

Equal Edinburgh

City of Edinburgh Council

1. Our Legal Duties as a Council

Why Community Needs Matter for Equality in Edinburgh

Communities in Edinburgh are protected by laws that make sure everyone is treated equally. This includes special rules from the Equality Act 2010. These rules help to end discrimination and ensure people with different backgrounds are treated fairly.

At the Council, we also pay special attention to young people who have been in care, treating their needs like those of other groups that need protection. Our goal is to focus on communities by:

- Stopping unfair treatment, like discrimination and harassment
- Helping everyone have equal chances, whether they are protected by the law or not
- Encouraging good relationships among people with different backgrounds

We apply these duties in our daily work through the following:

- Decisions informed by communities: We involve people from different backgrounds to improve services and policies.
- Prevention-led approach: We work on preventing the causes of poverty and inequality.
- Consistency and accountability: We set clear goals and report on our progress.
- Celebrating difference: We respect everyone, no matter their background.
- Community cohesion: We strengthen relationships within local communities.

2. Our Communities and Partners

With the help of the Equality and Rights Network (EaRN), we talked to over 300 local people to learn what they need.

People shared their thoughts on:

- Problems they face when seeking help
- Their desire to feel safe and welcome in their communities
- The need for services to be close to where they live

We recognise there are several areas for improvement:

- Sharing why we make certain decisions
- Ensuring our services are easy to reach
- Creating welcoming community spaces
- Using data to understand how we can serve everyone better

Intersectionality

Communities want us to see everyone as individuals, not just labels. Many people have different backgrounds that affect their lives in different ways. This idea is called intersectionality.

People want the Council to take an intersectional approach to equality and focus on making it easier for everyone to access services. We need to listen and respond to their concerns.

3. Partnerships with Trusted Organisations

Communities emphasise the importance of working with trusted organisations. This includes:

The Edinburgh Partnership: This group brings together public agencies, businesses, and communities to improve life in Edinburgh. They focus on reducing poverty and inequality. Their goal is to make sure everyone has enough money, access to jobs or education, and a good place to live.

The Equality and Rights Network (EaRN): Since 2015, EaRN has worked to reduce inequality and promote human rights in Edinburgh. We continue to work with them to ensure community voices are heard.

4. Our Equality Outcomes

From listening to the community, we've created three equality outcomes to guide our changes over the next four years:

- 1. Easier Access:** Services will be easier for everyone to use.
- 2. Better Engagement:** We will connect with different groups in meaningful ways.
- 3. Data-Driven Decisions:** Our choices will be based on solid information to treat everyone fairly.

5. Delivery Plan

Outcome 1: Easy-to-Access Services

Council services are easier to access and engage with, and the needs of different groups are equally considered.

We will make sure that our services consider what people need. We will review our processes with the help of EaRN to ensure:

- Our locations and services are inclusive.
- We use digital tools for better accessibility.

- We share information clearly.

Outcome 2: Strengthening Engagement

The Council engages with diverse groups of people across the city in ways that are meaningful and helpful to them.

We will reach out to communities that are hard to connect with, ensuring they have a voice. This means:

- Improving how we ask for input from communities.
- Sharing feedback more effectively.

Outcome 3: Understanding Needs Better

The Council is equipped to make data-driven decisions about equality matters ensuring people are treated fairly and equally.

We will involve communities in understanding what information we need about them to provide better services. We will focus on:

- Collecting useful data on services.
- Listening to communities to improve access.

6. Mainstreaming Equalities

We consider community needs in everything we do as a Council.

People:

We have about 20,000 employees working hard to support the city. We want to create a workplace where everyone feels included and can grow.

Services:

We offer over 700 services to help people in different ways, like education, social work, and community support.

7. Governance

We want to keep communities updated on how we're doing. To track our progress, we have a new EDI Programme Board that will help monitor our delivery plan.

We will provide updates every two years and make sure our efforts align with what communities need.

8. Reporting

As part of our legal duties, we report on our equality goals every two years. This includes updates on our workforce's diversity and our work in education, ensuring everyone has a fair chance.

Our plans are always aimed at making life better for every person in Edinburgh.