

# DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

2020 - 2025



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Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council is proud to bring forward this Disability Action Plan.

We are driven and focused on inclusion within our Borough, regardless of ability.

We value what each and every person within our community needs to live an active and fulfilled life.

#### We aim to:

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life

This ambition is mindful of the Council's duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006.

Fun times on our wheel chair accessable swing at V36 Play Park

But we want this plan do more than meet our legal requirements.

It will be our roadmap to delivering a more inclusive society, with more and better opportunities for all the people across Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough.

Councillor Jim Montgomery, Mayor of Antrim and Newtownabbey 2020-2021 Jacqui Dixon, Chief Executive of Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council



# 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Disability Action Plan is a statement of the Council's commitment to the promotion of equality of opportunity for disabled people and complements its Equality Scheme under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

This Disability Action Plan has been designed to ensure that the Council fulfils its statutory obligations in compliance with Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006. In addition it will set out the steps that ensure its services are inclusive.

The Disability Discrimination Act places duties on public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life

These are collectively referred to as 'the disability duties'.

This Plan outlines how we will incorporate consideration of the issues facing disabled people into our business planning and corporate objectives, decision making and our communications processes.

# 1.2 THE PURPOSE OF THE DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

The purpose of the Disability Action Plan is to set out how Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council is committed to providing all necessary resources (in terms of people, time and money) to effectively deliver upon the action points of this plan.

We will ensure that the appropriate internal arrangements are made to enable action points of the plan to be achieved in a timely manner. We will communicate the plan to all staff and arrange training and awareness raising activity.

# 1.3 RESPONSIBILITY

The Council confirms its commitment by submitting an annual progress report to the Equality Commission as well as carrying out a five yearly review of this plan.

We are also committed to consulting with disabled community when implementing and reviewing our plan.

Responsibility for implementing, reviewing and evaluating this disability action plan lies with the Chief Executive and the point of contact within Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council will be:

Ellen Boyd Accessibility and Customer Services Officer Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council Antrim Civic Centre BT41 2UB 028 9446 3113 Ext 31020

Email: ellen.boyd@antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk

If you would like a copy of this plan in an alternative format (such as in large print, in Braille, on audio cassette, easy read or on computer disc) and/or language, please contact us to discuss your needs.

A copy of this plan, our annual progress report to the Equality Commission and reviews of this plan will be made available on our website www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk



# 1.4 THE COUNCIL ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

The Council has a broad range of roles and functions which generally fall into three categories: Direct, Representative and Consultative.

- The direct provision of a number of services and facilities
- The promotion of the arts, tourism, community, leisure and economic development
- The regulation and licensing of certain activities relating to environmental health, consumer protection and public safety
- Representative role on a number of bodies and boards including Education and Health
- Consultative role in relation to functions conducted by other Government bodies and agencies on issues such as planning, water, roads and housing
- Advocacy role for the people of the Borough

In the performance of these roles the Council carries out functions in the following areas: (Not an exhaustive list)

- The provision and maintenance of facilities for recreational, social and cultural activities including leisure centres, community centres, parks, open spaces, sports and playgrounds and places of entertainment
- Street cleansing
- Waste collection and disposal
- Burial grounds
- Grant aid to support the leisure, arts, community development, good relations and the promotion of tourism and economic development
- Regulation of certain matters relating to the environment, public health and public safety including building control, food safety, statutory nuisance, dangerous buildings, air pollution, noise pollution, dog control, consumer protection and health and safety
- The licensing and regulation of street trading, places of entertainment, amusement centres, adult establishments, society lotteries, cinemas and petroleum stations
- The making and regulations of byelaws

### **Planning**

- Local development plan functions
- Development control and enforcement

#### Roads

• Off street parking (except Park and Ride)

# Urban Regeneration and Community Development

Improvement or physical development (e.g. environmental improvement schemes)

- Area based regeneration (such as Neighbourhood Renewal)
- Some community development programmes for the voluntary and community sectors

#### **Local Economic Development**

- Start a Business Programme and Enterprise Shows
- Youth Entrepreneurship (such as Prince's Trust and Shell Livewire)
- Social Entrepreneurship
- Investing for Women
- Neighbourhood Renewal funding relating to enterprise initiatives

#### **Local Tourism**

- Small scale tourism accommodation development
- Providing business support including business start-up advice along with training and delivery of customer care schemes
- Providing advice to developers on tourism policies and related issues

### **Community planning**

 A framework which Councils government departments, statutory bodies and other relevant agencies and sectors can work together to develop and implement a shared vision for promoting the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area based on effective engagement with the community

### **General Power of Competence**

• This will enable a council, in broad terms, to act with similar freedom to an individual, unless there is a law to prevent it from doing so. It would provide a council with the ability to act in its own interest and to develop innovative approaches to addressing issues in its area.







# 1.5 EXTENDING OUR REACH

The Council is engaged with a number of external bodies and we use this connectivity to influence and advocate positive change across these groups. This includes where Members or Officers service on committees or boards such as:

- Police and Community and Safety Partnership
- Community Planning Partnership
- Borough Arts and Cultural Advisory Panel
- Diversity Champions
- Mental Health Champions
- Northern Ireland Local Government Association
- Northern Ireland Veterans' Services Advisory Committee
- PEACE Plus
- Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships
- Placeshaping Fora
- GROW South Antrim
- Good Relations Sub-Groups
- Town Teams
- Local Government Partnership on Traveller Issues
- Lough Neagh Partnership
- A range of central Government Departments and related bodies

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### 2.0 DEMONSTRATING OUR COMMITMENT

It is very important to us that all residents and visitors can enjoy what the Council has to offer. We have made a number of improvements and upgrades to our facilities, and services to ensure we support our residents and visitors with physical, sensory and learning disabilities. We have also consulted with a wide range of organisations to help inform these improvements.

Extensive training and awareness raising was undertaken as follows:

- Disability awareness training (cognitive, sensory and physical) was provided for staff
- Deaf awareness training and autism awareness training was provided for staff who had significant access to the public
- Awareness was raised of the support services and initiatives relating to mental health for all staff and elected members

A range of improvements include:

- Achievement of the Autism Impact Award
- Achievement of JAM Card Friendly Status
- Introduction of Inclusive signage (braille and hidden disability)
- Refurbishments of reception areas
- Pool Pods at Antrim Forum and Valley Leisure Centre
- Addition of Changing Places facilities at Antrim Forum, Valley Leisure Centre and Gateway Centre, Antrim Loughshore
- Disability Hubs and Clubs at Valley Leisure Centre/ V36 and Allen Park
- ISF Accredited Gym Equipment
- Inclusive Leisure Membership
- Inclusive trails at V36
- Installation of hearing loop system in Theatre at the Mill
- Installation of access doors in the Old Courthouse
- Co-hosting Disability and Inclusion Seminar with Northern HSC Trust & Mae Murray Foundation

#### **Council Events**

Council events are specially tailored to be inclusive of the needs of all our Borough residents and visitors. There are several ways we do this:

- Pre-Event information detailing car-parking arrangements and map of event
- Accessible viewing area for children and adults with a disability or anxiety
- Sign Language Provision
- Language Interpreter
- Accessible event layout
- Mobile Enhanced Accessible Toilet/Changing facility
- Quiet Room
- Sensory Room
- Specific Inclusive Events Relaxed Environment/Reduced Capacity/all-ability participation
- Inclusive Communications Plan
- Dedicated events for those with specific needs e.g. Enchanted Winter Gardens





### 2.1 DELIVERING REAL CHANGE - CASE STUDIES

#### **Play Parks**

A number of parents of children with disabilities from the NI Parents for Change group contacted us about the provision of accessible play equipment. In response, we installed the first wheelchair accessible swing in our Borough at V36 Play Park in Newtownabbey and an Enhanced Accessible Toilet/Changing facility is in the adjacent Valley Leisure Centre building. There is also a wheelchair roundabout and sensory play elements.

We then extended this provision with equipment in our new play park at Antrim Loughshore with an Enhanced Accessible Toilet/Changing facility, and at Lilian Bland Park in Glengormley. We have further plans to extend the accessible play provision in all District Electoral Areas of the Borough in 2020/21. Inclusive playground equipment allows children with disabilities and specific needs to be active side-by-side their able bodied siblings or friends.

#### Summer Scheme and Inclusive Summer Scheme

Within our Council Summer Scheme programme we are inclusive of all disabilities and medical conditions. We have introduced an Inclusive Summer Scheme for children who require more specialised medical or personal care needs.

We work in partnership with the Mae Murray Foundation who have staff and volunteers trained in fulfilling specific personal care needs. We have successfully integrated 191 children with disabilities and 416 children with medical conditions in to the summer scheme in the past 3 years.

To further promote the participation of children with complex disabilities and medical conditions in Summer Schemes, we have provided access to funding of up to £5000 for each Special Needs School in the Borough for the Summer Schemes available at their school.

# An Evening of Inclusive Enchantment

Our Enchanted Winter Gardens is Northern Ireland's Premier Christmas Event hosted in the wonderful Antrim Castle Gardens. As part of this event, for a number of years we have hosted an evening of Inclusive Enchantment. Working in partnership with the Mae Murray foundation and Sensory Kids NI we amended the programme of attractions to recognise and accommodate adults and children with specific needs including those who are sensitive to noise, lights and crowds.

Attractions and rides were slowed down, music levels lowered and strobe lighting and other strong lighting were not used on these evenings. We have also hosted The Bridge Association for an inclusive market, where adults with learning disabilities displayed and sold craft items as Christmas gifts. The whole event is a truly special and rewarding experience.

# **3.0** ACTION MEASURES

The following action measures have been identified for the years 2020-2025 and include

#### **ACTION MEASURED BY/** RESPONSIBILITY IMPACT PI /TIMESCALE Provide Equality and Disability Attendance at all Diversity Promotes positive Training for all Council staff and relevant training Champions attitudes towards **Elected Members.** and networking (Nominated disabled people events as Elected Deaf Awareness/ Sign Language Members and Staff and Elected required for the Disability Awareness duration of this officers) Members training and Autism Awareness awareness-raising plan (2020-2025) Mental Health Awareness Visual Impairment Awareness Reappointment Sharing of good Dementia Awareness of Champions as practice between necessary diversity champions Consultation of relevant information **Achieve Dementia Friendly status** To be achieved Customer Promotes positive for Council venues and facilities by by December Accessibility attitudes towards implementing: 2021 and Equality disabled people Officer and encourages Staff Training establish Dementia participation by Champions disabled people in Dementia Internal building audits to ensure Champions public life Dementia Friendly Dementia awareness and support Staff and Elected Members training and Run focus groups in our community awareness-raising centres/ council offices Run craft/ colouring classes for those To further improve with Dementia Create Dementia Friendly area in Council support and some of our parks and open spaces accessibility we will with bright coloured flowers calming introduce training to those with Dementia colour, smells and dementia friendly and textures are important to those services with Dementia. Things like lilac, mint, lavender or pine might be good for people with sight loss too Designate Dementia Friendly seating near entrance/exit Support of staff who are Carers In partnership with PCSP run safety sessions to help promote personal Promote the services Council offers such as: assissted bin lifts, energy efficient grants, home safety assessments and home heating Experiencing the Petting Farm during the Inclusive Community Day at Mossley Mill support antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.u



**ACTION** MEASURED BY/ RESPONSIBILITY **IMPACT** PI /TIMESCALE Challenge barriers which To be Customer Promotes positive attitudes disabled people face in achieved by Accessibility and towards disabled people and accessing Council venues, December **Equality Officer** encourages participation by disabled people in public life events and services 2021 All Staff Positive changes made to Continue to review the Access Audit and upgrade facilities, activities and events and improve accessibility in to improve accessibility for

Create and maintain an Accessible Communications and Promotional Plan to ensure effective promotion of Council events and services

Ongoing for the duration of this plan (2020-2025)

Council venues

Council events

mobility

 Continue to embed inclusion for disabled people at all

• Continue to tailor our Council

improve our play parks and open spaces in the Borough

to ensure all needs of those

with a disability are met

 Provide additional mobility aids at suitable locations to ensure that disabled people can have greater personal

those with a disability

Continue to upgrade and

services to meet the needs of

- Inclusive methods of communication i.e. Sign Language videos
- Communication of pre-event information
- Communication of information useful to those with a disability (internal/ external)
- Promote the service of alternatives formats
- Promotion of our accessible Council venues and facilities
- Promotion of inclusive aspects of our events and services

Ongoing for Head of the duration Communications of this plan (2020-2025) Customer

Customer Accessibility and Equality Officer

All staff

Promotes positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourages participation by disabled people in public life

disabled people

events and services

organisations and

improvements

**Awareness-raising** of barriers

which disabled people face

in accessing Council venues,

**Consultation** with relevant

individuals when considering

Create a plan to prioritise and communicate accessible elements to services and information for disabled people

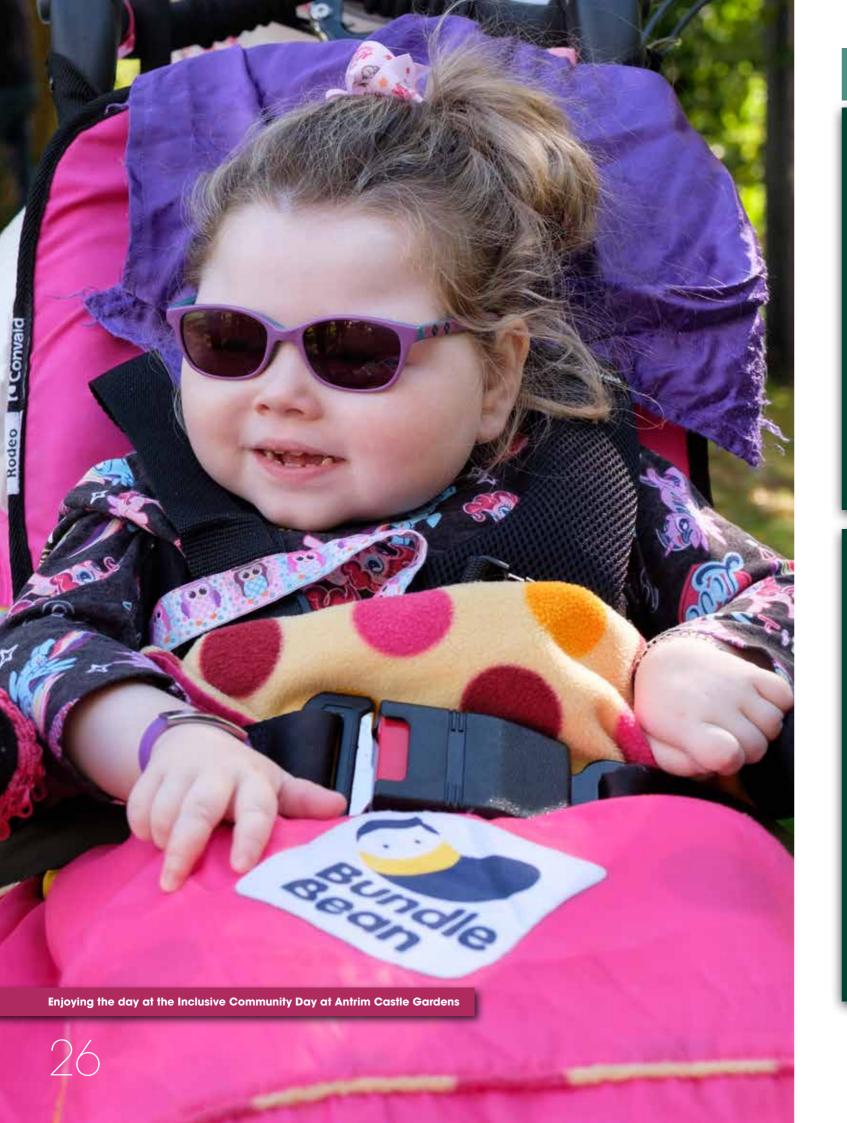
Awareness-raising of accessible elements to services and information for disabled people

Consultation seek feedback from disabled organisations and individuals on the usefulness of information

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**ACTION** 

PI /TIMESCALE

MEASURED BY/ RESPONSIBILITY IMPACT

#### Support work experience and pathways to employment opportunities for disabled people

- Increase the number of annual work placements we (2020-2025) have for disabled people
- Investigate the possibility of ring-fencing of suitable job roles within Council
- Promote the Interview adjustments which are available and eligibility
- Run community interview scenario sessions/ advice in partnership with CEDAR Foundation to prepare those in the Borough with the confidence to apply for a

On an annual programming basis ongoing for the duration of this Customer plan

Human Resources Manager

**Accessibility** and Equality Officer

Promotes positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourages participation by disabled people in public life

Awareness-raising actively promote positive attitudes and support for disabled people in the work place

**Consultation** seek information on an individual level from disabled organisations and individuals on what is best suited to them

Monitoring report on the level of satisfaction of disabled staff

Work towards being a Disability confident organisation

Promote the work Council are already undertaking in relation to:

- Inclusive and accessible recruitment
- Communicating vacancies
- Offering an interview to disabled people
- Providing reasonable adjustments
- Supporting existing employees

To achieve Disability Confident accreditation. This will outwardly communicate Council's commitment to support the recruitment and support of disabled people and those with Mental III Health

By December 2021

> and Equality Officer

Customer

**Accessibility** 

HR Team

Promotes positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourages participation by disabled people in public life

**Awareness-raising** by creating commitments to improve Council recognition of recruitment of disabled people and supporting those who are existing staff

**Consultation** seek feedback from disabled applicants on the satisfaction of the recruitment process and existing staff on their experience of support measures

**Monitoring** report on the level of satisfaction of disabled applicants and existing staff

	MEASURED BY/ PI /TIMESCALE	RESPONSIBILITY	IMPACT	ACTION	MEASURED BY/ PI /TIMESCALE	RESPONSIBILITY	IMPACT	
for Disability Northern Ireland – Member	On an annual programming basis ongoing for the duration of this plan (2020-2025)	Human Resources Manager  Customer Accessibility and Equality Officer  All staff	Promotes positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourages participation by disabled people in public life  Awareness-raising actively promote positive attitudes towards disabled people in the work place  Consultation with staff	Continue to ensure that customer satisfaction surveys are carried out that allow for a review of findings by disability	basis ongoing for the duration of this plan (2020-	Accessibility and Equality Officer	Promotes positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourages participation by disabled people in public life  Awareness-raising highlight themes which are raised through the satisfaction surveys  Consultation customer satisfaction surveys are direct consultation with	
13			to inform them on the features and benefits of being an Employer for Disability and what support they can access	15			Monitoring implement changes were viable to improve service provision through feedback received	
that all policies/ decisions are screened to highlight requirements in relation to disability	programming A	Customer Accessibility and Equality Officer	Promotes positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourages participation by disabled people in public life  Awareness-raising by screening all policies/decisions considering all Section 75 categories  Consultation any potential impacts can be flagged and disability organisations and individuals can be consulted on their views as necessary					
			Monitoring quarterly screening reports will be collated to publically display the screening decisions			Making music duri	ring the Inclusive Community Day at Mossley Mill	
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**ACTION** MEASURED BY/ RESPONSIBILITY **IMPACT** PI /TIMESCALE **Create Art Exhibitions** By September Head of Arts and Promotes positive attitudes featuring work specifically 2022 Culture towards disabled people and by disabled people encourages participation by Museums Officer disabled people in public life Awareness-raising to the Customer Accessibility and talents of disabled people and **Equality Officer** celebrating them Continue to improve On an annual Head of Leisure Promotes positive attitudes towards disabled people and access to Leisure, programming play and recreation across basis ongoing Leisure Staff encourages participation by the Borough for people with disabled people in public life for the ACTION RESPONSIBILITY IMPACT MEASURED BY/ a disability duration of this Customer PI /TIMESCALE plan (2020-Accessibility and Improved Health and Continue to work 2025) **Equality Officer** wellbeing, social HR Team Promotes positive attitudes **Promote awareness of Mental** Number of with Disability NI inclusion and access to Mental Health Health and reduce any towards disabled and Department Play and Parks facilities Mental Health Teams associated stigma Champions people andencourages of Communities to including Staff Champions participation by disabled secure funding to Promote training for Mental people in public life & Elected improve equipment Health Champions **Members** Managers at all and opportunities for levels Raises awareness of participation • Develop leadership and people Mental Health reducing **Participation**  Continue to support clubs skills on how to manage Mental HR Wellbeing the stigma and creating with inclusive training and in mental Health in the Workplace health training a positive culture of Team coaching workplace mental health Continue to promote free activities Promote and signpost Managers and and wellbeing **RADAR KEYS to access** information, training and mental Attendance Staff accessible equipment health and wellbeing activities Increasing confidence Continue development of across the Council and participation Mental Health to have conversations classes and programmes at Wellbeing Champions around mental health available to people with events a disability Individuals have the Ensure that development of disability hubs and knowledge to support themselves, colleagues, clubs are established in conjunction witha family and friends experiencing mental **Enhanced Accessible** health challenges Toilet/Changing provision Continue to work with other partners such as Mae Murray Foundation to provide the additional support some residents need to participate in our programmes. **Inclusive Community Day at Mossley Mill** 

**ACTION** MEASURED BY/ RESPONSIBILITY **IMPACT** PI /TIMESCALE **Maintain and Promote** By February Customer Promotes positive attitudes Autism Impact Award and 2023 Accessibility and towards disabled people and JAM CardFriendly Status **Equality Officer** encourages participation by disabled people in public life Engage with retailers All trained staff and the wider business Awareness-raising maintaining community to promote Council commitment to awareness and use of the support persons with Autism JAM card and the Autism Impact Award. Mark the International Day On an annual Customer Promotes positive attitudes programming Accessibility and of Persons with Disabilities towards disabled people and (3 December) encourages participation by basis ongoing Equality Officer for the disabled people in public life duration of Marketing and Awareness-raising celebrating this plan Media Team (2020-2025)annually the international day of persons with disabilities **Prepare Annual Progress** To be ready All departments/ Promotes positive attitudes Report for the Equality annually by 31 officers with towards disabled people and Commission **August** actions on DAP encourages participation by disabled people in public life Permanent Customer Accessibility Monitoring reporting on the rolling action Council departments progress year on year Officer on disability/ equality action plan points DAP to be **Review Disability Action** Diversity Promotes positive attitudes Plan for Antrim and reviewed by Champions towards disabled people and Newtownabbey Borough March 2025 Working Group encourages participation by Council and new DAP disabled people in public life to be drafted Awareness-raising promotion of themes to support disabled people Consultation seeking the views of disabled people to make informed decisions Drumming a beat for Good Relations at the Inclusive Community Day Mossley Mill

**Monitoring** feedback

received



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