INTRODUCTION

Making sure that everyone has equal access to local services and employment is one of Newham council’s main priorities. We recognise that in the past, some individuals, groups and communities may have been unfairly excluded or not enjoyed equality of opportunity.

The high level commitment across the council for a real change and improvement to the lives of our residents and staff is demonstrated from top down. The Mayor of Newham has said that achieving equalities is a key task in his administration.

In response to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, we have published a Race Equality Scheme. Our RES sets outs how race equality will be integrated into the activities of every council department. Cllr Neil Wilson is leading the work to overcome inequality at every level and tackling the key factors, which contribute to such disadvantage through innovative solutions.

This RES action plan shows how we aim tackle racial discrimination and promote equal opportunities across the borough.
SUMMARY

This document sets out how Newham Council will respond to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The Act puts a duty on all public authorities to:

- Eliminate racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good race relations between people of different racial groups.

In publishing our Race Equality Scheme, we are setting out the steps we will take to produce and implement Action Plans that address race equality issues. We will set up systems to monitor this work and to check our progress.

We will also carry out awareness training with our staff, to ensure that we are all working within the requirements of the legislation.

The results of our work under the Race Equality Scheme, will be made public and we will make sure that the information is readily available and in a format that is easy for everyone to access.

This document sets out the Action Plans that have been developed by the Council’s departments, showing the areas of work that have been identified for early action.

We will review our progress regularly and make our findings public.
THE COUNCIL’S VISION

The Council has an ambitious vision for Newham:

By 2010, Newham will be a place where people chose to live and work

Our borough has a rich and diverse population, with approximately 57% of our residents from ethnic minority backgrounds. It is vital to Newham that our vision for the future is an inclusive one and the Council recognises the importance of race equality and equality of opportunity, as key elements in helping us to achieve that vision.

The statutory responsibility for the effective implementation of the Race Equality Scheme in Newham lies with the Council. To demonstrate our commitment, a Corporate Equalities Project Team is leading the work. The Team has senior level officer representation from each Council department, and is headed by the Chief Executive, Dave Burbage.

KEY EQUALITY TARGET

The Council is committed to achieving Level 5 of the new Equality Standard for Local Authorities, by May 2006.

We have established a set of core values in equalities that we are working towards:

CORE VALUES FOR EQUALITIES IN NEWHAM

- everyone has opportunities to fulfil their potential
- discrimination is not tolerated
- everyone makes their contribution
- racial equality is promoted
- diversity is valued

The Mayor and the Council have made this commitment to mainstreaming equalities into the centre of our core business. Signing up to the Equalities Standard for Local Government means that we can ensure the barriers that can prevent equal access to services and
The Strategy for achieving equality of opportunity in Newham has been developed on a five year rolling programme, comprising several key elements:

- It is underpinned by a research programme
- It is informed by a consultation and communications strategy
- The intelligence gathered each year, will inform the target setting for the next year
- It will be monitored through a rigorous performance framework.

The Race Equality Scheme is a vital central element of our equalities agenda.

As part of the corporate working that the Council promotes, we will ensure that targets and performance indicators relating to the Race Equality Scheme are incorporated into departmental planning and reporting mechanisms.

Successes and areas for future work will be published on a regular basis, so that achievements can be seen and built upon.
THE RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

Under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, there are general and specific duties imposed upon public authorities.

THE GENERAL STATUTORY DUTY

The General Duty (s.71) applies to every public authority covered by schedule 1a of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. It requires the public authority to have due regard, in carrying out their functions, to the need to:

- Eliminate racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

SPECIFIC DUTY

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 allows the Home Secretary to impose specific duties on some or all of the public authorities that are subject to the general duty. The specific duties focus on the processes that will help to identify and address racial discrimination and promote racial equality. If particular patterns of racial inequality and discrimination are identified, authorities must take steps to eliminate them.

Public authorities must publish a Race Equality Scheme (RES), which demonstrates how we will meet the requirements of the statutory duty.

Newham Council is committed to the fulfilment of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000’s requirements in all parts of the organisation and will commit the necessary resources (in terms of people, time and funds) to ensure that the Race Equality Scheme is developed in an effective and timely way.

The Council will ensure that there are effective internal arrangements in place to ensure that the duties are effectively complied with, monitored and reviewed.
The Council will develop and deliver a planned programme of training and communication on the Equality Scheme.

**ACHIEVING THE GENERAL DUTY**

Throughout 2001, the Council carried out a series of activities focussed on equalities, to help us prepare for the General Duty:

**RESEARCH**

Research helps the Council decide what it should do, how to do it, and to find out if things are being done according to plan.

A research programme will underpin the Council’s equality strategy for the next five years. The programme will be able to respond to changing circumstances if the regular reviews of the strategy show that changes in direction are necessary.

A planned research programme is the starting point. The first stages of this include:

- A programme of research on employment in the council. This includes looking at barriers to employment and promotion; patterns of employment in the past two years; identifying systems that may discriminate against people in their work places; evaluating complaints of discrimination over the past two years; and developing indicators to measure the action that is being taken.
- A project investigating equalities work carried out in the public, private, and voluntary sectors will feed into Newham’s plans for the future.
- Examination of equalities issues by analysing survey data from the local Household Panel of 1,000 households; and focus groups will be carried out to explore the findings in depth.
- Research into how tackling racial harassment in the borough can be incorporated into the mainstream work of the council and other agencies.
- An assessment of the results of the consultation with local communities carried out so far. This will help to shape other
research projects into specific issues of concern and point to possible solutions.

- An examination of the implications and learning from the UN World conference against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

Future research will involve a focus on institutional discrimination by examining a selection of issues and services that most concern employees and residents.

CONSULTATION

The Council recognises that the views of local people and groups is a key ingredient of any strategy, but particularly the equalities strategy that needs to address the specific concerns of people whose voices may not have been heard before.

A continuous programme of consultation has been developed to inform the equalities work. So far the Council has consulted with a wide cross section of the community in the borough, through key organisations and stakeholders including:

- Race Equality in Newham
- Newham Youth Parliament
- Subco Elders Daycentre (Asian Elders)
- Refugee and Migrant Project (Black Women Refugee Group)
- Newham Church of England (Deanery Chapter)
- Sikh Gurdwara (the main and largest Sikh temple in Newham)
- Plaistow Christian Church (Latin American community)
- The Black and Ethnic Minority Community Business Forum

Different methods of consultation have been used to ensure maximum participation and feedback from groups and individuals. These methods have included discussion groups, focus groups and roadshows with workshops, presentations and electronic voting.

The consultation work will continue.
The next phase will include talking and listening to:

- Community Forums
- Temples, mosques, other churches
- Disability organisations
- Gay and Lesbian groups.

The Council is committed to carrying out consultations in accordance with the guidance developed by the Commission for Racial Equality and also recognises the need for such consultations to be timely, open and inclusive.

Working with and through representative groups has meant that dialogue and engagement have improved. Specific consideration may need to be given as to how best to communicate with more young people, those with learning difficulties and ‘hard to reach’ groups.

The Council will also continue to give emphasis to the appropriateness of meeting venues, appropriate use of language, the provision of translation and interpreting services etc.
PUBLISHING A RACE EQUALITY SCHEME
Meeting the Specific Duty

The Council will assess over a three year period, how its current and proposed policies will impact on the promotion of good race relations, within the terms of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. This will be done by monitoring our achievement of the targets set and by using the results from the research and consultations (detailed above).

We will comprehensively review the Race Equality Scheme within three years and take into account any further guidance developed by the Commission for Racial Equality relating to the Scheme. The review will seek to examine how good race relations and equality of opportunity have advanced during that timeframe.

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF POLICIES ON THE PROMOTION EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY AND GOOD RACE RELATIONS

Not all of the policies and functions delivered by the Council will have a direct relevance to equalities. We will therefore assess our work for its appropriateness to the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. Using a corporate assessment system, Council departments will create action plans to address the key areas for development.

The assessments will be undertaken by posing key questions:

Which of the 3 aspects of the legislation does this policy or procedure relate to?

- eliminating discrimination
- promoting Equal Opportunities
- promoting good race relations

Is there evidence that some racial groups could be differently affected?
Which groups?
Is there public concern that the policy is being operated in a discriminatory way?
APPENDIX 1

Contains action plans for each service department across the Council, which evidences their priorities for the first phase of the work. The plans identify the evidence used to establish the priorities, milestones, outcomes, arrangements for monitoring, tracking progress, and reviewing.

APPENDIX 2

Contains a Guidance Note used by Council departments in considering the questions contained within the legislation and how we might look for evidence to address the issues. Where lack of evidence is identified during the assessment, the Council will look at options for gathering further data and information.

When undertaking the assessment exercise, the Council will seek to identify whether the policies or functions under consideration, have a different impact on people from some ethnic groups. These findings will also underpin the development of future action plans and target setting.

MONITORING

Information about the uptake of Council services and the impact of our policies on the residents of Newham is vital to the development of future Race Equality Scheme Action Plans. Within the first year of the RES, the Council will develop a monitoring system for the Action Plans. This will allow for the identification of areas for further development work and for recognition of successes.

The Council recognises the value of robust performance data in the planning and development of future service delivery.

MONITORING AND CONSULTING STAFF

The Council undertakes an annual staff count, which looks at all the people we employ and examines a number of equalities issues.
We monitor the workforce by overall numbers and then by grades, age profile, length of service and whether our employees are also residents of the borough. We also do specific analysis of the staff group by disability status, ethnicity and gender and then examine the grades and positions of these groups.

Work is underway in 2002, to amend the ethnic categories we use in line with those used in the 2001 census. Systems will be developed or revised to ensure that we monitor, with reference to racial group:

- Applicants for training, employment and promotion
- Staff who receive training
- Staff who benefit or suffer detriment as a result of performance appraisal systems
- Staff involved in grievances and disciplinaries
- Those who leave the Council's employment.

Information about how we tackle equalities issues in employment is also gathered and checked each year by the Audit Commission, through our Best Value Performance Plan.

We consult our staff every year about their experiences and views of working for the Council. We ask specific questions about whether the Council provides equality of opportunity in employment for

- Women
- Men
- People from ethnic backgrounds
- Lesbians and gay men
- Disabled people.

The information gathered, alongside that from the work force monitoring, allows us to look at areas we need to improve on and to develop targets to deliver that improvement.

**TRAINING**

The Council will ensure that all of our staff have information, advice and support on the duties under the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000, and the requirements of the Race Equality Scheme, appropriate to their grade and responsibilities.
PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND SERVICES

The Council is committed to effective communication with the people of Newham. It has become clear from the consultation on equalities issues already undertaken, that there is a risk of some sections of the community experiencing difficulty in accessing information. Particular areas of concern may be related to people whose first language is not English and those who may experience difficulties with information presented only in English.

The Council will continue to review the appropriateness of its methods of communication. We will need to take account of:

- the Disability Discrimination Act
- the variety of formats that information needs to be offered in
- the resource implications.

We will ensure that a summary of the Race Equality Scheme is available to all who request it.

Our intention is that all Council services are accessible to all sections of the community in Newham. The equality assessments and the subsequent action plans - developed by each department - will highlight factors that indirectly discriminate by making a service less accessible to particular groups. Thus our learning about barriers and difficulties will help with future planning and development of ways to make our information and plans, clear and easy for everyone to access.

COMPLAINTS

A recent best value review of complaints systems across Council departments identified several issues including communicating information to local communities and gathering data around ethnic monitoring.

Work is underway to help individuals from all backgrounds to understand the complaints procedure and how they can raise concerns and issues about any
aspect of Council service delivery. For example, an ongoing task is to increase awareness of the complaints procedure amongst Newham’s diverse communities; and to ensure Newham Language Shop are actively involved in facilitating translation of complaints in community languages.

Communication has been identified as an integral part of a development programme to make sure residents and the Council understands what a complaint is. An equalities dimension will be incorporated into this programme.

All work within complaints is monitored 6 monthly and performance measured against BVPIs annually. The Scrutiny Committee review findings once a year. Further improvement measures to the system have been identified in response to finding that evaluation of equalities monitoring is patchy, and as part of continuous service improvement.

THE PUBLICATION OF THE SCHEME

Once the Scheme has been agreed at Council and approved by the Commission for Racial Equality, it will be disseminated widely to groups who were part of the consultation exercise. The summary will be distributed more widely through the community database (of some 1500 voluntary, community and faith organisations) and through other community and grass roots networks.

The summary will be publicised in the Newham Magazine, which is delivered free to all of the 91,000 households in the borough.

The summary will also be available on the Equalities Web Pages on the Newham website – www.newham.gov.uk
REVIEW OF THE RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

The Council will conduct a review of the Scheme, within three years of its submission. The review will include:

- an assessment of how the Council has complied with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- how equality of opportunity and good race relations have advanced in terms of policies and the discharge of the Council’s functions.
CORPORATE ACTION PLANS


YEAR 1: JUNE 2002 - JUNE 2003

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEWHAM’S RACE EQUALITY SCHEME ACTIONS</th>
<th>YEAR 1: JUNE 2002-JUNE 2003 RESOURCES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establish Corporate Equalities Project Group</td>
<td>Lead by CE</td>
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<td>Awareness raising sessions for members</td>
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<td>Awareness raising sessions for staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awareness raising sessions for community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop Corporate Assessment Toolkit</td>
<td>NS, DR, ML</td>
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<tr>
<td>Departmental Action Plans in place Group</td>
<td>Equalities Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop consultation model – to cover a range of equalities issues</td>
<td>NS, DR, NP, ML</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop mechanism to utilise research and intelligence findings in to Equalities Planning</td>
<td>DR, NS, NP, ML</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training / awareness raising for staff – in place</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monitoring framework, operating within existing PI mechanisms and BVPP</td>
<td>BG, NS, ML, DR</td>
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<td>Publication of Scheme and progress Team</td>
<td>Communications</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regular reporting to Policy Forum / Cabinet</td>
<td>NS, NP, ML</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review of RES and action planning for next year</td>
<td>Equalities Project Group</td>
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## NEWHAM’S RACE EQUALITY SCHEME
### ACTIONS

- Delivery on Action Plans for Year 2
- Undertake Impact Assessment – to evaluate Year 1 of RES
- Revise and build on consultation strategy
- Assess arrangements for providing information in accessible formats
- Expand training programme for RES for staff and members
- Regular reports to members to identify through which mechanisms
- Prepare Annual Equalities Report and report RES within that framework
- Continue to incorporate research and consultation findings

### RESOURCES

- Equalities Project Team
- Strategic Human Resources
### NEWHAM’S RACE EQUALITY SCHEME YEAR 3: JUNE 2004 – JUNE 2005

<table>
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<th>RESOURCES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Delivery on Action Plans for Year 3</td>
<td>Equality Project Team</td>
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<td>Undertake Impact Assessment – evaluating</td>
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<td>the outputs and outcomes from Year 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revise and build on consultation strategy</td>
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<td>Review and evaluate models used for</td>
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<td>consultation and dissemination of information</td>
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<td>Expand training programme for</td>
<td>Strategic Human Resources</td>
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<td>RES for staff and members</td>
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<td>Continue to incorporate research and</td>
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<td>consultation findings</td>
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APPENDIX 1

Action Plans are available on Newham's Internet site under 'Equalities'
APPENDIX 2

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR COMPLETING THE ASSESSMENT GRID.

GATHERING EVIDENCE

- What mechanisms do you have for recording users of your service – can this data be further interrogated?
- What sort of data do you keep on the diversity of your workforce? What other issues can be identified by the analysis of these records?
- What surveys and consultation have you carried out recently?
- Consider any evidence of over or under use of the service – how does this inform the development or review of your policies or services?
- How do you use the results of any research or consultation carried out. Does it inform future policy setting?
- What sort of user satisfaction data do you have?

These brief notes provide further information to assist you in assessing the relevance of your policies and functions to the Race Relations Amendment Act. You should consider which aspects of the ‘general duty to promote racial equality’ apply, when completing the Assessment Grid.

ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION:

This is about closing gaps in the way services are delivered

- Is there under use of a service or over use?
- Can it be traced to a particular community or group within a community?
- Do you have any positive action programmes?
- What do your complaints reveal?
- What do your user satisfaction surveys show?
- Are their discrepancies in the distribution of the service – why have they arisen?
Is the diversity of the workforce reflected in planning and policy development?

PROMOTING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

- What is the composition of your workforce?
- Does your workforce reflect your service users, at all levels?
- Do your service users reflect the diversity of the boroughs population?
- Does your service delivery reflect users expressed needs – how do you know – have you carried out consultation, Best Value Reviews etc?

PROMOTING GOOD RACE RELATIONS

- How do you promote the benefits of diversity – i.e. through training programmes etc?
- Do your publications demonstrate a representative workforce and service users?
- Are your communications materials accessible by all communities?
- Are your policies transparent – is it clear why certain policies or actions are developed? For example, if your service is targeting particular users, are the reasons for this approach generally made clear?