



Single Equality Scheme
Annual Report
2008-2009

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Joint Foreword

Councillor Brian Wallace, Convener of the Board of Strathclyde Fire and Rescue and Mr Brian P Sweeney, Chief Officer

In 2008 Strathclyde Fire and Rescue introduced its Single Equality Scheme to strengthen as well as streamline the approach to mainstreaming equality and diversity into all that we do.

It was important to us to ensure that our Single Equality Scheme exceeded our legal obligations to have equality schemes for race, disability and gender and include age sexual orientation, religion and belief as well as disadvantage resulting from social and economic exclusion. Improving performance across all equality strands and in all that we do as an employer and service provider remains at the core of our business objectives.

To reiterate the comments contained within the Single Equality Scheme, we value our workforce as colleagues who deliver an excellent service and also as individuals entitled to dignity, respect and consideration. The same dignity, respect and consideration we afford to those communities we serve.

Introduction

Mrs Eileen Baird, Deputy Chief Officer

It is with pleasure that I present to you the first annual report of Strathclyde Fire and Rescue's Single Equality Scheme. In addition to my corporate responsibilities for equality and diversity I also have a personal commitment to this important agenda.

This report meets our statutory responsibilities to report annually on gender, race and disability equality issues and replaces the requirement to publish separate statements in June and December of each year.

Further information including a copy of the full Single Equality Scheme Action Plan is available from the Diversity Team, contact details at the end of this report.

Section 1 - What we have achieved

The Action Plan

Our Action Plan sets out our ambitious equality and diversity objectives, which we aim to achieve during the lifetime of the Scheme. Covering every function and area of responsibility of Strathclyde Fire & Rescue the action plan is split into three themes: Values; Service Delivery and Employment.

The action plan is comprised of activities that are specific to individual directorates as well as those where cross-departmental co-operation occurs and those activities that are relevant (in other words, generic) to all Directorates.

The action plan encompasses activities within the life-time of the Scheme (2008-2011) and also includes some activities that extend beyond the 31 March 2011 end date. Activities included within the action plan that have an end date occurring before 31 March 2011 have their anticipated completion date included. There are some activities that are not anticipated to be completed before 31 March 2011 but where some work will commence before that date have been included as having target dates of 31 March 2011 with appropriate qualifications. There are also some activities that are ongoing and do not have a discrete completion date such as recording and monitoring of employment practices, these are included in the action plan as having a target date of 31 March 2011 with a requirement for directorates to provide regular updates throughout the life-time of the Scheme.

In addition to being a comprehensive action plan spanning the entire organisation we have put in place robust mechanisms to review our performance. The action plan is subject to quarterly review by the Corporate Management Team. In addition, the Corporate Performance Team, a group established to evaluate Strathclyde Fire & Rescue's performance comprised of senior managers drawn from each directorate and chaired by the Deputy Chief Officer will monitor performance in relation to this important issue. Furthermore, the achievements of each directorate form a key element of each Assistant Chief Officer's quarterly review meetings with the Deputy Chief Officer. The results of quarterly reviews provide the basis for this annual report of overall performance.

Contained within this section is the performance of Strathclyde Fire & Rescue as reported to the Deputy Chief Officer as part of the first quarterly review of the Scheme's Action Plan (12 December 2008). The updated and revised action plan is available from the Diversity Team (contact details at the end of this report).

Values

V1 – Strategic Model

Establish a strategic model that mainstreams and embeds equality and diversity throughout the organisation (values, vision, purpose).

	Action Plan Objective
During 2008 Strathclyde Fire & Rescue introduced a revised model for mainstreaming equality and diversity. Led by the Chief Officer and Board the model provided the framework for the introduction and promotion of a revised Equality & Diversity Policy and a progressive Single Equality Scheme covering all equality strands.	V1.1 – 1.4
Robust mechanism for reviewing the organisation’s performance in relation to equality and diversity objectives established on a quarterly basis: Corporate Management Team and Deputy Chief Officer /Assistant Chief Officer review meetings.	V1.5

V2 – Mainstreaming Action Plan

Establish a performance improvement and reporting model to progress equality and diversity plans to ensure that promoting and valuing diversity is embedded within Strathclyde Fire & Rescue (business planning, performance management and outcomes).

	Action Plan Objective
Each directorate identified relevant equality and diversity objectives in the formulation of the SES action plan. In addition to those activities identified within the Employment element of the action plan, the Human Resources Directorate has also set specific equality and diversity objectives within its service level action plan and HR Strategy.	V 2.1
Mainstreaming of action plan strengthened by reporting and evaluation measures as identified at V1 above. Our objective of reporting annually on our performance is achieved through the publication of this report.	V2.2, 2.4, 2.5
The reporting of equality indicators within employment practice was the subject of review during 2008. Strathclyde Fire & Rescue led the introduction of an employment and equality performance indicator framework for all Scottish Fire and Rescue Services. In December 2008 our Data Services team presented a report outlining the arrangements for the monitoring of incident records.	V2.3

V3 – Consultation and Engagement

Explore and establish ways of consulting and engaging with members of the public and representative organisations so that Strathclyde Fire & Rescue can respond more effectively to their needs and to promote a better understanding of our Service (challenge, transparency, scrutiny, accountability).

	Action Plan Objective
<p>The introduction of a Communications Strategy during 2008 provides the framework and direction for ensuring that our objective of engaging effectively and appropriately with community groups, stakeholders and employees is achieved. The Communications Strategy is supported by the addition of a Communications Officer whose purpose is to improve the service's public consultation and engagement activities and the Connect Team which focuses on internal communications.</p> <p>Engagement with communities at a local level is a long established practice within Strathclyde Fire & Rescue and further details of this important activity are detailed within the <i>Delivering Equality Directly to Communities</i> of this report.</p>	V3.1 – 3.3
<p>The inclusion of reviewing equality and diversity issues within the Corporate Performance Team framework met our objective of establishing a group to promote good practice across the organisation capable of reflecting on and challenging performance.</p>	V 3.4

V4 – Equality Impact Assessment

Establish systems that identify and remove any potential discrimination in Strathclyde Fire & Rescue activities, policies and procedures (impact assessment, evidence and action).

	Action Plan Reference
<p>The Equality Impact Assessment process was reviewed during 2008 and a supporting quality assurance process has been drafted for consideration during 2009.</p> <p>In support of the introduction of a Single Equality Scheme the Equality Impact Assessment process has been revised to include disadvantage resulting from social and economic exclusion.</p> <p>A rolling programme of training on conducting equality impact assessments continues to be delivered. During 2008 56 people were trained in the process with 118 in Strathclyde Fire & Rescue now</p>	V4.1 - 4.3

trained to conduct equality impact assessments.

Directorates continue to carry-out equality impact assessments on relevant topics. During 2008 20 EIAs were carried out. V4.4

Early work on revising the Service's Publication Scheme has been progressed by the Freedom Of Information Officer to ensure that public access to equality impact assessments is easily achieved. V4.5

V5 – Training and Development

Support the delivery of Strathclyde Fire & Rescue equality and diversity values, policies and plans with effective learning and development (building capacity and capability).

	Action Plan Objective
Strathclyde Fire & Rescue continues to implement training initiatives that underpin the objectives of the SES by developing our employees understanding and competency in equality and diversity.	V5.1
Diversity Awareness Training programme is compulsory for all employees and extended to include Board members.	V5.2, 5.4, 5.6
Equality and Diversity element contained in IPDS training calendar at station level.	V5.4
Compulsory Equality and Diversity elements in Assessment Development Centre Process.	V5.3
Work has progressed on the introduction of development programmes for uniformed employees seeking career advancement including core equality and diversity components.	V5.3
Ongoing advice and support on the Service's legal obligations in relation to equality and diversity is provided by the Legal section through debriefing sessions and the Legal Newsletter.	V5.4

V6 – Culture

Develop an open and trusting culture where all staff, members of our communities, partners and stakeholders feel involved, valued and respected (values, transparency, challenge).

	Action Plan Objective
A revised Bullying and Harassment Policy approved in 2008 for introduction in early 2009.	V6.2
Strathclyde Fire & Rescue has taken steps to ensure that all of our premises meet the needs of male and female employees All properties have been surveyed and assessed for compliance with the services Dignified Facilities criteria and a long term targeted programme of phased work has been developed and is regularly reviewed in consultation with Areas and in line with the approved capital programme.	V6.3
During 2008 Strathclyde Fire & Rescue retained its status as a positive employer under the Disability Symbol Award framework and continued to engage with partner organisations as members of the Stonewall Equality Champions Programme and Networking Women in the Fire Service.	V6.6
Strathclyde Fire & Rescue participated in the pilot for the Public Sector Improvement Framework (identified locally as the Strathclyde Improvement Model – SIM) to ensure that sustainable improvement can be achieved across all functional areas.	V6.6
Delivery of a comprehensive programme of equality and diversity training was sustained throughout 2008.	V6.8

V7 – Equality and Assessment Tool

Adopt a model of self-assessment to support continuous improvement in equality performance (assessment, challenge, capability)

	Action Plan Reference
Engagement with the Improvement Service on developing a tool for self-assessing performance progressed during 2008. Commitment given by both parties to sustaining partnership working throughout 2009 to design a model relevant to Scottish fire and rescue services.	V7.1-7.4
The development of the Single Equality Scheme Action Plan has outlined those steps that Strathclyde Fire & Rescue will take to ensure capacity building and capability building is achieved in relation to equality and diversity.	V7.2

Service Delivery

SD 1 – Mainstreaming Diversity

Ensure equality and diversity is adopted at all action planning levels throughout the service.

	Action Plan Reference
Each Directorate has clear equality and diversity objectives as laid out in the Single Equality Scheme Action Plan. Directorate level action plans influence the activities undertaken at team and Area level.	SD1.1
The introduction of a Communications Strategy during 2008 provides the framework and direction for ensuring that our objective of engaging effectively and appropriately with community groups, stakeholders and employees is achieved. The Communications Strategy is supported by the addition of a Communications Officer whose purpose is to improve the service's public consultation and engagement activities and the Connect Team which focuses on internal communications.	SD1.4

SD2 – IRMP

Identify and remove any potential discrimination in the planning and provision of services.

	Action Plan Reference
Strathclyde Fire & Rescue introduced comprehensive modelling software during 2008 with the capacity to allow more accurate mapping of incidents against equalities data. A resulting benefit will be the ability to determine areas of high risk and implement a suitable intervention based on data relating to those groups within the community identified as being at particular risk.	SD2.1 – 2.3

SD3 – Operational Competence

Ensure appropriate learning and development opportunities provide the skills and knowledge required to engage with and relate to all sectors our communities.

	Action Plan Reference
Strathclyde Fire & Rescue continues to ensure that all operational personnel are fit to carry out their role through a process of continuous assessment.	SD3.1
Work continues to progress in the construction of a new Training Centre which will provide state of the art training facilities unique within the United Kingdom. In addition to providing excellent training and development facilities for our employees, the Centre will also be accessible to members of the public for community education purposes.	SD3.6 – 3.8

SD4 – Accessibility

Ensure that access to services is appropriate to the needs of the recipient.

	Action Plan Reference
The introduction of the Communications Strategy and Strathclyde Fire & Rescue's Connect Team will ensure that all our communications are provided in accessible formats regardless of disability or language ability.	SD4.1
Improvement work was undertaken during 2008 to a number of our premises including our flagship HQ building to ensure that our buildings are fully accessible to individuals with a disability.	SD 4.2, 4.5
A disability access audit on our premises was carried out by our Property Team during 2008 and an improvement plan has been adopted to ensure that all of our premises meet the highest standards. During 2008 a major review of Strathclyde Fire & Rescue's ICT provisions was undertaken and the IT Project Board was established to oversee the development of the service's ICT services.	SD 4.4
A number of employees with dyslexia have benefited from additional support from IT through the provision of specialised training and/or equipment. An example of this is the use of voice recognition software.	

SD5 – Community Engagement and Involvement

	Action Plan Reference
A "Stakeholder Map" was researched during 2008 for implementation early in 2009. Containing details of external agencies and community groups, the Map facilitates consultation and engagement activities between the fire service and our community stakeholders.	SD 5.1
During 2008 our Community Safety Directorate led a review of our Partnership Register. The Register contains up to date information of all the partnership arrangements Strathclyde Fire & Rescue has with external agencies and groups allowing corporate and local level engagement activities. The review also allows for gaps in our partnership working arrangements to be readily identified and remedied. As part of the review process a pilot project within the East Dunbartonshire and Renfrewshire and Inverclyde areas was implemented to test the effectiveness of keeping the Register relevant to local requirements.	
Strathclyde Fire & Rescue continues to engage with the communities we serve through Community Planning Partnerships as well as specific consultation measures such as in the development of the Single Equality Scheme and the proposal to merge Cambuslang and Parkhead	SD 5.3

fire stations.

During 2008 the Community Safety Directorate led the development of the Evaluation Policy to assess the impact of community engagement activities.

The appointment of a Communications Officer has set in place the framework and mechanism for sustained improvement in community engagement.

Engagement with communities at a local level is a long established practice within Strathclyde Fire & Rescue and further details of this important activity are detailed within the *Delivering Equality Directly to Communities* of this report.

SD5.4

SD6 – Dignified Services

To ensure that the services we deliver are appropriate to the needs of the community Strathclyde Fire & Rescue continues to engage with the communities we serve through Community Planning Partnerships as well as specific consultation measures such as in the development of the Single Equality Scheme and the proposal to merge Cambuslang and Parkhead fire stations.

The introduction of the Communications Strategy and appointment of a Communications Officer has set in place the framework and mechanism for sustained improvement in community engagement.

Our Community Safety Presentations Development Officer has worked closely with key stakeholders such as Help the Aged and Age Concern to ensure that the content of our education programmes meet the requirements of all our community groups.

The 'Cut it Out' road safety programme was designed in consultation with psychologists and education experts to ensure its suitability and effectiveness with target audiences. One group specifically targeted by the Cut it Out Programme is young males who are identified as being at particular risk from road traffic collisions.

The appropriateness of our education activities is evaluated through a variety of mechanisms including focus groups and direct feedback questionnaires which are used to improve and further develop our community safety programmes.

Working in partnership with stakeholder agencies as well as individual members of the public we ensure that the services we deliver are developed to meet the needs of the communities we serve. During 2008

**Action
Plan
Reference**
SD 6.1

we worked with the West of Scotland Regional Equality Council, Stonewall, Glasgow Anti-Racist Alliance and other stakeholder agencies to target our services more appropriately.

SD7 - Delivering services to vulnerable groups

	Action Plan Reference
<p>During 2008 Strathclyde Fire & Rescue continued to deliver our pioneering Fire Reach programme to vulnerable young people across Strathclyde. Engaging and involving young people in the future development of the programme has been one of the keys to its success.</p> <p>The Community Safety Directorate continues to liaise with the Scottish Government, Local Authorities, NHS and Social Services to review and update the Vulnerable Persons Policy.</p> <p>Our Cadets programme has been instrumental during 2008 in working with vulnerable groups to deliver the community safety education message. Of particular note has been the development of school education packs in partnership with the Enterprise and Employment Officers.</p>	SD7.1
<p>The Community Safety Directorate record and monitor interventions with people involved in Fire Service anti-social behaviour through the SAFE Programme (Structured Anti-Social Behaviour Fire Education).</p> <p>FireReach track participants post intervention to measure and monitor the participants progression post course. Behaviour change is monitored to identify changes as a result of the course.</p> <p>During 2008 the Community Safety Directorate invested in a mobile Community Safety Appliance and an Active Learning Fire Appliance to bring the community safety message to a broader audience than ever before and in formats suitable for all audiences.</p> <p>Strathclyde Fire & Rescue were represented at Pride Glasgow in August 2008. The mobile community safety centre and active learning fire appliance were used to facilitate the delivery of home fire safety messages.</p>	SD7.2

SD8 – Partnership Working

	Action Plan Reference
During 2008 we revised our Procurement Practices to ensure that they are easily accessible. We introduced a 24-hour electronic system providing potential bidders with guidance and access to the process.	SD 8.1
Those organisations we work in partnership with are required to demonstrate their commitment to equality and diversity. An example is the requirement for those participating in the procurement exercise to provide evidence that they operate in a manner that is consistent with Strathclyde Fire & Rescue's equalities policies.	SD 8.4
The Community Safety Directorate has an excellent record of delivering high profile media campaigns and this was continued during 2008. Using television and radio advertising a wide audience including minority ethnic community groups, socially excluded and other vulnerable groups. Radio adverts were broadcast on Real Radio, West Sound, Radio Clyde and Radio Ramadan.	SD8.5

Employment

Ensuring fairness, dignity and respect for all our employees is a key strategic objective for Strathclyde Fire and Rescue. We want to maintain our status as an employer of choice and be representative of the communities we serve.

During 2008 the Human Resources Directorate implemented a number of initiatives to improve our performance in delivering employment practices and secure our position as an employer of choice.

Improving Performance

	Action Plan Reference
<p>During 2008 Strathclyde Fire and Rescue led the introduction of a suite of Employment Performance Indicators which captures equality data for the 8 Scottish Fire and Rescue Services through the Chief Fire Officers Association.</p> <p>The suite of indicators which are to be reported annually via CFOA(S), will allow external benchmarking of performance and more importantly internal analysis of the impact of employment practices on different equality groups.</p> <p>To progress this piece of work internally, a review of our employment monitoring processes was carried out and a revised model developed for introduction in 2009/10.</p>	E1
<p>Work continued to progress on the introduction of an integrated HR and Payroll system which will further enhance Strathclyde Fire & Rescue's recording, reporting and management capabilities.</p>	E15
<p>We engage in a number of accreditation schemes such as Investors in People and the Disability Symbol Award and are affiliated to Stonewall as part of their Champions Programme, Networking Women in the Fire Service and the Equality Exchange.</p>	V6.6

Recruitment and Selection

	Action Plan Reference
<p>Strathclyde Fire & Rescue continued to participate in the Disability Symbol "Double Tick" scheme, whereby individuals with a disability are guaranteed an interview where they meet the essential criteria for the job.</p>	E2.2
<p>During 2008 Strathclyde Fire & Rescue continued to work towards its ambition of having a workforce that is representative of the communities it serves engaging in a number of positive action recruitment initiatives.</p>	E2.4-2.6

In support of both the wholetime recruitment campaign and general recruitment activities we:

- Held 7 in-house information sessions - 5 specifically for underrepresented groups.
- Attended Ability Fest, Scotland's Job Fair, Ethnic Minority Recruitment Fair, Glasgow Mela, Pride Glasgow, Ethnic Minority Enterprise Centre event, Eid on the Drive and a range of other local recruitment fairs.
- Advertised in a broad range of media including Eastern Eye and Radio Awaz.

During 2008 we increased our supported employment positions with securing one new placement for an individual who had previously been out of the workplace for an extended period of time due to disability.

E10.4

Employment Policies

	Action Plan Reference
<p>During 2008 we introduced a revised and enhanced Flexible Working Policy applicable to all employees which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Term Time Working • Homeworking • Job Share • Scheme of Special Leave • Career Break Scheme • Flexible Working Hours 	E3.1
<p>To support our employees with caring responsibilities we introduced a Child Care Voucher Scheme.</p>	
<p>A revised Bullying and Harassment Policy was endorsed by the Board during 2008 for introduction early in 2009.</p>	E4.1
<p>We undertook a best value review of the provision of our employee assistance programme and introduced a revised and enhanced support programme available to all of our employees and their families. The service includes 24 hours access to counselling.</p>	
<p>The Health and Fitness Policy was introduced extending the benefits of a medical and fitness assessment and programme to all employees.</p>	

Employee Engagement

	Action Plan Reference
The Service's Employee Forum on Disability continued to grow and in September 2008 the service supported the Forum in hosting a disability awareness day "Respect-Ability". The purpose of the day was to raise awareness of disability issues amongst Strathclyde Fire & Rescue's employees and invitations were extended to the Board and other partner organisations from across Scotland.	E13.4
The event was a great success with over 70 people attending. The HR Directorate continues to maintain Investors in People status.	E13.11

Training and Development

	Action Plan Reference
A comprehensive and compulsory Diversity Awareness programme continued throughout 2008.	E14.1
A rolling programme of Equality Impact Assessment training is delivered by the Diversity Team on a bi-monthly basis.	V4
Equality and diversity continues to feature in all induction programmes.	E14.10
To support our employees in carrying out their roles we introduced an electronic management toolkit during 2008 – SFR Know-How. This toolkit contains elements specific to equality and diversity.	E14.9

Workforce Profile December 2008

Category	Male	Female	Declared Disabled	Declared BME
Total	3050	463	10	8
Wholetime	2043	30	0	6
Volunteer	219	36	0	0
RDS	548	28	0	0
Control	5	63	0	0
Support	235	306	10	2

Employment Practices

Recruitment and Selection

Wholetime recruitment

	Total	Male	Female	Gender Not Declared	Declared Disabled	Black and Minority Ethnic
Number Of Applications Received	5319	4813 (90.5%)	431 (8%)	75 (1.4%)	27 (0.5%)	106 (2%)
Number Appointed	90	80	9	1	0	0

All other recruitment

	Total*	Male	Female	Disabled	BME
Applicants	615	306	305	94	3
Shortlisted for Interview	267	134	133	39	0
Appointed	57	22	35	3	1

Employment Practice	Number of cases involving			
	Men	Women	BME	Individuals with a disability
Grievance	4	2	0	0
Discipline	5	3	0	0
Dignity at Work/ Bullying & Harassment	0	1	0	0
Flexible Working requests received in total	2	3	0	0
Flexible Working requests approved	2	3	0	0
Leavers	70	11	0	0

Delivering Equality Directly to Communities

Delivering an emergency response and community safety service to Strathclyde's communities is the core of our business – it is what we are here to do. Our ten Areas work closely with partner agencies to ensure that Strathclyde is a safe place to live, work and visit.

Linking activities with Local Authority Single Outcome Agreements, an extensive programme of community engagement and education was carried out during 2008. This section provides a summary of some of those initiatives. To find out more about what is happening in your Area or for further details on some of the initiatives listed please refer to the Contacts section at the end of this document.

Working with people of all ages

In one Area alone (South Glasgow) 22,000 young people received safety talks through the Schools Programme. Across Strathclyde we engaged and educated young people on the risks of fire and potential dangers from driving and road traffic through the FireReach Coreskills Course, Firesetter interventions, Kickstart Theatre and Cut it Out initiatives. We reached the very young through pre-5 schools and mother and toddler groups and we reached the disenfranchised through the Youth Justice scheme.

Ours Fire Cadets played an instrumental part in engaging with many community groups and were particularly effective in working with young people.

Like the nation as a whole, Strathclyde has an aging population and we undertook a large number of activities specifically for our older community members. In addition to carrying out home fire safety visits to individual members of the community special programmes of assistance were also delivered via groups such as Pensioners Action Centre, Dementia Care Group and the Good Morning Project.

Building relationships and working with our culturally, ethnically and religiously diverse communities

Strathclyde Fire and Rescue has an established relationship with the Glasgow Anti Racist Alliance and the West of Scotland Regional Equality Council. We support a large number of community events such as the Asian Business Awards, Eid on the Drive, Ethnic Minority Football tournaments, Ethnic Minority Sport Events, the Chinese Healthy Living Centre and have close ties to community and religious centres across the region.

At a corporate and local level we have worked alongside religious leaders and representatives across all major faith groups including Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Hinduism. Activities have included raising our own awareness of these faith groups through visits to religious centres and targeted fire safety interventions at the request of religious leaders and representatives.

As a key partner in the local Multi Agency Racial Incident Monitoring Groups and Community Planning Partnerships we are committed to tackling racial and religious discrimination.

Welcoming new communities to Strathclyde

Strathclyde in the 21st century is more ethnically and culturally diverse than at any time in its history. This diversity of heritage is increasing with new communities of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees who are predominantly, although not exclusively, establishing their homes in Glasgow. Working with partner agencies is essential in ensuring that new migrants into Strathclyde can access our services and that barriers of language and culture are overcome.

Specific initiatives aimed at our new communities included the ITS project, safety talks arranged in partnership with the Shawlands Bi-lingual Unit and the Toryglen Asylum Seekers and Refugees Group. Open days were held including the Karibu Open Day at Springburn Fire Station and FireReach courses specifically for the youngest and newest members of our communities. And links with the Scottish Refugee Council continued to develop.

Working with people who have a disability

We work hard to ensure that the service we provide is appropriate to all of the communities we serve and we have adapted our service to meet their needs. Strathclyde Fire and Rescue has been particularly active in ensuring the safety of people with a disability through the development of pictorial community safety booklets, installation of specialist alarms for those with a sensory impairment, DVDs and CDs outlining our "Safer Homes" initiative and delivering safety road shows for people with learning difficulties. We have worked closely with a number of agencies to ensure we are reaching as many people as possible such as the Sensory Impairment Unit, Toryglen Physically Impaired Tenants group, Community Mental Health Teams, Deaf Alert and Headway.

Working with Women

Women in Scotland are more likely than men to be the primary or sole carer for children as well as dependent adults, are more likely to experience poverty at some point in their lives, more reliant on social and public services, more likely to suffer a mental health condition and in some cultures be isolated within their own communities. For these reasons, undertaking specific initiatives with women is a crucial equalities objective for Strathclyde Fire and Rescue.

At a local level we worked with the Homestart Single Mothers Support Group to deliver safety education, we arranged female only fire safety talks with the North Lanarkshire Minority Ethnic Group, participated in International Women's Day and provided community education to the African Women's Integration Group.

Working with our Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender community

We understand that our LGBT communities experience discrimination and are sometimes the subject of hate crime including arson attacks. We take our responsibility to ensure the safety of all our communities seriously and in supporting

the LGBT community we have engaged in a number of specific community safety interventions including attending Glasgow Pride 2008 and also working with local the LGBT group in the South Lanarkshire Area.

Working towards an inclusive society – targeting the hard to reach

Some of the most vulnerable and at risk groups in society are also those that are hardest to reach as they often sit apart from society. We work very closely with a number of organisations such as Alcohol and Addictions Forums, Turning Point (Glasgow Drug Crisis Forum), Ayrshire and Arran Alcohol and Drug Action Team Violence Reduction Unit, James McLean Project for homeless teenagers, Hope House – Salvation Army Hostel, Circle Lanarkshire and Life Line. These interventions succeed in achieving three things: providing fire safety advice; providing specialist equipment and materials such as fire retardant bedding to individuals identified as at particular risk as well as reaching out to those most excluded from society with the purpose of furthering social inclusion and participation in public life.

Equality Impact Assessments

Since 2003 Strathclyde Fire and Rescue has taken the implementation of the Equality Impact Assessment process for race equality very seriously. In 2005 we extended the provisions of the EIA to include gender, disability, religion & belief, sexual orientation, caring responsibilities and age. With the introduction of the Single Equality Scheme we further extended the process to include disadvantage resulting from social and/or economic exclusion.

Our Equality Impact Assessment Process

All new policies and practices must be Equality Impact Assessed prior to their submission to the Corporate Management Team and onward reporting to the Board. We strengthened this requirement by including reference to the findings of the EIA as a compulsory item in our Board reporting papers.

We have a number of existing policies and practices that require to be equality impact assessed and these are detailed within the Single Equality Scheme.

Supporting Our Workforce Carrying Out Equality Impact Assessments

We maintain a rolling programme of Equality Impact Assessment training. During 2008 we trained 56 people to carry out EIA's bringing the total number of fully trained personnel to 118.

Our training programme is supported by a comprehensive guide to EIAs and the Diversity Team provide ongoing assistance and guidance to individuals carrying out the EIAs.

The Diversity Team

Strathclyde Fire & Rescue has a dedicated Diversity Team whose function is to provide support and guidance in mainstreaming equality and diversity across Strathclyde Fire and Rescue.

While located within the HR function, the Diversity Team provides support across the organisation and to all Directorates. The Diversity Team is comprised of 3 support staff employees; a manager, officer and administrative support and has a devolved budget.

During 2008 the Diversity Team led on the development and implementation of the Strategic Model for Mainstreaming Equality & Diversity, the Equality and Diversity Policy, the Single Equality Scheme and its action plan.

The Diversity Team has rolled out a comprehensive Diversity Awareness Training and has developed the in-house follow-up course to ensure that new employees into the organisation are provided with the same high standard of diversity training. The Diversity Team also undertakes induction training for all employee groups and delivers the Equality Impact Assessment programme.

Having responsibility for undertaking positive action initiatives the Diversity Team represented Strathclyde Fire & Rescue at many events during 2008 to encourage women and minority groups to apply for a career in the fire service.

Acting as the link between Strathclyde Fire & Rescue and equalities agencies the Diversity Team represents the organisation with the Uniformed Services Partnership, West of Scotland Regional Equality Council, Glasgow Anti-Racist Alliance, Lanarkshire Equalities Partnership, Stonewall, Chief Fire Officers Association (Scotland) Equality Workstream and other local equality groups.

Section 2 – 2009/10 The Year Ahead

In the year 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010 we will build on our achievements and improve our performance in relation to building equality and diversity into all that we do.

An updated copy of the full Single Equality Scheme Action Plan is available from the Diversity Team, contact details in Section 3. However, there are a number of key objectives that Strathclyde Fire and Rescue will be working to progress during 2009/10 which merit special mention.

Performance

We will be developing our recording, monitoring and reporting of equalities information through the introduction of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which take particular cognisance of equalities issues. These KPIs will cover areas of service delivery such as operational response and community engagement activities which have previously not been the subject of equalities monitoring. What is important to us is that our equalities monitoring provides us with data that is helpful to us in designing and delivering a service that is appropriate to community needs.

Our Corporate Performance Team will provide the mechanism for reviewing our performance.

Mainstreaming Equality

Mainstreaming of equality and diversity will remain a priority for the Service. To underpin the current activities of building equality and diversity in to all that we do the Diversity Team will be working alongside Directorates to support them implement and develop new equality objectives.

Delivering Our Service and Engaging with Communities

We will continue to seek ways to improve the service we deliver to those communities we serve. One way we will achieve this is through ongoing engagement and involvement with our communities at a corporate and local level. We will seek new organisations to work with and include them in our Partnership Register. And we will seek new organisations to engage with and include these in our Stakeholder Map.

Representing the Communities we Service

We will continue to undertake positive action initiatives to address the under representation in the workforce of women and minority groups. During 2009/10 we will be introducing a more comprehensive programme of positive action initiatives than ever before and are working to develop a new recruitment DVD with the 8 Scottish Fire and Rescue Services.

Employment Practices

We will continue to implement and review our employment practices to ensure that they are robust, follow best practice, are fair and are fairly implemented. In particular we will develop our recruitment processes, develop our provisions for the Retained Duty System, implement Key Performance Indicators for employment practices and develop our managers in responding to issues concerning dignity in the workplace such as mediation training.

Section 3 - Contacts

Diversity Team

Strathclyde Fire and Rescue Headquarters
Strathclyde Fire and Rescue
Bothwell Road
Hamilton
ML3 0EA

Tel: 01698 338395

Email: Diversity@strathclydefire.org

Freedom of Information Officer

Strathclyde Fire and Rescue Headquarters
Strathclyde Fire and Rescue
Bothwell Road
Hamilton
ML3 0EA

Tel: 01698 338984

Email: sharon.reid@strathclydefire.org

Making a Complaint

The Complaints Officer
Strathclyde Fire and Rescue Headquarters
Strathclyde Fire and Rescue
Bothwell Road
Hamilton
ML3 0EA

Tel: 01698 300999 (asking for the Complaints Officer)

Or to any member of Strathclyde Fire & Rescue staff at any Strathclyde Fire & Rescue establishment.

Your Local Area

<p>Argyll & Bute Area Headquarters Helensburgh Fire Station South King Street Helensburgh G84 7DX</p> <p>Tel: 01436 655918/922</p>	<p>North & South Ayrshire Headquarters 4 Barr Street Ardrossan KA22 8HD</p> <p>Tel: 01294 607000</p>
<p>East Ayrshire & East Renfrewshire Headquarters 187 Glaisnock Street Cumnock KA18 1JX</p> <p>Tel:01290 427610</p>	<p>North West Glasgow Headquarters 123 Port Dundas Road Glasgow G4 0ES</p> <p>Tel: 0141 302333</p>
<p>East & West Dunbartonshire Headquarters 2 Kilbowie Road Hardgate Clydebank G81 6QT</p> <p>Tel: 01389 385999</p>	<p>Renfrewshire & Inverclyde Headquarters 5 Thornhill Johnstone Renfrewshire PA5 8JH</p> <p>Tel: 01505 384184</p>
<p>North East Glasgow Headquarters 30 McFarlane Street Glasgow G4 0TL</p> <p>Tel: 0141 5528222/5534421</p>	<p>South Glasgow Headquarters 123 Port Dundas Road Glasgow G4 0ES</p> <p>Tel: 0141 302333</p>
<p>North Lanarkshire Headquarters Dellburn Street Motherwell ML1 1SE</p> <p>Tel: 01698 338100</p>	<p>South Lanarkshire Headquarters Cleghorn Road Lanark ML11 7QT</p> <p>Tel: 01555 667000</p>

