

# Shetland Integration Joint Board (IJB)

## Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 2025 – 2029



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## Contents

1. Introduction and Purpose .....	3
2. Legal Context .....	3
2.1 The General Equality Duty and Public Sector Equality Duty .....	3
2.2 The Specific Duties .....	4
3. Development of this Report .....	5
Focus Group Methodology .....	5
4. Mainstreaming Equality .....	6
4.1 Mainstreaming Outcomes .....	6
Mainstreaming Outcome 1 .....	6
Mainstreaming Outcome 2 .....	7
5. Equality Outcomes .....	8
Equality Outcome 1 .....	8
Equality Outcome 2 .....	9
6. Monitoring and Review .....	11
Appendix A: Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Progress Report 2021/25 .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

## 1. Introduction and Purpose

This Report provides Shetland Integrated Joint Board's (IJB) plans for promoting equality from 2025 to 2029. The IJB is responsible for the planning and oversight of community health and care services in Shetland. The IJB work is carried out by the Shetland Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP), which is a partnership of NHS Shetland and Shetland Island Council.

This report explains how the HSCP are actively working to integrate our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion across all our strategic priorities and activities. We believe health and care should always be an inclusive environment; and we are committed to ensuring everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered. We will focus on outcomes that create improvements in the lives of people who face discrimination and disadvantage.

## 2. Legal Context

This report outlines the equality outcomes, which are the goals Shetland HSCP aim to reach to support the General Duty of the Equality Act. By doing this, the IJB meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010; which aims to protect people from discrimination and ensures everyone is treated fairly. This includes eliminating discrimination, promoting equal opportunities, and building positive relationships between different groups.

The Public Sector Equality Duty, referred to as the 'General Equality Duty,' is set out in s149 of the Equality Act 2010. Under The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 places Specific Duties on all public bodies in Scotland which are designed to help listed authorities meet the General Equality Duty. Shetland IJB, being an integration joint board established under section 9 (2) of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014, is a public body as per Schedule 19 of the 2010 Act and therefore has both General and Specific equality duties to meet.

### 2.1 The General Equality Duty and Public Sector Equality Duty

The General Equality Duty requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not; and

- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) covers the following protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

The PSED also covers marriage and civil partnerships, with regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination in employment.<sup>1</sup>

## 2.2 The Specific Duties

As well as the general duty, the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) regulations set out additional specific duties that apply to Scottish public authorities listed in the Schedule to The Equality Act (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012, as amended, these include:

- report on mainstreaming the equality duty
- publish equality outcomes and report progress
- assess and review the equality impact of policies and practices
- gather, use and publish employee information
- use information on the characteristics of members or board members gathered by the Scottish Ministers
- publish gender pay gap information
- publish equal pay statements
- consider award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement
- publish in a manner that is accessible.<sup>2</sup>

As Shetland IJB do not directly employ staff it is not required to produce or publish staff equality information. Shetland HSCP staff are employed either by NHS Shetland or Shetland Islands Council (SIC), and both these organisations produce reports on staff equality.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/essential-guide-public-sector-equality-duty-scotland.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [Public Sector Equality Duty: specific duties in Scotland | EHRC](#)

The IJB will work with NHS Shetland and SIC to ensure that equality and diversity is considered appropriately to ensure fairness, dignity and respect within the HSCP workforce. The IJB will work with its partners to ensure staff working within the HSCP are provided with a continuously improving and safe working environment.

### 3. Development of this Report

This report and the associate background work has been developed in collaboration by the NHS Shetland Planning Team and the Council's Community Planning Team, to support a collaborative approach.

The content of the Report has been developed by:

- Assessing progress in achieving the Outcomes set out in the [Equalities Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 2021/25](#) (Progress Report Update, see Appendix A);
- Drawing on Profiles, for Each Protected Characteristic, which include:
  - Census Data
  - Research Reports
  - A Series of Focus Groups

### Focus Group Methodology

The designed methodology was running Focus Groups for each of the Protected Characteristics, under the Equality Act, 2010.

The purpose was to enable people to share information about the key issues, challenges and opportunities individuals in the Shetland community face, with regards to discrimination, the advancement of equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.

The ethos was, as much as possible, to reach people where they are, rather than bringing people together for a specific event. This was achieved by contacting and working with other services and community groups.

A guide was created for all Focus Groups, to ensure the method used was consistent. The guide was altered to be more user friendly for certain groups, such as altering text to be as inclusive, accessible and understandable as possible. Specific detail on the approach used for each Focus Group can be provided, on request. Protected Characteristics profiles that have been produced will be published shortly.

## 4. Mainstreaming Equality

Mainstreaming equality means integrating equality into the day-to-day working of the HSCP. This means taking equality into account, in the way the HSCP does its day-to-day work, structures and delivers its services, as part of the community in Shetland.

Mainstreaming the equality duty has several benefits including:

- equality becomes part of the structures, behaviours and culture of the HSCP;
- the HSCP can demonstrate how it is promoting equality in the workforce and communities; and
- mainstreaming equality contributes to continuous improvements and better performance.

Shetland HSCP’s ambition is to reduce inequalities, and mainstreaming equality is an integral part of the IJB’s Strategic Plan 2025-28. This is also a key focus for the HSCP partners, the Shetland Partnership contains this goal within the Shetland Partnership Plan 2018-2028, and NHS Shetland within its Strategic Delivery Plan 2024-29.

Progress in achieving Outcomes, is set out in the Equalities Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 2021/25 Progress Report Update, see Appendix A.

### 4.1 Mainstreaming Outcomes

To support Mainstreaming, the HSCP will work towards the following strategic outcomes:

<b>Mainstreaming Outcome 1</b>		
Decision-makers and staff will have access to good quality evidence (data and lived experience) to inform service improvement.		
<b>Why do this? (i.e. Rationale)</b>		
Services are more efficient in terms of resources and more accessible and accessed if their design is informed by service users, including those with Protected Characteristics. People in Shetland want to be more involved. Participants of the Focus Groups were pleased to have their views listened too, with a keenness to continue to have conversations, as long as change will result. Services have a need for evidence, when monitoring, reviewing and re-designing services.		
<b>Who does this impact? (i.e. which Protected Characteristic)</b>		
Age	Disability	Gender Reassignment
Marriage & Civil Partnership	Pregnancy & Maternity	Race
Religion or Belief	Sex	Sexual Orientation

What will we do?	By when?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create easy read versions of the Protected Characteristics Profiles and raise awareness of them.</li> <li>• Share and discuss the detailed findings from the Focus Groups, with HSCP and Strategic Partnerships.</li> <li>• Work with Community Planning colleagues to Develop and expand the Focus Groups.</li> </ul>	<p>Publish online by end of May 2025 / Ongoing. By end of June 2025 / Ongoing.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p>
<b>Legal Entities with Individual Responsibility for this Outcome</b>	
Shetland IJB, NHS Shetland, Shetland Islands Council	
<b>General Equality Duty</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;</li> <li>• Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.</li> </ul>	
<b>How will we measure progress and know we've made a difference?</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of discussions with services / strategic partnerships.</li> <li>• Collect case studies of examples of where evidence from the Profiles has been used to change policy, service delivery and/or project delivery.</li> </ul>	

## Mainstreaming Outcome 2

We will use Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) as a meaningful tool to reduce discrimination and disadvantage.

### Why do this? (i.e. Rationale)

To improve outcomes and ensure that service design does not discriminate against those with Protected Characteristics.

To support and evidence that the statutory duties are being met.

A mechanism to assess the impact of policy, service redesign and projects on those with Protected Characteristics.

### Who does this impact? (i.e. which Protected Characteristic)

Age	Disability	Gender Reassignment
Marriage & Civil Partnership	Pregnancy & Maternity	Race
Religion or Belief	Sex	Sexual Orientation

What will we do?	By when?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share and publish EIA templates with workforce</li> <li>• Plan and hold EIA workshop with team leads across HSCP to support use of tools</li> <li>• Provide ongoing support to teams across HSCP to undertake EIAs.</li> </ul>	<p>June 2025 By Autumn 2025 By end 2025-26</p> <p>Ongoing/continuous goal</p>

### Legal Entities with Individual Responsibility for this Outcome

Shetland IJB, NHS Shetland, Shetland Islands Council

### General Equality Duty

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equal opportunities between those who have a Protected Characteristic and those who do not.

**How will we measure progress and know we've made a difference?**

- Number of EQIA's completed each year.
- Feedback from workshops/development session
- Collect case studies of examples of where evidence from the Profiles has used to change policy, service delivery and/or project delivery.

## 5. Equality Outcomes

These equality outcomes have been developed to address specific issues for people with Protected Characteristics.

### Equality Outcome 1

Adults with disabilities have access to health and care services which cater to their individual needs, preferences and decisions.

**Why do this? (i.e. Rationale)**

People with disabilities can experience challenges when trying to access health and care services. For instance a person with Learning Disabilities may find it challenging to communicate their health concerns, health decisions and wishes. This can mean that symptoms could be overlooked, and that those providing health and care, may not be aware of the person's needs or desires. By ensuring people receive appropriate support and care at the right time we can empower the person and improve a person's health outcomes.

This rationale is drawn from local focus group evidence, as well as national evidence around inequalities in health outcomes for people with disabilities, including learning disabilities.

**Who does this impact? (i.e. which Protected Characteristic)**

Disability

**What will we do?**

- Develop Annual Learning Disability health checks; these will allow for monitoring and reviewing of health problems for individual's; which can assist those who struggle to communicate health concerns and provide earlier access to health, care and prevention services.
- Use an Annual Learning Disabilities Health Check App that provide a function to enable individuals to record and

**By when?**

End 2025-26

End 2025-26

<p>communicate their health and needs with health professionals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take a person centred approach to care planning; ensuring the person’s views are acknowledged, recorded and considered when planning support.</li> <li>• Develop accessible forms of disability information and advice documents, such as Easy Read.</li> <li>• Work with our Partners including our third sector partners to develop local support and services.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing/continuous goal</p> <p>Ongoing/continuous goal</p> <p>Ongoing/continuous goal</p>
<p><b>Legal Entities with Individual Responsibility for this Outcome</b></p>	
<p>Shetland IJB, NHS Shetland</p>	
<p><b>General Equality Duty</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.</li> <li>• Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant Protected Characteristic and those who do not.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>How will we measure progress and know we’ve made a difference?</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of Learning Disability Health Checks (number of)</li> <li>• Development and use of app</li> <li>• Development of documents in Easy Read and other accessible formats</li> <li>• Service user feedback</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Equality Outcome 2</b></p>
<p>People will have access to inclusive and accessible communication.</p>
<p><b>Why do this? (i.e. Rationale)</b></p>
<p>By improving the clarity and accessibility of communication we can ensure that everyone has access to the information they need, when they need it and in a way that suits their needs.</p> <p>By ensuring our communications and information is clear, we can provide clarity, ensuring the meaning is understood, reducing the potential for confusion and misinterpretations.</p> <p>By providing a variety of options we can provide accessibility for various needs of those with Protected Characteristics, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disabled people accessing information; and</li> </ul>

- Non-native speakers or individuals for whom English is not their first language having access to information in their language

The importance of technological solutions is acknowledged in an ever-changing digital landscape, as they support inclusive and accessible communication methods. For example:

- Those with disabilities who require access to assistive technologies to communicate; and
- Those for whom English is not their first language having access to their preferred method of communication.

However, it is recognised that older people also face challenges with digital technology, particularly in keeping up with its rapid advancements.

The rationale for this outcome is informed by data from local profiles, research findings, and insights gathered from local focus groups, per relevant protected characteristic.

Improving communications can have a positive effect by reducing barriers, improve understanding, enabling good decision making, reducing confusion, provide for self-advocacy and participation, as well as valuing and empowering individuals which promotes opportunity, self-management and choice. We aim to achieve this equality outcome by incorporating inclusive and accessible communication methods, alongside reasonable adjustments.

**Who does this impact? (i.e. which Protected Characteristic)**

Age                                      Disability                                      Race

**What will we do?**

**By when?**

- Promote how to access and provide various communication formats, such as Language Line.
- Develop supportive technology, systems and process that are easy to use and provide information in an accessible way.
- Develop accessible formats of key documents, such as paper and online formats, British Sign Language, Easy Read or transcripts.
- Increase awareness of accessibility, and tools to assist communication, within our staffing groups.

End 2025-26

Ongoing/continuous goal

Ongoing/continuous goal

Ongoing/continuous goal

Ongoing/continuous goal

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broaden our communication channels with service users and the general public; so that we offer a variety of ways to provide feedback and to find out more about our services.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Legal Entities with Individual Responsibility for this Outcome</b></p>	
<p>Shetland IJB</p>	
<p><b>General Equality Duty</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;</li> <li>• Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant Protected Characteristic and those who do not.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>How will we measure progress and know we've made a difference?</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language Line usage</li> <li>• Accessibility audits</li> <li>• Inclusion of alternative format statement</li> <li>• Number of staff who have completed equality and communication training</li> </ul>	

## 6. Monitoring and Review

Shetland IJB will produce an Equalities Outcomes and Progress report every four years, and will review our progress every two years, providing this progress as an Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Progress Report.