



**LLYFRGELL GENEDLAETHOL CYMRU  
THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF WALES**

# **STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN**

## **2018 – 2022**

(Revised Version – March 2021)

[www.library.wales](http://www.library.wales)



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**Lywodraeth Cymru**  
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# Contents

Introduction	3
Commitment to Equality and Diversity	4
Legal Background	5
Public Sector Equality Duties	6
About the National Library of Wales	7
Equality Objectives 2018-2022	8
Monitoring and Reporting Progress	11
Responsibilities	13

## Introduction

This Strategic Equality Plan that covers all our legal duties and confirms our commitment to equality and diversity.

The Plan outlines how we will promote equality and diversity over the next 4 years, some of the practical steps we will be taking to put our commitments into practice and how we will monitor our performance and our effectiveness.

Comments and suggestions on how the Library can improve its performance and commitment to equality and diversity are always welcomed and can be submitted at any time to:

Human Resources Unit  
The National Library of Wales  
Aberystwyth  
Ceredigion  
SY23 3BU

or via e-mail to [equality@library.wales](mailto:equality@library.wales)

## **Commitment to Equality and Diversity**

We are committed to treating our staff, volunteers, users and stakeholders fairly. We will ensure that we do not discriminate against people on the grounds of their age, disability, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, belief or lack of belief, social class, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marital status or any other reason that is unfair.

The Library's Strategic Plan for 2021-2026 "A Library for Wales and the World" notes that it aims to give the widest possible access to our collections with in the building in Aberystwyth, on sites in other parts of Wales, on our website and through on-line platforms and channels. We are committed to work towards reflecting the diverse backgrounds and experiences of the people of Wales.

In 2021 the Library will adopt the Zero Racism Wales Policy and will participate in the development and delivery of Welsh Government's Race Equality Action Plan. The Library has prepared its own Racial Equality Action Plan.

### **Covid-19**

According to the Social Metrics Commission the Covid-19 pandemic has pushed the total number of people in the UK living in poverty to more than 15 million – 23% of the population. The Library is committed to removing barriers to culture and work for those experiencing inequalities as a result of living in poverty.

Staff, Volunteers and visitors wellbeing has been paramount during this difficult time. We commit to supporting the health and wellbeing of all as we return to the new normal.

### **Racial Equality**

The emergence of the [Black Lives Matter](#) movement and the public debate over the following months has made it clear that our policies and actions fall short of the values we should uphold in declaring our solidarity with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people against the injustice they face.

The Library recognises and celebrates our society's cultural diversity and will work within these communities to deliver learning, educational, interpretation and marketing materials that recognise and celebrate the rich and diverse cultural mix of society, encourage widespread physical and intellectual engagement and promote anti-racist practice and principles.

## Legal Background

The new Equality Act came into effect on 1st October 2010. The Equality Act brings more than 116 different pieces of legislation together into one Act. Together, these form a new Act that sets a legal framework for protecting the rights of individuals and promoting equality of opportunity for everyone.

In implementing the Act, we will work towards creating a fairer society and improving services, which will ultimately improve people's lives.

Under the Act there is a requirement for the Library, along with other public bodies, to give due consideration to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, promote equal opportunities and foster good relations amongst and between people who belong to different protected groups (this is recognised as the Public Sector Duty).

These are the protected groups or characteristics:

- age
- gender reassignment
- sex
- race
- disability
- pregnancy and maternity
- sexual orientation
- faith and belief
- marriage and civil partnership (only regarding the need to eliminate discrimination)

As a national institution, it is also our duty to conform to the legal framework of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 that enforces duties upon public bodies to conform with one or more behavioural standards with regard to the Welsh language. There is a substantial link between the Library's wider handling of equality and diversity and the Library's commitment to the Welsh language. It is essential that we ensure that people can deal with the Library in their choice of language (Welsh or English).

# Public Sector Equality Duties

## The General Duty

The General Duty aims to ensure that public bodies and those undertaking public functions consider how they can contribute positively to a fairer society by promoting equality and good relations in their day to day activities.

Public bodies are required to appropriately address the need to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other behaviour that is prohibited under the Act;
2. Promote equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who don't;
3. Promote good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who don't.

## Specific duties in Wales

The Equality Act 2010 permits Welsh Ministers to make regulations that give the public sector in Wales specific equality duties listed in Part 2 of Schedule 19 to the Act.

The duties have been developed to be proportional, relevant to need, transparent in terms of method and tailored to lead relevant public bodies in Wales towards better performance of the general duty. The ambition is to satisfy the needs of Welsh citizens dependent on the services provided to them by the public sector.

The Specific Duties in Wales are set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 that came into effect on 6th April 2011.

In Wales, the specific duties give the listed bodies the responsibility of developing and delivering the following:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Objectives</li><li>▪ Strategic Equality Plans</li><li>▪ Engagement</li><li>▪ Impact Assessment</li><li>▪ Equality information</li><li>▪ Employment information</li><li>▪ Differences between pay</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Staff training</li><li>▪ Procurement</li><li>▪ Annual report (for Public Authorities and Welsh Ministers)</li><li>▪ Publication</li><li>▪ Review</li><li>▪ Accessibility</li></ul>
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## About the National Library of Wales

The Library was established by Royal Charter in 1907 and Supplemental Charters were granted in 1911 and 1978, which amended the Library's constitution slightly. In 2006 a new Supplemental Royal Charter and new Statutes were granted. This substantially changed the Library's constitution and governance giving special consideration to the recent constitutional developments derived from the Government of Wales Act 1998. The Library's Statutes were amended further in 2013.

The Library is Wales' pre-eminent library and archive. It is a vast resource of information, a treasure house on all subjects, and a living store of the recorded culture of Wales - 'Our Documentary Heritage' as defined by UNESCO - freely accessible to everyone. It is also one of the six 'Legal Deposit' Libraries in the UK and Ireland, which gives it statutory privileges enabling it to collect a high proportion of the entire printed publications of the UK and Ireland, including electronic formats. Today, it has three facets - a splendid physical building in Aberystwyth that is home to the print, manuscript, visual and audio-visual collections, an online library and gallery accessible worldwide via the internet, and it is extending its presence in a variety of locations in Wales.

The Library's purpose is set out in the 2006 Supplemental Royal Charter as:

'to collect, preserve and give access to all kinds and forms of recorded knowledge, especially relating to Wales and the Welsh and other Celtic peoples, for the benefit of the public, including those engaged in research and learning.'

There is further information on the Library, its rich collections and the services provided, on our website [www.library.wales](http://www.library.wales)

## Equality Objectives 2018-22

<b>Objective 1</b>	<b>To attract, retain and develop the workforce as an Equal Opportunities Employer</b>
Which equality groups does it specifically affect?	All.
What are we going to do and how?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Take steps to remove barriers and increase the number of ethnically diverse applicants who apply for posts at the Library</li> <li>▪ Thorough training for Members of the Equality and Diversity Committee e.g. "Equality Champions"</li> <li>▪ <b>All</b> staff to receive awareness training of racism and bias, equality and diversity</li> <li>▪ Work towards Disability Confident Accreditation</li> <li>▪ Hold annual awareness days (e.g. look at the CIPD Equality and Diversity calendar to view list of events).</li> <li>▪ Collect and monitor equality data with regard to recruitment pay and the workplace</li> <li>▪ Ensure that all members of staff are given opportunities to develop and improve to ensure that they maximise their potential.</li> <li>▪ In light of Covid-19 support the health and wellbeing of our staff as they gradually return to the new normal working environment.</li> </ul>
What are the desired results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ By providing training and awareness raising, we can tackle and minimise any inequality.</li> <li>▪ Measure our achievements by ensuring that we get constant feedback from our workforce and act upon it.</li> <li>▪ Collect further information on staff members' equality characteristics in order to identify any barriers.</li> </ul>



<b>Objective 2</b>	<b>To improve our arrangements for Equality Impact Assessments</b>
Which equality groups does it specifically affect?	All
What are we going to do and how?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide training for all staff on conducting Equality Impact Assessments.</li> <li>▪ Ensure that all policies, projects, procedures, exhibitions etc. are subject to Equality Impact Assessments.</li> <li>▪ Raise awareness and ensure continuous improvement in this area of work.</li> </ul>
What are the desired results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ That the Library is a workforce that is aware of equality impact assessments as a natural part of its duties and through these equality impact assessments can identify the effect on different cohorts and minimise any unfairness.</li> </ul>

<b>Objective 3</b>	<b>To Encourage and Widen Public Engagement</b>
Which equality groups does it specifically affect?	All.
What are we going to do and how?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promote the Library's work by informing the Public that they can visit the Library and ensuring that they are aware of our facilities.</li> <li>▪ Ensure that the public can access information about the Library and its business easily and quickly, e.g. recruitment, volunteering, education, exhibitions etc.</li> <li>▪ Interested organisations and groups recognise the Library estate as a location for holding events.</li> <li>▪ Seek opportunities to reach under-represented and diverse groups who haven't previously come into contact with the Library or been involved in its work.</li> <li>▪ Establishing connections with organisations and bodies who represent or work closely with ethnically diverse communities</li> </ul>
What are the desired results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Achieve an increase in our number of readers / visitors - that the</li> </ul>

	<p>public can easily and quickly access information about the Library, how to contact us and visit us in person or online.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ That more diverse/under-represented groups are aware of our services and facilities.</li> </ul>
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<b>Objective 4</b>	<b>To provide an inclusive Estate and Facilities, to include access in its widest respect</b>
Which equality groups does it specifically affect?	All.
What are we going to do and how?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conduct a survey of the demographic profile of the Library's visitors and Partner Organisations in order to gather their opinion on how to improve facilities / access. Based on the feedback, establish a Focus Group including staff and visitors to work on the findings.</li> <li>▪ Review all materials pertaining to marketing, publicity and customer-facing information to ensure that a "diversity positive" message is conveyed.</li> <li>▪ Improve internal and external signage welcoming visitors and promoting services and facilities.</li> </ul>
What are the desired results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gather user information on how to improve facilities/access to the building and act upon it.</li> <li>▪ That we can work with Partner Organisations to attract and work with individuals from diverse backgrounds.</li> </ul>

# Monitoring and Reporting Progress

## Engagement and Monitoring

Engagement is one of the specific duties in Wales. The work on developing the Strategic Plan has included representation from our stakeholders, customers and staff. Over the next four years, the Library will further develop the way it engages and monitors performance against our objectives.

Every year, we will publish an Annual Report that will illustrate the steps that the Library has taken over the past twelve months to work towards achieving our four objectives. The Annual Report will be presented to the Executive Team and published on our website. This Strategic Equality Plan will be reviewed every four years.

## Impact Assessment

Legally, we are required to show that we have given 'due consideration' to the possible effect of our policies and decisions on the 'protected characteristics' identified under the Equality Act 2010. To this end, we have produced our own guidelines and template for assessing policies and practice.

Looking at the impact assessments completed to date, we have identified that the standard is inconsistent, and that development of the assessments isn't always achieved appropriately. We have therefore prioritised the improvement of our Equality Impact Assessments as one of our objectives over the next four years.

## Staff Training

The Library will provide thorough training for all its staff, managers and volunteers on all aspects of Equality and Diversity. This will include training on the legislation pertaining to equality, and consideration of the effect of equality on all aspects of the institution, not just employment issues. The training will emphasise the Library's responsibility for ensuring an inclusive environment for all staff and visitors.

## Procurement

The general duty is relevant to all procurement issues, whatever the value of the contract. The specific duty is relevant when we procure goods, services or work from other organisations. As a public body, the Library has an opportunity when procuring goods to influence the way private sector organisations operate, and we will use this opportunity to develop equality. In fulfilling the general duty, we will:

- Ensure that general duties are embedded in our procurement documents, so that we have a consistent method for procuring goods and services across the Library.
- Insist that any business or company wishing to be a contractor or supplier to The National Library of Wales agrees to abide by our Equality and Diversity Policy

## **Differences in pay**

Tackling differences in pay is one of the specific duties in Wales. As the Library has less than 250 members of staff, it is not mandatory for us to publish annual statutory calculations to illustrate the pay gap between male and female employees. As good practice, the Library will conduct an audit into differences in pay in order to identify the gaps / inconsistencies and use them as a basis to develop action points for improvement.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Within the institution**

The Chief Executive and Librarian has ultimate responsibility for equality and equal opportunities within the institution and monitoring is delegated to the two Directors and every Head of Department. The day to day operation and collation of information sits within the Human Resources Unit. The Human Resources Manager is responsible for acting as Chair of the Diversity Group meetings and report on progress to the Executive Team on a quarterly basis.

### **The Role of the Diversity Group**

- To review current and ongoing relevant legislation to ensure that the Library conforms to its legal obligations.
- To review any aspect of the Library's activities to ensure that it does not discriminate in its employment practice and in delivering services to the public, and to ensure that Equality Impact Assessments are conducted and acted upon.
- To ensure that there is a mechanism in place for monitoring and reporting on equality and diversity activity.
- To develop a relevant strategy supported by policies and procedures for the consideration of the Library's Executive Team.
- To ensure the planning of the group and the communication of its existence and purpose, to encourage support for its activities.
- To seek external support where relevant to ensure that the Library has access to the most relevant advice with regard to equality and diversity issues.

### **Day to day responsibilities**

Every Line Manager has a responsibility to ensure that the Equality and Diversity Policy is implemented with consistency, and to ensure that staff and volunteers understand the contents of the policy. A copy of this Plan, and the Equality and Diversity Policy, are available on the Library's website, [www.library.wales](http://www.library.wales)