

1. Name of SOA case study

Joint Equality and Diversity Service in Scottish Borders (Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders)

2. What was the local need addressed by this SOA case study?

Changing demographics- age, disability and race

From 2009/10 SOA area profile:

“In 2007, 1.3 % of pupils at school in the Scottish Borders were from ethnic minorities, against a Scottish average of 3.2%. However, rates of increase are similar to the Scottish average . Local data suggests that the largest groups of migrant workers in the Scottish Borders are Polish (50%), and Portuguese (29%) . Throughout 2008, demand for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) tuition far outstripped supply, with SBC and Borders College’s single point of referral recording a waiting list of 133 in March and 114 in December 2008 respectively .

There is a particularly high elderly population and most recent population projections suggest that the region will experience above average increases over the next 12 years, when the 65+ age group will make up 25% of the population. There is also a predicted 57% increase in the 85+ age group for the same period. However, between 2004 and 2024, the population of 0-15 year olds is predicted to rise by 7%, whereas predictions for Scotland are a 12.4% decline for the same period . 2006 predictions show a 26% increase in household formation between 2006-2031, against a predicted national increase of 19%” .

Particular areas of need:

- Disabled people and access to services in Scottish Borders
- LGBT Community and their inclusion in Scottish Borders life
- Access to ESOL Classes to support inclusion and integration within race equality duty
- Raising awareness of services available and how to access those services if you had moved into Scottish Borders and English was not your first language

3. What was done – and by which partners?

Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders have agreed and committed resource to equality and diversity and have appointed a Joint strategic lead for equality and diversity.

The joint service has developed joint interpretation and translation policy; joint equality impact assessment policy and toolkit; implemented training for all Council staff ; working jointly on a Gypsy traveller strategy for Scottish Borders by all community planning partners; strengthening the SOA Equality indicators ; joint approach to the implementation of the National Entitlement card ; published an access guide for disabled people in partnership with disabled people and their carers; developed and published

“Welcome to Scottish Borders” handbook by the community planning partners and the migrant support service; implementation of the Scottish Borders Disability Partnership – supported by the public bodies and co-ordinated by the voluntary sector, so that they are the critical friend to the public bodies; implementation of the Scottish Borders LGBT Forum ; implementation of the migrant support service supported by the Fairer Borders Committee; implementation of ESOL classes by the ESOL Partnership to increase access and opportunity for learning;

4. What is the evidence of the benefits for communities – or if the benefits are still to be delivered, what is the timeline for that?

Benefits to the community:

- staff are appropriately trained in equality and diversity which means that those working on the frontline have a greater understanding of equality and diversity and adapt services appropriately
- joint and partnership working with the voluntary sector to ensure that hard to reach groups and minority groups are engaged with and involved
- clear governance structures for inward facing issues and outward facing issues that have an impact on the communities e.g. recruitment processes made more accessible; communication and publications made more accessible;
- access to ESOL Classes increased
- access guide widely distributed and made available to the community
- LGBT Forum is a voice for the LGBT Community in Scottish Borders

5. What added value has the SOA process brought to the delivery of these benefits?

- Focus on equalities outcomes and how to measure progress
- Engagement of key stakeholder groups and those who are harder to reach
- Strong , effective partnership working

6. What next steps are you taking to meet this local need?

- Development of joint training plan across the Community planning partners
- Development of a joint gypsy traveller strategy for Scottish Borders
- Strengthen the Equality Indicators in the SOA
- Continue to Equality Impact Assess the SOA

Contact details of lead officer.

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