

# **Draft Equality Action Plan for DfI 2023 – 2026**



# Action Plan for DfI Audit of Inequalities 2023 – 2026

1. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations across the nine equality categories outlined in the Act.

aligned to our current Business Plan objectives. The audit gathers and analyses information across the Section 75 categories to identify the inequalities that exist for service users and are listed under the “Issues to Address” column in the Plan.
2. As part of this approach, in line with its Equality Scheme commitments, and based on its functions, the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) has developed an action plan to promote equality of opportunity and good relations.
3. To develop this action plan, DfI has:
  - undertaken an audit of inequalities;
  - developed action measures based on functions and key inequalities identified;
  - developed performance indicators for delivery of action measures;
  - developed timescales for implementation of action measures; and
  - developed an action plan.
4. In its guidance, ‘Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998: A Guide for Public Authorities’, the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) recommends that public authorities should review and update action plans over the lifetime of their equality scheme to ensure that they remain effective and relevant to their functions and work and to report of progress on their delivery. This is reflected in Department’s Equality Scheme. A copy of this Plan and our annual progress report to the Equality Commission will be made available on our [website](#).
5. This document sets out the Department’s response to our Audit of Inequalities,

6. The point of contact in relation to the consultation, implementation, review and evaluation of this Equality Action Plan is the DfI Equality Unit – email [equality@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](mailto:equality@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)
7. Any request for the document in another format or language will be considered. Please contact [equality@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](mailto:equality@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)

## Accessibility statement

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## Equality Action Plan for Dfl 2023-2026

Issue to Address	Action Needed	Intended Outcomes	By when
1.Integration of Section 75 duties into all planning and decision making processes	<p>1.1 Departmental Board (DB) and senior managers committed to incorporating equality and good relations targets across all aspects of Departmental business, both externally and internally.</p> <p>1.2 Staff trained in S75 and equality screening.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equality and good relations considered as part of all future corporate and strategic plans, staffing and financial planning processes.</li> <li>Completion of timely and thorough Equality Screenings and EQIA assessments.</li> </ul>	<p>2023</p> <p>2023</p>
2.Tackle persistent inequalities	<p>2.1 DB commitment to tackling persistent inequalities and to monitoring progress to achieving equality outcomes.</p> <p>2.2 DB to be provided with progress reports.</p> <p>2.3 This Action Plan to be monitored during each reporting year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achievement of all actions in this Action Plan by the appropriate target dates.</li> <li>Inequalities and under-representation levels eliminated.</li> </ul>	<p>2026</p> <p>2026</p>
3.Engagement with customers across Section 75 groups	<p>3.1 Establishment of Dfl S75 Equality Forum with key representatives from S75 groups.</p> <p>3.2 Business areas to actively engage with customers and consultees across S75 categories early in the policy development process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve engagement with S75 groups that will better inform, raise awareness and where possible address equality issues related to Dfl.</li> <li>Policymakers have a better understanding of the issues impacting the different S75 groups.</li> <li>Customers actively contributing to decision making processes.</li> </ul>	<p>2023</p> <p>2023</p> <p>2023</p>

Issue to Address	Action Needed	Intended Outcomes	By when
4. Diversity within DfI Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs)	<p>4.1 Ensure best practice in our public appointment procedures to remove barriers to participation in public life for all S75 groups.</p> <p>4.2 Review existing ALB equality monitoring to standardise with S75 requirements.</p> <p>4.3 Continue to take outreach measures to raise interest levels amongst S75 candidates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In partnership with others introduce a coordinated annual programme of interest raising measures.</li> <li>To increase the number of applications received by S75 groups currently under represented across all NDPBs by 2023.</li> <li>To increase the number of expressions of interest by S75 groups in DfI public appointments by 2026.</li> </ul>	<p>2023</p> <p>2023</p> <p>2023 - 2026</p>
5. Equality monitoring and data co-ordination	<p>5.1 Establish a methodology for the collection and co-ordination of Section 75 equality monitoring data across all business functions.</p> <p>5.2 Develop new methods to record and analyse data on the equality categories.</p> <p>5.3 Develop staff to be able to use information to inform policy and decision making processes.</p> <p>5.4 Outcomes from equality monitoring to inform future screening and decision making processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A localized equality database for each business area and a standardised approach to Section 75 monitoring across all business functions.</li> <li>Agreed programme or equality monitoring undertaken by business area.</li> <li>Equality monitoring outcomes reviewed and published on an annual basis.</li> <li>Improved data will better inform policy development by understanding equality issues related to DfI.</li> </ul>	<p>2023</p> <p>2023</p> <p>2023</p> <p>2023</p>
6. Accessibility of our communication services	<p>6.1 In partnerships with others, improve the accessibility of our communication channels to suit the specific needs of different customer groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customers can communicate with us using a range of accessible communication methods.</li> <li>Customers are made aware of the availability of accessible services and how to access them.</li> </ul>	<p>2023</p> <p>2023</p>

Issue to Address	Action Needed	Intended Outcomes	By when
	<p>6.2 Our information both written and web-based will be developed in accessible formats to suit the needs of all equality groups.</p> <p>6.3 Conduct an annual review of our minorities language policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More accessible information services for customers.</li> <li>• Website accessibility and technology enhanced to suit needs of different groups of customers.</li> <li>• On request will provide translation of documents into other languages.</li> </ul>	<p>2023</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>7. Access to public transport</p>	<p>7.1 Through the Public Service Agreement with Translink :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Translink and our stakeholders through the Accessibility Advisory Group to consider the needs of older passengers and passengers with disabilities when using public transport services.</li> <li>• Work with Translink to increase the proportion of services operated by low-floor access vehicles.</li> <li>• Work with Translink to increase the percentage of the fleet with audio-visual announcements, etc.</li> <li>• Work with Translink to ensure the sustainability of services.</li> <li>• Introduce Changing Places facilities through a programme of accessibility improvements in new/refurbished stations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving the travel experience and access to public transport services for older people and those with a disability.</li> <li>• Increase in the proportion of services operated by low floor access vehicles.</li> <li>• Improving accessibility to audio/visual announcements and accessible information on journey planning.</li> <li>• Continued free travel provision for those fleeing domestic abuse.</li> <li>• Introducing Changing Places facilities into new or redeveloped stations or hubs, where possible, to improve the customer experience for those with</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>2024</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Issue to Address	Action Needed	Intended Outcomes	By when
		dependents, older people and people with a disability, subject to the required funding being made available.	
8.Support to Concessionary travel	8.1 Provide funding to support discounted travel for accessible public transport for older people and people with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote social inclusion by providing access to public transport for older people and people with disabilities.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
9. Access to rural transport services	9.1 Working in partnership with DAERA and our other partners to maximise available accessible rural transport services within resource available to benefit rural people including women, younger and older people or those who have a disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through joint funding arrangement facilitate the provision of services for S75 groups in rural areas to access local amenities, public transport and reducing social exclusion.</li> <li>Enabling those who hold a SmartPass to avail of a discounted fares on rural community transport.</li> </ul>	2024
10. Road safety measures	<p>10.1 Develop a new Road Safety Strategy to continue our effort in addressing important road safety issues.</p> <p>10.2 Engage with disability organisations to explore options to resolve the issue of inconsiderate parking on pavements that forces pavement users onto oncoming traffic.</p> <p>10.3 Develop advice for using parking bays.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing the number of children and young people killed or seriously injured (KSI) on our roads.</li> <li>Reduce the number of people aged over 70 killed or seriously injured in road collisions.</li> <li>Ensure safe and accessible footways for S75 groups in particular people with a disability and dependent carers.</li> <li>To assist people with disabilities, particularly wheelchair users to park and access their rear loading wheelchair accessible vehicles when parked.</li> </ul>	<p>Annually</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Issue to Address	Action Needed	Intended Outcomes	By when
11. Hate crime	11.1 Continue to work with our strategic partners to remove hate expression from our street furniture where it presents a risk to road safety or it is offensive, racist, or sectarian in nature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removing offensive material to promote a neutral environment for all S75 groups.</li> </ul>	Ongoing
12. Specific S75 training for staff	12.1 Develop a S75 training plan for all DfI staff.  12.2 Increase awareness of gender budgeting.  12.3 Ensure provision of disability awareness training for front line staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff can effectively carry out equality screening, equality consultations and EQIA.</li> <li>Frontline staff better able to assist customers who may need additional assistance.</li> </ul>	2023  2024
13. NICS Diversity and Inclusion	13.1 Support and promote the NICS Disability Staff Network within DfI.  13.2 Support and promote the NICS LGBTQ+ Staff Network within DfI.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a DfI Diversity Action Plan.</li> <li>Take forward and support any DfI related objectives from both the Disability and LGBTQ+ Staff Networks.</li> </ul>	Annually  Ongoing
14. Disability Equality	14.1 Review current DfI Disability Action Plan (DAP) progress to inform the development of a new DfI DAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Successfully complete all actions of current DfI DAP.</li> <li>Develop a new DfI DAP.</li> </ul>	2023  2023



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Available in alternative formats.