

# Equal Chances, Better Lives

## The Wiltshire Equalities Framework

*“Get to know us and let people represent themselves, so that greater understanding can be brought about”*  
Wiltshire resident.

- What is the framework? Page 2
- Why do we need a framework? Page 3
- A vision for Wiltshire Page 4
- Your turn Page 5

## What is the framework?

This framework is the map we hope everyone will use to navigate our way through the journey ahead and is intended to give a structure to all equalities work in Wiltshire. Its aim is to establish a way for all organisations, be they public, private, voluntary or charity, to work together to make sure that all people are treated equally in Wiltshire. It spells out our intention to act on the needs of all the people in our community, to transform the way we work together and to be relentless in our desire to bring about change for the better.

This work has been informed by the needs of groups covering the six strands: age, disability, faith, gender, race and sexual orientation. We intend to work towards the recommendations and needs that have emerged through consultation with our communities and which are detailed in the related transition plan.

*Equality is not  
in regarding  
different things  
similarly;  
equality is in  
regarding  
different things  
differently."*

Tom Robbins

## Key recommendations from the Wiltshire research:

- The development of this Equalities Framework for Wiltshire and an associated transition plan, signed up to by key leaders, which signals the desire for innovation and change across Wiltshire.
- A single point of information and resources responsible for lobbying, advocacy, access to legal advice and best practice.
- A co-ordinated approach to supporting equalities training across organisations, available to voluntary and infrastructure groups, the public and private sector, and communities in Wiltshire.
- An accepted monitoring and scrutiny system adopted by voluntary, public and private sectors which attempts not to 'tick boxes' but to identify areas which need improving, the progress towards these and demonstrates change.
- A programme of training in schools to educate young people about diversity and support young people experiencing discrimination.

# Why do we need a framework?

We asked members of diverse communities in Wiltshire about their needs and views about equalities. The purpose of the research was to guide the development of this framework: a statement of intent to improve equalities services, outline key actions and set out ways to measure and observe change. This research, the framework and transition plan, combine to offer an opportunity for equalities work in Wiltshire to be both informed and progressive.

## What we found

There are some very good services and partnership working in Wiltshire and a genuine commitment to equalities from a wide range of organisations. However, there is a lack of coordination of these services and the county's rural nature means that services are concentrated in towns and are often difficult to access by people outside urban areas because of limited transport and cost.

As the county is a largely rural area with a mostly white population, people in minority groups are often not present in sufficient numbers to form groups and this can lead to an unheard and unmet demand for services. Particular to Wiltshire is a significant military community, the largest Moroccan community outside London and a proportionately large number of people from the Gypsy and Traveller community. There are no organised services for many people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender and very little information about these groups.

Some good initiatives between the public and voluntary sectors have helped to build relationships with some minority groups. However, mistrust and poor communication need to be overcome to support the progress of equalities. The full participation of infrastructure groups and employers is also vital to get an extensive "sign up" to equalities work.

Everyone is agreed, this work needs 'teeth': the influence to call to account those responsible where change is blocked or too slow.

*"Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Willing is not enough; we must do."*

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

## Our shared vision for Wiltshire

- We will not tolerate discrimination against or harassment of anyone under any circumstances.
- We will support communities to come together to learn about each other.
- We expect that everyone in Wiltshire supports and works with the laws which are there to make sure people are treated equally.
- We will all make people feel welcome if they are new to the area, to a group or school and that everyone is able to join something new or get help from a group if they need it.
- We will all work towards a better life for everyone, and make sure they get the support and help they need when they need it.
- We will ensure that this framework is developed, maintained and championed by public bodies, voluntary groups, charities and private companies in Wiltshire.
- We will value what everyone has to say about the framework and include it when we make changes.
- Everyone who has the power to do so, plays a part in making sure the framework works and in supporting anyone who wants to say when it is not working.

*"Each of us has the right and the responsibility to assess the roads which lie ahead and those over which we have travelled, and if the future road looms ominous or unpromising, and the road back uninviting, then we need to gather our resolve and carrying only the necessary baggage, step off that road into another direction. If the new choice is also unpalatable, without embarrassment, we must be ready to change that one as well."*

Maya Angelou

## Now it's your turn to ....

**C**ommit to continued work on the framework and actions

**C**hallenge discrimination, harassment and disadvantage wherever it is found

**C**hampion and celebrate the diversity of Wiltshire communities

**T**ransform the way we work together, building trust and co-operation

**B**e open to examining your approach to equalities and diversity and to change where necessary

*"Are you in earnest? Seize this very minute! Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it. Only engage, and then the mind grows heated. Begin, and then the work will be completed."*

John Anster

**W**e want you to sign up to this framework and, in doing so, to agree that this work is important, demanding and sometimes challenging but worthy of putting time and resources into a joint approach. We are not interested in something you just sign up to, stick up on your wall and forget! This is an active process, a shared journey and a real commitment.

Visit [www.equalitiesframeworkwiltshire.org.uk](http://www.equalitiesframeworkwiltshire.org.uk) with your first three actions to bring about change .....

Or ring ..... for more information on how to get involved

*"To live is to choose. But to choose well, you must know who you are and what you stand for, where you want to go and why you want to get there."*

Kofi Annan

This framework has been developed collaboratively by

Community First/Youth Action Wiltshire	Gypsy and Traveller Community
Race Equality Action Group	Salisbury District Council
West Wiltshire Citizens Advice Bureau	West Wiltshire Interfaith Group
Wiltshire and Swindon Community Foundation	Wiltshire and Swindon Men's Sexual Health
Wiltshire and Swindon Users Network	Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living
Wiltshire County Council	Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service
Wiltshire NHS	Wiltshire Police, County Division
Wiltshire Race Equality Council	

And was funded by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission, Wiltshire County Council and Salisbury District Council.