Appendix 3 - Examples of Inequality

Age equality
A report by Age Concern in 2006 found that ageism is the most commonly experienced form of discrimination in the UK and is experienced across all age ranges. Age discrimination is based on a set of stereotypes about the capacities and characteristics of different age groups. Older people are often characterised as non-threatening to the British way of life, friendly, moral and admirable but as less intelligent and less capable. Conversely, views about younger people can sometimes be the opposite, that they are aggressive, out of control, uncaring and threatening.

Examples of potential inequality experienced by different age groups

Potential discrimination against carers. By 2026, more than 10 per cent of the population is projected to be over 75 years old. This is likely to impact on employment as caring rates are highest between 45 and 64, although one in five carers are aged 65 or over.

Restricting access to the workplace, for example by enforced or incentivised retirement.

Failing to offer choices in health and social care, and making assumptions that older people might not want the sorts of life chances that younger people do.

Assuming that it is 'natural' for older people to have lower expectations, reduced choice and control, and less account taken of their views.


Key legislation

Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

This legislation includes the following provisions:

Prohibit unjustified age discrimination in employment and vocational training
Default retirement age of 65. Retirement ages below 65 need to objectively justified
Employer's duty to consider requests to work beyond retirement
Employer's duty to inform employees in writing of their retirement date at a least six months in advance

The regulations apply people of all ages. The regulations outlaw direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

Disability Equality

Disability covers a variety of impairments such as:

- learning disabilities;
- mental health conditions;
- mobility impairments;
blindness and partial sight; 
deafness and hearing impairment; and 
progressive long-term health conditions such as multiple sclerosis and HIV. 
Invisible disabilities such as epilepsy, ADHD, Dyslexia, Dysphasia and 
Apergers.

And it also covers people who may not recognise themselves as having a disability, 
such as those with long-term conditions (for example, diabetes or cancer) or older 
people. Disabled people are not a homogenous group and may also be discriminated 
against because of other aspects of their identity such as ethnicity, age, gender, 
sexuality, economic status and religion or belief.

Using the widest definition, there are more than 11 million disabled people in the UK, 
more than one in five of the adult population and one in 20 children.

Disabled people do not always have the same opportunities or choices as non-
disabled people and this can be particularly acute because the majority of disabled 
people have impairments that are not easily visible. They can experience 
discrimination, lack of respect, and unreasonable barriers to participation in society 
on an equal basis. Such barriers can be attitudinal, environmental and institutional. 
Although these barriers may sometimes be unintentional this does not lessen the 
negative impact upon disabled people.

Examples of inequality experienced by disabled people in public services

Only one in two disabled people of working age is likely to be in employment 
compared with four in five non-disabled people.
The income of disabled people is on average less than half that of non-
disabled people and they are more likely to live in poverty.

Disabled people are more likely than non-disabled people to have no 
educational qualifications and less likely to have advanced educational 
qualifications.

Disabled people face discrimination and harassment. One in four disabled 
people say they have experienced hate crime.

Much of the social housing stock is unsuitable for disabled people with 
mobility or other impairments and inadequate or sub-standard housing can 
make some conditions worse such as asthma, heart conditions or mental 
health problems.

Disabled people travel one-third less often than non-disabled people and 
physical access to public transport, such as getting on or off buses and trains, 
can be an issue.

Low income, non-employment, and low education can all independently 
increase the probability of someone becoming disabled.

Source: Improving the life chances of disabled people, Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit, January 2005. 
Reproduced from The Audit Commission’s ‘Making Diversity and Equality a Reality’ November 2006

Key legislation:
The Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The Act makes discrimination 
unlawful in relation to employment, education, and provision of goods, 
facilities, services and public transport. The Act creates a duty to make 
reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled people enjoy equality of 
opportunity. The Act outlaws direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, 
harassment and victimisation.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005. This Act is aimed at the public sector 
and includes a duty to promote disability equality and eliminate disability 
discrimination. Public authorities must publish a disability equality scheme
by December 2006.

**Gender equality**
We recognise that gender inequality is experienced by both women and men, girls and boys and our approach recognises the additional disadvantage faced by transgender people. The level of disadvantage faced will differ depending on factors additional to people's gender such as age, ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, and whether or not they have a disability.

Gender inequality is experienced across the full range of public services: in employment; access to public services; access and take-up of health care services; protection from crime and violent assault and use of transport. Although public services have a great impact on the lives of women and men, there are often significant inequalities in the way these services are managed and delivered.

**Examples of inequality experienced by women and men in public services**

The vast majority of people employed in local government services are women (70 per cent), yet only 29 per cent of elected councillors are women and even fewer women, 17 per cent, are chief executives of local authorities. Women form the majority of local government workforces and most are concentrated in lower paid and part-time jobs.

Many women still bear the majority of the responsibility for childcare and, as a result of this, many women in employment are part-time workers. Forty-four per cent of women work part-time, compared to 10 per cent of men. Part-time work can limit career progression, lead to lower pay and reduced pensions. Thirty-eight per cent of mothers, 11 per cent of fathers and 18 per cent of carers have either left a job or been unable to take a job due to caring responsibilities.

Health care services are not addressing the needs of men who are less likely to seek medical assistance than women, resulting in higher death rates for men from conditions that respond well to early diagnosis.

The majority of people reporting as homeless to local authorities are single men.

Young Pakistani, Bangladeshi and black Caribbean women are three to four times more likely to take a job at a lower level than the one they are qualified for.

One-quarter of all violent crime reported is violent attacks on women by their partners and ex-partners (commonly described as domestic violence). Two women a week die as a result of these attacks.

Young men between the ages of 16 and 24 are the most at risk from violent crime.

**Source:** Crime in England and Wales, a report of the Home Office; Gender statistics: an evaluation, a study by the Equal Opportunities Commission.
Reproduced from The Audit Commission’s ‘Making Diversity and Equality a Reality’ November 2006

**Key legislation:**
Equal Pay Act 1970 stipulate that work of equal value to an organisation must attract equal pay
The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 made it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of gender or marital status.
The Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999 made it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of gender reassignment (sex change). The Equally Act 2006 this is a new piece of legislation that comes into effect April 2007. All of the above pieces of legislation outlaws direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

Race Equality
People from black and minority ethnic communities experience multiple inequalities: 70 per cent live in the 88 most deprived neighbourhoods of the UK and they are more likely to be poor, with lower incomes spread across larger household sizes. They also continue to experience discrimination, stereotyping and racism. Gypsies and Irish Travellers face particularly acute discrimination as many local public services have low awareness of the needs of these particular communities. These overall patterns also vary between and within different ethnic groups.

The Rural Racism Project based in Plymouth has found that racism and racist incidents is an increasing and significant problem for the South West region and have identified 4 key contributing factors as to why racism is prevalent in rural areas. Firstly a denial of the existence of black and minority ethnic people by key agencies. Failure to acknowledge the differing needs through a ‘colour blind’ approach to working practices across sectors. There is a belief that racism is somehow confined to urban populations and the lack of empirical evidence to support the claims of victims adds to the problem.

From the 2003 half yearly count, there were over 200 Gypsies and settled Gypsies in the county, with a further 70 New Age Travelers. These were usually based on the settled sites at Wareham, Piddlehinton, Thorncombe and Shaftesbury. Yet, whilst there might be reluctance and an inability to access services that are available to the wider community without abuse or assumptions being made, it is evident that there are a number of issues related to their health and welfare. This includes:

- services for older gypsies who, due to infirmity and frailty, may have problems using their caravans and on-site facilities at authorised sites.
- substance mis-users amongst the gypsy and traveler population.
- support for those experiencing family breakdown

Examples of inequality experienced by black and minority ethnic people in public services

Employment – Overall, black and minority ethnic people are more likely to be unemployed, irrespective of their qualifications, place of residence, sex or age. They are less likely to hold senior management positions.

Education – Black, Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils experience lower levels of educational attainment. Black pupils are more likely to be excluded from school.

Health – African Caribbean people are more likely to be diagnosed with schizophrenia.

Social services – Adults and older people from black and minority ethnic communities are less likely to be provided with social services following an assessment. Only 33 per cent of all social services users in England thought that matters of race, culture and religion were noted by local authority social services staff.
Policing – Black people are eight times and Asian people three times more likely to be stopped and searched than white people. There is a strong perception among young black and minority ethnic people that the police assume that they are potential criminals. Indian, Bangladeshi and Pakistani people are more likely to be victims of crime.

Housing – Black, Pakistani and Bangladeshi households are more likely to live in homes that fall below the Decent Homes Standard than white households.

**Source:** Journey to race equality, Audit Commission, 2004.
Reproduced from The Audit Commission’s ‘Making Diversity and Equality a Reality’ November 2006

**Key legislation:**
Race Relations Act 1976. The Act makes racial discrimination unlawful in employment, education, housing and the provision of goods, facilities and services. The Act outlaws direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. This Act is aimed at the public sector and includes a duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate racial discrimination and to promote good race relations between people of different racial backgrounds. Since 2002 public authorities have been obliged to publish a race equality scheme. This Act is aimed at the public sector and includes a duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate racial discrimination and to promote good race relations between people of different racial backgrounds. Since 2002 public authorities have been obliged to publish a race equality scheme.

**Religious or belief equality**
There is still widespread indifference and ignorance towards religion, which can lead to discrimination. Religious discrimination has become more prominent by the rise in Islamophobia, particularly since the September 11 and July 7 bombings. There is often a perceived overlap between race and religion. For example:

Some black and minority ethnic communities have used religion to express their identity.
Some aspects of religious discrimination are covered by the RRAA 2000 as Jews and Sikhs are considered in law to be ethnic groups. Other religions are not covered.

**Key legislation:**
The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003. The Regulations define religion or belief as, ‘any religion, religious belief, or similar philosophical belief’. The regulations make it illegal to discriminate against individuals in any matter regarding employment because of their belief. The regulations also make it unlawful to discriminate against someone on the grounds of their perceived religion or belief. In other words, the law protects who are assumed – correctly or incorrectly, to have a particular religion or belief.

The law also protects people from being discriminated against, because of the religion or belief of the people with whom they associate, for example, their family and friends. The regulations outlaw direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
This protection was widened under the Equality Act 2006 to cover lack of belief as well. In addition the Human Rights Act (1998) upholds freedom of thought, conscience and religion and the manifestation of religion and belief.

**Sexuality Equality**

Discrimination and harassment on the grounds of a person’s sexual orientation exists in the UK.

There are number of sexual orientations. Sexual orientation has been defined as enduring emotional, romantic, sexual or affection attraction to another person. Sexual orientation is defined as: - orientation towards people of the same sex (lesbian or gay men) - orientation towards people of the opposite sex (heterosexual) - orientation towards people of both sexes (bisexual)

**Examples of discrimination against gay, lesbian and bisexual people**

A gay couple were turned away from a Scottish guesthouse. Her local NHS refused a woman a smear test simply and explicitly on the grounds of her being a lesbian.

A man was referred to a publicly funded centre to help treat a dependence on alcohol and told there, by the counsellor, that he would have to “give up homosexuality” if he wanted to get better.

A London council eventually overturned its decision to only allow gay couples to sign the civil partnership register, and not have friends present and a celebration in the same way as heterosexual couples. But this decision came only after strong pressure and adverse publicity.

A survey of gay, lesbian and bisexual people found that two-thirds of the respondents had been the victims of at least one homophobic incident. Many of the incidents described were very serious. Some were horrific. The most common homophobic incidents experienced by the sample were threats and intimidation, verbal abuse and physical assault. Only 18 per cent of respondents had reported to the police the incident they had described

**Source:** Breaking the chain of hate, National Advisory Group, 1999, and Stonewall website. Reproduced from The Audit Commission’s ’Making Diversity and Equality a Reality’ November 2006

**Key Legislation:**

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations came into force in 2003 and make it unlawful to discriminate against employees and job applicants on the grounds of their sexual orientation. The EA 2006 also makes provision for regulations to address discrimination in the provision of goods and services on the grounds of sexuality. These regulations came into force on 30 April 2007.

In 2005 civil partnership came into force which gives same-sex couples the ability to obtain legal recognition for their relationship. Civil partnership is a new legal relationship which can be registered by two people of the same sex. It gives same-sex couples the ability to obtain legal recognition of their relationship. Civil partnership came into force on 5 December 2005.