questionnaires and meetings with experts.

## Deprivation

People can be said to be deprived if they lack the types of diet, clothing, housing, household facilities and fuel, and environmental, educational, working and social conditions, activities and facilities which are customary. People are in poverty if they lack the resources to escape deprivation (Townsend 1979). Deprivation refers to unmet need, which is caused by a lack of resources of all kinds not just financial.

## Discrimination

Discrimination can be both direct and indirect and it can occur in many ways. The council considers discrimination to be broadly defined as:

To discriminate is to treat a person more or less favourably on the basis of race, colour, nationality or ethnic origin, religion, culture, gender, disability, age, sexuality or other such category that is irrelevant to the individual's right to receive fair and equal treatment.

Discrimination on the basis of race, nationality, colour, ethnic origin, gender, age and disability is unlawful. Direct discrimination is deliberate. Indirect discrimination is where an act or failure to act, intentionally or inadvertently, has a disproportionate impact on an individual or a particular group.

## Institutional discrimination

The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (Macpherson, 1999) found that institutional discrimination could affect the way organisations operate and the way services are provided. Institutional discrimination is defined as 'the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, ethnic origin, gender, disability or age. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness

and stereotyping which disadvantage on the grounds of ethnicity, gender, disability or age.’

## **Definition of Disability**

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) provides the following definition of disability:

‘A disabled person has physical or mental impairment which has a substantial, long-term, adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day duties’.

## **Disability Equality Duty**

This term is used to refer to both the general duty and, where appropriate, the specific duties, placed on public authorities under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

## **Diversity**

No legal or universally agreed definition for diversity exists. Diversity has not replaced equality but has added a further layer of understanding to the statutory obligations about race, gender and disability. Diversity is about improving how people can work together by valuing people’s differences and similarities.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

An equality impact assessment is a way of systematically and thoroughly assessing and consulting on the effects that both proposed or current policy is likely to have on people, depending on their race, gender, disability etc.

## **Equality Standard for Local Government**

The Equality Standard for Local Government is a framework that sets up a way of working within local authorities, which makes equality a central issue to all aspects of the council’s activities.

Using five levels, the Council will introduce a comprehensive and systematic approach to dealing with equality, which covers all aspects of service delivery, employment and community leadership. By applying the standard the Council will:

- develop a systematic framework for ensuring equality
- meet our obligations under the law
- integrate equalities policies and objectives with Best Value/CPA
- encourage the development of anti-discrimination practice appropriate to local circumstances
- provide a basis for tackling institutionalised discrimination
- provide a framework for improving performance over time

The Council will be able to assess progress based on 5 levels:

- Level 1:** Commitment to a corporate equality policy
- Level 2:** Assessment and Consultation (planning)
- Level 3:** Setting equality objectives and targets (doing)
- Level 4:** Information systems and monitoring against targets
- Level 5:** Achieving and reviewing outcomes

## Ethnic monitoring

A process for collecting, storing and analysing data about individuals' ethnic (or racial) background to see whether all groups are fairly represented.

## Functions

The full range of activities carried out by a public authority to meet its duties.

## Gender Equality Duty

This term is used to refer to both the general duty and, where appropriate, the specific duties placed on public authorities under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 as amended by the Equality Act 2006.

## Monitoring

Monitoring is an activity designed to assess or measure progress against specific targets. Monitoring within the council may take the form of: self-assessment, performance management, scrutiny and audit arrangements.

## Policies

Policies are the sets of principles or criteria that define the different ways in which an organisation carries out its role or functions and meets its duties. Policies also include formal and informal decisions made in the course of their implementation.

## Poverty

People are in poverty if they lack the resources to escape deprivation, in other words a lack of money or material possessions. Townsend (1979) describes poverty as 'individuals, families and groups can be said to be in poverty if they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities which are customary, or at least widely encouraged or approved in the societies to which they belong'. A family can also be defined as being in poverty if their income is 60% lower than the average local earnings.

## Procurement

Procurement relates to any process or action carried out by the council that results in the obtaining of goods or services.

## Race Equality Duty

This term is used to refer to both the general duty and, where appropriate, the specific duties, placed on public authorities under section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act 1976, as amended and the Race Relations Act 1976 (Statutory Duties) Order 2001 & Race Relations Act 1976 (Statutory Duties) (Scotland) Order 2002.

### **Race Equality Scheme**

Most public authorities bound by the general duty have a specific duty to produce a race equality scheme. This is a document setting out how the public authority plans to meet its statutory duties under section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act 1976 and in particular articles 2 (2) and 2 (3) of the Race Relations Act 1976 (Statutory Duties) Order 2001 & articles 2 (3) and 2 (4) of the Race Relations Act 1976 (Statutory Duties) (Scotland) Order 2002.

### **Racism**

This term is used to describe a range of ideas and attitudes, used to justify placing (a) particular racial group(s) in an inferior position to another. The Race Relations Act (1976) defines 'a racial group' as a group of persons defined by skin colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins. These negative attitudes often result in discriminatory or oppressive behaviour.

The Act defines direct racial discrimination as:

- treating one person less favourably than another on racial grounds. Direct discrimination is unlawful under the Race Relations Act 1976. This definition can be expanded to include other forms of discrimination such as age, disability and gender.

The Act defines indirect racial discrimination as:

- a rule or condition which is applied equally to everyone can be met by a considerably smaller proportion of people from a particular racial group
- the rule is to their disadvantage
- and the condition or rule cannot be justified on non-racial grounds.

All three conditions must apply. Again this definition can be expanded to include other forms of discrimination such as age, disability and gender.

### **Definition of Racial Harassment:**

Racial harassment is unwanted conduct of a racial nature, or other conduct based on race affecting the dignity of women and men.

### **Definition of a Racist Incident:**

Recommendation 12 of the Stephen Lawrence enquiry defines a racist incident as:

- any incident, which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

## Sexism

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 declares that it is unlawful to treat a person more or less favourably than another on the grounds of sex. It is also unlawful to apply a requirement or condition, which discriminates against women because they are less able to comply with it than men are (or vice versa). The same protection applies to married people. It is also unlawful, in certain circumstances, to treat a person less favourably than another on the grounds that he or she intends to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment (sex change).

## Sexuality

This term refers to the general preference of people. It is preferable to the alternative term 'sexual orientation'.

## Social Exclusion

Social exclusion is a term used to refer to the experience of specific communities, neighbourhoods, families and individuals. They will have either, a combination of linked problems (such as unemployment, poor skills, low income, poor housing, high crime, ill health, cycles of early pregnancy, family breakdown and isolation) or particular characteristic (such as minority ethnic backgrounds, being in care, old age, drug dependency or abuse, mental illness or a disability). This may mean that their quality of life is significantly disadvantaged compared with the opportunities available to the majority. Social Inclusion encompasses all activities to combat social exclusion.





## Outline of the law relating to equality and inclusion

The council has statutory obligations to promote equalities through the following key pieces of legislation:

- Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and its amendment of 2005
- Race Relations Act 1976 and its amendment of 2000
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and its amendment by the Equality Act in 2006
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Anti-discrimination in employment directive
- UN convention on the rights of the child

The council also has responsibilities to address specific aspects of equal opportunities or discrimination through other pieces of legislation

### The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA)

The DDA introduces measures aimed at ending discrimination on the grounds of disability. The Act's provisions include employment, access to goods, services and facilities, and the buying and renting of land or property. The Act is being introduced on a staggered basis. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 was amended in 2005 to place a duty on all public authorities to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the act
- eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- encourage participation by disabled persons in public life

### The Race Relations Act 1976, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 came into force in April 2001 and strengthens the 1976 Act. It arose in part due to the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry and has been targeted at the public sector. It places a new duty on all public authorities to:

- eliminate discrimination
- promote racial equality
- and promote good race relations

### Sex Discrimination Act 1975

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (SDA) prohibits sex discrimination against individuals in the areas of employment, education, and the provision of goods, facilities and services and in the disposal or management of premises. It also prohibits discrimination in employment against married people. The SDA applies to women and men of any age, including children.

The Equality Act 2006 amended the SDA to place a statutory duty on public authorities to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- promote equality of opportunity between men and women

## The Human Rights Act 1998

The Human Rights Act came into force in October 2000. The Act allows people to claim their rights under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) in all UK courts and tribunals instead of going to the European Court in Strasbourg. The Act requires all public authorities in the UK to act in compliance with the Convention rights and has many implications for local government activity.

## Anti-Discrimination in Employment Directive (Religious belief & sexual orientation and age)

The Anti-Discrimination in Employment Directive sets out a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation. One of the aims of this Directive is to outlaw discrimination against people at work on the grounds of their religion or belief or sexual orientation. The provision relating to sexual orientation and religion or belief came into effect in the UK in December 2003. It is now unlawful for any employer to discriminate against employees and potential employees because of their religion, beliefs or their sexuality. The approach taken to implement these provisions will largely mirror the existing sex discrimination and race discrimination legislation.

## Definitions

- Sexual orientation includes orientation towards the same sex, the opposite sex or both sexes.
- Religion or belief is defined as, 'any religion, religious belief, or similar philosophical belief'. This excludes 'any philosophical or political belief unless that belief is similar to a religious belief'.

### Factors to take into account when defining a religious belief include:

- Collective worship, or
- Clear belief system, or
- Profound belief affecting way of life, or work view

Similar provisions relating to age and employment were implemented on 2 December 2006. The Council also has responsibilities to promote equal opportunities on the grounds of age through working to the standards set out in the Government Statutory Code of Guidance on Age Discrimination in Employment (DFEE 1999) and the European Union Directive on eliminating age discrimination, when age discrimination in employment and vocational training became unlawful on 1 October 2006.

## **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**

The UK signed up to this convention in December 1991. It sets out 42 articles that define basic rights that all young people under the age of 18 years are entitled to. States that are party to the convention are obliged to develop and undertake all actions in light of the best interests of the child. Particular relevant articles to the work of a local authority are articles 9, 12, 15, 16, 19, 23 & 31.



## About Huntingdonshire

Huntingdonshire is a large rural district within the county of Cambridgeshire. Huntingdonshire shares borders with Peterborough, Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Fenland, East Cambs and South Cambs. Huntingdonshire has a population of 162,000 (MID 2005 Pop ONS estimates). Almost half of the population is concentrated in the four market towns of Huntingdon, St Ives, St Neot's and Ramsey. A large proportion of Huntingdonshire is predominantly rural with village settlements providing the main focus for community facilities outside the market towns.

## Ethnicity

93.1% of the population was born in the UK; ethnic diversity in Huntingdonshire is low; 97.2% of the population are white in comparison to 90.9% nationally. The Black & Minority Ethnic population (2.9%) includes Black African, Black Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Chinese. (Source, Census 2001). The Cambridgeshire sub-region Traveller needs assessment (2005-10) stated that based on ODPM counts and TES school roll data, there were 192 Gypsy/Travellers in Huntingdonshire.

While Huntingdonshire does not face the same demands as an ethnically diverse inner city area, there are challenges to be met; engaging with Black and Ethnic Minority (BME) communities is one, as few representative groups have been established in the area.

The Diversity Forum (Huntingdonshire) was set up to share knowledge and resources on Huntingdonshire's Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) population. This is a multi-agency group comprising representatives from Huntingdonshire District Council, Luminus Housing Group, Cambridgeshire Constabulary, Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust, Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service and Jobcentre Plus.

## Migrant workers

In Autumn 2004 EEDA (East of England Development Agency) commissioned one of the most comprehensive and detailed reports to date on the contribution migrant workers make to the regional economy. The report estimates that in the last five years, between 50,000 – 80,000 migrant workers had arrived in the East of England region and that using the lower figure, migrant workers contribute somewhere in the region of £360 million per annum. In addition, the report found several companies in the region could not survive without the skills provided by migrant workers, yet many have inadequate access to basic support such as information on rights, childcare, finance and services. Migrant workers may face language barriers and other barriers, for example exclusion from local social and sporting events, hostility from the local community, and poor housing.

The following table shows the number of National Insurance Number Registrations (NNIR) to non-UK nationals from 2002/3 to 2005/06. The total number of NNIR increased significantly when ten additional countries joined the European Union (EU) on 1st May

2004. Nationals of Cyprus and Malta were granted full rights to work throughout the EU and nationals of the other eight countries (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia – known as the ‘Accession 8’ or ‘A8’) were given regulated access to the UK labour market.

Huntingdonshire experienced an increase from around 500 NNIRs in each of 2002/3 and 2003/4 to more than double this at 1,040 in 2005/6. This rise can be attributed to A8 nationals, with the level of people registering from these countries increasing from 10 in 2002/3 to 580 in 2005/6.

Country	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	Total
Poland (A8)	10	20	210	370	610
Philippines	90	60	30	40	220
Portugal	40	60	50	30	180
South Africa	40	40	20	50	150
Republic of Lithuania (A8)	0	0	50	90	140
India	30	30	30	30	120
USA	30	40	20	30	120
Australia	20	20	20	20	80
Pakistan	20	20	10	20	70
Republic of Latvia (A8)	0	0	30	40	70
France	20	10	10	20	60
Slovak Republic (A8)	0	0	20	40	60
Zimbabwe	10	20	20	10	60
Bangladesh	10	10	10	20	50
Germany	10	10	10	10	40
Italy	10	10	10	10	40
New Zealand	10	10	10	10	40
Rep of Ireland	10	10	10	10	40
Spain	10	10	10	10	40
Thailand	10	10	10	10	40
Canada	0	10	10	10	30
China Peoples Republic	10	10	0	10	30
Czech Rep (A8)	0	0	10	20	30
Ghana	0	10	10	10	30
Malaysia	10	10	10	0	30
Netherlands	10	10	0	10	30
Uganda	10	10	0	10	30
Zambia	10	10	0	10	30
Brazil	0	0	10	10	20
Finland	10	0	0	10	20
Turkey	10	10	0	0	20
Cyprus	0	0	10	0	10
Denmark	0	0	10	0	10
Greece	0	10	0	0	10
Hungary (A8)	0	0	0	10	10
Iran	10	0	0	0	10
Jamaica	0	10	0	0	10
Nigeria	0	0	0	10	10
Republic of Estonia (A8)	0	0	0	10	10
Romania	0	0	10	0	10
Russian Federation	10	0	0	0	10
Sri Lanka	0	0	10	0	10
Sweden	0	0	10	0	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>1040</b>	<b>2770</b>

1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest ten.

2. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

3. Numbers are based on 100% data from the National Insurance Recording System (NIRS).

4. Local Authorities are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant postcode directory.

5. Local Authorities counts are based on the most recently recorded address of the NINO recipient

**Source: 100% sample at 17th June 2006 from the National Insurance Recording System (NIRS).**

## Disability

No single definitive figure exists in regard to the actual number of disabled people living in the district, although the following figures provide an indication that the numbers are significant:

- 4,795 people were claiming Disability Living Allowance in August 2005 (3% of all people in the district). This is below the national average of 4.4%. (source DWP)
- 3,935 people were claiming Incapacity Benefit & Severe Disablement Allowance (DWP August 05) 2.5% of all people in the district, this is below the national average of 4.5%
- 6.3% of people in the district (9,820 people) reported their general health to be 'not good' at the 2001 Census
- 2.9% of people aged between 16-74 in the district (3,269 people) consider themselves to be economically inactive due to permanent sickness or disability (Census, 2001)
- 13.6% of all people in the district (21,263) stated they had a limiting long term illness (2001 Census)

## Age

Forecasts indicate that the number of older people (aged 65+) in Huntingdonshire is likely to increase by 50% between 2002 – 2016, a growth rate exceeding county and national levels. The Census also indicated that:

- nearly 6% of the population are aged 75 or over

## Religion

Overwhelmingly, Christianity is the largest practised religion in Huntingdonshire. The table below shows the number of people practising each religion (2001 Census) and as the population of Huntingdonshire increases and diversity grows, the variety of faiths and number of people practising these faiths is likely to increase. It must be noted that according to 2001 Census nearly 26,000 people stated that they practised no religion; this reflects the national trend in the decline of religious belief.

2001 Census Religion	Numbers	Percentages
Buddhism	266	0.2%
Christianity	116,887	74.5%
Hinduism	294	0.2%
Islam	983	0.6%
Judaism	205	0.1%
Sikhism	185	0.1%
Other religions	455	0.3%
Religion not stated	11,744	7.5%
No religion	25,935	16.5%

A Faith guide has been produced to accompany the corporate equality policy. The guide provides basic and rudimentary information about religious and cultural norms. Its aim is to provide a better understanding of the religions practiced within the district.



## Gender

The gender split in the district is similar to the national average (49.7% male and 50.3% female (Census, 2001)). However, there are gender differences, for example life expectancy where women in the district can expect to live to 80.8, while male life expectancy is only 77.9 years (National Statistics Website, 2005). Gender differences are noticeable in the workplace where traditional roles are well entrenched. The following table outlines some of the economic disparities between men and women:

	Men	Women
Percentage of those aged 16-74 that are economically inactive (Census 2001)	17.8%	32.9%
Average full time gross weekly wages 2006 (Residence Median - ASHE, 2006)	£534.00	£371.20

Differences in the occupations that men and women undertake are quite marked. Women are more likely than men to undertake lower paid occupations, often in a part-time capacity. The most notable differences exist in the following occupations :

Census 2001	Men	Women
Managers and senior officials	23.1%	11.9%
Administrative and secretarial	5.1%	23.9%
Skilled trades	18.2%	2.4%
Personal services	1.3%	12.3%
Sales and customer services	2.9%	10.7%
Process, plant and machine operatives	13%	3.6%

## Other Socio-economic Information

Overall, Huntingdonshire is a fairly prosperous district where people enjoy a good quality of life. According to 'Huntingdonshire Today August 2006':

- Deprivation in Huntingdonshire overall is relatively low although the ward of Huntingdon North has particularly high levels of deprivation indicators
- Average weekly earnings in Huntingdonshire are close to the national average (ASHE 2006). Economic activity is high, with every ward in Huntingdonshire having a higher level than the national average (ONS)
- Unemployment remains low at 1.2%, compared to the UK average of 2.6%. Huntingdonshire has a low overall level of people claiming income support, job seekers allowance and pension tax credit. However, it should be noted that there are a few wards with high levels of claimants
- Huntingdonshire has a high level of out-commuting at 35.3% and the 2001 Census showed there has been a 4% increase in out-commuting since the 1991 Census
- The average distance travelled to a fixed place of work for people living in Huntingdonshire is the 7th highest of all 48 local authority areas in the East of England
- Of those people who work in the district, 22.8% commute in
- Almost a quarter of people aged 16-74 in Huntingdonshire have no formal qualifications (this remains lower than the county and national average) however, 20% have a degree

- or higher qualification
- 11% of the population is retired
- Life expectancy in Huntingdonshire is high compared to the national average
- 4.3% of households are without central heating, only 0.2% are without a bath or shower and 3.5% of households are overcrowded
- around a quarter of all crimes reported in Cambridgeshire, were in Huntingdonshire although the rates of crime per 1,000 population are below the average for England and Wales

## Number of dwellings

According to the Housing Needs Assessment, there are 66,900 dwellings in Huntingdonshire and approximately 58,600 of these are within the private sector (owner occupation and private rented including tied accommodation). Of all of these households in the district, the 2001 Census indicated that:

- 24% are one-person households
- just over 14% have no vehicle

## Tenure

The tenure split in the district is roughly as follows:

- Owner occupation: 76%
- Private Rented: 11%
- Housing Association: 13%

## House prices

Huntingdonshire house prices have continued to rise rapidly:

- 8.4% in Q3 2003-4;
- 3.4% in Q3 2004/05
- and 9.0% Q3 in 2005-6

This is a rate that far outstrips earnings and the capacity of aspiring new owners to borrow. Presently, the average house price in the District as at Q3 of 2006 is £200,040.

## The Shortage of Suitable Housing

The results of the 2002 District-wide Housing Needs Survey (and its update in January 2006) identified a need to build 585 new affordable homes in Huntingdonshire each year. The only effective way of meeting this need is social rented housing. However, there is a further tranche of people who can afford private sector rents (so they are not in 'housing need') but they cannot afford owner occupation. This forms an additional requirement for 470 homes of intermediate tenure for this group. The study identified housing need across the whole district with shortages being most acute in St Neots and St Ives.

The Housing and Special Needs Registers are important sources of information about

individuals' actual housing needs. As at the 30th November 2006, there were 2,146 households on the Housing Register, of whom 293 (12.4%) required special need housing.

### **Earnings and Affordability**

In any local economy, a significant proportion of households (usually around 30%) will at any time be unable to afford to become or remain homeowners, and will need to be accommodated in social housing, or the middle-to-lower priced end of the private rented sector. This group priced out of owner-occupation has grown, and indicators exist to show that this trend will continue as:

- The earnings of younger, middle-income employees (i.e. “aspiring first-time buyers”) are not keeping pace with the rise in house prices
- Lower-end earnings appear to be growing only very slowly
- The availability of “entry level” housing is very low
- New “entry level” housing is not being built in sufficient quantity

### **Travel to work patterns**

The 2001 Census results showed that 82,325 employed people live in Huntingdonshire and of those 64.7% work in the district; and 35.3% commute out of the district. Of those that commute out of the district for work, 3.4% commute to London; 5.2% commute to Cambridge (more than one in twenty workers); and 7.4% commute to Peterborough. Patterns of out commuting vary and people living in the north of the district tend to commute to Peterborough whereas those living in the south tend to commute to Cambridge or London. Almost twice the number of people travel out of Huntingdonshire for work than travel into Huntingdonshire for work.



**Corporate Equality Action Plan 2006/07  
corporate equality policy (CEP)**

Action	Target	Who is Responsible/ Resource	Progress
<b>Level I - Leadership and corporate commitment</b>			
Formulate and adopt a corporate equality policy	March 07	Policy and Research Service	
Make a corporate commitment to develop a corporate equality policy (CEP) CEP to be completed and signed off and taken through Member approval process by March 07	March 07	Equality steering group	
<b>Consultation and community development and scrutiny</b>			
Each division to commit to engage in consultation on it's service delivery Already occurs where appropriate – needs further investigation to ensure this occurs in an efficient manner	On-going	Equality steering group to provide guidance	
<b>Service delivery and customer care</b>			
Divisional commitment to corporate equality policy. Directorates to commit their services to take appropriate action to comply with corporate equality policy, Race Equality Scheme and Disability Equality Scheme	March 07	Equality steering group	
Divisional commitment to setting equality targets Directorates to commit services to linking their service plans to the corporate equality policy	March 07	Departmental Management Teams, Directorates and Equality steering group	
Divisional commitment to equality action planning Directorates to commit services to setting equality targets in their service plans where gaps identified	March 07	Departmental Management Teams, Directorates and Equality steering group	
Organise corporate equality training	March 07	HR and Policy	
Divisional commitment to allocation of specific resources for improving equality practice Divisions to investigate	From April 07 onwards	Departmental Management Teams & Equality steering group	
<b>Employment and Training</b>			
Adopt recruitment procedures which use non-discriminatory practices Any gaps will be included in an over-arching employment policy	March 07	HR	
An equality objective will be built into management competencies and a mechanism for measuring effectiveness will be developed	March 07	HR	
Commitment to an employment equality assessment of the Local Labour Market Area Consider whether an assessment of LLMA is required	March 07	HR	
Commitment to establish a fair employment and equal pay policy. Produce an over-arching employment policy	March 07	HR	

Action	Target	Who is Responsible/ Resource	Progress
Commitment to developing an equal employment and equal pay element of CEP incorporating the employment related issues from RES and including those assessments of organisation & individual requirements required for compliance with the DDA. Produce an over-arching employment policy	March 07	HR	
Commitment to adopt procedures to ensure that publicity for vacancies does not unfairly restrict the range of applicants	March 07	HR	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preliminary EIA already conducted on recruitment policy. HR need to translate findings into equality objectives and include in service plan</li> </ul>	March 07	HR	
<b>Level 2 - Leadership and corporate commitment</b>			
Publish corporate equality plan Steering group to sign off CEP by March 07	March 07	Equality steering group	
Develop corporate mechanism for assessing development of service level equality objectives and targets. Develop this via performance management framework	March 07	Policy and Research Service and Equality steering group	
Create corporate structure for overseeing development of information and monitoring systems. Plan consideration of using CRM database	March 07	Head of Policy	
Ensure mechanisms for responding to harassment on grounds of race, disability and gender are in place. Plan/scope how to review existing mechanisms e.g. Open Out, corporate complaints procedure, dignity at work, grievance and disciplinary.	March 07	Equality steering group	
<b>Consultation and community development and scrutiny</b>			
Ensure draft CEP has been circulated for consultation. Ensure CEP & corporate equality policy is subject to internal and external consultation	March 07	Equality steering group	
Establish mechanism for consultation with designated community, stakeholder groups and wider community on all aspects of equality policy	March 07	Equality steering group	
Engage in consultation with Members, employee rep's and services on EIA and the CEP. corporate equality policy to be reported to Members & Employee Panel/ELAG as appropriate for comment	March 07	Equality steering group	
Directorates to consider consultation/engagement with designated community, staff and stakeholder groups	March 07	Directorates	
Produce a plan which enables Directorates to plan, consult and engage with community, staff etc	March 08	Equality steering group	

Action	Target	Who is Responsible/ Resource	Progress
Each directorate to engage with equality self-assessment, scrutiny and audit on service delivery Produce a plan that details the following processes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure that Members undertake scrutiny/audit of corporate/strategic equality issues</li> <li>Reporting issues emerging from EIA of services to Members</li> </ul>	March 07 March 07	Democratic Services Equality steering group	
<b>Service delivery and customer care</b>			
Engage in department and service area EIA Draft training plan and programme	March 07	Equality steering group	
Engage in development of service level equality objectives and targets. Include in performance management framework and work with the service planning process	March 07	Policy and Equality steering group	
Review of services should include the procurement function and all contracted services and partnership arrangements. Consideration of a plan to ensure that any review of services include the procurement function and all contracted services and partnership arrangements	March	Head of Policy and Head of Financial Services	
<b>Employment and Training</b>			
Develop fair employment and equal pay policy element of CEP Work to be completed by March 2007	March 2007	HR	
Engage in employment equality assessment of LLMA. Investigate if required	March 07	HR	
Engage in workforce profiling and an equal pay review Equal pay audits completed annually for internal comparison. Investigate if required to compare against external comparators	March 07	HR	
Adopt procedures to ensure that publicity for vacancies do not unfairly restrict the range of applicants Conduct full EIA if required. Policy to be defined in overarching employment policy. Adopt written procedure or document existing procedure	March 07 March 07	HR	
Produce a standard range of application forms and job descriptions Already in place but HR to commit to review annually	Annual	HR	

## Huntingdonshire District Council Race Equality Scheme (RES) - Action Plan 2006 – 2009

Action	Target	Who is Responsible	Progress
<b>Year 1 May 2006 – April 2007</b>			
Initial listing and assessment of functions/policies for relevance to general duty		Equality steering group	
Consultation of RES	August/September 2006	Policy to lead	Complete
Process of impact assessments to begin	By April 2007	Equality steering group to lead	
Development of guidance for assessment of proposed policies for impact on race and other equality areas	Prior to commencement of staff training - October 2007	Policy to produce Equality steering group to approve	
Development of guidance for <b>monitoring</b> and assessment of <b>existing</b> policies	Prior to commencement of staff training - October 2007	Policy to produce Equality steering group to approve	
Development of guidance for consulting on proposed policies	Prior to commencement of staff training - October 2007	Policy to produce Equality steering group to approve	
Review of systems and procedures in relation to ethnic monitoring	By April 2007	Equality steering group to lead	
Report on RES to Cabinet	Annually	Equality steering group	
Publication of RES	Annually	Policy Division	
Establish departmental equality working groups	By April 2007	Equality steering group to lead on their development	
Evaluate equality training to date	Prior to commencement of staff training - October 2006	Equality steering group and Personnel	
Development of training plan for employees (linked into equality standard training) e.g. For equality steering group For managers/general staff For Members	Commence training by October/November 2006	Equality steering group and HR	Steering group training May 2006 commenced
Publication of results of equality impact assessments		Policy Division	
Examination of previous years employment (equality monitoring) data	Annually	HR	
Publication of employment monitoring information	Annually	HR	
Annual Report on progress to date in achieving RES targets	A year from the date the RES adopted	Equality steering group and HR	
Publication of Annual Report on website		Policy	
Review of procurement strategy in relation to race	Commence process by April 2007	Equality steering group and Financial services	
Review of complaints procedure in relation to race, gender and disability	Commence process by April 2007	Policy and Administration	



## Huntingdonshire District Council Disability Equality Scheme (DES) Action Plan 2006 – 2009

Action	Target	Who is Responsible	Progress
<b>Year 1 May 2006 – April 2007</b>			
Initial listing and assessment of functions/policies for relevance to general duty		Equality steering group	Complete
Consultation on DES	August/ September 2006	Policy Division	Complete
Process of impact assessments to begin	By April 2007	Equality steering group	Training arranged for January 2007
Development of guidance for equality impact assessment of <b>proposed policies</b>	January/ February 2007	Policy and Equality steering group	
Development of guidance for monitoring and assessment of <b>existing</b> policies	January/ February 2007	Policy and Equality steering group	
Development of guidance for <b>consulting</b> on proposed policies	January/ February 2007	Policy and Equality steering group	
Review of systems and procedures in relation to disability monitoring	By April 2007	Equality steering group	
Report on DES to Chief Officers, Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet	Annually	Equality steering group	
Publication of DES	Annually	Policy	
Establish departmental equality working groups	By April 2007	Equality steering group	
Evaluate equality training to date	October/ November 2006	Equality steering group and HR	Initial evaluation with HR and Policy September 06. Final decision to be made by HR and Policy November/December 06. HR and Policy agreed approach – specific equalities training for staff with opportunity for more tailored training if required. Policy to fund & HR to manage training programme. HR & Policy to shortlist companies from January 07 onwards. Training to commence April 07
Development of training plan for employees (linked into equality standard training) e.g. For equality steering group For managers/general staff For Members	Commence training by October/ November 2006	Equality steering group and HR	Equality steering group commenced training May 2006. EIA training to commence January 07
Assessment and publication of results of equality impact assessments	April 2008	Equality steering group and Policy	

Action	Target	Who is Responsible	Progress
Examination of previous years employment (equality monitoring) data	Annually	HR	
Publication of employment monitoring information	Annually	HR	
Annual report on progress to date in achieving DES targets to Chief Officers, Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet	A year from the date the DES adopted	Equality steering group and HR	
Publication of Annual Report on website	Annually	Policy	
Review of complaints procedure in relation to race, gender and disability	April 2008	Policy and Administration	

### Recommendations from Disability Equality Scheme consultation – Actions

Recommendation	Action	Target	Who is Responsible	Progress
Consider findings from DES consultation	Each service to consider recommendations and findings of DES consultation and identify action	April 2008	All services	
More education and training for council employees to raise awareness and attitude change to disabled people	Linked with development of training plan for employees Specific training for frontline staff on disability issues – to be assessed through Personal Development Reviews	General corporate equality training to commence by April 2007. Specific training to be considered by services by 2008	Equality steering group and Personnel	
A dedicated department for disability issues that is accessible and widely publicised as a centre for information and consultation	HDC unable to support this however the Policy Division & the Equality steering group can partially fulfil this role	On-going	Equality steering group	
Improve physical access to HDC buildings	Improved access to buildings	New headquarters by 2010 New Operations Centre by 2007	Technical Services	
Improved transportation in rural areas with adjustments to access for disabled people on buses	Refer to HSP Transport & Access Group	November 2006	HSP Transport & Access Group	The Group has already identified this as an issue that needs to be addressed

Action		Target	Who is Responsible	Progress
Dedicated parking, greater penalties for anti-social parking in disabled (accessible) bays and adjustments to roads and paving	Dedicated parking, considered as part of the Car Parking Strategy Issues relating to enforcement outside of car parks and on highways needs to be referred to Highways at Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambridgeshire Constabulary	Underway	Planning Services  Highways at Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambridgeshire Constabulary	Information sent on to CCC
A transparent complaints procedure, well trained staff with an understanding of the needs of disabled people	Considered as part of the review of HDC Complaints Procedure	April 2008	Administration & Policy	
Better communication and flow of information on available funding and facilities for disabled people	Ensure information and communication requirements of disabled people are considered as part of the review of the Customer Service Strategy	2007	Customer Services Strategy Review team	Customer Services Strategy Review is underway
More dedicated leisure facilities with improved access and support available	Consider the extent to which suitable facilities at leisure centres can be provided	Undertake further research during 2007	Leisure Services and Leisure Development	
Greater access to IT and Internet for dissemination of information	Each service to consider how to improve access to services and information about service using IT and the Intranet/Internet	April 2008	Individual services and IMD	98% of HDC Internet meets AA (W3C) accessibility standard
Long term involvement with disability support groups and individuals regarding consultation and engagement	HDC will commit to consultation and engagement with disability support groups and individuals	On-going	Equality steering group	
Consider how to consult with learning disabled in future DES and action plan consultation	Further work to ensure that groups/individuals representing the needs of learning disabled are included in any future consultation on disability	April 2008	Equality steering group	