

WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT

DISABILITY SCHEME

FOREWORD

1. INTRODUCTION

Definition of Disability

The Disability Equality Duty – the General Duty

The Disability Equality Duty – the Specific Duty

2. WHO WE ARE

Welsh Assembly Government

Government of Wales Act 1998

Equality of Opportunity Committee

Assembly Parliamentary Service

3. WHAT WE ARE DOING FOR DISABILITY EQUALITY

Social Model of Disability

British Sign Language

How we are Mainstreaming Equality

How we are Mainstreaming Disability Equality

Communication and Publication

4. HOW OUR SCHEME WAS DEVELOPED

How we involved Disabled People

5. WHAT OUR DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME WILL DO

Departmental Action Plans

Reporting on our Action Plans

6. RESEARCH AND STATISTICAL INFORMATION

7. THE WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT AS AN EMPLOYER

8. HOW WE DO BUSINESS

Procurement

Legal Services

How we work with Local Authorities

Culture Welsh Language and Sport

Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills

Enterprise, Innovation and Networks

Environment, Planning and Countryside

Health and Social Services

Office of the Chief Nursing Officer

Office of the Chief Medical Officer

Social Justice and Regeneration

9. DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

ANNEX 1: LIST OF DEVOLVED FUNCTIONS

ANNEX 2: CARE STANDARDS INSPECTORATE WALES, SOCIAL SERVICES INSPECTORATE WALES, HEALTH INSPECTORATE WALES AND VALUE WALES

ANNEX 3: DISABILITY AND LONG-TERM ILLNESS IN WALES

FORWARD BY JANE HUTT AM, MINISTER FOR BUSINESS, EQUALITIES AND CHILDREN

The Welsh Assembly Government warmly welcomes the Disability Equality Duty and I am proud to present our first Disability Equality Scheme. For disabled people to achieve full social, political and human rights, to live free of discrimination, free of inappropriate attitude and free of poorly designed services, many changes are needed at every level of our society.



We are committed to the ultimate goal of achieving a fully inclusive society and our Disability Equality Scheme gives us the opportunity to set out how we are mainstreaming disability equality and explains how we will continue to develop and deliver policies that promote equality for disabled people both in our role as an employer and as the Government of Wales.

However fine words are never enough, the real test of our Disability Equality Scheme will be whether we succeed in reducing the barriers to inclusion and make a positive difference to disabled people's lives. When I considered the way that politicians, policy makers and service providers communicate it became clear to me that many of the barriers that exist within our society are there because disabled people are not part of the decision making process.

This is why when we began to develop our Scheme we recognised that it was vital to engage with disabled people to help us determine the priorities for action. We made sure that disabled people were fully involved in the development of our Scheme by:

- holding four engagement events throughout Wales with disabled people and their representatives;
- holding meetings with the Welsh Assembly Government Equality Champions to discuss guidance and how departments will contribute to the Scheme;
- engaging with the Welsh Assembly Government's disabled staff group;
- creating a "critical friends" groups of representatives from national disability organisations to monitor our Scheme.

I would like to thank every person who has participated and made these meetings and events so successful. The feedback we have received has helped us focus on how disabled people want the Welsh Assembly Government to promote disability equality and how to deliver the services that meet their requirements.

I am confident that the Disability Equality Duty will be a catalyst for the Welsh Assembly Government to move beyond legal compliance to effect change and become a beacon for other organisations to deliver real equality outcomes for disabled people, ultimately benefiting everyone in Wales.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This is the Welsh Assembly Government's Disability Equality Scheme. It is a living document. As we review our progress towards our Scheme and look at whether we are achieving our commitments, the scheme and action plans will be updated as necessary to ensure the best outcome for disabled people in Wales.
- 1.2 The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to promoting equality of opportunity, for all people in Wales, in all aspects of Welsh life. The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to challenging inequality and discrimination, in whatever form, including age, disability, gender, race, religion, and sexual orientation.
- 1.3 The Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (referred to as 'the Act' throughout this document), requires Public Bodies such as the National Assembly to produce a Disability Equality Scheme.
- 1.4 The Scheme is designed to run from December 2006 to March 2008. The Welsh Assembly Government has committed itself to this timescale because there is a National Assembly for Wales Election in 2007, and we want to ensure that we will be in a position to revise our Scheme to reflect the manifesto commitments of our new Government in Wales. In addition to this, we have given a commitment in our Mainstreaming Strategy to the development of a Single Equality Scheme in April 2008, that will reflect our total commitment to the Equality Agenda. Our commitment to Disability Equality will be reviewed and a new Disability Scheme developed as part of a Single Equality Plan at this stage. A copy of the Mainstreaming Strategy can be accessed at:
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/equality/rightsequality/PromotingEquality/Mainstreaming/?lang=en>
- 1.5 The Scheme will be supported by action plans from each Assembly Government department. These action plans will outline how we will achieve our commitments towards disability equality. We will publish these action plans with

the details of who is responsible for them, and how we will measure our achievements on the Welsh Assembly Government's internet site. The Scheme is being created in partnership with disabled people throughout Wales. This involvement will be a crucial factor for the Scheme's success.

- 1.6 You can access an online version of the Scheme and action plans at the following link:
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/equality/?lang=en>

Definition of Disability

- 1.7 The Act defines disability as:

A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities¹. (This includes long-term medical conditions for example, cancer, diabetes, HIV and mental health).

- 1.8 The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) Family Resources Survey 2002-2003 estimates that over ten million people in Great Britain fall under this definition of disability.

- 1.9 Disabled people, like everyone, have multiple identities which can add to the complexity of analysing and meeting their needs. For example, there are specific problems for disabled people from minority ethnic backgrounds. These issues along with other identities such as sexual orientation need to be addressed by the Welsh Assembly Government and other public bodies when developing policies and planning services.

¹ Schedule 1, DDA, quoted from Appendix 1 of Disability Discrimination Act 1995 Part IV, Code of Practice for providers of Post 16 education and related services.

The Disability Equality Duty - the General Duty

1.10 The Act is part of a new approach to equality legislation that will drive forward positive cultural change across the public sector and in doing so remove many of the barriers disabled people encounter in their daily lives. The Act imposes a general duty on public authorities, when carrying out their public functions to have due regard to the need to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons;
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act;
- eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities;
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons;
- encourage participation by disabled persons in public life; and
- start taking account of disabled persons' impairments, even when that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

The Disability Equality Duty - the Specific Duty

1.11 In addition, those public authorities deemed to have a significant impact on the lives of disabled people, including the Welsh Assembly Government, will be subject to a specific duty requiring them to produce a Disability Equality Scheme from December 2006. This Scheme will set out the actions the Assembly Government intends to take in order to meet its general duty.

CHAPTER 2: WHO WE ARE

Welsh Assembly Government

2.1 The Welsh Assembly Government is the devolved government for Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government (the First Minister and his Cabinet Ministers) are responsible for a wide range of devolved functions such as:

- education;
- economic development;
- health;
- local government;
- social services;
- planning;
- transport;
- housing; and
- industry.

2.2 The Welsh Assembly government, in the financial year 2006-2007, had a budget of £13.2 billion and employed over 6,000 staff. The public and voluntary sectors in Wales are the main way in which the Assembly Government delivers public services. This includes local government, the NHS and Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies.

2.3 When the Assembly Government was elected in May 2003, they identified four priority areas:

- helping more people into jobs;
- improving health;
- developing strong and safe communities; and
- creating better jobs and skills.

2.4 Working towards disability equality will help to meet these priorities. In focusing on these priority areas, the Assembly Government is committed to:

- openness;
- partnership and participation;

- public services;
- equality;
- putting results first;
- listening to people; and
- reflecting difference across Wales.

2.5 If you are interested in receiving further information, these commitments are set out in more detail in 'Wales; A Better Country – The Strategic Agenda of the Welsh Assembly Government', which can be found at:
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/?lang=en>

Government of Wales Act 1998

2.6 Under sections 48 and 120 of the Government of Wales Act the National Assembly for Wales has a unique statutory duty to ensure that equality of opportunity is embedded in its work. This applies to *all* people and *all* the devolved functions of the Welsh Assembly Government. A full list of devolved functions can be found at Annex 1.

2.7 This means that elected representatives and Welsh Assembly Government officials are required to mainstream equality in all their work. This has led to the development of a distinctive and positive equality agenda in Wales which has had a major influence on our strategic policies.

Equality of Opportunity Committee

2.8 Much of the business of the National Assembly is conducted through its committees. At present there are eighteen permanent committees including seven subject committees, which have a role in developing policy as well as examining legislation and the actions of Ministers and public bodies. All committees have been briefed on the requirements of the Act and subject committees will receive regular updates on progress towards achieving our commitments within the Scheme.

- 2.9 The Equality of Opportunity Committee is one of only two discretionary standing committees and its establishment reflects the crucial role and importance placed on equality by the National Assembly for Wales. The purpose of the Committee is to ensure that the National Assembly has effective arrangements to promote the principle of equality of opportunity for all people in the conduct of its business and the exercise of its functions (sections 48 and 120 of the Government of Wales Act 1998).
- 2.10 The Committee is committed to representing minority and disadvantaged interests at all levels within the National Assembly. To help achieve this, a number of equality organisations, including the Disability Rights Commission, have standing invitations to attend meetings of the Committee as advisers. The Cabinet Minister responsible for equal opportunities, is not a member of the Committee but frequently attends meetings.

The Assembly Parliamentary Service

- 2.11 The Assembly Parliamentary Service (APS) exists to support the members of the National Assembly for Wales and to ensure its successful functioning as a democratic body. This involves a broad range of activities including:
- providing National Assembly Members (AMs) with the accommodation, facilities, equipment and information they need to do their jobs;
 - supporting National Assembly Committees and Plenary;
 - providing translation, interpretation and reporting services which ensure that the National Assembly can operate in English and Welsh;
 - providing information and education about the National Assembly to the public;
 - ensuring that visitors to the National Assembly are enabled to access and enjoy the National Assembly buildings and contribute democratically; and
 - recruiting staff to do this work.

- 2.12 The APS is politically neutral. It operates under the guidance and direction of the Presiding Officer and the all-party House Committee. Day to day operations are delegated to the Clerk to the Assembly.
- 2.13 After May 2007 the Welsh Assembly Government and the Assembly Parliamentary Service will cease to be part of the same organisation. They will be split into two separate legal entities. As a result of this forthcoming split the Assembly Parliamentary Service have produced their own Disability Equality Scheme which can be accessed at: [\[link\]](#)

CHAPTER 3: WHAT WE ARE DOING FOR DISABILITY EQUALITY

- 3.1 The Welsh Assembly Government wants to be recognised for providing an exemplary service to disabled people in Wales with strategies and policies that reflect their requirements. Our vision for Wales is one of full social inclusion, where social barriers in our society are removed and where everyone can have access to the services they require. The aim of our Disability Equality Scheme is to set out how we intend to achieve this.

The Social Model of Disability

- 3.2 In 2002, the Welsh Assembly Government adopted the social model of disability as the basis for all its work. It is the model we have used to inform our Disability Equality Scheme. The social model acknowledges that disadvantage and social exclusion stem from the barriers disabled people face rather than from an individual's impairments. The Welsh Assembly Government is working with Disability Wales, on the 'Disability Equality in Action' project. This project aims to raise awareness of the Social Model of Disability within public bodies in Wales, including the Welsh Assembly Government. The project will assist public bodies to understand and implement the social model of disability in their policies and practices.

British Sign Language

- 3.3 British Sign Language (BSL) is the first or preferred language of approximately 3,000 deaf people in Wales. The Assembly Government stated in January 2004 that it recognised BSL as a language in its own right and followed that statement by establishing a Task and Finish Group to investigate BSL interpreter services in Wales.
- 3.4 In February 2006 the Equalities Minister, Jane Hutt AM, announced that a total of £2.7 million had been made available to support BSL Futures – The British Sign Language Interpreter Apprenticeship Scheme for Wales.
- 3.5 BSL Futures is the first Scheme of its size in the UK. It will build a resource that public services in Wales can use. The expectations of *Making the Connections: Delivering Better services for Wales* states that “All public bodies in Wales should [...] develop the capability to [...] communicate effectively in English, Welsh and other languages of the communities they serve”². BSL Futures will support the Assembly Government in achieving this.

How we are Mainstreaming Equality

- 3.6 The Welsh Assembly Government has adopted the following definition of mainstreaming:

"Mainstreaming' equality is about the integration of respect for diversity and equality of opportunity principles, strategies and practices into the every day work of the Assembly and other public bodies. It means that equality issues should be included from the outset as an integral part of the policy-making and service delivery process and the achievement of equality should inform all aspects of the work of every individual within an organisation. The success of mainstreaming should be measured by evaluating whether inequalities have been reduced".

² Page 12, *Making the Connections: Delivering Better Services for Wales*, Welsh Assembly Government, October 2004

3.7 Our approach to mainstreaming equality will lead to a better understanding of the diverse needs of the people of Wales, and will help us to develop policies and services that are responsive to and help to meet those requirements.

3.8 In May 2006 the Welsh Assembly Government's Mainstreaming Equality Strategy was approved by Cabinet. The Strategy is aimed at those who make and deliver policy and will be used as a framework by them when developing policies, strategies and programmes.

Combined Impact Assessment

3.9 We are developing a combined impact assessment which will cover the following equality strands:

- age;
- disability;
- gender;
- race;
- religion and belief; and
- sexual orientation

3.10 The Combined Impact Assessment Tool will help us to ensure that equality is a fundamental part of policy making and implementation and will be piloted from early 2007.

Policy Development

3.11 We are mainstreaming disability equality into the way we make policy. A Policy Gateway Integration Tool process has been developed to help staff develop and deliver policies that not only meet the Assembly Government's strategic agenda but do it in a way that fulfils our commitment to equality of opportunity. The Tool tests how a policy contributes to the delivery of the whole Cabinet agenda. This helps to reflect how each individual policy fits into the bigger picture and aims to help make policies that deliver sustainable outcomes.

3.12 All strategic policies going out to consultation have to include a summary of the completed Tool in the consultation document. These strategic policies are identified through the Assembly Government's operational

plan or following a recommendation from our internal Policy Committee. The Tool will be refreshed following the next election and we will ensure that equality issues are better reflected, as well as continuing to compliment this high-level Tool with a more detailed combined impact assessment.

- 3.13 All policy proposals to Ministers have to include a statement on compliance with statutory duties including equality of opportunity.
- 3.14 An in-house Policy Development Training course, with the Assembly Government's core values of sustainable development, equality of opportunity and social inclusion at its heart, has been developed to enable policymakers to design and deliver more effective 'Made in Wales' policies, by equipping them with the relevant skills, tools and information.
- 3.15 In addition to this the Assembly Government is mainstreaming disability equality into its financial planning process.
- 3.16 *Equality Audit*
In March 2006 the Welsh Assembly Government commissioned an independent equality audit. This audit was an ambitious project that involved the assessment of approximately fifty Assembly Government policies and strategies to determine how they were addressing equality issues. The findings of the audit were discussed and agreed with officials from across policy departments and action is being taken to address some of the key issues highlighted by the report.
- 3.17 The audit will have a lasting legacy for the Welsh Assembly Government and our staff. Those who took part in the audit now have a greater understanding of the relevance of equality issues to their policy areas. With this in mind, the Strategic Equality and Diversity Unit plans to develop a Combined Impact Assessment approach that focuses on increased engagement, development of transferable skills and expertise in mainstreaming.

- Making the Connections – Customer Service Principles*
- 3.18 The Making the Connections (MtC) Unit aims to encourage public services in Wales to become more responsive to the needs of individuals and communities, driven by a commitment to equality and social justice. This vision, supported by the recent recommendations of the Beecham review, is firmly grounded on a citizen centred model of governance and service delivery. There will be a strong focus on developing public services to become more responsive to customer requirements.

How we are Mainstreaming Disability Equality

- Leadership*
- 3.19 The Minister for Business, Equalities and Children, Jane Hutt has signalled her personal commitment to taking forward disability equality within the Welsh Assembly Government. The Cabinet warmly welcomed the proposals contained within the Disability Equality Scheme and gave their commitment to ensuring that their portfolio areas evidenced robust progress against their action plan commitments.
- 3.20 The Equality of Opportunity Committee will be calling for regular updates on progress both towards the Scheme and the departmental action plan which support it.
- 3.21 The Welsh Assembly Government's Senior Director, Derek Jones has taken on the role of Diversity Champion for the Assembly Government's Management Board and is committed to driving the agenda forward. He attends the staff disability forum (DAAS) and is the Chair of the Mainstreaming Equality Task and Finish Group.
- 3.22 A project board made up of senior Assembly Government officials has been established to guide and monitor the development of the Assembly Government's Scheme. The project board is chaired by the Head of the Strategy and Equality Division, Helen Thomas. A project team was established in the Strategic Equality and Diversity Unit to co-ordinate the production of the Scheme.

3.23 The development of the Scheme has also been a regular item on the Senior Business Team Meeting agenda and for the Welsh Assembly Government Management Board.

3.24 In January 2006, a shadow board was set up to help the Management Board of the Welsh Assembly Government to set the corporate direction of the organisation and influence management decisions. The shadow board recruitment process was designed to ensure that a diverse range of applicants would be attracted. This has resulted in disabled people being represented on the board.

Equality Champions

3.25 Each Assembly Government Department has an Equality Champion who is nominated by and supported by their Director. Equality Champions meet regularly to support one another and talk about the equality agenda. The project team are regular attendees at these meetings and use them as a forum to agree the approach to the development of the Scheme. A workshop was held for Champions to help them understand the detailed requirements of the legislation. The project team also met with each Champion and their Head of Department individually to ensure they understood their role and contribution to this Scheme.

Inspection

3.26 The newly established Department of Public Services and Performance (DPSP) is among other things responsible for three specialised inspectorates:

- Social Services Inspectorates Wales (SSIW);
 - Care Standards Inspectorate Wales (CSIW); and
 - Health Inspectorate Wales (HIW)
- (Please see Annex 3 for more information on their role and function).

3.27 In order to mainstream disability equality into the work of these inspectorates their annual reports in 2006-2007 will include a commentary covering how their inspection process covers all of the equality strands, including disability. This will include how their individual inspection

processes have monitored the provision of services, for disabled people, by the providers they have inspected, and have engaged disabled people in the inspection and regulation process. This will help them to draw out any areas for improvement identified by the inspection process and to consider how the inspection process can contribute to help rectify these deficiencies. This reflection will inform the process and annual reports for subsequent years.

Communication and Publication

- 3.28 We will ensure that the public has access to information about Welsh Assembly Government policies, initiatives and programmes.
- 3.29 When considering publicity and publication methods, the diverse nature of the audience is key. We aim to adopt a best practice approach to the provision of information. This means taking into account issues such as format (e.g. print, braille, audio , website, face to face, video and BSL) and language (e.g. style, simplicity, Welsh and other languages).

Accessible Information

- 3.30 The Strategic Equality & Diversity Unit and the Strategic Communications Division are committed to producing guidance for policy departments on the production of accessible information and publications, revising existing guidance and building on the requirements of the Act.

Print and Design

- 3.31 The Welsh Assembly Government follows the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) 'Clear Print' guidelines for making information accessible. We have adopted best practice to comply with the Act. We use 'Clear Print' as an approach to designing and producing material which focuses on design elements such as font, type size/weight, legibility, colour, contrast and page navigation. More information on 'Clear Print' can be accessed at:
http://www.rnib.org.uk/xpedio/groups/public/documents/publicwebsite/public_printdesign.hcsp

Formats

3.32 The Welsh Assembly Government gives priority to producing alternative formats alongside print or electronic versions of publications when a publication:

- is aimed specifically at disabled people;
- is needed to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship;
- is needed to receive payments or other services;
- is of a personal or confidential nature;
- could result in legal consequences or loss of rights if not acted upon;
- seeks a response from the audience; or
- is in response to correspondence from a disabled person who has expressed a preference for a particular medium.

3.33 If you need a publication in another format, please contact the Welsh Assembly Government's Publications Centre on **029 2082 3683**. If we have not already produced a format that is suitable for you we will, having regard to costs and resources and having assessed that it would be reasonable to do so, arrange with the appropriate Assembly Government department for a version to be produced. If production will exceed our usual maximum delivery of 20 working days we will inform you of the anticipated delivery date within 10 working days of your request.

Planning events and meetings

3.34 Due regard will be given to the specific requirements of individuals attending meetings or events. The Welsh Assembly Government has produced 'Accessible Venues Guidance' in partnership with the Disability Rights Commission, Disability Wales, Wales Council for the Blind and the Royal Institute for the Blind that identifies best practice and is available for all departments to use when planning meetings or events. This guidance will be used as a tool for assessing how best to meet the needs of disabled people and for providing a service that goes beyond the current legal minimum requirements set out in

Part M of the building regulations. This guidance can be accessed at the following link:

http://new.wales.gov.uk/docrepos/40382/40382313/4038232/40382321/Accessible_Venues_Guidance_1.pdf?lang=en

Marketing

- 3.35 Best practice is employed across all marketing and communication work, including using positive images of disabled people in our advertising and information campaigns. We have employed the Whitehall 'Images of Disability' initiative. Marketing strategies consider the target audience and take into account all requirements to enable the information to be readily available and easily accessed in all required formats.

Communication and the Internet

- 3.36 The Welsh Assembly Government internet site was designed with the requirements of part three of the Act in mind, which makes it mandatory for government websites to consider equality of access in the e-communications environment. The website includes:

- adjustable font size;
- compatibility with assistive technologies such as screen-readers, which reads text of the site aloud for users; and
- alternative colour schemes for specific visual impairments.

CHAPTER 4: HOW OUR SCHEME WAS DEVELOPED

- 4.1 As we have developed our Scheme we have worked to set a good example to the public sector in Wales. We have focused on engaging and listening to the views, experiences and aspirations of disabled people, and their representative organisations. The issues and priorities that have been identified by the disabled people who were involved with us have been used as the basis for developing our Scheme and the departmental action plans that support it. We believe that open and frequent

dialogue will help us develop policies and services which better meet the needs of disabled people in Wales.

How we Involved Disabled People

Engagement Events

- 4.2 In April, May and June 2006 the Welsh Assembly Government ran a series of engagement events. These were held in Mold, Aberystwyth and Cardiff where we discussed the important issues and priorities for disabled people. In all more than 100 people attended these events.
- 4.3 Disability Wales and the Disability Rights Commission were both involved in the engagement events. In particular, Disability Wales helped us to contact disabled people from across Wales to ensure that as many people as possible were aware of the events. Both disability organisations and individuals were invited to and represented at the events.
- 4.4 The “**Engagement Events**” were the first stage in what the Welsh Assembly Government plans will become an ongoing dialogue with disabled people and their representatives in Wales. Each event provided us with a set of issues and priorities that were fed back to Assembly Government policy colleagues. Following the events a summary report was produced which captured the key themes that emerged. This report was made available to all stakeholders and was presented to the Welsh Assembly Government Equality of Opportunity Committee in October 2006.
- 4.5 The Summary Report has been used by Welsh Assembly Government Departments to inform the development of our overall Scheme and departmental action plans (paragraph 5.2). A copy of the Summary Report can be accessed on the Welsh Assembly Government’s website and can be made available in other formats on request: <http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/equality/?lang=en>
- 4.6 We have also worked closely throughout the engagement process with the Welsh Assembly Government Disability

Advisory and Support Group (DAAS) which is a forum for Assembly Government staff. Members of the group were invited to and attended the external engagement events as delegates. The Welsh Assembly Government also held a specific event for the DAAS group members. The project team are regular attendees at the DAAS group meetings and use it as an opportunity to test out our progress towards the development of the Scheme and to keep staff up to date with the Schemes progress.

Critical Friends Network

- 4.7 In addition to the “Engagement Events” a group of critical friends has been developed. This group is made up of representatives of key disability equality organisations from across Wales who will have a key monitoring and support role throughout the duration of the Scheme.

Statutory Consultation

- 4.8 A draft copy of the Welsh Assembly Government’s Disability Equality Scheme was released for statutory consultation on 3 August 2006. All those who attended the engagement events, our critical friends and statutory consultees were informed of the consultation exercise. The Welsh Assembly Government is grateful for the considered views expressed by all those who responded and has taken on board the comments. A copy of our official response to the consultation can be found on the Welsh Assembly Government website and can be made available in other formats on request:
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/equality/?lang=en>

Continued Engagement and Involvement

- 4.9 The Welsh Assembly Government intends to continue to engage with and involve disabled people in our policy and service development. This engagement and involvement will take place on a Welsh Assembly Government wide basis as well as at departmental level. The Assembly Government has and will continue to hold annual engagement events with disabled people and groups that represent them around Wales. In addition to this we will meet with critical friends at least twice a year and will take action to engage with and involve in our work traditionally hard to reach groups. We will work through established

networks and seek to expand our ability to involve more widely individuals from across Wales. Individual Departments will also have a crucial role in involving disabled people in decision on policies and services that affect them in their particular policy area.

CHAPTER 5: WHAT OUR DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME WILL DO

- 5.1 Our Scheme will achieve real outcomes and deliver real improvements for disabled people in Wales. We will mainstream disability equality into our core business, functions and values. Using our Combined Impact Assessment we will assess every programme and strategy to ensure we have a clear understanding of how they impact upon the lives of disabled people. The Scheme will provide a snapshot of where we are now and where we are going in terms of promoting equality of opportunity for disabled people in Wales.

Departmental Action Plans

- 5.2 As part of the development of the Welsh Assembly Government's Scheme all of our departments were asked to develop their own action plans. Each department did an initial screening exercise in their policy area. Based on the results of this exercise and the feedback from the Disability Equality Scheme Engagement Events, departments prioritised the most important things they need to do over the lifetime of this Scheme and will use this information to help them plan their objectives for their next annual action plan.
- 5.3 Departmental action plans have been produced in two formats. The first, which is contained at Chapter 8, provides an overview of what departments already do and what they plan to do to promote disability equality. The second is a tabular version which contains SMART objectives and performance measures. The action plans run to April 2008.
- 5.4 These plans, along with the results of the screening exercise and the Disability Equality Scheme Engagement

Events Summary Report will be made available on the Assembly Government's website and in other formats on request:

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/equality/?lang=en>

Reporting on our Action Plans

- 5.5 We are going to review our action plans every six months as part of our operational management process and an annual report will be produced and published every year from March 2008 onwards and will be made available in a range of accessible formats.
- 5.6 We will keep our Scheme and action plans under review in the light of our annual reports. We will conduct a full review of our Scheme by April 2008 alongside our Race Equality Scheme.
- 5.7 There is a statutory requirement for the First Minister to publish a three-yearly review of how the disability equality duty has been implemented across all public authorities in Wales. We will work with our partners to ensure that this report is reflective of the progress that is being made towards achieving disability equality throughout the public sector in Wales.

CHAPTER 6: RESEARCH AND STATISTICAL INFORMATION

- 6.1 The Welsh Assembly Government recognises the importance of having evidence to help us develop our Scheme, and deliver action plan objectives that will have a positive impact on disabled people in Wales. We also need to gather information about equality more generally. To achieve this we:
- have commissioned an Equality Audit (paragraph 3.15).
 - are working on improving the statistics available to support departments making policies and to

inform the wider public debate on tackling inequality. We are developing statistical reports covering:

1. Department for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks;
2. Department for Health and Social Services;
3. Department for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills;
4. Department for Environment, Planning and Countryside;
5. Social Justice and Regeneration Department

These will be published on our internet site later this year and will contain statistics relating to the top five equality issues for each department. We will use existing statistical sources to get this information. This exercise will also enable us to identify statistical research and information gaps to be filled in the future.

A brief review of the current evidence regarding the scale of disability in Wales can be seen at Annex 3.

- will build on the statistical reviews outlined above by reviewing all data sources to develop a comprehensive and accessible evidence base on equalities, including disability, to inform policy development and delivery. The project, which will be carried out over 12 months, will have the following outputs:
 1. a series of concise and accessible briefing papers for key policy areas, which will cover disability issues;
 2. identification of evidence gaps and input into central and departmental research programmes;
 3. guidance to departments on how they should mainstream equalities issues throughout their research programmes, and advice on definitions etc;
 4. potential equalities, including disability, performance indicators; and

5. a web-based information resource to help policy makers, researchers and others to locate and better understand relevant evidence.
- 6.2 To increase the level of accessibility to statistical information our Corporate Information and Services Directorate also plans to introduce electronic publications via StatsWales³ and to review the accessibility of the current internet site.

CHAPTER 7: THE WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT AS AN EMPLOYER

- 7.1 The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to becoming an employer of choice for disabled people. The actions we are taking to build on this commitment are set out in our Diversity Delivery Plan.
- 7.2 We are active members of the Employers Forum on Disability, an employer's organisation that promotes good practice in employing disabled people. In 2005 the Welsh Assembly Government scored 66 per cent, which is above the public sector average in the first comprehensive disability benchmarking exercise conducted by the Forum.
- 7.3 In 2005 we undertook an extensive diversity monitoring exercise that provided us with comprehensive baseline data. We will use this to monitor progress against targets set to address the under-representation of disabled staff. We had set a target of 3.2 per cent representation for the Senior Civil Service by April 2008.
- 7.4 We also work with the Disability Awareness, Advice and Support (DAAS) staff group and seek their involvement in the development and review of Human Resources (HR) policies and practices.
- 7.5 The Assembly Government adopted the Social Model of Disability approach in 2002. We have applied this to our

³ http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk/intro_eng/index.htm

Human Resource and recruitment practices and believe that this approach will support us in achieving our objectives.

7.6 Over the lifetime of this scheme we plan to focus on the following three priorities to move forward as an employer of choice for disabled people:

- Recruitment
- Location
- Training and Development

7.7 These priorities have been selected following information gained from the Welsh Assembly Government staff disability group DAAS and from messages received from the external engagement events.

Recruitment

7.8 We hope to attract more disabled people to work with us to harness the difference that people bring to an organisation and the benefits that result from diversity.

7.9 The Summer Placement Scheme for Disabled Undergraduates/Graduate Students has been in place since 2003. The Assembly Government has been commended for its commitment to the scheme, particularly as we are the second largest supporter in the Civil Service and the principal supporter outside of London. Following placements at the Welsh Assembly Government several participants have secured permanent jobs with us or other Government Departments as a direct result of their involvement in the scheme. In the summer of 2006, eight disabled students had the opportunity to work at the Assembly Government for eight weeks and the scheme will continue for 2007 and beyond.

7.10 To encourage disabled people to apply for posts in our new offices, the Assembly Government will hold workshops to ensure that disabled people have the relevant guidance to help them produce successful applications. We also operate the 'Positive About Disability' Scheme which allows disabled applicants to use the 'Two Ticks' Guaranteed Interview.

- 7.11 In December 2006, the Assembly Government introduced e-recruitment as a method to recruit staff. Disabled people have been involved in identifying potential barriers and in testing the new system. Users will be monitored to inform change where necessary.
- 7.12 We plan to revise our recruitment policy in light of this new e-recruitment method to ensure that it remains fair and accessible to all job applicants both internally and externally. The revised policy will continue to take into account existing and new disability equality legislation.
- 7.13 The new approach to recruitment will allow us to improve the monitoring of access to internal and external recruitment opportunities for disabled people. We will also have better information on recruitment outcomes.

Location

- 7.14 The Assembly Government is opening new offices in Merthyr Tydfil, Llandudno Junction and Aberystwyth. The design of these new buildings take account of the needs of disabled people. To improve accessibility, the Assembly Government will be working with transport providers to ensure that the buildings are fully accessible by members of the public.
- 7.15 Any barriers to disabled staff seeking financial support to move home to work in a new office will be removed.

Training and Development

- 7.16 Disability awareness is included in induction training for all new staff. New disability courses, namely, Disability Equality in Employment, Promoting Disability Equality, The Social Model and Disability Awareness in the Delivery of Goods and Services, are being offered to all Assembly Government staff by our training provider Eliesha. The take up of these new courses will be carefully monitored and evaluated. To raise the awareness of new Disability duties, Human Resources has been delivering "hot-shot" sessions across all Welsh Assembly Government offices.

7.17 The Learning and Development (L&D) team are committed to improving access to L&D activities for all staff, and work closely with the core training provider, Eliesha, to ensure best practice in programmes and processes. Our action plan includes a range of commitments to ensure all programmes are developed, delivered and evaluated with disability legislation and best practice in mind. Over the lifetime of this scheme we also plan to undertake a programme of Access Audits of our current and potential training venues, and will make our training materials available in any required format.

Diversity Delivery Plan

7.18 To assist progress towards increased diversity at senior levels, the Welsh Assembly Government has produced a three year Diversity Delivery Plan on Diversity and Equality commencing summer 2006. This is in line with the Cabinet Office's 10-Point Plan to recruit and promote under-represented groups.

7.19 Actions identified under the Diversity Delivery Plan include:

- raising awareness among members of under-represented groups of employment opportunities offered by the Welsh Assembly Government. We are currently in the process of agreeing an annual programme of advertisements promoting the Assembly Government as an employer of choice, we plan to develop a diversity microsite that will meet the AAA disabled web access standard;
- providing placement opportunities to members of under-represented groups – building on the success of the graduate and undergraduate scheme we plan to develop a placement scheme aimed at disabled people, regardless of qualifications. This scheme would enable disabled people to access longer term work experience opportunities. This would include liaison with several disability organisations;

- providing positive action training to staff from under-represented groups. We are working closely with Eliesha, the Assembly Government's core training provider, to identify opportunities to deliver programmes aimed at actively supporting and developing under-represented groups. We will also support individuals, where possible, to attend suitable external events which will ultimately support this aim;
- ensuring that management development programmes include additional positive action elements for members of under-represented groups; and
- offering mentors from the Senior Civil Service to members of under-represented groups.

7.20 All actions within the plan will be monitored quarterly and progress reported to the Welsh Assembly Government Management Board.

CHAPTER 8: HOW WE DO BUSINESS

Procurement

8.1 *How we deal with contracts with outside parties*
 The Government of Wales Act 2006 will separate the National Assembly for Wales into two separate legal entities, the Welsh Assembly Government and the Assembly Commission. This will mean that the Welsh Assembly Government and the Assembly Commission will enter into contracts in their own right. Existing contracts that apply to both parts of the current organisation are being reviewed to establish if they can be separated. The work on separating contracts will continue as contracts come up for renewal between now and legal separation in 2007.

Value Wales

- 8.2 The internal arm of Value Wales is responsible for awarding contracts on behalf of the Assembly Government. The external arm facilitates collaborative contracting across the public service in Wales and this includes embedding sustainable development principles into all parts of the procurement process. An important part of this approach is to look at equality and diversity issues including disability, gender and race equality.

External Procurement

- 8.3 By April 2007, Value Wales will evaluate the different tender procedures used in consultation with representative organisations and concentrate on improving access for the whole community to contract awards opportunities. These improvements will then be made in 2007-2008 for Assembly Government contracts, and guidance will be given to other public sector organisations via the Value Wales Procurement route planner.
- 8.4 Value Wales has also set up a sub group of the Business Procurement Task Force to explore opportunities available under the revised European Union Procurement regulations. This then reserves certain public sector contracts for Supported Employment organisations and is rolling out the principles outlined in “Opening Doors⁴ - The Charter for SME Friendly Procurement” to all small businesses in Wales. Its main objective is to make public sector procurement more accessible and promote initiatives such as the Sell2Wales⁵ web site, which puts

⁴ *Opening Doors: the Charter for SME Friendly Procurement*” has been produced through Value Wales. This Charter is part of a programme of actions to deliver a consistent approach to procurement across the public sector in Wales while at the same time, addressing issues of particular concern to SMEs.

⁵ Sell2Wales is a new initiative by the Welsh Development Agency and the Welsh Assembly Government that aims to help small and medium companies work successfully with public sector clients. There are about 100 public sector organisations in Wales, all funded by the Welsh Assembly – these include local government,

companies directly into contact with Public Sector buyers in Wales. It has been commended in the Small Business Services report 'Small Suppliers - Better Value?' as an example of best practice.

Internal Procurement

- 8.5 Corporate Procurement Services (CPS) provides support and advice to Assembly Departments in meeting their business objectives, ensuring best practice is adopted and value for money is obtained.
- 8.5 Procurement is relevant to the Assembly Government's duty to promote disability equality in three main areas:
- services provided under contract or agreement;
 - contractors' equal opportunities policies and practices; and
 - contract opportunities for businesses owned by disabled people.
- 8.7 The Assembly Government has introduced a voluntary Code of Practice for its procurement policies. The Code sets out the Assembly Government's business principles and core values with the aim of creating a database of suppliers prepared to support the Assembly Government's core values of equality of opportunity, sustainable development and social inclusion. While contracts must still be let on the basis of open competition, suppliers who support the Code will be assisted with positive action such as guidance on ways to improve, and constructive feedback on unsuccessful bids.
- 8.8 To further promote disability equality in the way that it procures goods and services the Assembly Government has incorporated a requirement that all contractors adhere to and ensure all relevant legislation is observed.
- 8.9 The Assembly has also committed to:

the NHS, Further and Higher Education and bodies such as ELWa and the WDA. The website will list all the public sector tenders published in Wales.

- supporting Special Contract Arrangements (SCA) to help ensure disabled entrepreneurs have equal opportunities to tender for Assembly Government contracts.
- actively participating in the Value Wales initiative to make Public Sector purchasing more accessible and transparent to all sectors of society, by advertising all contracts over £25,000 in value on the Sell2Wales website, and publishing our tendering procedures on the Winning Our Business website.
- ensure that CPS attends the launch events for 'Opening Doors' the Assembly charter for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) friendly procurement.
- arranging 'meet the buyer events' to provide targeted advice on future trading opportunities specifically for disabled people.
- making staff aware of their obligations under the Act through our training courses and ask them to give due consideration to issues such as physical and mental impairment as well as accessibility when letting contracts.

Legal Services

- 8.10 The Legal Services Department is committed to achieving the actions in the Welsh Assembly Government's Equality Schemes, which are relevant to its function areas and staff. This Statement should be read together with the disability regulations:
<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2005/20052966.htm>. An explanation of its relevance to the public sector is at:
http://www.drc-gb.org/documents/psd_summary.doc.
- 8.11 The Legal Services Department will ensure that all legislation and legal advice prepared by the department is compliant with the Act. This will be achieved by

maintaining a centre of expertise within the department and ensuring that all lawyers are conversant with the requirements of the Act through training. They will also be made aware of any new developments, such as case-law, with respect to them.

- 8.10 The Legal Services Department will ensure that all its internal policies, practices and procedures are compliant with the Act by consulting as appropriate and necessary.

How we work with Local Authorities

Local Government

- 8.12 The two Local Government Divisions (Local Government Policy and Local Government Finance) provide support to Local Authorities in Wales and work with them to improve delivery in Wales.

- 8.13 Local Authorities deliver many services to the public in Wales, across the range of Assembly Government Ministerial Portfolios. The Assembly Government's relationship with Welsh local government is not exclusively a matter for the Local Government Divisions.

- 8.14 The Assembly Government does not have statutory powers to enforce compliance by local authorities with the Disability Equality Duty: this duty binds local government in the same way as it binds the Welsh Assembly Government. However, we can and do reflect those duties and the principles that underlie them in all our work with local government: for instance, by:

- making equalities assessments a required component of the Wales Programme for Improvement;
- including equalities-related measures in the local government performance measurement framework; and
- providing financial support to the Welsh Local Government Association's Equalities Unit.

- 8.15 A key feature of the Assembly Government's relationship with local government is its negotiation of individual policy agreements with each of the twenty-two authorities. Each policy agreement contains sixteen measures. Eight are prescribed measures, defined by the Assembly Government and common to all twenty-two agreements, and eight are local measures, which each local authority devises for itself and should reflect local needs and pressures. All local authorities have been strongly encouraged to include at least one equalities-related measure in their local measures. For instance, sixteen authorities have opted to include compliance with the Local Government Equality Standard. Others have included measures on, for instance, improving workforce diversity and increasing employment opportunities for disabled people.
- 8.16 The funding formula for local government allocates resources across Wales in accordance with the need to spend on each service area for each authority. For instance for Personal Social Services (PSS) there are separate formulae for children and young people, younger adults and older adults each of which use different indicators. In the recent work to update the formula for Younger Adults PSS a variety of indicators were investigated and found to be significant. These included claimant counts for Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA) and Disability Living Allowance (DLA). These now form part of the proposed formula for 2007-2008 onwards.
- 8.17 The new Performance Measurement Framework in Wales encourages authorities to use service-based performance indicators to collate disaggregated equality data to reveal any varying levels of service quality or delivery as between different social groups. This approach will support authorities to meet their statutory duties to monitor services and policies to determine whether there is an adverse impact on people according to their disability.
- 8.18 We will ensure that equality issues including those relating to disability are included on the agendas of the annual meetings between individual local authorities and the

Local Government Minister. Progress on equality issues will also be discussed at regular meetings between the Assembly Government and the Welsh Local Government Association which meet at least three times a year.

- 8.19 The current round of policy agreements expires in March 2007. We will consider the possible inclusion of an equality-related measure as a prescribed component in any arrangements which replace policy agreements after that.

Culture, Welsh Language and Sport

What we do:

- 8.20 The Directorate for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport, CyMAL and Cadw develop and implement policies to:
- give everyone the opportunity to enjoy the rich and diverse cultural experiences that Wales has to offer; and
 - maximise the health benefits that sport and physical activity can bring to the population.

What we are going to do:

Cultural Institutions

- 8.21 The National Library of Wales and Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales (AC-NMW) are focusing on ensuring that their staff, especially those dealing directly with the public and visitors, have been trained in equalities and disability awareness. By December 2006, 80% of National Museum staff will have received appropriate equalities training in preparation for the Disability Equality Duty coming into force.
- 8.22 The National Museum is taking forward a programme of gallery refurbishment. Work on the Origins gallery at the National Museum Cardiff will be complete by December 2007, and at Gallery 1 at St Fagans: National History Museum by Easter 2007.

8.23 By January 2007, AC-NMW will ensure that Access Audits are carried out at all their sites which have not been refurbished in the past ten years. They will seek advice on the audits from disabled people. In the light of the audits, the National Museum will prepare a prioritised implementation plan by the end of March 2007, to make improvements to access where necessary and as resources allow.

Historic Environment

8.24 Cadw's programme to improve access to monuments is being further enhanced this year by securing an additional £125k in 2006-2007 to implement proposals to engage with visitors with sensory impairments. It includes tactile and sensory hands-on materials for furnished room settings at Castell Coch and Plas Mawr to enable visitors with visual impairments to experience and explore the fabrics and furnishings of both monuments. Tactile plans and interpretive information for blind and visually impaired visitors will also be installed at Tintern Abbey, Caernarfon Castle, Kidwell Castle, Rug Chapel and Criccieth Castle.

8.25 Cadw has already consulted on their Access Strategy of their main sites and has started work on implementing the Access Strategy - most notably addressing physical disability access issues at St David's Bishop's Palace and the works at Caernarfon Castle are continuing into 2007-2008.

CyMAL: Museums Archives and Libraries Wales

8.26 CyMAL, the Assembly Government division for local museums, archives and libraries, has commissioned a research project "Quantifying Diversity: Mesur Amrywiaeth" to gather data on disability and other equalities issues in Welsh museums, archives and libraries. This will be complete by April 2007.

8.27 We will use this evidence to improve the way in which we build equality and diversity issues into the CyMAL grant schemes for museums, archives and libraries, starting with the next round of grant application paperwork in December 2007.

The Arts

- 8.28 The Arts Council of Wales has developed Moving Beyond, its strategy for Disability and the Arts. The Action Plan is being taken forward in partnership with Disability Arts Cymru. We will maintain a clear focus on this work, and will conduct an evaluation of the impact of this scheme to inform our disability Action Plan in 2008-2009.

Sport and Physical Activity

- 8.29 The Welsh Assembly Government's strategy for sport and physical activity, "*Climbing Higher*" recognises that Wales needs to be more physically active in order to be a healthier nation. It also encourages people across all ages, gender and social groups in Wales to take part in more sport and physical activity.
- 8.30 The Sports Council for Wales has established a partnership with the Federation for Disability Sport to provide more opportunities for disabled people to engage in sport and physical activity. In particular, work on club provision has been consolidated with local development and is now focusing on encouraging active club membership.
- 8.31 The Sports Council works with the other UK Sports Councils, UK Sport and equality groups to further develop generic equality standards for national governing bodies of sport which will help in their continued modernisation programme. The Sports Council also works closely with local authorities to encourage equal access to sport and leisure facilities.
- 8.32 The Assembly Government is funding free swimming for children and young people and for older people aged 60 and over, across Wales as pilot initiatives to inform future government policy at a national and local level. Specific targeted structured activity sessions aimed at disabled people are a key feature of both schemes. We have been working in partnership with the Federation of Disability Sport Wales to ensure that the sessions are appropriate to the needs of the individual.

Cultural and Sporting Events

- 8.33 We will be carrying out research to measure participation in cultural and sporting events to identify problems of access and inclusion. The research will be complete by April 2007. We will use this evidence to improve the way in which we build equality and diversity issues into the conditions of grant for events starting in 2007-2008.

Education, Lifelong Learning & Skills

- 8.34 The Department for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DELLS) aims to improve children's services, education and training provision to secure better outcomes for learners, business, and employers. It helps empower children, young people and adults through education and training to enjoy a better quality of life.

What we do:

Transition

- 8.35 In making progress towards resolving transition issues from secondary to further and higher education, the Department has focussed on key disability areas.
- Firstly, DELLS has gathered evidence on transition issues for those with sensory impairments in Wales.
 - It funded research and acted upon recommendations from this evidence to create a model for transition arrangements.
 - In January 2006, the Quality Standards for Educational Services for Sensory Impairment report praised these arrangements.
 - Furthermore, the Welsh Assembly Government's Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice sets out a transition process designed to support an individual's training needs. The Education Lifelong Learning and Skills (ELLS) Committee is presently undertaking a review of SEN. Phases 1 and 2 are complete. Phase 3 is currently looking at transition issues.

Curriculum Review

8.36 The Department is reviewing the 3-14 curriculum, which includes the PSE Framework. Guidance on the teaching of disability issues and disability awareness is to be incorporated into the PSE Framework as part of this review.

8.37 One of the priority areas for funding in the 2006-2007 Better Schools Fund is to develop staff expertise and provision for pupils with additional learning needs in line with the Inclusion and Pupil Support Policy Framework and the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales. The 2007-2008 document is being consulted upon.

Learning Materials

8.38 DELLS is developing an e-learning resource on SEN issues which is to be piloted in 2007. This course is designed to account for 30 credits towards a Masters degree, but also be suitable as a training resource for teachers e.g. in teacher training days.

Economic Inactivity

8.39 Many disabled people in Wales are receiving incapacity benefits, and are not economically active. A significant proportion of these people do however want to work, and there is strong evidence that being in work can help improve a person's health. The Assembly Government is committed to helping all those who want to work, to do so. The current *Want2 Work* pilots, which are a joint initiative between the Assembly Government and Jobcentre Plus, are proving successful in helping people who have been on incapacity benefit, but who want to return to work, to do so, with support tailored to the needs of individuals.

8.40 The initiative started in January 2005 and is due for completion in 2007-2008. The intention is to engage with a minimum of 5,000 recipients, and of these, help at least 1,000 to find and stay in work. Delivery, through outreach provision in local communities, is targeted within the four local authority areas of Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Neath Port Talbot and Rhyl.

What we are going to do:

Transition

- 8.41 To widen and reinforce the evidence base, DELLS will be conducting a secondary analysis of 14 to 19 learning to determine key disability issues. This includes transition from secondary to further and higher education. It will also investigate models of improving transition arrangements inside and outside the UK, and engage with the organisations such as Disability Wales and the Disability Rights Commission. A report and recommendations will be drafted by April 2007. DELLS will use this evidence to inform reviews of the affected policies and the 2008-2009 Disability Equality Action Plan.

Curriculum Review

- 8.42 The Department will consult on the curriculum, including the PSE Framework, between January and March 2007. It will use Welsh Assembly Government contact networks to promote this opportunity to key disability networks from December 2006. The report on the consultation will include specific disability and inclusion issues raised in the exercise (i.e. areas for clarification).

Learning Materials

- 8.43 The Department will produce training and awareness raising materials on the duties for teachers, schools and Local Education Authorities, primarily on the requirements to promote equality and develop Disability Equality Schemes. These materials will be provided by February 2007 in preparation for the requirement on schools to produce a Disability Equality Scheme by April 2007.

Economic Inactivity

- 8.44 DELLS will build on the *Want 2 Work* pilots, by seeking to harness the new round of European Union (EU) funding to extend help for people with health problems and disabilities to return to work. In doing this, DELLS will work with other departments across the Assembly Government, with the Department for Work and Pensions, Jobcentre Plus, and, via the Spatial Plan, with a wide range of partners in local authorities, business and the voluntary sector.

Enterprise, Innovation and Networks

- 8.45 The Department for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks vision is to work together for Wales to create a vibrant Welsh economy, delivering strong and sustainable growth by providing opportunities for all.

What we do:

- 8.46 Entrepreneurship And Support For Job Creation
We include a Quality Assessment form in the Regional Selective Assistance and Assembly Investment Grants appraisal process. This includes assessing companies` commitment to training and equal opportunities.
- 8.47 While access to business support programmes remains open to all, we have provided dedicated positive action to assist disabled people, as well as under-represented groups.
- 8.48 The Broadband Wales programme has focused on delivering affordable broadband services to the people of Wales regardless of age, disability or ethnic origin.
- 8.49 Equal Opportunities, covering disability, are mainstreamed into the European Structural Fund Programmes.
- 8.50 We are targeting under-represented groups in terms of business start-ups.
- 8.51 We have conducted surveys on barriers experienced by people from under represented groups when growing or sustaining their business.

What we are going to do:

- 8.52 All policies and strategies will be disability equality impact assessed, with disability baseline data used to determine future policy and strategy.

- 8.53 A Customer Service Team will capture demographic data relating to disability across all business facing areas of the Assembly, capture customer service feedback from clients and report regularly on data from programmes disaggregated by disability. This will include a project framed in the Social Model of Disability collecting data on business demographics and numbers of people with a disability. This project will continue to ensure that all services are delivered in the most accessible way utilising new adaptations as they become available and pass on this knowledge to SME`s.
- 8.54 Data collected on businesses owned by disabled people will be reviewed and brought into line with corporate requirements for diversity data collection.
- 8.55 Training will be provided to staff on how to gather disability data effectively.
- 8.56 We will ensure that all information about business start-ups is available in accessible information.
- 8.57 We will continue to target under-represented groups in terms of business start-ups.
- 8.58 We will ensure that all our events and activities delivered are accessible to all.
- 8.59 We will collect data to identify the barriers experienced by disabled people when growing or sustaining their business and act upon the findings. We will involve disabled people in discussions to remove barriers or take remedial action.
- 8.60 Through the Potentia programme we will continue to deliver a disability equality training module targeting mainstream business support providers in the voluntary and private sectors, deliver training programmes to encourage disabled people into enterprise, delivery of consultancy around disability issues to mainstream business support providers, and provision of an inclusive and accessible service to all and ensuring the promotion of services to and by disabled people.

- 8.61 All staff in the Department will undertake relevant equality and diversity training appropriate for their job.

What we do:

Public Transport

- 8.62 Bus and train operating companies are already required by law to comply with the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act. Many operators will have made modifications and improvements to buses, trains and infrastructure to make them more accessible to disabled people. Operators will also have in place a range of policies, procedures and practices in order to avoid discrimination and to make the services meet the needs of disabled customers. We have provided advice and guidance to public service operators on the requirements of the Act. However, in discharging their duty under the Act operators must also not compromise the health and safety of drivers, other passengers and disabled users.
- 8.63 The Public Service Accessibility Regulations 2000 set out the minimum standards that new buses and scheduled coaches must satisfy to meet the needs of disabled people. Small buses will need to be accessible to wheelchair users by January 2015, large single deck buses by 1 January 2016 and double deck buses by January 2017.
- 8.64 The Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations (RVAR) came into force on 1 November 1998 and have applied to all new trains entering service since 1st January 1999. The Regulations cover accessibility and accommodation, including the requirements for visual and audible information, dedicated wheelchair spaces, appropriate handrails and colour contrasting. The Regulations were drawn up in consultation with the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC).
- 8.65 From the 4th December 2006, Train Operating Companies (TOCs) will also be subject to the Part 3 duties for that element of the service that involves the provision and use of the train itself. They will have to address their policies,

procedures and practices, tackle gratuitous discrimination and make available auxiliary aids, unless to do so would require physical alterations to the vehicles.

- 8.66 We encourage local authorities in Wales to adopt the Department of Transport's guide on "Inclusive Mobility" that sets out best practice on access to pedestrian and transport infrastructure. It provides advice on the design and accessibility of transport buildings including bus stops as well as rail and interchange stations to meet the needs of disabled people.
- 8.67 We are currently consulting on the Welsh Transport Strategy "Connecting Wales". One of our key outcomes is to improve access to all services particularly for the most disadvantaged groups. This will ensure an integrated transport policy agenda that will encompass accessible public transport and transport infrastructure and a barrier free pedestrian environment. We have consulted the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee and will take account of their views when analysing the responses to the consultation exercise.
- 8.68 Since April 2002, elderly and disabled people resident in Wales have been able to travel free on local bus services throughout Wales, and to a limited extent to and from some destinations just across the border in England. The scheme is hugely popular and local authorities have issued more than 530,000 free bus passes.
- 8.69 The Welsh Assembly Government is providing funding of £3 million over the next three years to support 15 community demonstration projects for severely disabled people who are not able to access low floor buses. The projects are providing community transport through a range of models. These include:
- dial a ride using either minibuses or taxis to provide a door to door service;
 - taxi operators being paid in travel tokens by disabled passengers, and
 - minibuses purchased for wheelchair users and severely disabled to be used in a specific region

or area.

- 8.70 The projects will test different ways to improve accessibility for severely disabled people on community transport.

What are we going to do:

Buses

- 8.71 The Welsh Assembly Government plans to establish a Public Transport Users Committee for Wales (PTUCW), under the Transport (Wales) Act 2006. The PTUCW will represent the interests of all users, including disabled people, for all modes of transport, including trains and buses. It will act as a watchdog to ensure that the passenger's voice is heard. One of the responsibilities of the Committee will be to consider the issue of accessibility, in terms of bus stops and kerb heights, low floor buses, and the number of local authority concessionary fares passes. We aim to have the Committee in place by April 2008.

- 8.72 We have revised the operating contract with the Vehicle Operating Service Agency (VOSA) to enable inspectors in Wales to ensure bus operators are complying with the Regulations. This will be reviewed annually.

- 8.73 We will raise the profile of the free concessionary scheme for the elderly and disabled people through a targeted marketing and publicity campaign by Spring 2007. We will also evaluate the free concessionary scheme to measure the success of the arrangements and to see if any changes are needed by April 2008.

Trains

- 8.74 The Welsh Assembly Government is undertaking a programme of Station improvements, these include tactile paving, improved electronic information, help points and improved lighting. Passenger satisfaction on these improvements will be monitored.
- 8.75 All of ATW trains will have CCTV and all new ATW trains will comply with the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations.

Environment, Planning and Countryside

- 8.76 The Department for Environment, Planning & Countryside is committed to creating a sustainable environment for the people of Wales and for future generations

What we do:

Planning:

- 8.77 The Welsh Assembly Government provides the overall planning policy framework. The 25 local planning authorities in Wales undertake the planning function in accordance with the planning policy that we set.
- 8.78 A new Local Development Plan (LDP) system has been designed to facilitate community involvement and build consensus on where future development should take place. LDP Wales, the policy of the Assembly Government on the new LDP system, covers the need for local planning authorities to comply with the general duties in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Race Relations Act (2000) when producing their development plans.
- Recreation:
- 8.79 We recognise that there are barriers to people, including disabled people in accessing the countryside. We are developing new policies to improve access and through our funding, our partner organisations (Environment Agency, Countryside Council for Wales, and National Parks Authorities) are implementing these policies and taking the projects forward. As a result of this partnership we have recently successfully delivered a programme of new public access to some 20% of the land area of Wales. In the preparations for that we sought to take account of equality issues in a range of ways (for example, ensuring that the Minister's Countryside Opportunities Steering Group had 'countryside access and disadvantaged groups' in its work plan.)
- 8.80 The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 places a duty on local highway authorities to have regard to the

needs of those with mobility problems in making improvements to rights of way.

- 8.81 New Rights of Way Improvement Plans are being drawn up now by local highway authorities which, inter alia, will set out how they plan to cater for those with mobility problems. The National Park Authorities are looking at ways to improve access to their parks for disabled people and have received additional funding in 2006-2007 from the Welsh Assembly Government for this purpose.

What we are going to do:

Planning:

- 8.82 Planning Policy is set out in a suite of key documents: Planning Policy Wales, Minerals Planning Policy Wales, Local Development Plans Wales and a supporting series of subject specific Technical Advice Notes. These currently reflect the general duties in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Race Relations Act (2000). However, we will ensure that equality issues are reviewed when planning policy and technical advice notes are updated.

- 8.83 In addition, to ensure that the needs of disabled people are met in new developments, we will be introducing a mandatory requirement that relevant applications for planning permission and listed buildings consent submitted to Local Planning Authorities in Wales will require an accompanying access statement. This will set out the ways in which the proposal addresses the needs of disabled people in terms of accessibility to the development.

Recreation:

- 8.84 The delivery of our countryside access programme will continue in 2006-2007. A key action we will be taking during the year involves public consultation on statutory guidance for local highway authorities in Wales on how they should take account of the needs of those with mobility impairments in installing or improving 'furniture' on rights of way. We plan to issue the guidance in final form by March 2007.

8.85 Improving public access to the coast is also one of our objectives. A new programme was announced by the First Minister in June 2006 with the aim of improving access to the coast for communities and visitors to Wales via local footpath improvements. As part of this we also plan to secure improved opportunities for wheelchair user access to the coast. At the moment some 3% of Welsh coast is accessible by disabled people and we plan to increase this to nearer 10% over the 4-5 years of the programme, i.e. by 2011.

8.86 We also wish to encourage greater participation in angling by disability groups. By March 2007 we will have reviewed the existing arrangements for disabled licence concessions with a view to incorporate additional groups. We will also be analysing our existing programme of participation events with a view to identifying how greater number of disabled people can be attracted.

Health and Social Services

8.87 The Department for Health and Social Services, (DHSS), has the following responsibilities:

- advising the Welsh Assembly Government on setting policies and strategies for health and social care in Wales;
- contributing to the making of legislation in the field of health and social care;
- providing funding for the NHS and other health and social care bodies;
- managing and supporting the delivery of health and social care services; and
- monitoring and promoting improvements in service delivery

What we do:

Designed for Life – a new strategic framework for health and social care

8.88 The aim of this strategy is to ensure that future services are sustainable across Wales, and that everyone has access to high quality, safe services as locally as

possible. It adopts a citizen approach to healthcare and the involvement of people in locally based planning and design. As part of the framework there will be a redesign of acute services across Wales, new guidance on commissioning, and improvement in information systems, all of which should strengthen the ability to meet the needs of different groups. The new commissioning guidance and processes will emphasise the importance of promoting disability equality, through the commissioning and provision of healthcare services. New Health, Social Care and Well-being strategies are currently being developed which should identify and state how health inequalities will be addressed locally.

- 8.89 Designed for Work, is a strategic framework for the NHS workforce, which supports Designed for Life. Designed for Work is the workforce and people management strategy to make sure that we develop and engage our staff in this vital change to the way we deliver healthcare in Wales. The future workforce will be designed around patients, care pathways and service needs and the Designed to Work strategy aims to get the right people, with the right skills at the right place and time.
- 8.90 Designed to Work will be implemented by adopting a partnership approach, with NHS staff, trades unions and professional bodies, heads of professions, politicians, local government leaders, NHS Managers, the Deanery stakeholders and the public. NHS Organisations must commit to and will be monitored and assessed against, the Designed for Working Life Standards. These standards will scope the people management elements from Investors in People, the Welsh Risk Management Standards, Health Inspectorate Wales reviews, the bi-annual staff survey results and also assessments to be developed for measuring partnership working effectiveness and also staff involvement.
- 8.91 *Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities*, a Strategy for Social Services over the next decade, will be issued for consultation in the near future. It promotes the social model of disability and helping people to lead fuller lives.

This strategy will therefore be important to many disabled people. The Strategy will focus on:

- making major improvements in systems, the capacity and the workforce
- making the voice of the citizen, the service user, the carer and the workforce, really count in making services more responsive and accountable to citizens in all their diversity
- transforming performance management, improving information about performance and improving scrutiny
- promoting better partnership and collaboration between councils and with other statutory and independent organisations.
- championing the vulnerable so that other services recognise their needs and work to promote their inclusion.

GP Premises:

8.92 All independent contracting GPs have been issued with guidance on meeting DDA compliance and will have to take this into account when submitting bids for funding to the Primary Care Estates Forum.

Expert Patients Programme (EPP)

8.93 *Wales* is an NHS self-management course for people living with any long-term condition, which provides individuals with skills to take more responsibility for their own health and well-being. The course has enabled patients with support and advice to be removed off the incapacity register and start working again. Course materials have been developed in 10 languages, including Welsh and 8 ethnic languages, Braille, audio and an on-line system is currently under development. In 2006-2007 it is planned to develop a programme for ethnic minorities and mental health patients.

Mental Health Services

9.94 People with mental health problems have the same needs for effective care of physical health problems including dental, visual and hearing needs as the general population. Primary care are working jointly with the

mental health services and with the support of specialist services such as the community dentistry services to ensure all those requiring care have access to and receive effective services, whatever their circumstances. The principal aim of the National Service Framework for Mental Health, is to drive up quality and reduce unacceptable variations in health and social services provision. It establishes the practical guidelines that will ensure consistent and comprehensive implementation of the strategy's vision across Wales.

8.95 By March 2007 Local Authorities, Local Health Boards and NHS Trusts to clearly identify each service user's physical health problems through the application of the Unified Assessment Process identifying within relevant domains any such needs, the plan to meet them and ensuring equity of access to these services. In line with the GMS contract quality indicators, a register of patients with a serious mental illness within each practice is to be developed. Regular reviews of the physical health problems and prescribed medication of patients with a severe and enduring mental health problem to be undertaken in line with GMS contract (subject to review of GMS contract).

Public Appointments to NHS Bodies

8.96 We are committed to increasing representation from minority ethnic communities, disabled people and women on NHS public appointments, e.g. to NHS Trust Boards. Data from 2005-2006 indicate 12 people with disabilities were appointed.

NHS Centre for Equality and Human Rights

8.97 Established in 1994, the Centre works proactively to build the commitment and capacity of health service organisations to ensure staff and patients are treated fairly and according to their needs. To achieve this, it works in partnership with individuals and organisations to promote equality and human rights in the planning, commissioning and delivery of health services.

What we are going to do:

Directed Enhanced Services

- 8.98 Three Directed Enhanced Services will be implemented in Primary Care GP Practices to address provision of general medical services for adults with severe learning disabilities, people with mental health problems, and access to a member of the Primary Care Team. A Directed Enhanced Service is an enhanced service provided by Primary Care to meet identified, evidenced gaps in provision, and assist local partnerships to use enhanced services to deliver better pro-active healthcare to patients.
- 8.99 These three directed enhanced services commenced on 1st April 2006, and measurable benefits will include:
- development of local registers;
 - systematic recall approach for patients for further appointments;
 - annual health check provision;
 - improved involvement of carers, support workers and family; and
 - a whole system approach of care with local support services.
- 8.100 Annual reviews will be undertaken to measure the impact of the new Directed Enhanced Services
- 8.101 In addition the Assembly Government is funding a disability awareness programme for GPs and practice staff, called "Equip Cymru, Promoting Disability Equality in Primary Care" which will include an assessment of how well they are developing disability awareness systems. This will be a two-year programme, which will provide recognition for the Practices, which have successfully participated, and will measure the progress of the programme across Wales.
- Community Health Council Membership
- 8.102 Current membership will be analysed and compared with local population data and a report will be produced by September 2006. Stakeholders will be engaged at the end

of 2006 to develop an action plan, to improve appointment guidance, and a programme of awareness will be developed by April 2007. An implementation plan will then be developed taking forward the action plan reducing/eliminating inequalities in CHC membership in 2008.

Analyse membership data	December 2006
Compare membership data with local area data	January 2007
Engage stakeholders	March 2007
	April 2007
Produce detailed action plan	August 2007
Implement Plan	To be agreed

- 8.103 The National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services in Wales (10-year plan)
The National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services (NSF) was launched on the 30th September 2005 and sets out the quality of services that children, young people and their families have a right to receive.
- 8.104 This is not just a strategy for health, but for education, housing, leisure, transport, and other local services, which strongly influence the health and well being of children.
- 8.105 The NSF contains 21 cross cutting standards and 203 specific and measurable key actions, which put children, young people and their families at the core of services.
- 8.106 Chapter 5 is dedicated to disabled children and young people and includes a specific standard to make effective transitions from childhood to adulthood. The ethos of the chapter is that disabled children and young people are entitled to be valued and have the same chance to succeed and participate in society as their non-disabled peers.
- 8.107 'My Orange Book' – an All Wales Hand Held Record for disabled children and young people with complex needs, launched by the Minister for Children in September 2005,

was produced as a direct result of feedback from parents/carers and children themselves during the consultation process undertaken for the NSF. It has been written in such a way that professionals and carers can have an understanding of the world through the eyes of the child and aims to improve co-ordination between professionals and families. To date over seven thousand copies of My Orange Book have been distributed.

Patient Equalities Monitoring Project – NHS Centre for Equality & Human Rights

- 8.108 In 2005, the NHS Centre for Equality and Human Rights was commissioned to conduct a Patient Equalities Monitoring Project, which is due to be completed in August 2008. The aims of the project are to deliver a programme of change that improves the collection of equalities data within NHS Trusts across Wales, to enable the Service to assess the impact of health service delivery, policies and practices upon different groups of patients, according to their racial group, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief.
- 8.109 The NHS CEHR provides strategic assistance and practical support to NHS organisations to develop their Disability Equality Schemes, offering advice, awareness training and co-facilitating engagement events with the Disability Rights Commission.
- 8.110 The National Service Framework for Older People
The National Service Framework (NSF), launched on 20 March 2006 sets 10 national standards and action plan to improve quality and to drive up standards for older people's health and social care services across Wales.
- 8.111 Challenging dependency is one of the national standards and sets key targets for community-based services, equipment and home adaptations. Issues regarding physical and mental health, advocacy, involvement, information and Intermediate care are also targeted.
- 8.112 The implementation plan for the NSF has been commenced together with a support programme co-

ordained by the Welsh Assembly Government, in conjunction with key partners.

- 8.113 The Commissioner for Older People (Wales) Act 2006 received Royal Assent on 25 July 2006. The Commissioner will be a source of information, advocacy and support for older people in Wales and their representatives and will also have a role in encouraging best practice in the treatment of older people in Wales. It is hoped that the regulations will come into effect and that a Commissioner will be appointed during 2007.

Service and Financial Framework Targets 2006–2007

- 8.114 The Service and Financial Framework (SAFF) 2006-2007, sets out the delivery plans agreed by the Health Service to achieve Welsh Assembly Government's priorities and requirements alongside local priorities, within the context of the financial resources provided, and are determined within the context of Designed for Life.
- 8.115 The SAFF includes targets regarding the planning of integrated processes and access to services including mental health services, long term care, medicine management and older people.
- 8.116 The SAFF targets reflect the targets as outlined in the National Service Frameworks, for Older People, Mental Health and Children, Young People and Maternity Services in Wales.
- 8.117 The SAFF is monitored on a monthly basis and any targets that have an impact on services for people with disabilities will be monitored in the DHSS Disability Equality Action Plan.
- #### Our Approach to Equality
- 8.118 DHSS are committed to mainstreaming equality and diversity into the working practices of the department. A project approach has been adopted by DHSS to ensure this is realised. Appropriate training and knowledge support systems are being developed for DHSS staff to ensure their understanding and skills are attuned to enable the department to meet its health and social care

agenda in Wales equitably. An equality training needs analysis will be undertaken with DHSS staff in September 2006.

- 8.119 The Department for Health and Social Services Disability Equality Action Plan will be monitored via the DHSS Equality and Diversity Steering Group. This Group is chaired by the Head of Health and Social Services, and membership comprises of Division Directors, and representation from the Officer of Chief Medical Office, Officer of Chief Nursing Office and the Strategic Equality and Diversity Unit. This Group has recently evolved to include all strands of equality including disability, gender, race; which are covered by statutory legislation. This Group will meet on a bi-annual basis.
- 8.120 Collaborative working with a wide range of organisations, such as NHS Centre for Equality and Human Rights, Disability Wales, Disability Rights Commission will continue to ensure the Department undertakes its business in an involving, empowering, informative manner.

Office of the Chief Nursing Officer

- 8.121 The Office of the Chief Nursing Officer (OCNO) is committed to supporting the Welsh Assembly Government by providing good quality professional nursing advice.
- 8.122 OCNO comprises the Chief Nursing Officer, Nursing Officers who are experts in specific aspects of nursing but who can operate generically to access and develop specialist advice covering the whole range of health and social care policy. They are supported from time to time by Secondedes usually drawn from NHS Wales for specific projects, and dedicated Business Support unit.
- 8.123 In order to support the Welsh Assembly Government's vision for Wales, nursing policy must serve to improve the health and wellbeing of our people, to tackle inequalities in health, to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our services, to ensure partnership working between all health and social care stakeholders and to facilitate innovation in all aspects of nursing.

- 8.124 OCNO meets its commitment through working closely with colleagues in the Department of Health and Social Services by informing and supporting policy development, implementation and evaluation. These close links provide the rationale for incorporating OCNO within the overall DHSS Disability Action Plan.
- 8.125 Nursing Officers will be provided with the latest information and research evidence in order that they can ensure they are up to date with equality developments.

Office Of The Chief Medical Officer

- 8.126 The Office of the Chief Medical Officer has a crucial role in ensuring the health and well being of the people of Wales is protected and improved. A key element of our role lies in the prevention of ill health where the following action, in relation to disability equality, is being taken:

What we do:

- 8.127 There are currently 62 projects supported by the Inequalities in Health Fund, one of which 'The Hearts and Minds' project in Wrexham is encouraging physical health and well being for people with learning difficulties and/or long term mental health problems.

What we are going to do:

- 8.128 All Inequalities in Health Fund projects produce quarterly questionnaire based reports and detailed annual reports. These reports have provided information on take up of the services by gender, age etc since inception. Specific questions will be added to the respective reporting requirements across all projects with the view to collecting information on take up of services by disabled groups. This requirement will be added for the second quarter returns due in mid October 2006 and for the annual report due in April 2007. This information will be used to direct subsequent programme activity.
- 8.129 By March 2007 we will have undertaken a disability research programme resulting in the publication of an initial report.

The report will be used to inform future Health Promotion policy direction.

8.130 By March 2007 we will have revisited the criteria for the redeveloped Voluntary Grant Scheme to ensure that it is inclusive of all social demography of society. Actions will include:

- Developing criteria for grant application and award with reference to race, disability and gender issues
- Organisations invited to submit applications for funding to include a proportion of those dealing with the disability agenda
- All organisations funded to have diversity and equality policies in place

Social Justice and Regeneration

What we do:

8.131 The Department's four Divisions and their main responsibilities are:

- Communities Directorate – delivering and funding programmes for locally based regeneration and social inclusion; co-ordinating policy on social justice and child poverty.
- Community Safety Division – creating safer communities; reducing levels of crime and drug abuse as a cause of crime; tackling domestic violence; supporting Community Safety Partnerships.
- Housing Directorate – ensuring good quality, affordable housing; increasing domestic energy efficiency; planning for housing that meets the needs of older people; reducing homelessness; promoting fire safety.
- The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service - their powers and duties are set

out in the Children Act 2004. They include advising Family Proceedings Courts in cases directly affecting children, making provision for children to be represented in court proceedings and providing information, advice and support to children and their families

- 8.132 The Department has a range of policies that intend to impact on equality and diversity as part of delivering social justice and regeneration. Set out below are examples of programmes and grants where disability equality is currently being supported:

Communities First

- 8.133 Communities First is principally concerned with developing community participation in identifying local problems and their solution. There are 137 Communities First Partnerships across Wales taking forward a wide range of capacity building and community development activities. The Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB) received a total of £752,401 under the Communities First Programme over six years (2001-2007) to identify the main barriers to social inclusion for people with severe sight loss, and then develop the priorities for action to overcome these barriers.

- 8.134 With support through the Communities First Support Fund, the Royal National Institute for the Deaf is helping deaf and hard of hearing people participate fully in the Communities First process. The project focuses on breaking down the barriers to involving the deaf and hard of hearing in the regeneration of their community. The aim is to increase confidence and skills through a range of practical activities such as training, workshops and interactive events.

Communities @One

- 8.135 Communities @One initiative seeks to achieve 'digital inclusion', which is social inclusion through the use of technology, in the most deprived areas of Wales. The rationale of the project is 'to enable communities and individuals to use ICT in ways relevant to them to enhance their quality of life, overcome difficulties and

allow them to fulfill their social, economic and cultural potential.’ The initiative was launched in January 2006 and is administered by the Wales Co-operative Centre on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government.

- 8.136 The RNIB has approached the Wales Co-operative Centre to discuss the potential for working with blind/partially sighted people in Communities First areas. The aim is to raise awareness on the issues and barriers facing people with sight loss, as well as looking at accessible technology that will help overcome the sensory barriers to ICT.

Substance Misuse

- 8.137 The Welsh Substance Misuse Strategy includes initiatives, services and treatments specifically tailored to meet the needs of children and young people. Projects under the Substance Misuse Action Capital Fund have included provision for the disabled. For example, Prism in Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire has received funding to improve access to clients which included compliance with the Act.

Disabled Facilities Grants

- 8.138 Disabled Facilities Grants are mandatory grants, provided by Local Authorities, which are available to help disabled people to remain living independently in their own homes. In September 2005 the Welsh Assembly Government decided to abolish the means-test for parents with disabled children.

Adapted Housing Registers

- 8.139 The National Housing Strategy ‘Better Homes for People in Wales’ contains a recommendation covering local authorities keeping registers of their own stock that have been adapted in order to match them to new disabled occupants when they become vacant. The Housing Directorate’s Review of Adaptations including Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG), which reported in March 2005, also recommended that local authorities should keep such registers. Revised guidance on DFGs which will be issued in December 2006 covers local authorities keeping

these registers. This will be the responsibility for local authorities to administer.

Disabled Persons Housing Service

- 8.140 Funding is provided to a project by the Charter Housing Association to enable a Disabled Persons Housing Service in South East Wales. The project aims to work with disabled people and housing providers to enable disabled people to achieve independent living through access to the right home at the right time in their lives.

Social Housing Management Grant Programme

- 8.141 The Welsh Assembly Government's Social Housing Management Grant Programme provided funding for research to be undertaken by the RNIB Cymru and the Joint Mobility Unit (JMU) Access Partnership. The main aim of the project is to improve housing design, address issues and remove barriers to housing services for people with sight loss. The RNIB have published two design guides 'Housing Sight' and 'Adapting Homes'. The former guide will provide valuable design guidance for people with sight problems and has already been put into practice via the building of a pilot home in Cardiff by Wales and West Housing Association. The latter will provide guidance on adapting existing homes.
- 8.142 The major requirements of the guide have been incorporated into Welsh Assembly Government's Development Quality Requirements 2005. This enables all new and refurbishment projects undertaken by housing associations from July 2005 to provide accessible homes for people with sight problems. The RNIB guidance is also available to developers of private sector homes which sets the good example by the public sector.

Home Energy Efficiency Scheme (HEES)

- 8.143 The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme (HEES) is our main vehicle for lifting Welsh households out of fuel poverty. Over 60,000 households have received energy efficiency measures such as cavity wall insulation, loft insulation, draught proofing, and central heating through the scheme.
- 8.144 Since the commencement of HEES in 2000, Eaga, who deliver the scheme, has worked closely with many

representatives of RNIB. At operational level, the RNIB has identified eligible clients and provided a facility for the production of material in user friendly formats such as braille and large print.

CAFCASS CYMRU

8.145 CAFCASS CYMRU is a child focused organisation which provides specialist advice to Family Courts across Wales in cases directly affecting children. The organisation works directly with service users, and therefore must ensure its services are accessible to all.

What we are going to do:

8.146 We will continue to develop policy and support services that assist disabled people to maintain their independence. With involvement from groups that represent disabled people, we will maximise the effectiveness of specific programmes and grants by reviewing guidance and identifying barriers to access.

8.147 We have developed the following specific objectives to meet our commitment:

- we will review our grant scheme conditions to ensure that the grants we administer promote access for disabled people and compliance with the Act.
- by reviewing best practice guidance, we will ensure that Care and Repair services assist older disabled people to maintain their independence in their own home by delivering services effectively.
- in response to the Russell Commission recommendations, we will ensure that young disabled people are offered opportunities to volunteer, thereby increasing their self-confidence and skills and allowing positive contributions to be made by all.

- through data analysis and the production of a report, we will take steps to ensure that disabled people have equal access to the Assembly Government grant scheme for adaptations in housing association property regardless of their landlord or the local authority area they live in.
- to identify barriers preventing disabled people with sensory impairment or mobility problems accessing supported housing services so that guidance can be produced or revisions to grant criteria can be made to remove barriers wherever possible.

8.148 Detailed departmental action plans, containing performance indicators are available on the Welsh Assembly Government's internet site.

CHAPTER 9: DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS

External Complaints

9.1 The National Assembly for Wales has a 'Code of Practice on Complaints', to deal with complaints made by members of the public on Assembly administrative actions.

9.2 If a member of the public considers that the National Assembly is not meeting its administrative obligations under the general or specific duties as specified in the Act, and wishes to make a complaint, they should access the Code and follow the process contained therein. The Code can be found at:
<http://www.wales.gov.uk/contacts/complaints/index.htm>

Internal Complaints

9.3 Complaints from staff can be dealt with through one or more of the Assembly Government's internal policies, including those on:

- grievance;
- dignity at work; and

- whistleblowing.

9.4 Union members may also approach their union representative for assistance.

Complaints about Individual Assembly Members

9.5 In accordance with Standing Order 16, the Presiding Officer may refer complaints about the conduct of individual Assembly Members to the National Assembly's Standards Committee.

Disability Rights Commission and Public Service Ombudsman

9.6 Members of the public and Assembly staff can approach the Disability Rights Commission or the Public Service Ombudsman with any complaint they have regarding a breach of the general or specific duties. From October 2007 the Commission for Equality and Human Rights will replace the Disability Rights Commission following which complaints should be addressed to, and will be taken forward by the Commission for Equality and Human Rights.

ANNEX 1 – LIST OF DEVOLVED FUNCTIONS

The Assembly Government has considerable power to develop and implement policy within a range of areas:

- agriculture;
- ancient monuments and historic buildings;
- culture;
- economic development;
- education and training;
- the environment;
- health and health services;
- highways;
- housing;
- industry;
- local government
- social services;
- sport and leisure;
- tourism;
- town and country planning;
- transport and roads; and
- the Welsh language.

What does this mean in practice?

Examples of the important decisions the Assembly Government can make include:

- developing education, training and lifelong learning in Wales;
- developing and funding NHS services in Wales;
- administering European funds including the Objective One programme;
- administering funding for local authorities in Wales;
- developing housing policy, including tackling homelessness;
- sponsoring bodies that protect our environment and conserve wildlife and natural habitats;
- developing an integrated transport framework for Wales;
- promoting agricultural schemes and rural development;
- developing schemes to promote the culture and heritage of Wales;
- establishing schemes for sustainable development and equality of opportunity; and
- developing information and communication technology in Wales.

ANNEX 2: CARE STANDARDS INSPECTORATE FOR WALES, SOCIAL SERVICES INSPECTORATE FOR WALES, HEALTHCARE INSPECTORATE WALES AND VALUE WALES

Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales (CSIW)

CSIW is an operationally independent Division of the Welsh Assembly Government.

The Division is headed by Rob Pickford and is responsible for ensuring that social and early years services meet the regulations and national minimum standards set by the National Assembly for Wales and the Welsh Assembly Government.

CSIW Regulates:

- Care homes for adults - including care homes with nursing facilities
- Domiciliary care agencies
- Adult placement schemes
- Nurses' agencies
- Children's homes - including secure units
- Day care services for children under 8 - including childminding, full day
- Public sector and independent fostering agencies
- Public sector and voluntary adoption agencies
- Boarding schools, residential special schools and further education colleges which accommodate students under 18
- Residential family centres

CSIW has six main duties:

Registration - We decide who can provide services

Inspection - We inspect those services and publish reports

Complaints - We investigate and deal with complaints (if they cannot be dealt with by the providers own complaints procedures)

Compliance - We support compliance with the regulations

Enforcement - We take enforcement action to make sure that the Care Standards Act and its associated regulations are met

Contributing to policy development - Our statutory Annual Report is one aspect of this, which reports on the quality, and health of the services we regulate

CSIW operates through eight regional and three local offices located across Wales.

Our national office in Nantgarw centrally supports the regional offices.

Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (SSIW)

SSIW through its inspection and development programme seeks to promote the provision by social services authorities in Wales of high quality services to service users and carers.

The Division is currently headed by Richard Tebboth and is responsible for its programmes and for relations with other bodies.

Chief Inspector

The Acting Chief Inspector, Richard Tebboth, heads the Social Services Inspectorate for Wales and is the chief professional adviser on social services to the Welsh Assembly Government.

Inspection Unit

SSIW's Inspection Unit carries out reviews of the way in which local authorities discharge their social services functions, under the delegated functions of the National Assembly for Wales in chapter six of the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003.

Children Development Unit

SSIW's Children and Families Development Unit links with local authorities and partner agencies to promote good practice and continuing improvement in the services for children and families.

Adult Development Unit

The Adult Development Unit works across adult and cross cutting social services matters. It links with local authorities and partner agencies to promote good practice of continuing improvement in services for adults and older people.

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW)

The Division is headed by Dr. Peter Higson. HIW's purpose is to promote continuous improvement in the quality and safety of patient care in Wales. In taking this forward, we undertake reviews of and investigations in relation to the provision of healthcare commissioned and provided by Welsh NHS bodies.

In undertaking review activities, HIW is required to consider:

- The availability of, and access to, healthcare;
- The quality and effectiveness of healthcare;
- The financial or other management of healthcare and the economy and efficiency of its provision;
- The availability and quality of information provided to the public about healthcare; and
- The need to safeguard and promote the rights and welfare of children.

As of 1 April 2006, HIW was also established as the regulator of independent healthcare organisations in Wales and now has full delegated authority for its regulatory decisions. Independent healthcare settings include private hospitals, dentists where treatment is provided under anaesthesia, hospices and where prescribed techniques includes class 3b and 4 lasers.

The functions of the Local Supervising Authority (LSA) also transferred to HIW with effect from 1 April 2006. The LSA for the statutory supervision of midwives in Wales involves preparing, appointing and developing supervisors of midwives.

In agreement with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), professional advisers from HIW conduct annual monitoring of the higher education institutes in Wales which offer approved NMC programmes.

Although HIW is part of the National Assembly for Wales, there are a number of safeguards in place to protect and ensure its independence. These include:

- HIW Chief Executive has editorial control of reports;
- HIW generates its own work programme; and
- HIW has rights of independent access to the First Minister and the Minister for Health and Social Services.

HIW works closely with other inspection, regulation and audit bodies in Wales and has a statutory duty of collaboration with the Healthcare Commission in England to ensure the quality and safety of cross border services. HIW is leading the implementation of the healthcare aspects of the *Concordat Between Bodies Inspecting Regulating and Auditing Health and Social Care in Wales*. The Concordat is consistent with the Welsh Assembly Government's aim to improve the way public services are delivered in Wales. Making the Connections and its action plan Delivering the Connections identifies the need to simplify layers of regulation and inspection of public services in Wales to achieve clear and more effective reporting structures.

Value Wales

Value Wales is headed by Martin Sykes and is all about working with the Public Sector looking to improve co-operation between them on the provision of services to the public, the achievement of efficiency and other gains through smarter procurement and delivering a fit for purpose and sustainable capital infrastructure estate.

Value Wales has been established to act as a major catalyst for change across the public sector, to help organisations achieve real and sustainable improvements and realise value for money opportunities. Value Wales aims to achieve this through:

- Focusing on opportunities for streamlining support functions; better management of capital investment; and smarter procurement
- Providing leadership, strategic direction and access to information, best practice, guidance and technical expertise across the public sector
- Supporting organisations to collaborate both within and across sectors to achieve desired outcomes.

Value Wales also provides high quality Estates and Procurement services to the Welsh Assembly Government.

ANNEX 3: DISABILITY AND LONG-TERM ILLNESS IN WALES

The Current Position

The proportion of disabled people and those with a long term illness living in Wales can be estimated from several sources. The 2001 Census, the Labour Force Survey, the Welsh Health Survey, the household interview part of the Welsh House Condition Survey, and the Living in Wales Survey are reliable sources.

The estimate of people living in Wales with a disability or a long-term illness has varied from 1 in 6 of the overall population (from the Welsh House Condition Survey), to 1 in 3 (from the 1995 and 1998 Welsh Health Surveys).

The 2001 Census showed that that in Wales nearly 1 in 4 people (23.3 per cent) had a limiting long-term illness. For people of working age this was nearly 1 in 5 (18.4 per cent).

The comparable figures for England show that 17.9 per cent of all people had a limiting long-term illness, and for people of working age this was 13.3 per cent. The figures for Scotland were 20.3 per cent (all people) and 15.6 per cent (working age); and for Northern Ireland 20.4 (all people) and 17.0 (working age).

There were large variations in levels of long-term illness between local authorities in Wales. The highest levels (for all ages) were in Merthyr Tydfil (30.0 per cent), Neath Port Talbot (29.4 per cent), Blaenau Gwent (28.3 per cent), and Rhondda Cynon Taff (27.2 per cent). The lowest levels were in Cardiff (18.8 per cent), Monmouthshire (19.1 per cent), Flintshire (19.2 per cent), and the Vale of Glamorgan (19.9 per cent).

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is the largest regular household survey in the country. It collects information about the personal circumstances and work of everyone living in the sampled households.

The 2004 LFS estimates that there were 1,746,000 people of working age in Wales, and that of these 396,000 said that they were disabled, giving a proportion of 22.7 per cent. The 396,000 was made up of three groups of disabled people: those who considered themselves to meet the definition contained within the

Act (78,000), those who considered themselves to have a work limiting disability (54,000), and those who considered themselves to have both (264,000). The proportion of working age people who said they had a work limiting disability (the 54,000 and the 264,000) was 18.2 per cent, which is close to the 2001 Census figure of 18.4 per cent.

The comparable figure for the UK gives the proportion of working age people who said they had a work limiting disability as 14.9 per cent.

As with the Census there were large variations in levels between local authorities in Wales. The highest levels of work limiting disability (for people of working age) were in Merthyr Tydfil (32.0 per cent), Blaenau Gwent (30.4 per cent), and Caerphilly (30.3 per cent); the lowest levels were in Powys (16.3 per cent), Ceredigion (17.3 per cent), and Gwynedd (18.0 per cent)

The Welsh Health Survey (WHS) is a continuous health survey. The 2004 WHS estimated that 14 per cent of the adult population were being treated for arthritis, 13 per cent for respiratory illness, 10 per cent for heart disease (not counting high blood pressure), 9 per cent for mental illness, and 5 per cent for diabetes. 4 per cent were being treated (or had been treated) for cancer. 28 per cent said they had a limiting long-term illness. This is higher than the overall Census figure of 23.3 per cent because the WHS is limited to adults and the Census includes everyone (and children have low levels of illness and disability). The WHS figure of 28 per cent is within one percentage point of the Census figure for the adult population.

The 2004 WHS showed that, not surprisingly, levels of limiting long-term illness increased with age. 1 in 8 people aged 16 to 44 had a limiting long-term illness, a third of people aged 45-64, and half of people aged 65 or over.

The Living in Wales Survey (LiW) is now one of the main sources of information on households and the condition of homes in Wales. 18 per cent of the people surveyed said that they had a long-term illness, disability, or infirmity. 85 per cent of these respondents said that their disability limited their day-to-day activities in some way (that is 15 per cent of all the people surveyed).

As expected, the LiW showed that long-term illness increased sharply with age. The levels were similar for adult males and females, although over the age of 45 the proportion of males reporting having a long-term illness, disability or infirmity was one or two percentage points higher than females.

The long-term illness figures in the Living in Wales Survey were low compared with those in other surveys (the Welsh House Condition Survey figures were also low). One of the reasons for the lower figures could be that the question was not next to other health-related questions in the questionnaire. Also the survey excludes the non-household population (for example, people living in residential care) who have higher rates of long-term illness. The figure may also be affected by the fact that the survey respondents were reporting on the health of other members of the household not just themselves.

This means that other surveys (for example, the Census or the Welsh Health Survey) are better sources of estimates of illness and disability in Wales. The Living in Wales Survey is particularly useful for cross-classifying illness and disability with housing-related variables and others like benefits claiming.

The 2004 Family Resources Survey run by the Department for Work and Pensions estimated that 23 per cent of households in Wales claimed incapacity or disablement benefits. In England the figure was 15 per cent, in Scotland 20 per cent, and in Northern Ireland 24 per cent.

To summarise, in Wales nearly 1 in 4 people (23.3 per cent) had a limiting long-term illness and for people of working age this was nearly 1 in 5 (18.4 per cent). These are about five percentage points higher than the comparable figures for England; and roughly three percentage points higher than the comparable figures for Scotland and Northern Ireland.