

# Diversity and Inclusion Report

Hertfordshire County Council

2018/19



Hertfordshire



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**Councillor Ralph Sangster,**  
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Hertfordshire County Council

## Foreword

Hertfordshire in 2018/19 is the most diverse it has ever been throughout our history both in terms of our population and staff make-up. Evidence shows that diversity in the workplace is good; it can encourage creativity and innovation, and research shows that an individual is more likely to seek and stay with an employer that practices inclusive policies. A reflective workforce also benefits the residents of Hertfordshire as we can further understand the needs of individuals from different backgrounds through lived experiences.

The last few years have been particularly challenging for local government. We have had to reduce our spending by £315 million since 2010/11 whilst protecting the services that are important to you. The next few years will also be tough. It is possible that the grant we receive from Government from national taxation will be phased out and increasingly our services will have to be funded solely from council tax, business rates and fees. We also face significant pressures due to the changing nature of our population as many people are living longer and need more care in older age.

To meet the challenges requires us to continue at pace to improve the way we work and deliver our services, whilst ensuring that we are listening to our residents in a way that helps prevent, reduce or delay demands on public services while still maximising fairness overall. This means we will ensure that all individuals, regardless of their gender, race or any other protected characteristic are afforded the same equal opportunities as every other citizen in Hertfordshire. This report highlights some of our key achievements both from internal staff inclusion and the services we provide.

# Equality & Diversity in Hertfordshire

## Key information



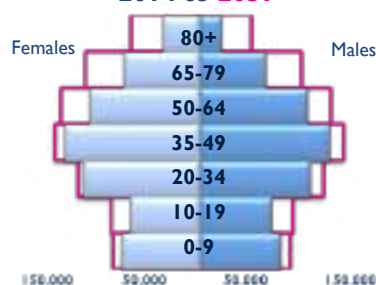
**1,184,400**  
estimated  
population of Hertfordshire



**24%**  
projected increase in  
population by 2039

### Projected population growth

2014 to 2039



**17% of  
adults (16-74)**  
have a common  
mental health  
disorder

**7% of adults** have depression  
**14,000+ people** thought to  
have dementia



### Top 5 Religions (% of residents)

1. Christianity **58%**
  2. Islam **2.8%**
  3. Hindu **1.9%**
  4. Jewish **1.9%**
  5. Buddhist **0.5%**
- No religion**  
**26.5%**



Adults with a moderate to  
serious physical disability  
**71,100** (78,000 by 2025)



Adults with a learning disability  
**21,000** (23,000 by 2025)



People over 75 with dual  
sensory loss (sight and hearing)  
**65%**

**16%**  
Children in Hertfordshire with  
a Special Educational Need  
or Disability



**159,848**

**14.3%** of people in Hertfordshire  
have their day to day activities  
limited to some extent

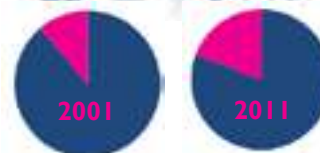
### Least deprived wards

**Berkhamsted West**  
**Chorleywood West**  
**Rickmansworth West**



### Most deprived wards

**Cowley Hill**  
**South Oxhey**  
**Bedwell (Stevenage)**



% of residents from Black & Minority  
Ethnic groups up from  
**11% in 2001 to 19% in 2011**

You can find further infographics,  
data and information at:  
[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/insight](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/insight)

### Carers providing unpaid care

**114,000+**



**4,000**  
of which are  
under 18



**14,699** births in 2016  
**27.5%** of births to  
mothers born  
outside the UK

### Top 5 languages spoken in schools other than English

Polish **3,262** speakers  
Urdu **2,186**  
Romanian **1,595**  
Gujarati **1,216**  
Tamil **1,082**



but only **0.93%** of residents  
cannot speak English well



**5,300**

international, long-term migrants  
into the county in 2016

**14,000**



Estimated number of people  
who are Lesbian, Gay,  
Bisexual or other

## 2 Our commitment to Equality and Diversity

Hertfordshire County Council is committed to achieving diversity and equality of opportunity as a large employer of people and as a provider of services. This is about more than legal compliance: we want to ensure that Hertfordshire is free from discrimination and make every effort to positively promote equality and diversity within our workforce and across the services we are responsible for.

**As a provider of services** we will promote diversity and equality in everything we do to improve the quality of life of everyone living in, working in and visiting Hertfordshire - to create a county of opportunity for all.

**As an employer** we recognise, respect and celebrate the fact that our staff and the people we serve are all very different, whether this is in our ethnic background, family setting, gender, religion and belief or other factors. We believe that diversity can drive innovation, a culture of fairness and respect and equality of opportunity for all.

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/medialibrary/documents/about-the-council/data-and-information/equality-and-diversity/equality-strategy-2016-2020.pdf>



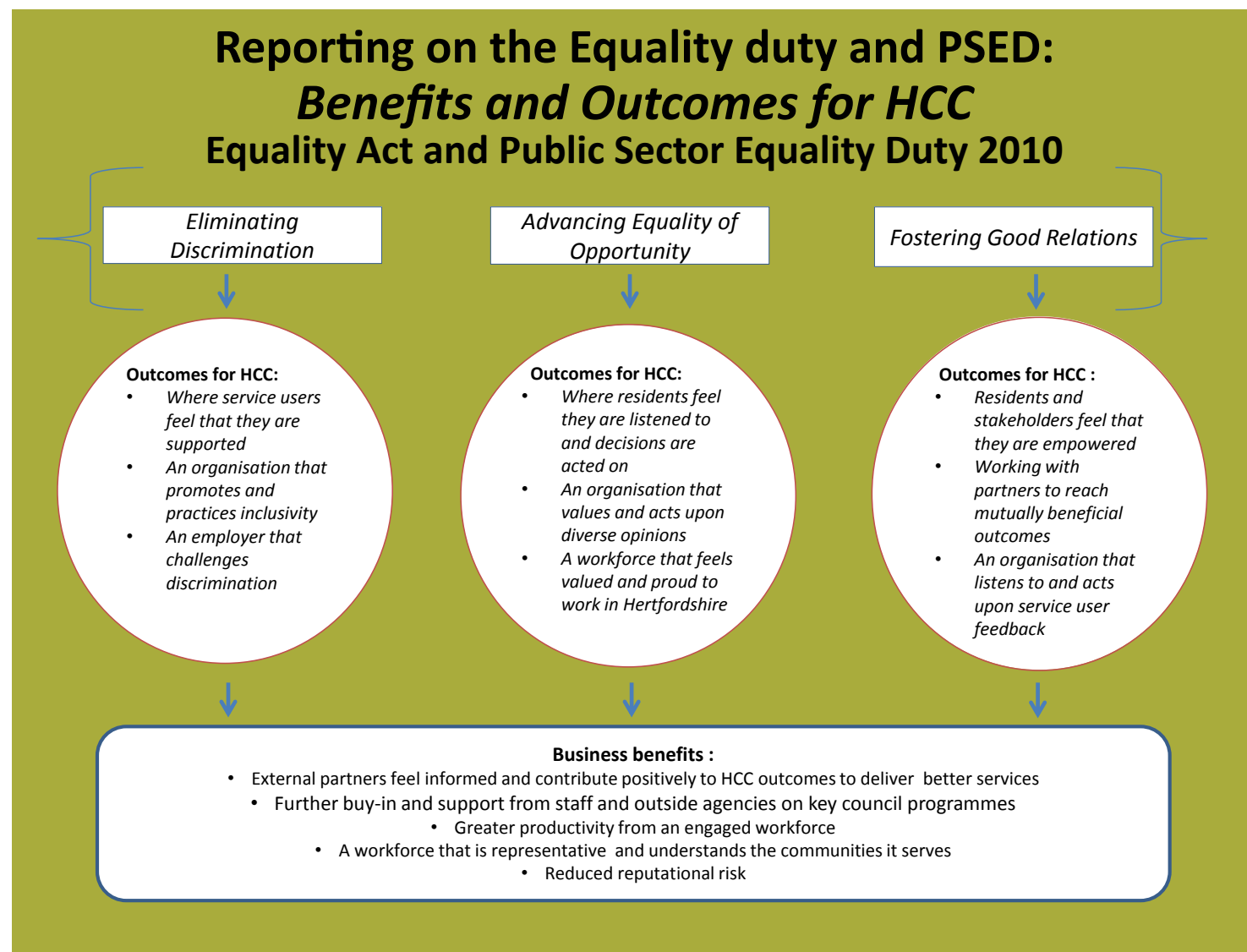
Our Equality Strategy sets out how we aim to achieve this and maintain real and lasting progress for diverse groups and individuals in Hertfordshire.

Our strategy for 2016-2020 sets out key objectives under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) over this period.

### 3 Key achievements in 2018-19, reporting on progress

Hertfordshire County Council carries out a wide range of work that challenges discrimination, advances equality of opportunity and promotes good relations between communities.

This report does not capture everything we do in relation to Diversity and Inclusion; instead, it sets out a number of key achievements that show our commitment to improving equality of opportunity, celebrating diversity in Hertfordshire and advancing inclusiveness in our workforce.





## Theme 1 - Eliminating Discrimination

**An organisation that challenges discrimination and creates an environment where service users feel that they are supported and listened to.**

Hertfordshire County Council has put in place policies and procedures to ensure our services are free from discrimination and are available to everyone regardless of who they are. Our Equality Strategy provides us a framework to measure our progress and success in how we tackle inequality and promote diversity.

Our process of Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) ensures our services are non-discriminatory and allows us to think about how our services and policies might affect different groups of people protected by equality legislation, for example in our annual budget setting process. This helps us identify differential impact on protected groups and find appropriate mitigating actions. The items below are key highlights from the last year.

### Service users helping shape services

Our Adult Care Services involve our service users in designing services for them. The Co-production Board is a strategic board which joins together our senior managers with people who use care services, their carers and organisations that represent them to help us shape adult care services. The Co-production Board has brought together different elements including learning disability, mental health, physical disability and sensory loss to service the needs of population in Hertfordshire.

Did you know?

In Hertfordshire

**71,100 Adults** have a moderate to serious physical disability of which **21,000 Adults** have a learning disability

**65% of people over 75** have dual sensory loss

**14.3%** have their day to day activities limited to some extent and **47%** are over 65s.



## Supporting our Families

Since the launch of the Families First Portal (our directory of organisations, services and groups in Hertfordshire for early help support) we have sought feedback from parents on the use of Families First Portal and its accessibility to families. We ran a two-month online survey and received 74 responses which we are using to inform further development of the Portal in 2019/20. An online survey was also carried out with practitioners who use the Portal in their work with families to tell us about their use of it and how easy it was to find information. Survey results are also being used to inform further development of the Portal in 2019/20. We have printed and distributed over 4000 postcards aimed at families to raise awareness and promote use of the Portal. This has been distributed through schools and various partnerships, and our triage team also send this out to families referred for support, in addition to providing support.



## Saying no to Hate Crime

A hate crime is any criminal offence that is targeted at a person because of hostility or prejudice, because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or transgender identity. Between April and October 2017, the number of hate crimes reported in Hertfordshire was almost 9 per cent higher than the same period in 2016.

Hertfordshire's Hate Crime Partnership including the county council, the police and other key organisations came together to launch a new [website](#) during Hate Crime Week 2018. It provides information about how and where to report hate crime in Hertfordshire and how to access support if you have been affected by it.



## Revising our Domestic Abuse Strategy

Our Domestic Abuse Strategy (Herts DA Strategy) is designed to ensure women, children and men in Hertfordshire are kept safe from domestic abuse and have opportunities to lead healthy and happy lives. The Strategy has three key headline aims – Prevent, Protect and Provide.

The Herts DA Strategy ended in July 2019 and the Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse Partnership have agreed to review its objectives. There have been a number of developments including the Domestic Abuse Helpline in addition to the dedicated website run by the Sunflower project which provides specialist advice and support to victims.

<https://www.hertsdomesticabusehelpline.org/Combating Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking>

<https://www.hertssunflower.org/herts-sunflower.aspx>



Although slavery is illegal in every country in the modern world, it still exists today and can affect anyone, regardless of their age, gender and ethnicity. Hertfordshire's Modern Slavery Partnership, led by our Adult Care Services, works to minimise discrimination as a result of trafficking of people, forced labour and servitude. We have developed an eLearning module for staff on Modern Slavery. We will also include Modern Slavery as one of the 'other' important characteristics for consideration when renewing and reviewing our contracts with third party suppliers.



## My Story

Sabina Iqbal, Team Manager, Sensory Services, Hertfordshire County Council

### Overcoming barriers and raising the profile of people with sensory difficulty in everyday life

The Sensory Services provide specialist services for people with sensory needs. We are seen as a flagship in our services to deaf,

blind and visually impaired people and as one of the top four local authorities in the country, leading Sensory Services, especially around the Care Act.

The key motivation for me was witnessing social injustices, first hand, as an Asian Muslim Deaf Woman. I believe the key to empowerment for those who are marginalised, is having access to information.

In my voluntary capacity, I founded a charity “Deaf Parenting UK” in 2001, the first of its kind run by deaf parents for deaf parents. I also wrote a book “Pregnancy & birth, a guide for deaf women” in 2004, based on meeting deaf women who shared their experiences with me. I found these extremely useful when I gave birth myself in 2006 and consequently had a positive experience. As a deaf parent with three children, I believe I use my knowledge, understanding and insight in helping overcome discrimination experienced by deaf people. I endeavour to challenge stereotypes about deaf people and their ability to succeed in their chosen field.



## Theme 2 - Advancing Equality of Opportunity

An organisation that promotes and practices inclusivity and acts upon diverse opinions and has a workforce where individuals are valued and are proud to work in Hertfordshire.

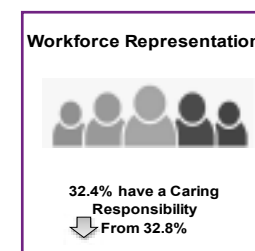
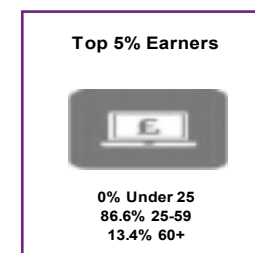
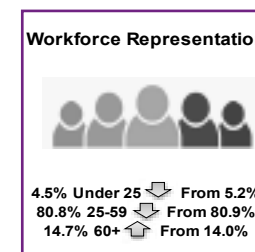
Our staff are our key asset. There are robust policies and procedures in place to ensure staff are not discriminated against in any way and that they have equal opportunities for progression, promotion and have appropriate guidance to carry out their job. Our People Strategy sets out a framework for people management which provides leaders and managers with an overarching approach to guide our strategic workforce planning decisions.

Under the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017, all public sector employers were required to publish annually calculations showing their gender pay gap. Based on a snapshot of data taken on 30th March 2018, we are proud that the data indicates that there is a very small negative gender pay gap of -0.9% making on average our female employees' gross hourly earnings higher than those of our male employees.



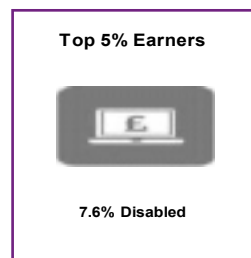
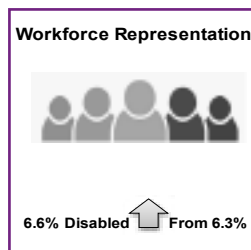
### Our workforce data for 2018-19:

- Employees aged between 40-59 make up 51.5% of our workforce. The proportion of under 25s and the 60+ age group has increased. Engagement scores (as measured by responses to the 2018 Staff Survey) for both the under 20s and 60+ groups are higher than the council departments' average. This year, an employee menopause group has been developed further and we will continue to explore and support sourcing options, such as careers fairs, to attract younger people into the organisation.
- 32.4% of the council workforce have declared a **caring responsibility** (including parenting) and this group have a higher representation in the top 5% of earners. This group have a high engagement score (as measured by responses to our 2018 Staff Survey) and their turnover is lower than the council average, indicating stability. They have a lower representation on apprenticeships although they access both face to face and e-learning. National Carers Week in June was used as a platform to promote resources and support available for carers.

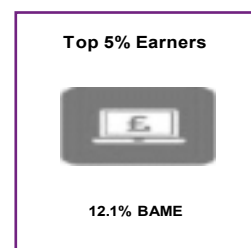
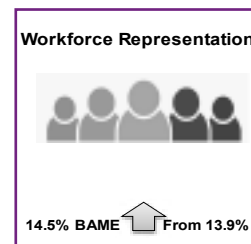




- The proportion of staff declaring a **disability** has continued to increase, from 6.3% to 6.6%, but remains below the 2011 Census figure of 8.7% of the Hertfordshire population living with a long-term health problem or disability. Disabled staff have a high representation among apprentices and the top 5% earners in the council. Their engagement scores (as measured by responses to our 2018 Staff Survey) are lower than other groups and are being reviewed by council department Equality Action Groups to determine appropriate actions. Last year was an active year **supporting disabled employees and raising awareness**, and an Autism Employee Forum and employee Hearing Loss Network were newly established.



- The proportion of **Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME)** staff across council departments continues to increase, from 13.9% in 2018 to 14.5% in 2019. This remains above the BAME economically active population in Hertfordshire of 12.6% (2011 Census). Turnover levels are higher than the county council average so this will be monitored. BAME staff are well represented as apprentices, their engagement scores (as measured by responses to our 2018 Staff Survey) are higher than the council average and they have a higher representation as a proportion of the workforce in face to face and e-learning. 12.1% of BAME staff are in the top 5% earners in the council. We will continue to re-invigorate our BAME staff group this year, so it can develop as a representative voice and assist the council with increasing representation of BAME staff at more senior levels within the organisation.



## Staff groups/networks/employee support

- We have increased our engagement with employee staff groups by encouraging them to get involved in influencing policies and working practices as well as supporting each other. For example, the Autism Employee Forum reviewed our HR Learning and Development pages to ensure easy to read guidelines are followed. We engaged with employees with varying disabilities and the LGBT+ staff network to update our data recording options, so we can better use data to understand employee statistics.
- Having and encouraging open conversations at work is an important aspect of staff wellbeing. For us allowing people to be who they are at work is paramount as it encourages an open dialogue and aids understanding to a wider group. During Mental Health Awareness Week we had employees sharing stories of their experiences, challenges and support they received when having a mental illness. 96 managers, from areas of the organisation where mental health absence is high, were also trained in Mental Health First Aid to ensure they have the tools to recognise the symptoms and provide support early.
- To help raise Religious Awareness of our staff some of our Muslim employees ran Islam Awareness sessions during Ramadan at our main sites. The sessions were attended by a number of staff who wanted to understand and ask open questions about Islam.

## Case study - Empowering our LGBT+ staff



Hi I'm Rob Bacon – Health Improvement Lead (Public Health) and also Chair of LGBT+ Staff Group.

For me day-to-day, what matters most to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender+ (LGBT+) people, and to productivity and staff retention, is feeling safe and supported to be yourself in the workplace. LGBT+ staff can face workplace discrimination on a daily basis, from homophobic slurs disguised as 'banter' to bullying and harassment. These instances are commonly exacerbated by the context

in which they take place – heteronormative working environments where heterosexuality is promoted as the normal or preferred sexual orientation. The HCC LGBT+ staff group and its Yammer page play an important role in giving staff a voice, meet other LGBT+ staff, inform policy and share local events.

Over the years the LGBT+ staff group have run a number of events including information on LGBT+ adoption and staff sharing their 'Coming Out' stories during LGBT History Month. HR, the Equalities and Diversity Team and the support from the Diversity Board have been fundamental in making our ideas a reality.

This year we will be launching the LGBT+ Ally scheme. Supporters for LGBT+ people can sign up for a rainbow badge and lanyard. By having a visible presence in the workplace both staff and service users will feel safe to be themselves.





## My Story

Hi, I'm Samuel Johnson, a project officer in the Improvement team. I've been with HCC for about a year and a half and am still inspired by how driven the staff are to providing the best services to the citizens of this county.

Joining the Black & Asian Minority Ethnic Support group was recommended by my colleague and I immediately saw the opportunity to grow and expand my network. It was a good starting place to speak to colleagues who were able to advise, learn about/from their journey or simply to just say "hi" and engage in conversations that one could relate to. The group meetings have a relaxed environment and the atmosphere is one where conversation and opinions are encouraged to be voiced regardless of subject matter. This would be my first time to join such a staff group within any organisation and I was really encouraged that HCC see this as a priority and support this group wherever necessary.

Whilst I see this group as an opportunity to grow my own network and understand how each department is contributing to the organisation's strategic vision and how I can implement the knowledge gained from these meetings; I believe the group can contribute to the council's equality and diversity related aspirations by its unique blend of people from different backgrounds, cultures and religion. The group provides that level of familiarity and could act as 'initial ice breaker' for new employees and also for those not so new.

There is huge potential for informal advice and guidance from group members with different seniority levels. Also, at times one just needs someone to converse with in a language familiar to them to express how they really feel and this group might be a great starting place. I believe that this group is best placed to provide support to its members and develop relationships both in the workplace and outside of work environment. For example, I'm part of a small group who meets every two to three months with the objective to enjoy good food and discuss, inspire and encourage each other to progress in their respective careers."



## Apprentices and internships

- This year we focused on helping to develop our Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff and increase younger staff representation in taking up an apprenticeship. We recruited new and existing staff onto our apprenticeship programmes across the organisation, 19.8% of those apprentices were BAME staff and 36% were under 25.
- We want to give our residents every opportunity to fulfil their potential so this year we will be working with our local colleges to recruit young people with Learning Disabilities into our internship programme. As the largest employer in the county we want to lead by example and employ the most diverse range of staff possible.



## Equality Act Standards, accessibility and SmartWorking

- We continue to be a Disability Confident Level 2 employer and guarantee an interview for all applicants with a disability who meet the minimum criteria for the role. We also launched communications during various national disability awareness campaigns with employees with disabilities sharing their positive experiences of working here to encourage applicants with disabilities to apply. We recently carried out Access Audits on a number of our sites to ensure that our buildings are compliant and accessible.
- Our SmartWorking programme continues to provide greater diversity in the way staff and teams deliver their roles. For many teams this includes varying the time, location and tools they use to deliver their service dependent on the needs of the business and their personal preferences. A key part of SmartWorking is to support and encourage a cultural shift toward greater recognition of the opportunities and benefits of allowing greater diversity in the way we work and, where applicable, allow staff greater autonomy. Central to this is identifying staff who require additional considerations to enable them to participate and manage in a SmartWorking environment. This includes ensuring special requirements are taken into account in office relocations and desk allocations as well as ensuring managers take into account and review their staff preferences and needs on a one-to-one basis.



## Theme 3 - Fostering Good Relations

**An organisation that listens to and works with partners to reach mutually beneficial outcomes. Residents and stakeholders feel that they are empowered and enabled to make decisions.**

- Hertfordshire Pride event continues to be a shining success. Hundreds of people turned up and joined the County Council to celebrate the LGBT community. The event took place in Cassiobury Park, Watford where families and friends of all ages enjoyed a full day event of food, a funfair and live music.
- Hertfordshire County Council, in partnership with Herts for Learning supports and contributes to the Herts for Learning led Stonewall Education Index submission. Last year, the joint partnership was awarded '3rd' rank on the index.
- The Hertfordshire Forward conference brings together all the key agencies in the county to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of Hertfordshire residents. A presentation from the Hertfordshire Community Foundation at the conference highlighted that in Hertfordshire in 2018 1 in 10 residents live in an area of deprivation, 30,000 children live below the poverty line, there were 8,290 reported cases of domestic abuse and 658 winter deaths were attributed to poor living conditions. 25% of residents also experience mental health problems at some point in their lives and homelessness is on the rise.
- Government statistics suggest that there are roughly 36,000 veterans in Hertfordshire (3.7% of the adult population). We continue to raise the issue of veterans needing to identify themselves as such to medical professionals through our poster campaign to improve their health outcomes.



**We work in partnership with a number of voluntary organisations and other public sector bodies to promote and foster good relations between communities. Some of our partnership working includes:**

- Hertfordshire Compact Partnership Group is an online Compact Forum; a wider group of people meeting biannually to discuss ideas, seek advice and share good practice and stories of success.
- The Learning Disability Partnership meets quarterly to discuss and raise awareness to improve the lives of people with learning disabilities and their families.
- The LGBT+ partnership is a quarterly forum to provide support to the LGBT+ community. The partnership discusses varied topics such as LGBT+ leadership and co-ordinates activities as set out in the Government's LGBT+ action plan.
- The Rural Loneliness Forum meets together quarterly to find ways of reducing loneliness amongst older people living in rural areas. The Forum discusses issues such as transportation and the quality of broadband services in rural areas and offers advice on ways of improvement.

## Case study - Reynold Rosenberg, Chair of Herts Interfaith Forum

**H**i, I'm Reynold Rosenberg and I set up the Herts Interfaith Forum with the County Council to allow District Inter Faith Groups to come together to share problems and successes.

It has grown into the central link between communities of faith across the county and the County Council.

We take issues of importance to the county and present them to the representatives of the Faith communities. In the last year we have welcomed the High Sheriff, the Year of Physical Activity and Affinity Water. The Forum also provides a channel for issues to be brought to the attention of the Council.



We provide information on the range of faiths in the county. These include a diary of festivals across the year and a matrix of information on the faiths used by the police, fire services and NHS.

For those Districts without an Inter Faith Group, I have presented to them the benefits of having an Inter Faith Group, ways to set one up and liaised with local officials to form one. A particular example is East Herts which had an isolated group in Bishop Stortford. With the help of Cllr Jonathan Kaye, we set up an active group around Ware, which also includes representation from Broxbourne.

The group meets to mark the Holocaust Memorial Day and faith festivals, bringing the community together across faiths.

*Herts Inter Faith Forum with David Cansdale DL*



# Our strategy and aspirations from 2020 onwards

## Hertfordshire County Council strategic drivers

The organisation has set out the strategic priorities for the council. We will work to embed key principles of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) into these:

- **Developing Our People & Our Organisation**

We want to be a brilliant employer and lead by example, not just in Hertfordshire but beyond. To do this we will make sure development opportunities are available to all our people and that our leadership are championing an organisation that has diversity and inclusion as part of its DNA.

- **Operational Excellence and Herts Fit for the Future**

For Hertfordshire to grow well by delivering services to an increasingly diverse population, we need to understand what makes good communities through understanding the challenges and promoting the benefits of a growing diverse population.

- **Delivering Transformation**

For Hertfordshire to deliver successful outcome-based transformation, we will need to understand the impact of service changes on communities and staff and ensure that a clear communication path is developed to minimise adverse impacts.

### Developing a new approach

Our current Equality and Diversity strategy ends in 2020. Nationally, pressure groups and Government have pushed ahead with Diversity and Inclusion initiatives. Initiatives have included reporting on the Gender pay gap and more recently, reporting on the Ethnicity pay gap. There has been a push to have greater representation and inclusion, particularly at board level, with leading consulting firms publishing research reports that evidence a clear link between being an inclusive employer and greater employee wellbeing and productivity.

### The business case for EDI

Proven research ([Delivering through diversity by McKinsey & Company](#)) shows that diverse teams bring an advantage in relation to increased customer insight and will help us meet the needs of an increasing diverse Hertfordshire. Employees who feel valued are more likely to be engaged with increased productivity.

### Embedding accountability and assurance

It is important to note that under the Public Sector Equality Duty, as a public authority, we have a duty to ensure that we are satisfied that services are meeting the equality duty. We continue to do this by monitoring our equality impact analysis and publishing our equality objectives.

### Strengthen partnerships & engagement with community groups

Significant financial pressures have created challenges for both Local Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector at a time where demand on services continues to increase. By understanding the needs of our most vulnerable residents we can look to develop innovative solutions.

Hertfordshire county council recognises that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is an integral part of the County Council's core functions. The council has set out a number of priorities in relation to developing our people & our organisation. The new strategy will embed the key principles of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) into the wider councils' objectives and priorities.



