

# Inclusion Strategy

2021 – 2024



Hampshire  
County Council

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We invited an artist from Delta 7, who specialises in organisational development to create a visual narrative of our inclusion journey – shown on the front page. They attended workshops with our staff involved in the co-creation of this strategy to observe the conversations. This image represents our inclusion journey and was described and designed by circa 100 staff who were involved in those workshops. It will be used to develop our conversations on inclusion and to continue to embed inclusion within the County Council.

# Welcome to our Inclusion Strategy

## Introduction from the Chief Executive of Hampshire County Council

I am delighted to present Hampshire County Council’s new, dedicated Inclusion Strategy for 2021-2024, which sets out our ambitions for even greater inclusivity across all areas of our work, serving the people of Hampshire.

This document reflects the work of a large and diverse group of people, including many of our staff, and representatives of the communities we serve, who are committed to making public services as accessible and inclusive as they can possibly be. I would like to thank them all for their valuable contributions.

The strategy and its work programme are for everyone in Hampshire but I would like to particularly invite our staff, and our partners in public service, to consider how we can all embrace and reflect the principles it contains, to help guide and underpin everything that we do. There are practical steps featured in the strategy, to help you do this in your day-to-day work with Hampshire residents.

I firmly believe that the more diverse and inclusive an organisation is, the more effective it can become, and that for us to deliver the best from our services, both for the good of Hampshire residents and for our staff, embracing inclusion and diversity must be among our core values. There is always more we can do, and I look forward to embarking on our collective journey, guided by this important new framework.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Williamson".

**Carolyn Williamson**  
Chief Executive  
Hampshire County Council

# Foreword

We believe that the people of Hampshire should enjoy being part of strong, inclusive, and resilient communities, regardless of their background or protected characteristics. By championing inclusion and diversity throughout our organisation and every element of the work we undertake to serve the people of Hampshire, we recognise how this helps to make life better for everyone and secure the most positive outcomes for residents.

In the delivery of high performing public services to Hampshire’s 1.4 million citizens, we work closely with our strategic partners. We all recognise that we have a significant role to play in leading the way, valuing the unique lived experiences and different voices in our communities and ensuring that all who live and work in Hampshire have opportunities available to them, are treated fairly and our county is inclusive for all.

Our **Strategic Plan 2021 to 2025** sets out our firm commitment to the people of our county, and our priorities, which include advancing social equality in Hampshire by tackling health and social inequalities, narrowing educational attainment gaps, and creating opportunity for all residents; enabling communities to be more resilient and connected, alongside promoting the development of communities that support and uphold equity, diversity and sustainability.

This new, dedicated Inclusion Strategy for 2021-2024 is the blueprint for how we collectively realise these priorities for all of Hampshire’s residents. We look forward to working together to further embed inclusion considerations in everything we do, to benefit all of the people and communities that we serve.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Mans".

**Councillor Keith Mans**  
Leader of Hampshire County Council



Pictured above are some of the people who helped to develop the strategy

# We are Hampshire County Council

As one of Hampshire’s largest employers and service providers we are proud to deliver services that have a tangible impact on the lives of all residents, visitors and businesses within the County.

Across the County Council we work to provide services that, regardless of our backgrounds or any of our unique and personal characteristics, support and enable all aspects of people’s lives. These include things like registration of births, provision of adult social care, care for children, maintenance of roads and provision of various social amenities such as country parks and libraries.

We have learned through our experiences that no individual has all of the answers on how to deliver our responsibilities, as an employer, a partner and service provider, most effectively. Working together, seeking and capturing different views, lived experiences and perspectives are the key to being inclusive and therefore supporting the future health and prosperity of our County.

With that in mind, to create our Inclusion Strategy we have worked with staff, service users and partner organisations. The biggest ‘take-away’ from developing this strategy has been the matter-of-fact way in which people, be they staff, service users or partners, describe their needs and desires from an organisation such as ours.

Quite simply, people want to be **INCLUDED**.

In the following sections of this strategy document, we will set out:

**Why** being an inclusive organisation matters to us

**How** we will achieve and deliver inclusivity

**What** we will do to make our organisation even more inclusive

# Why being an inclusive organisation matters to us

We all live and work in communities that reflect the increasing diversity of our country, indeed our world.

Diversity is about difference, whether that be difference of race, disability, sexuality, thought, style, upbringing, or anything else for that matter. At Hampshire County Council we celebrate diversity, however, we know that being diverse is not enough, in and of itself.

We believe our success comes from using our diversity to work together, to learn from each other, to share ideas, to build on each other's experiences so that through our inclusivity we become more than simply the sum of our differences.

Through this Inclusion strategy we will make sustainable improvements to the inclusion and diversity, not just of our organisation, but of the County of Hampshire.

Yes, there are well rehearsed moral, legal and business reasons for why we would want to ensure that we are an inclusive and diverse organisation, including of course our responsibilities under the Equalities Act, but our 'why' goes beyond that. Our 'why' is rooted in the values we share with our employees, our service users and our partner organisations.

Values such as:

- 1 Showing kindness and compassion
- 2 Communicating with authenticity and integrity
- 3 Achieving a greater sense of belonging for everyone
- 4 Uniting with each other to celebrate differences
- 5 Having accessible buildings and services
- 6 Contributing to everyone's wellbeing
- 7 Working to help people feel happy and accepted
- 8 Leading inclusively and demonstrating consistency and fairness
- 9 Engaging with people
- 10 Learning and growing from our shared experiences
- 11 Implementing accessible communication and information sharing

Furthermore, our 'why' is rooted in our lived experiences. We want people to feel **included**, so that we work and live in an environment where innovation, engagement and productivity are maximised, where diverse views and experiences are combined with an inclusive culture to drive better decision-making, increase agility and strengthen resilience.

Put simply, our 'why' is about maximising the positive impact of all our differences to achieve meaningful outcomes for everyone.



1

**Artist** Jing Yan



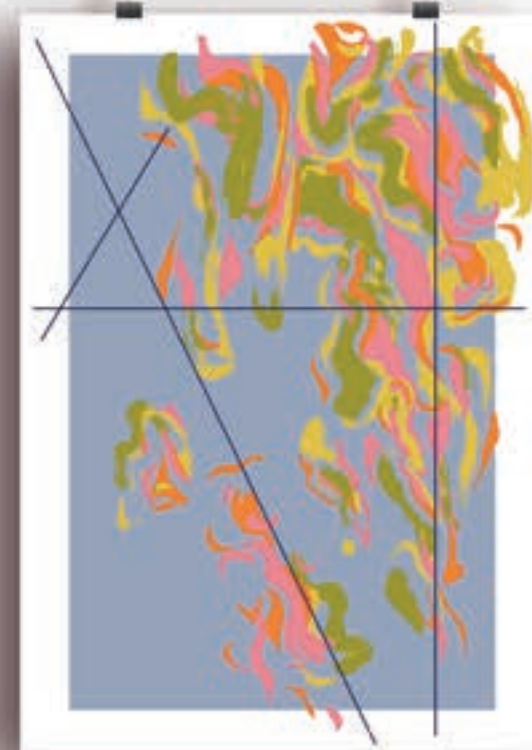
2

**Artist** Jing Yan



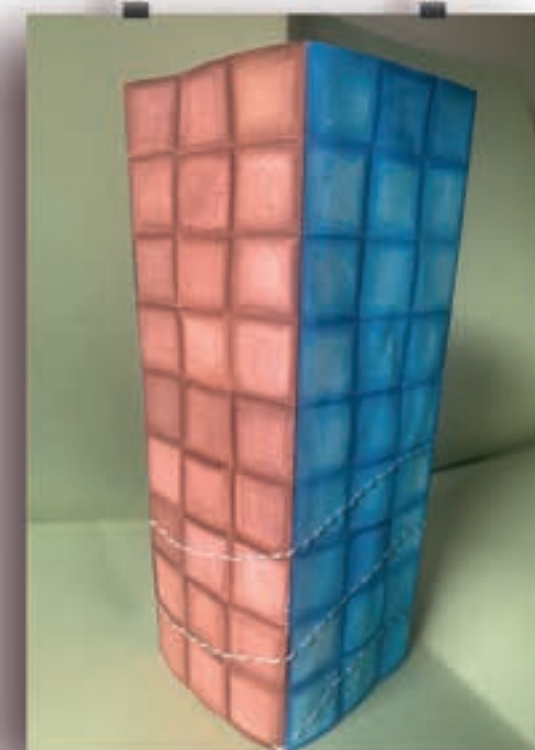
3

**Artist** Jade Dymond



4

**Artist** Lauren Wright



5

**Artist** Tanisha Kathuira  
**Title** Pillar of Inclusion

## Our inclusion gallery

**We ran workshops with our staff to enable the development of our Inclusion Strategy.**

Students from Winchester School of Art joined these workshops to capture the thoughts and feelings of those attending and present them in the visual images you see here in our gallery.

1

Expressing the fight against sexism, racism and ageism. The world has an element of diversity because of the differences between individuals.

2

In the face of unity, there is no difference in colour. Using rainbow-coloured stitch patterns to speak out against homophobia.

3

Strength lies in differences, not similarities. Overlapping heads create a new colour, signifying that 'strength' will be found in differences.

4

Linking to the idea of technology being a bigger part of the newly diversified council building in the way that computers can link us with people from around the world.

5

Life could not flourish or sustain itself without each and every single human being. Humans are meant to co-exist regardless of where they come from.

# How we will achieve and deliver inclusivity

## We achieve and deliver inclusivity by:

- adhering to the Equality Act;
- subjecting ourselves to good governance and oversight;
- being clear about what we mean and doing what we say we will do.

## Equality Act:

We adhere to the **Equality Act 2010** which is a law to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all. We also have a set of **Equality Objectives** which supports the **Public Sector Equality Duty**.

We are committed to ensuring that all people in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities, and that we continue to be an inclusive employer, service provider and partner.

## We will support the aims of the Equality Duty by:

- ensuring that services are inclusive and diverse, proactively increasing understanding between and within communities;
- attracting and retaining a diverse workforce, operating within an inclusive organisational culture;
- ensuring zero tolerance of harassment, discrimination, bullying and abuse, dealing effectively with incidents when they occur.

## Governance and oversight:

Our efforts to ensure an inclusive organisation delivering inclusive services is overseen by the following governance arrangements:

### The Corporate Management Team:

Made up of our Directors and chaired by our Chief Executive. They make decisions on our strategic direction and our work programme.

### The Inclusion, Diversity and Wellbeing Steering Group:

Made up of senior leaders and chaired by our Chief Executive. They oversee and provide support and direction on our work programme.

### Departmental Inclusion Sponsors:

These are people from across the organisation who champion inclusion activities within Departments and create a link between any corporate initiatives and departmental activities.

### The Operational Group:

Made up of Departmental Inclusion Sponsors who make sure the strategic direction is fed into the departments and to service delivery.

### Equality Impact Assessment coordinators:

Who help to make sure services are designed with Inclusion and accessibility at the core.

### Staff Networks:

Black Minority Ethnic, Carers/Working Parents, Disability, Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender+, which are open to any member of staff.

### Diversity Role Models:

Colleagues who are happy to share their experiences of how the County Council supports a diverse workforce, as well as speaking up and speaking out about what makes them diverse within our organisation.

Being clear about what we mean, and doing what we say we will do

It is important to the people we serve, those we work with and those who work for us, that they know what we mean, so that they trust what we say. Together with our colleagues and partners, we have agreed definitions for the following key terms:

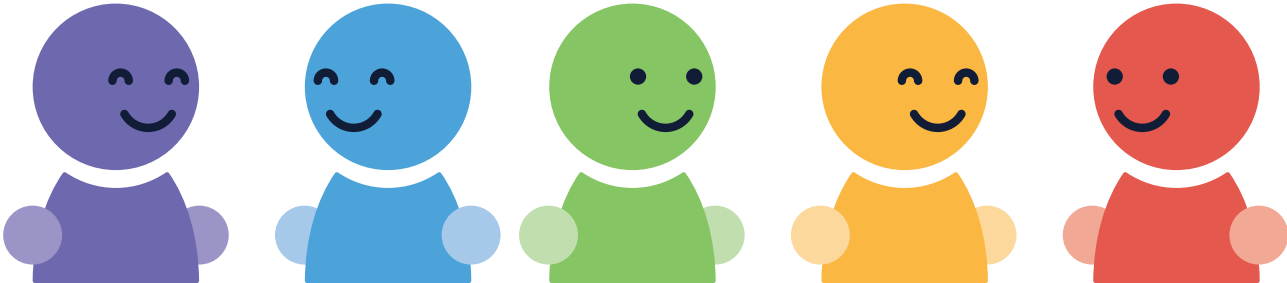
**Inclusion** – Is the conscious and deliberate act of embracing diversity. It is the value we place on creating an environment where everyone is welcome and included and therefore feels that they belong. It is reflected in our desire to enable everyone to thrive and succeed.

**Diversity** – Is the strength of our people. It is the positive value we place on our differences and celebrating these differences through the range of ideas and perspectives we all bring. It is reflected in our desire to bring together a mix of people in the work we do that represents the communities we belong to.

**Equality** – Is achieved when everybody is treated with empathy and respect. We want everyone to have equal chances in life, and we recognise that for this to happen, we need to adapt to meet individual need. ‘One size never fits all.’ This is reflected in our desire to empower people to challenge inequality, acknowledge mistakes, learn and grow.

**Wellbeing** – Is about feeling good and coping well. It is reflected in our desire to ensure that everyone can be comfortable, healthy and happy.

We have used an acronym **INCLUDE** to underpin ‘how’ we are committed to **INCLUDE**.



**IMPROVE**  
Continuously improve our systems and processes to support the diverse needs of our staff and service users.



**NETWORKS**  
Work with our networks and partners, both internally and externally to understand lived experiences and support improvements for the future.



**CULTURE**  
Develop our culture so that the lived experience of staff and our service users aligns to our values and beliefs.



**LEARN**  
Learn and develop as we go both in terms of new skills and new understanding to better enable us to learn from our mistakes to improve things for the future.



**UNDERSTAND**  
Seek to understand the needs and experiences of those we employ and those we serve.



**DATA**  
Use data-led insight to monitor our progress and to develop our systems and processes for the future.



**ENGAGE**  
Regularly engage both formally and informally with our staff and our service users.



1

**Artist** Anonymous  
**Title** Celebration of Inclusion



2

**Artist** Jasmine Daff



3

**Artist** Jasmine Daff  
**Title** The fruit of our labour



4

**Artist** Rebecca Buley

## Our inclusion gallery continued

**We ran workshops with our staff to enable the development of our Inclusion Strategy.**

Students from Winchester School of Art joined these workshops to capture the thoughts and feelings of those attending and present them in the visual images you see here in our gallery.

1

In nearly every part of the world there are issues pertaining to diversity and lack of representation. Through my body of work I am highlighting real people with real stories.

2

This piece reflects subtleties of diversity.

3

This piece is about tackling important issues as a community, represented by a large tangle of string, which is slowly being untangled by the people.

4

The variety of colour, texture and size woven together shows how diversity and inclusivity can create a strong fabric of society.

# What we will do to make our organisation even more inclusive

Our **action plan**, set out on this page, links to our **INCLUDE** statements to show the areas on which our Inclusion Strategy will primarily focus. A detailed work programme underpins these actions to deliver inclusion, diversity and wellbeing projects across the County Council.



## IMPROVE

Continuously improve our systems and processes to support the diverse needs of our staff and service users.

- ✓ **Develop, implement and maintain** inclusive ways of working – understanding our communities, the available labour market and ensuring we enable access to our services and our roles to all.
- ✓ Ensure we have **fair and inclusive** recruitment processes, supported by robust training for recruiting managers.



## NETWORKS

Work with our networks and partners, both internally and externally to understand lived experiences and support improvements for the future.

- ✓ **Work collaboratively** with our staff, service users and partners to achieve great results by listening to and respecting different views and perspectives.
- ✓ **Encourage diversity**, and work together to create an environment where everyone belongs and feels included.



## CULTURE

Develop our culture so that the lived experience of staff and our service users aligns to our values and beliefs.

- ✓ **Challenge inappropriate behaviour** and reinforce our values. Improve how we manage complaints.
- ✓ **Strengthen** and apply our policies and processes consistently.



## LEARN

Learn and develop as we go both in terms of new skills and new understanding to better enable us to learn from our mistakes to improve things for the future.

- ✓ Provide everyone with **opportunities** for development, progression and growth.
- ✓ Through **continuous learning**, review and learn from our work and experiences to become even better at what we do.



## UNDERSTAND

Seek to understand the needs and experiences of those we employ and those we serve.

- ✓ **Increase workforce diversity**, by increasing the representation of our staff from diverse backgrounds at all grades.
- ✓ **Continue to develop** and implement service level inclusion and accessibility action plans.



## DATA

Use data-led insight to monitor our progress and to develop our systems and processes for the future.

- ✓ **Analyse data** to take into account the changing needs of our service users and staff.
- ✓ **Improve** our consistent use of good quality data in decision-making to inform the work we do.



## ENGAGE

Regularly engage both formally and informally with our staff and our service users.

- ✓ **Encourage** good conversations and listen.
- ✓ **Engage** more widely to seek the views and perspectives of those we work with, 'nothing about us, without us.'

