



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY

2024 - 27



NORWICH
City Council

Plan on a page

This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy sets out our continued commitment to tackling inequality and promoting diversity. This covers both our legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 and our wider ambition to reduce socio-economic and health inequalities in the city.

It outlines how we will work with our partners to make Norwich the best it can be for everyone, recognising that different people and communities have different needs, so it's a city where everyone:

- feels they belong
- is respected
- has a voice
- has the chance to succeed and thrive.

We want to be an organisation that makes a real difference for the people of Norwich by:

- showing respect and kindness to everyone
- giving the most help to the people who need it the most
- continuing to learn and improve
- focusing on prevention and early intervention

We have three aims which are supported by key priorities:

Aim	Priorities
Aim 1- Norwich City Council is an inclusive place to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that the profile of our workforce broadly reflects the city's population and the local labour market• Continue to develop inclusive working practices and policies• Support colleagues to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to consider equality in all their work
Aim 2 - Our services will be joined up, accessible and inclusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve a range of communication platforms and channels to enhance accessibility, including for those facing digital exclusion• Undertake service-specific equalities reviews, so every service reflects our ambition• Ensure that our knowledge about the people and communities we serve informs our service planning, and that their voices are heard
Aim 3 - Norwich is a fair city where people facing inequality can share in and contribute to the city's success	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion outcomes inform wider council policies, strategies and programmes• Focus our efforts on the places and communities in the city that face the biggest disadvantages, improving our use of data to help us do this• Develop our leadership capacity and capability around equalities• Continue working with partners to influence investment and target resource• Mitigate the disproportionate inequalities of climate change impacting specific sectors of the community

Introduction

Norwich has a long history of being a radical, innovative city. We are increasingly recognised for our strong economy, quality of life and vibrancy. The city is rich in cultural and ethnic diversity which we aim to both celebrate and promote. This is central to our Norwich 2040 vision and our work with partners to achieve this.

We recognise the contributions that people from different backgrounds make, and actively seek to tackle inequalities and foster good relationships across our communities. We want the city to be a fair, kind, accessible and inclusive place for everyone. This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy sets out our continued commitment to tackling inequality and promoting diversity.

It outlines how we will:

- deliver this ambition and the high standards we expect of ourselves
- work with partners and communities to promote equality, diversity and inclusion and the progressive building of good relations between different groups
- shape services which actively address inequality and exclusion
- build an inclusive culture within our workforce and organisation

A key reason why many people in Norwich are held back is because of inequality and lack of opportunity connected to one or more of the characteristics that are protected under the Equality Act 2010. These are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

As well as a firm commitment to deliver our legal duty under the Act regarding these characteristics, our aspirations go further to include refugees and migrants, those who have served or continue to serve in our Armed Forces, and the socio-economic and health inequalities resulting from deprivation. Norwich City Council is committed to ending the class ceiling which creates structural injustices, socio-economic barriers to ambitions, and disrespect for the value, dignity and voice of all, regardless of background and/or occupation.

All these factors can cause disadvantage around poverty, educational attainment, access to good quality jobs, health and life expectancy.

This strategy re-states our long-held commitment to tackling inequality, with our partners, not just because it is our duty but also because doing so helps create a more successful city.

We want Norwich to be a place in which everyone's hopes and aspirations can be made real. We want to ensure people are not held back by poverty and that success is shared. This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy supports that journey.

Our Ambition

We live in an unequal society and that inequality causes vastly different outcomes for different individuals, groups and communities.

Against that backdrop, we want Norwich to be as fair, kind, accessible, and inclusive as possible. We will work with our partners to make the city the best it can be for everyone, recognising that different people and communities have different needs, so it's a place where everyone:

- feels they belong
- is respected
- has a voice
- has the chance to succeed and thrive.

We want to be an organisation that makes a real difference for the people of Norwich by:

- showing respect and kindness to everyone
- giving the most help to the people who need it the most
- continuing to learn and improve
- focusing on prevention and early intervention.

As a public sector body, we have a legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to have 'due regard' for advancing equality. This includes eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act, advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not, and fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not.

However, this strategy goes beyond this legal duty. It reflects our strong political commitment to equalities, fairness and social justice, which has been the basis of our ambition to reduce socio-economic and health inequalities in Norwich. We have been working towards this for many years. We take action to address inequality and hold ourselves and others accountable for this and will continue to do so. This new strategy sets out the priorities that will shape the new actions we will take over the next few years in addition to all the existing work which continues day-to-day.

What we mean

Equality, diversity and inclusion means different things to different people. For us:

Equality means...	...ensuring that every person has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents. It is also the belief that no one should have poorer life chances because of who they are, where they come from, or what they believe.
Diversity means...	... having a range of people with various backgrounds, circumstances, lifestyles, experience and interests, in line with the variety of people that make up society.
Inclusion means...	...the sense of belonging: feeling respected, having a voice and being valued for who you are; as well as feeling a level of supportive energy and commitment from others so that you can do your best.

How we have developed the strategy

To help guide our ongoing work and the development of this strategy, we have heard from communities via representative groups and from residents across the city as well as businesses, institutions and our own employees and elected members.

We did this through community conversations, online surveys, workshops, and open calls for views, trying to enable people to tell us their thoughts in a way that worked for them. We have also drawn on analysis of a range of quantitative data sources that show the distribution and nature of inequality in the city council area.

From this work, equality, diversity and inclusion are understood to be key elements for a positive and successful city like Norwich. However, listening to people is not a one-off exercise, so we plan to continue doing so as part of delivering this strategy.

Our aims

We have three strategic aims:

Aim 1 - Norwich City Council is an inclusive place to work	It is important that we have a culture that has inclusion and equality at the heart of everything we do. This is not just about the council's role as an employer: we need to be a genuinely inclusive organisation in order to achieve our other aims
Aim 2 - Our services will be joined up, accessible and inclusive	The council has duties and powers to provide a wide range of services in an inclusive way. Many of these services can play a role in creating a more level playing field for people who face inequality or exclusion.
Aim 3 - Norwich is a fair city where people facing inequality can share in and contribute to the city's success	Ensuring that all communities share in the city's success is a core part of the vision set out in our Corporate Plan. Many of the challenges we face need action by a range of partners and the council has a leading role to play in bringing together organisations across the private, public, and voluntary sectors to tackle inequalities and exclusion across Norwich.



Making it happen

We will only realise our ambition and our strategic aims through taking action. Much of this action constitutes our ‘business as usual’, routine service and business planning processes and our ongoing use of Equality Impact Assessments. However, we are also committing to some specific, additional actions that will support the realisation of our ambition.

The detail of these actions can be found in our forthcoming action plan. This will cover the duration of one year with the expectation that we will build on this in subsequent years covered by the strategy, based on measuring and reviewing the effectiveness of the action plan.

This table outlines the key priorities against each of our strategic aims:

Aim	Priorities
Aim 1 - Norwich City Council is an inclusive place to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the profile of our workforce broadly reflects the city’s population and the local labour market • Continue to develop inclusive working practices and policies • Support colleagues to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to consider equality in all their work
Aim 2 - Our services will be joined up, accessible and inclusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve a range of communication platforms and channels to enhance accessibility, including for those facing digital exclusion • Undertake service-specific equalities reviews, so every service reflects our ambition • Ensure that intelligence about the people and communities we serve inform our service planning, and that their voices are heard
Aim 3 - Norwich is a fair city where people facing inequality can share in and contribute to the city’s success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion outcomes inform wider council policies, strategies and programmes • Focus our efforts on the places and communities in the city that face the biggest disadvantages, improving our use of data to help us do this • Develop our leadership capacity and capability around equalities • Continue working with partners to influence investment and target resource • Mitigate the disproportionate inequalities of climate change impacting specific sectors of the community

Accountability and impact

The responsibility for achieving both our legal duty on equality and realising the ambitions of this strategy lies with the whole organisation, with every officer and councillor having a role to play.

Delivery of the strategy and action plan will be overseen by the Strategy Manager. They will report to the senior leadership team on progress of actions and impact, through the annual Equality Information Report.

The Equality Information Report will also be considered by Cabinet. The report includes data on our recruitment, workforce, customers, tenants and wider demographics of the city, as well as data that shows the patterns of socio-economic and health inequalities in the city. Although there are a range of factors that contribute to changes in these data, it provides some insight into how well we are meeting our aims, for example, in the diversity of our workforce.

If you would like this information in another language or format such as large print, CD or Braille please visit www.norwich.gov.uk/Intran or call 0344 980 3333.