

## Disability Equality Duty

South Hams District Council has implemented a Corporate Equality Scheme which comprises equality policy statements which set out the organisation's equality commitments and objectives; an Equality Strategy which sets out how we will work towards achieving our equality goals; and a supporting Equality Action Plan which details timescales and responsibilities for achieving these goals. The scheme was developed in consultation with staff and service users, and with the help of a number of external equality groups. The purpose of the scheme is to promote equality for all and ensure that the Council fulfils its community leadership role in providing services to the best of its ability.

The Disability Equality Duty, under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, requires public sector bodies, including local councils, to fulfil certain general and specific duties. South Hams District Council's Corporate Equality Scheme fulfils many of these requirements and additional work is currently underway to ensure that the Council meets all of the new statutory requirements.

The Council has recently joined with local councils and other public sector organisations in Devon to undertake a Disability Equality Duty consultation exercise, which involves a questionnaire that has been issued to people with disabilities and focus group meetings with people with disabilities. The aim of the consultation exercise is to further understand how the needs of people with disabilities can better be met by public authorities. The results from the consultation exercise will be considered by the South Hams Corporate Equality Monitoring Group with a view to incorporating new actions within the Corporate Equality Scheme Action Plan, which we view as a "live" document. We are fully committed to meeting the new requirements and to improve the experience of people with disabilities in accessing Council services.

For further information please contact the Council's Policy Development Officer at [improvement@southhams.gov.uk](mailto:improvement@southhams.gov.uk) or by telephone 01803 861234.

South Hams District Council  
Policy Development Officer  
28 November 2006