

# HUMAN RACE

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ISSUE THREE

## LEARNING THE HARD WAY

By Malcolm Williams, Head of Property Services

As the person responsible for maintenance of County Council properties and work relating to the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), I had my eyes opened when I spent an afternoon in a wheelchair at County Hall to discover the problems facing disabled people.



WCC employee Geoff Palmer (left) and Malcolm Williams tour County Hall.

This experience made me realise how much able-bodied people take for granted and how different it is for disabled staff and visitors.

It was raining on this particular day and by the time I had got out of my car outside County Hall and set up the wheelchair, I was soaking wet. The alternative would be to go to the underground car park, but to then get into the building you have to squeeze through the Members' door scuffing knuckles on the narrower door frame, ring Reception on the wall-mounted telephone and wait for someone to walk down and let you in.

In Reception, the height of the desk is intimidating because it is above wheelchair eye level. I also found it impossible to sign in at it and there is a definite need for it to be altered by removing a section and reducing the height by at least two feet.

If wheelchair users need to attend meetings on the first floor, they have to use one of the lifts located at either end of the building – a considerable distance away from Reception and in areas restricted to the public. There is clearly a need for a lift in Reception and I shall look into this.

When I went from one end of the building to the other, I needed considerable upper body strength to open the five sets of double doors and manipulate the wheelchair through them. The door handles were at an inconvenient height and some doors only had handles on one side resulting in sore toes or knees from having to barge them open!

Also, opening just one side of the double doors did not give a wide enough gap to pass through without scraping the skin off my knuckles. As part of the County Hall plans, all door handles will now be altered and conventional double doors will be adapted so wheelchairs can pass through easily.

I noticed that the floor surfaces make a considerable difference to the effort required to propel the wheelchair. The tiled floor in Reception is excellent and so is the basement corridor, but carpeted areas increase the amount of effort required. In one area, the carpet is relatively wheelchair-friendly, but this is negated by a thick underlay.

I next went back to my office and tried to unplug my electric fan, but the plug sockets in County Hall are at carpet level. Likewise, some of the switches in County Hall are at a difficult level for wheelchair users.

When I returned to Reception to withdraw money from the cash machine, the height of the screen and the buttons made it impossible for me to carry out this simple transaction.

I found the whole experience extremely humbling and eye opening and having looked at some mobility issues differently, it makes me wonder about the effect of other disabilities.

As the person ultimately responsible for disabled access, I pledge my commitment to improving what we have now. Before any further DDA works are carried out, I will ensure that my staff work closely with disabled staff and users because this is the only way we can even begin to get it right and make a difference.



## THE MOMENTUM GATHERS

By Jennie Bashforth, Director of Social Services and Chair of the Corporate Equalities Group

Welcome to the third Human Race newsletter produced over the last 18 months. Once again, we are publishing an accompanying poster which is being widely distributed and can be seen throughout County Council offices.

The previous two editions focused on race, but we are now widening the content to include other equality issues. As well as race, we need to improve on other areas such as disability and gender to get the message across that equality really matters.

That does not mean that we have 'done' race - quite the opposite, in fact - but race equality has been pushed further up the agenda over the last two years with the successful Race Equality Awareness Raising Campaign and the publication of our draft Race Equality Scheme which sets out how the Council is planning to meet its duties as detailed in the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

Each Directorate has prepared three-year action plans which explain the arrangements the Council has made to meet the general and specific duties. This work is already having a positive effect and more will be revealed about this in the next newsletter.

By driving forward the County Council's equalities agenda, we will have a better chance of attracting and keeping good employees and having quality services. Our Corporate Equalities Group now includes three elected member champions which is a great asset in providing the political leadership to our corporate equalities work.

So what has been happening with Disability Equality?

During the last year, I have been chairing a Corporate Disability Group which has included users of services and disabled staff. We have tried to cut through the bureaucracy and talking and to take action that will make a real difference. Part of this is the staging of an Awareness Raising Campaign "Today, Not Tomorrow" to celebrate the European Year of Disabled People 2003.

This ten-day programme will take place between 4th and 14th November 2003 and will highlight issues of concern for disabled people, raise the profile and widen the debate about equal opportunities and fair treatment of disabled people in Worcestershire.

"Today, Not Tomorrow" opens on 4th November with a conference at which the keynote speaker will be Sir William Lawrence who is the chairman of Visit Heart of England and is recognised internationally as someone who has contributed much to disability equality.

The campaign will continue with events across the County showing the work of disabled artists and performers. Schools will also be involved by giving young people the opportunity to work with artists and performers to create their own projects based on disability issues.

The programme will finish on 14th November with a major stakeholder event at County Hall open to anyone who has an interest in disability matters and will include music, live performances, films, exhibitions, demonstrations and workshops. Look out for further details of the campaign which are being widely publicised.

I hope that you find this newsletter interesting and informative. In total, 20,000 copies of it are produced and sent to all County Council staff, County Councillors, Trade Union representatives, the Worcestershire Partnership organisations, Parish Councils, Media Contacts, the County's main Sports Clubs, Citizens Advice Bureaux and other interested persons.

Any feedback is welcome and, so far, this has been positive. Please keep it coming and include suggestions for topics you feel should be covered in future editions. If you have any comments or ideas or want more information, please contact any officer on the Corporate Equalities Group:-

Jennie Bashforth  
Director of Social Services and Chair of Group  
Rukhsana Koser  
Corporate Diversity Manager  
Reuben Bergman  
Social Services  
Bridget Clark  
Corporate Services  
Chas Chainey  
Environmental Services  
Godfrey Pryor  
Educational Services

Adrian Tame  
Financial Services  
Elijah Collins  
Black Colleagues Group  
Anita Sumpth  
Black Colleagues Group  
Adrian Gregson  
UNISON  
Paul Crosher  
NAS/UWT



The Corporate Disability Group. From left Rukhsana Koser, Kenny Brown, Hayley Andrews, Simon Nicholls, Paul Purnell, Mary Collett, Mark Preston, Steve Seymour, Jennie Bashforth, Geoff Palmer.



Since the last newsletter, the County Council has appointed its first ever Corporate Diversity Manager. Here, Rukhsana Koser, gives her

## EARLY IMPRESSIONS

When I accepted the post early this year, I knew the role would present many challenges and the last five months has certainly confirmed this.

My first two months were spent on a whirlwind induction programme during which I met many of the colleagues that I would be working with in order to put equality and diversity into the mainstream work of the Council.

The foundations have been set by the work carried out so far, but we need to sustain this in order to make a real difference to the lives of the people we serve – particularly as we are the County's largest employer and our services are required by everyone at some stage in their lives.

I will be the lead officer on equalities, will be working with all directorates and will help to develop and apply policies which will promote equal opportunities within the Council.

I would like to be seen as the central reference point on equality and diversity information, new legislation and good practice from both inside and outside local government. I will also be reviewing, evaluating and monitoring the Council's performance in this field.

There are a number of pressing areas which I am working on with others and this includes reviewing, re-energising and re-launching the Race Equality Scheme so that it is seen as a living document which is regularly reviewed to ensure that the Council is meeting the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

The Disability Equality Group and I are involved in the organisation of "Today, Not Tomorrow" which is the County Council's celebration of the achievements of disabled people and highlights the issues facing them each day. Other projects include the Equality Standard and the local debate on a Single Equalities body.

The Council has certainly made a good start, but we have a long way to go and I am excited about the prospect of joining the authority on this journey.

## WHAT TO DO WHEN ENGLISH IS A FOREIGN TONGUE

Bridget Clark (County Council Policy and Employee Relations Manager) answers questions about Ethnic Access Link

Q What is Ethnic Access Link?

A The County Council recognises that people in Worcestershire speak many different languages, so we have an arrangement with Ethnic Access Link which offers a free interpretation service to ensure that people are not denied access to services or information.

Q How does it work?

A It employs a number of Interpreters on a regular and sessional basis offering help to Worcestershire's main ethnic communities. All the interpreters speak English as their second language which ensures accurate understanding and Ethnic Access Link will seek to provide an interpreter that suits the needs of the client.

Q How do people in the community find out about this service?

A County Council Managers preparing publications and documents for the community are encouraged to include a 'Signpost' if they think the readership may include people who cannot speak English. This says in six different languages: "If you need help with this document please telephone...". The 'Signpost' can be seen on the front of this Newsletter.

Q What languages are available?

A In addition to the languages in the 'Signpost', Ethnic Access Link can also provide interpreters in Albanian, Farsi, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, Turkish and Ukrainian.

Q How do I include a 'Signpost' on any documents I am producing?

A County Council employees can simply ask for it to be included when placing their print orders through the Graphic Design Team and Reprographics. Anyone outside the authority would have to contact Ethnic Access Link at 2, Inglethorpe Court, The Hopmarket, Worcester, WR1 1DG. Tel: 01905 25121.

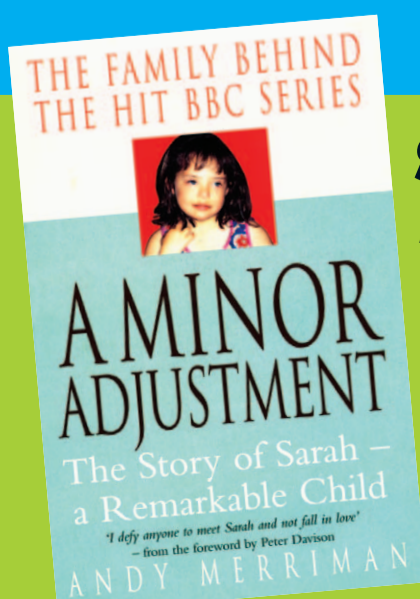
Q Where is the best place to put the 'Signpost' on a document?

A Ethnic Access Link advise that for maximum impact and to ensure that it is seen, it should appear, where possible, on the front cover.

Q Is there anything else I need to do?

A If you include the "Signpost" on a document, please ensure that you send a copy of it to Ethnic Access Link.

For further information about the scheme, contact Bridget on 01905 766215.



## SARAH – A LIFE

Author Andy Merriman has written a biography of his daughter, Sarah, who has Down's, charting the first six years of her life.

Before writing the book, Andy with his late father, the scriptwriter Eric Merriman, had written a comedy drama series for Radio 4 in which Sarah appeared playing a character based on herself.

Sarah is now 11 years old and a free, independent spirit with rock solid self-confidence who has a host of friends and interests.

## THE EDUCATORS

Godfrey Pryor, Pupil and Parent Support Manager, reviews what is being done to boost cultural diversity in County schools.



### RACE EQUALITY

The LEA and a group of headteachers are producing a guide to help schools develop the Race Equality Policy which they are required to have. The guide is being launched this term at a series of conferences for heads and senior staff.

Training sessions for governors have been held around the County to make them more aware of their new responsibilities for overseeing their school's Race Equality Policies. Local schools have made great strides during the last five years in all areas of Race Equality.

### MULTI-ETHNIC SCHOOLS

The small number of County schools with a significant number of children speaking English as an Alternative Language (EAL), have developed considerable expertise in educating them.

During the foundation stage and Key Stage 1, they have additional staff through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) and additional staffing at Key Stage 2 has been provided by the LEA.

But the increasing dispersal of ethnic minority families around the County means that some EAL pupils become 'isolated learners' in other schools which may lack the necessary expertise. A small support team offers advice and the LEA has published a booklet.

### TRAVELLER CHILDREN

The LEA places great importance on supporting schools to improve education for Traveller children and works hard with the West Midlands Consortium to tackle absences. An LEA project in Stourport has looked at how the children's culture affects their preferred learning style.

### TRAINING

There has been a variety of training in Race Equality, Cultural Diversity and dealing with Racial Harassment and schools are being encouraged to increase inexpensive school-based twilight sessions in clusters and pyramids.

### OTHER EDUCATION PROJECTS

Other Education projects include focused work on home/school visiting and on mentoring for pupils with English as an Additional Language.

For further information, contact Godfrey Pryor on 01905 766086.

## WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS!

Three County Councillors now act as "Equality Champions" to lead equality in Worcestershire.

Cabinet member, Mrs. Liz Eyre, will be taking the executive lead in ensuring that equality for everyone is in the forefront of the County's consciousness and she will be supported by Mrs. Diane Rayner and Mr. Dan Wicksteed.

Here the three new Champions, who all have a special interest in and experience of equality matters, reveal what they think needs to be done to give extra clout to the campaign for fairer shares for all.



Councillor Liz Eyre is the Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Well-being. She says:

"As Cabinet Member with this responsibility, it is natural that I should be particularly interested in the subject of equality – both equality for the individual and equality of provision of our services within the County.

"It is important that we treat all residents equally regardless of their ethnic or cultural background, gender or mental or physical abilities.

"Each of the three County Council members, who have now joined the Corporate Equalities Group, has a particular interest to bring to the Group. With my Cabinet hat on, I am keen to promote all equalities, but I have opted to be the champion for disabilities and gender issues such as employment.

"The latter is an obvious interest. Having been in employment on the career ladder from my student days to senior management, I have come across the prejudices that still sit uncomfortably in the work environment and I feel well placed to champion gender issues.

"In the last 20 years, like many women, I have also had a dual role as a carer. More recently, I contracted a chronic illness which introduced me directly to the complex issues that disability embraces. Thanks to good medication, my disability is less obvious these days - but again, there are the associated problems that come with hidden disability."



Councillor Diane Rayner was Chairman of the County Council's former Culture and Community Committee. She says:

"I believe most passionately and strongly in equality and that diversity is essential for a well-balanced, happy society. More importantly, I believe respect for others is essential to our own happiness as well as other peoples'.

"When 'Windrush' landed in the Fifties, it brought a gentle people who sought prosperity for their families and came at our invitation to help our economy as well as their own. I enjoy the richness and diversity that such other cultures bring.

"Equally important are our Gypsies who have helped us farm the land and sustain our rural economy for generations and - like Asian and African people - have fought beside us in wars.

"The disabled? - They're people who have different abilities and they don't need patronising.

"Gender? - Let's not be ridiculous! Women have been a driving force in our society and economy since Eve.

"Sexual orientation? - The only sexual preference you need worry about is that of the person you are involved with and please don't quote some obscure verse in the Bible to me. The only one that applies is 'Love one another'.

"I will work with anyone to build a society where each individual is recognised as important and no-one is shunned, patronised or disadvantaged no matter what their sex, colour, race, creed or physical attributes. We must listen to the voices that make up the world's conversation and value everyone's contribution."



Councillor Dan Wicksteed has served on the Worcestershire Racial Equality Council for several years and is just starting his second three-year stint as Chairman. He says:

"I recently went on a two-day training course about diversity as a member of the West Mercia Police Authority and found it fascinating. I also attended a half-day course about disability as a Board member of the Learning and Skills Council.

"These experiences have underlined for me the fact that we all have a lot to learn about the business of equality in its widest sense.

"I am particularly interested in the new proposal for a single policy to cover every aspect of equality because this has the potential to make all of us realise that everyone is at risk unless we stick up for each other.

"But there is a lot of hard work and thinking still to be done because not all minority groups are sympathetic to each other and this is something which needs addressing.

"One thing my work with the Racial Equality Council has taught me is that there is a lot of goodwill at a general level in Worcestershire. The next and much harder step is to turn that goodwill into specific actions that will make a difference to people suffering unfair treatment."

## MAKING WORK EXPERIENCE WORK

By Roger Britton, Development and Training Manager, Human Resources.

Local government managers often see requests for work experience placements as yet another demand on their scarce time, only grudgingly agree and then rush to pull something together at the last minute.

But if young people are not well motivated, a poor work experience can put them off working for local government and, even worse, give them a poor view for life of how it operates.



The County Council therefore decided to focus on youngsters from minority communities where many either find the idea of working for a large organisation a real turn-off or have low career expectations.

So we teamed up with Trinity High School in Redditch where school staff identified the young people who would most benefit from the experience and did some excellent preparation work with them.

To introduce them to the County Council, we arranged for them to tour County Hall, meet people ranging from the Chief Executive to the Post-room Assistant and sit down to the lunch usually served to visiting dignitaries. Finally, we gave them a bouncy presentation about our way of working.

The week itself was well planned, tightly focused and flexible. This meant that we were able to arrange a move when one of the young people wanted to work with our architects.

The de-brief was excellent, the young people really taught us how to do it better next time and shared their experiences and word got round their school that working for the County Council was good!

But most of all, the venture brought about a huge change in the youngsters' attitudes and confidence and opened up opportunities which they had previously thought impossible.



## A NEW LOGO AND AN INVITATION

By Elijah Collins, Chairperson of the County Council's Black Colleagues Group

Since the distribution of the last newsletter, you might notice that a logo has been designed to make work produced by the Black Colleagues Group easily identifiable. Other developments have also taken place and I would like to take this opportunity to raise awareness about the Group and to extend an invitation to black employees to join us.

The Group is involved with looking into a range of matters concerning black employees of the Council as well as the services that are available to black citizens of Worcestershire.

Broadly speaking, the Group has two roles. The first is to support its members by providing a support network, offering advice and by working with the Council, Directorates and Services in meeting their statutory duties to promote race equality.

Since distribution of the last newsletter, the Group has been busy advising, supporting and working with a number of other groups who are involved with promoting race equality in Worcestershire. These include the Corporate Equalities Group, Social Services Directorate's Race Equalities Group and Social Services Adult Services Equalities Group.

As well as the above, the Black Colleagues Group has been preparing for the development of a mentoring scheme in partnership with Worcestershire County Council's Human Resources Training Section and Leicester City Council's Black Workers Group.

The Group is also producing webpages to contain information about its roles, activities and meeting dates. We meet approximately once every six weeks at different locations around Worcestershire. For more information about the work of the Group and times, dates and venues, please contact Lily Box on 01905 766914 or myself on 01905 766968.

## GO WILD AT WORCESTER WOODS COUNTRY PARK!

says Andy Maginnis, the County Council's Countryside Estates Manager

Situated just one mile from the centre of Worcester, the Country Park has a huge part to play in helping people to unwind and pursue a healthy lifestyle, is accessible to people with disabilities and is free of charge to visitors.

This beautiful designated Local Nature Reserve has an abundance of wildlife and the waymarked, easy access trails which wind among its woodland are suitable for wheelchair users, pushchair users and people with mobility problems. There is also easy access to toilets, a café and shop, a large events field, a meeting room and a visitor centre.

The Country Park is a great place to meet people for a chat and we are also keen to encourage people of all abilities and backgrounds to help us maintain and improve it through volunteer work.

One of the great things about the Park is that many of the usual financial, cultural and physical barriers don't exist. This is being highlighted by the Government's Countryside Agency as one of the reasons why they are promoting a "Renaissance" of Country Parks. The Agency believes that they promote social inclusion, health, mental well-being and community involvement.

Our Country Park is extremely popular with groups with learning disabilities, parents with young children and people who have a culture of large family gatherings. We would also love to hear from other groups who would like to use it and from other authorities and agencies who would be interested in helping us make it even more accessible by removing physical, cultural or intellectual barriers.

If you would like a copy of the current Walks and Events programme which also contains details of the Countryside Service's other sites or you would like to book the events field or meeting room, please contact Ann Lloyd on 01905 766493.

## ACCESS BROUGHT TO BOOK

Kidderminster's flagship library was specifically designed with the disabled in mind and in 1999 won an ADAPT Trust Award for access to arts facilities.

As a result, a disabled student from Bewdley High School has recently been benefiting from a work experience placement there.

The state-of-the-art building, which was opened in 1997 by the Princess Royal, literally bristles with devices and design techniques for making access as good as possible and the staff have received training in customer care and disability issues.

There is plenty of space for wheelchairs to pass between bookshelves and most of the shelves are reachable from a sitting position. The People's Network terminals have adjustable height tables that allow wheelchairs to go under the surface top and there are disabled toilets on the ground and second floors and in the staff area.

People with different types of disability have also been catered for. There are a fitticom telephone and induction loops for the hard of hearing, the building has been fitted with tactile signs for the visually impaired and fire alarms are both audible and visual.

"This is a wonderful facility for the people of Kidderminster of which we are very proud and we must aspire to provide these kinds of facilities in all our libraries and other County Council buildings," said Trevor Norton, Director of Corporate Services.

"That is why I support and am committed to the work that the County Council is doing on equalities."

For further information about Kidderminster Library, contact Ron Hoggarth, Community Library Manager, on 01562 824500 or e-mail rhoggarth@worcestershire.gov.uk

## AN EYE ON THE LAW

Corporate Diversity Manager, Rukhsana Koser, looks at some of the latest equality legislation

### THE EQUALITY STANDARD FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

A new standard which recognises the importance of fair treatment and equal access to local government services and employment, has been developed to enable local authorities to mainstream gender, race and disability into Council policy and practice at all levels.

The Equality Standard has been developed by the Employers Organisation for Local Government, the Commission for Racial Equality, the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Disability Rights Commission and the Audit Commission.

Its successful implementation will depend on a partnership between the Council and the Community and will involve Councillors, managers, staff, trade unions, the community and voluntary sector. Progress will be audited through Best Value and the County Council aims to achieve Level 1 by March 2004.

### NEW REGULATIONS ON RACE, RELIGION, BELIEF AND SEXUALITY

The Government has made important changes to the Race Relations Act to meet the directive issued by the European Union in 2000. New Regulations give people greater protection from unlawful racial discrimination and harassment.

Key improvements include a new definition of indirect discrimination making it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of race, ethnic or national origin after a relationship has come to an end.

From December, it will be unlawful for any employer to discriminate against employees and potential employees because of their religion, beliefs or sexuality.

### A NEW SURVEY

Towards Racial Equality is a major survey of public authorities' activities to end racial discrimination and it assesses the nature, extent and quality of their response to the statutory duty to promote race equality.

The Commission for Racial Equality's report is based on a questionnaire survey of 3888 public authorities and educational institutions. An executive summary is available on the Commission's website, www.cre.gov.uk

## VIEWS FROM THE WHEELCHAIR

By two members of the Corporate Equalities Group



### TROUBLE WITH TRANSPORT

By Hayley Andrews

There are many who have very different conceptions of people with disabilities and that needs to be challenged big time. I'm playing my part by being involved with a group campaigning for better transport for people with differing needs/disabilities.

The group, which I chair, has been called A.D.A.P.T. (Alliance of Disabled Access to Passenger Transport). We think that's a pretty appropriate name because everything should be ADAPTABLE in this day and age.

Are two heads better than four? Wrong - two legs are better than none!

You may think this is a joke - but it isn't. Half of us with disabilities/differing needs would love to be able to get from A to B without a big hop, skip and a jump, but this can be difficult with public provided transport.

People with differing needs/disabilities are fed up with feeling like second class citizens who only get second class public transport. What's good for the goose should be good for the gander and we would like effective, reliable and AAAccessible public transport. This is where A.D.A.P.T. comes in.

We are committed to working with transport suppliers - helping when and where we are required - and we are lucky enough to be supported by the County Council. We will do our utmost to resolve people's difficulties with transport and, if necessary, forward their cases to the relevant people.

With help and support, A.D.A.P.T. will thrive and kick transport into gear for those with differing needs/disabilities.



### WHAT IT IS LIKE TO BE DISABLED IN 2003

By Mary Collett

I live on a bus route with a service that passes right by my house several times a day. How wonderful it would be for me if I could use it. The bus company even has T/LIFT buses - but they do not put them on this route.

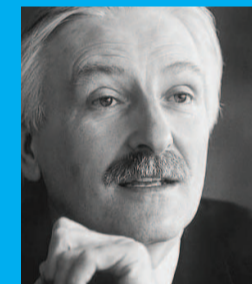
Frustration is a major factor in what disabled people feel. For example, you go out for a ride in your electric chair, (perhaps with a friend or partner), you are enjoying the walk and the fresh air and then suddenly there is no dropped kerb and you have to go back and try to find another route.

You join a club after finding out if it is accessible and, when you get there, there are no toilets for the disabled. Shopping can be very distressing because the doors or the aisles in shops are perhaps not wide enough for the wheelchair or the clothes are too high up and you can't read the labels. You feel discriminated against.

To be able to work creates problems - again, mostly because of accessibility - and sometimes, just having a small ramp can solve the problem.

Most people can book a holiday quite easily, sometimes at the last minute, but not the disabled. There are so many things you have to check out first like whether there are any steps, whether an hotel has a lift and whether there is a disabled toilet.

I do think that things are improving, although only very slowly, and hopefully in this European Year of the Disabled we can work with people to try to make life as enjoyable for the less able as it is for an able bodied person.



## CHIEF EXECUTIVE JOINS EQUALITY CAMPAIGN

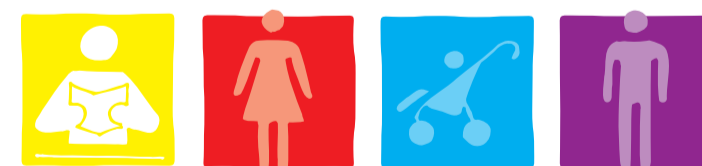
Rob Sykes, Chief Executive of Worcestershire County Council, is the backbone of the campaign for greater equality. He recently launched the local debate on the proposed development of a Single Equalities body for the County.

Worcestershire Racial Equality Council - under the umbrella of the Worcestershire Partnership Board - has now formed a working group with West Mercia Police and the County Council to take the debate forward.

Rob is also stepping into the fight to give greater support to people with disabilities. On 4th November, he is chairing and hosting jointly with University College Worcester the opening conference of "Today, Not Tomorrow", a ten-day campaign being organised by the County Council and referred to elsewhere in this newsletter.

"As Chief Executive, it is my job to lead the work on equalities in Worcestershire, but I am particularly pleased that we now have cross-party member champions to promote the political leadership in all areas of our equality work," he said.

"You can continue to count on my and the other Chief Officers' leadership in supporting the valuable work that is done by so many of our staff and people in the County."



## IS YOUR INABILITY



## TO SEE MY ABILITY



## YOUR DISABILITY?

WORCESTERSHIRE. WE ALL MAKE IT UNIQUE