Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties
Annual Progress Report 2017-18

Contact:

- Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and Equality Scheme
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- Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan
  As above

Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:
www.librariesni.org.uk/AboutUs/OurOrg/Pages/Equality.aspx

Signature:

This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the Equality Commission.

It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties, and implementing Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plans.

This report reflects progress made between April 2017 and March 2018
PART A – Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme

Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice

1. In 2017-18, please provide examples of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved. Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.

1. Libraries NI continued to target resources at 15 libraries serving people in the 10% most deprived Super Output areas and Urban Village areas with a view to addressing inequalities and reducing barriers to use through targeted programmes and activities. Libraries NI staff attend information and networking forums and work collaboratively with other agencies to contribute to initiatives under the Together: Building a United Community Strategy.

2. All libraries were set a specific target to deliver activities to groups at risk of social exclusion such as ethnic groups, rural dwellers and the elderly. This target was incorporated in Service and Branch Plans and in individual staff appraisals. In 2016/17 two year action plans focussing on refugees, homeless people, people with Autism and people with Dementia were implemented and these were completed in 2017/18 establishing Autism and Dementia Friendly libraries.

3. An “Out of Hours” pilot project funded by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) was launched. This service offers adults additional access to a range of library facilities outside of normal library opening hours and supports computer access in rural areas. Customers can access a limited but important range of services including broadband/Wi-Fi access, printing facilities, study space and book borrowing on a self-service basis.

4. Libraries provide free local access to broadband, Wi-Fi and computers, and many digital inclusion programmes support people to develop the necessary skills and confidence to access, evaluate and use appropriate online information and increase the use of social media.

5. There was continued investment in online resources such as eBooks, eMagazines, downloadable audiobooks, encyclopaedias, family history records to make library services and information accessible 24/7.

6. Libraries NI engages with regional and locally based organisations to promote Health and Wellbeing and a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the Patient and Client Council (PCC) facilitating access to health information in a neutral, stigma free environment. Support and signposting to other health information is provided in partnership with, for example, Health Trusts, Macmillan Cancer Support, Cedar Foundation, Autism NI, Dementia NI, Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB), Aware NI and Linking Generations NI (LGNI).
7. A number of strategic and local partnerships and service level agreements are in place to support and enhance service delivery e.g. Booktrust, SureStart and U3A. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the Northern Ireland Prison Service supporting library and information services to prisoners.

8. Libraries NI is a statutory partner in the Community Planning process and has actively engaged with Councils and other Community Planning partners on the development of community plans and delivery plans.


10. Libraries NI continues to deliver inclusive activities, programmes and services to increase understanding and respect for other cultures, traditions and beliefs. Libraries are ideally placed in communities offering neutral, welcoming spaces accessible to all whether for social interaction, learning a new skill or exploring different cultural traditions.

11. Quarterly policy screening reports were issued to consultees and published on the Libraries NI website.

2 Please provide examples of outcomes and/or the impact of equality action plans/measures in 2017-18 (or append the plan with progress/examples identified).

Please see Appendix One: Part A Section 1 Question 2

3 Has the application of the Equality Scheme commitments resulted in any changes to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2017-18 reporting period? (tick one box only)

☐ Yes ☐ No (go to Q.4) ☐ Not applicable (go to Q.4)

Please provide any details and examples:

- Autism Action Plan developed and implemented
- Dementia Action Plan developed and implemented

3a With regard to the change(s) made to policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas, what difference was made, or will be made, for individuals, i.e. the impact on those according to Section 75 category?

Please provide any details and examples:

- the Autism Action Plan will improve communication with people with Autism and Autism support groups and identifies measures to be taken to create Autism
Friendly libraries and library activities

- the Dementia Action Plan will improve communication with people with Dementia and Dementia support groups and identifies measures to be taken to create Dementia Friendly libraries and library activities.

3b What aspect of the Equality Scheme prompted or led to the change(s)? (tick all that apply)

☐ As a result of the organisation’s screening of a policy (please give details):

☐ As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise (please give details):

☐ As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact (please give details):

☐ As a result of changes to access to information and services (please specify and give details):

☒ Other (please specify and give details)

As a result of Service Plan targets and ongoing monitoring of service provision.

Section 2: Progress on Equality Scheme commitments and action plans/measures

Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)

4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2017-18 reporting period? (tick one box only)

☐ Yes, organisation wide

☐ Yes, some departments/jobs

☐ No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment

☐ No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done

☒ Not applicable
Please provide any details and examples:

An inclusive approach is mainstreamed into service provision and delivery to ensure implementation of the Equality Scheme is incorporated into Corporate, Service and Branch Plans and Staff Appraisals.

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2017-18 reporting period? (tick one box only)

- Yes, organisation wide
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Libraries NI is committed to an inclusive approach to service delivery and continually reviews services to people with disabilities, access to buildings and supports continuous improvement through training programmes. Libraries NI works in partnership with other organisations to maximise inclusive service delivery.

6 In the 2017-18 reporting period were objectives/ targets/ performance measures relating to the Section 75 statutory duties integrated into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? (tick all that apply)

- Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan
- Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning
- Yes, in some departments/jobs
- No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation’s ongoing corporate plan
- No, the organisation’s planning cycle does not coincide with this 2017-18 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Libraries NI is committed to an inclusive approach to service delivery. Libraries NI continually reviews services to people with disabilities, access to buildings and
supports continuous improvement through training programmes. Libraries NI works in partnership with other organisations to maximise inclusive service delivery.

Equality action plans/ measures

7 Within the 2017-18 reporting period, please indicate the number of:

Actions completed: □ □ Actions ongoing: □ □ Actions to commence: □ □

Please provide any details and examples (in addition to question 2):

Libraries NI delivers a range of activities, exhibitions, events, programmes and initiatives through a network of 98 libraries. Many of these are delivered through a range of strategic and local partnerships, Memoranda of Understanding and service level agreements.

8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2017-18 reporting period (points not identified in an appended plan):

Not applicable

9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2017-18 reporting period, the following have been identified: (tick all that apply)

☐ Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality

☐ Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way

☐ Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities

☐ Measures to address a prioritised inequality have been completed

The Libraries NI Audit of Inequalities will be reviewed in 2018.

Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)

10 Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance: (tick one box only)

☐ All the time ☐ Sometimes ☐ Never

There were no consultations in the 2017-18 reporting period.
11 Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2017-18 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

Not applicable

12 In the 2017-18 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: *(tick all that apply)*

- [ ] Face to face meetings
- [ ] Focus groups
- [ ] Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing
- [ ] Questionnaires
- [ ] Information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation
- [ ] Internet discussions
- [ ] Telephone consultations
- [ ] Other *(please specify)*:

Please provide any details or examples of the uptake of these methods of consultation in relation to the consultees’ membership of particular Section 75 categories:

13 Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2017-18 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- [ ] Yes    [x] No    [ ] Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:
PART A

14  Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2017-18 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

[ ] Yes  [ ] No  [ ] Not applicable – no commitment to review

Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

Libraries NI Policy Screening Outcome Reports

15  Please provide the number of policies screened during the year *(as recorded in screening reports)*:

19

16  Please provide the number of assessments that were consulted upon during 2017-18:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Policy consultations conducted with screening assessment presented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Policy consultations conducted <em>with an equality impact assessment</em> (EQIA) presented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Consultations for an EQIA alone.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17  Please provide details of the main consultations conducted on an assessment *(as described above)* or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

Not Applicable

18  Were any screening decisions *(or equivalent initial assessments of relevance)* reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? *(tick one box only)*

[ ] Yes  [X] No concerns were raised  [ ] No  [ ] Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:
Libraries NI takes into account feedback from consultees.

**Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)**

**19** Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2017-18 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- [ ] Yes
- [x] No
- [ ] Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

**Arrangements for monitoring and publishing the results of monitoring (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)**

**20** From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2017-18 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- [ ] Yes
- [x] No, already taken place
- [ ] No, scheduled to take place at a later date
- [ ] Not applicable

Please provide any details:

**21** In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies? *(tick one box only)*

- [ ] Yes
- [x] No
- [ ] Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

**22** Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2017-18 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

None

**23** Please provide any details or examples of monitoring that has contributed to the availability of equality and good relations information/data for service delivery planning or policy development:

None
Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)

24 Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2017-18, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

Libraries NI has a range of training and awareness measures in place to ensure compliance with the Libraries NI Equality Scheme including:

- Libraries NI Equality Scheme and Summary available to all staff on the staff intranet
- awareness raising of the Libraries NI Equality Scheme as part of Corporate and local induction
- completion of the CAL e-learning Diversity Now module by 555 staff
- attendance by HR staff at a range of seminars and workshops facilitated by the Equality Commission
- Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk training delivered to all newly appointed staff
- Parent and Guardian Engagement Sessions (PaGES) training
- Irish Language classes.

25 Please provide any examples of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

- **Diversity Now** – this e-Learning module to increase awareness, knowledge and understanding of equality and diversity
- other e-Learning modules completed by a number of staff included: Introduction to Human Rights, Introduction to Section 75, Unconscious Bias, ASD Awareness, Disability Awareness for Frontline Staff and Supporting Vulnerable People
- one member of staff undertook Parent and Guardian Engagement Sessions (PaGES) training to become an Autism Champion for Libraries NI and has subsequently rolled out Autism Awareness training to other staff
- one member of staff was supported to undertake Irish Language classes in keeping with Libraries NI Code of Courtesy for the Irish Language.

Public Access to Information and Services (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 6)

26 Please list any examples of where monitoring during 2017-18, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation to access to information and services:

None
Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

27 How many complaints in relation to the Equality Scheme have been received during 2017-18?

Insert number here:  0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

Section 3: Looking Forward

28 Please indicate when the Equality Scheme is due for review:

A review of the Libraries NI Equality Scheme commenced in November 2017; work is underway to complete the review exercise.

29 Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? (please provide details)

Nothing specific

30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what equality and good relations priorities are anticipated over the next (2017-18) reporting period? (please tick any that apply)

- Employment
- Goods, facilities and services
- Legislative changes
- Organisational changes/ new functions
- Nothing specific, more of the same
- Other (please state):
PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans

1. Number of action measures for this reporting period that have been:

- Fully achieved
- Partially achieved
- Not achieved

2. Please outline below details on all actions that have been fully achieved in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what public life measures have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Public Life Action Measures</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Outcomes / Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2(b) What training action measures were achieved in this reporting period?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Action Measures</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Outcome / Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Awareness raising of the Libraries NI Equality Scheme as part of Staff Induction</td>
<td>Delivered to all new staff (permanent and temporary) and Agency staff at corporate and local induction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>CAL e-learning Diversity Now module</td>
<td>Module completed by 555 staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Equality Commission seminars and workshops</td>
<td>Attendance by HR staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Safeguarding Children and</td>
<td>Attendance by all newly appointed staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults at Risk Awareness training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Parent and Guardian Engagement Sessions (Autism) training</td>
<td>Autism Champion attended</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2(c) What Positive attitudes **action measures** in the area of **Communications** were achieved in this reporting period?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communications Action Measures</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Outcome / Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 A strapline stating information is available in other formats.</td>
<td>Strapline incorporated in website and graphic poster design.</td>
<td>Improving and extending access to information generally and information regarding library services, in particular to those customers with needs specific to Section 75 categories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Increase in the use of social media as a means of promoting services</td>
<td>Social media increased by 23.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Minicom service available in all libraries to improve and promote accessibility of services for people with speech impairment or hearing loss.</td>
<td>Available in all 98 libraries.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Adaptive software on public computer terminals e.g. Jaws and Zoom Text.</td>
<td>Available in all 98 libraries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Browse Aloud</td>
<td>Piloted in 9 libraries</td>
<td>Improved access to reading, translation and using the Internet for those with dyslexia, reading difficulties or with English as a second language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2 (d) What action measures were achieved to ‘**encourage others**’ to promote the two duties:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Encourage others Action Measures</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Outcome / Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Libraries NI is committed to promoting positive attitudes and implements an inclusive approach to service provision.</td>
<td>Please see examples listed in Appendix One: Part A Section 1 Question 2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 (e) Please outline **any additional action measures** that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Outcomes / Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Please outline what action measures have been **partly achieved** as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Measures partly achieved</th>
<th>Milestonesvi / Outputs</th>
<th>Outcomes/Impacts</th>
<th>Reasons not fully achieved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Please outline what action measures have not been achieved and the reasons why.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Measures not met</th>
<th>Reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 *</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. What monitoring tools have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

(a) Qualitative

(b) Quantitative
Customer feedback/number of complaints or compliments

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions has your organisation either:

- made any revisions to your plan during the reporting period or
- taken any additional steps to meet the disability duties which were not outlined in your original disability action plan / any other changes?

If yes please outline below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revised/Additional Action Measures</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Do you intend to make any further **revisions to your plan** in light of your organisation’s annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes?

No. Appendix Two: Disability Action Plan April 2014 – March 2017 will be reviewed in 2018/19.

I. **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.

II. **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.

III. **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments

IV. **Regional** : Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level

V. **Local** : Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.

VI. **Milestones** – Please outline what part progress has been made towards the particular measures; even if full output or outcomes/ impact have not been achieved.
APPENDIX 1: Part A Section 1 Question 2

2 Libraries NI examples of outcome/impact of Equality actions/measures and statistics for 2017-18

Libraries NI has a network of 96 public libraries, two specialist libraries – the Mellon Centre for Migration Studies and Irish and Local Studies Armagh, 16 mobile libraries, ten Homecall vehicles and online library service 24/7. A range of programmes, events, activities and exhibitions is delivered in all libraries to support Service Priorities:

- Reading and Reader Development
- Children and Young People
- Digital Inclusion
- Community Relations and Cultural Diversity
- Cultural Heritage
- Support for Health and Wellbeing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome/impact of Equality action/measures 2017/18</th>
<th>Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Headline statistics with detail in sections below:</strong> All Core and Regular activities for adults and children. These include:</td>
<td>402,727 instances of participation in 29,210 sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Visits, Got IT, Reading Groups, Rhythm and Rhyme, Storytime, Creative Writing, Go ON, Job Clubs, Knit and Natter, Mindful Colouring, Tea and Newspapers</td>
<td>Source: Libraries NI Activity Database (PROVISIONAL as of 25-04-18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Items issued or renewed, eBooks and downloadable audio books borrowed, eMagazines downloaded</td>
<td>5,285,824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Users</td>
<td>289,787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Access Computer/Wi-Fi sessions</td>
<td>1,034,222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public computers</td>
<td>1,277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iMacs available</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stock spend</td>
<td>£3,905,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In line with Service Priorities a range of inclusive events and programmes has been delivered in libraries across Northern Ireland.
**Reading and Reader Development**

Stock and information is purchased to meet the expectations and needs of all our borrowers and includes items which:

- document, recognise and reflect the shared history of Northern Ireland
- reflect the diverse communities in Northern Ireland
- support the reading needs of adults and children with hearing and sight impairments e.g. large print books, audiobooks and downloadable audiobooks.

Library stock is provided in a range of formats e.g. newspapers, magazines, eMagazines, books, large print, eBooks, books on CD, downloadable audiobooks.

Libraries NI supports a range of reading groups including groups for Irish Language and for people with sight impairments as well as reading groups in prisons and a LGBT reading group.

In 2017/18 Libraries NI curated and toured book collections on the themes of Health, Age, Gender, Race and Sexuality.

**Access to Services**

**Mobile Library Service**

The *Mobile Library Service* is targeted at older people, retired people, children and carers who would not easily access their local library or who live in remote communities. The mobile library service operates in rural areas and visits schools and playgroups in areas of social exclusion. Summer programmes are in place and staff deliver Rhythm and Rhyme and storytimes at caravan parks and summer schemes. All vehicles have full disabled access, some have hearing loops and book stock is tailored to suit the key customer groups mainly large print, audiobooks, and children’s books.

Rathlin Island receives a customised library service due to its isolated location.
Homecall Service

**Homecall Service** staff deliver books and audiobooks to people who are unable to access library services independently, enabling people with disabilities to continue their reading habit.

**Targeting Social Exclusion (TSE)**

Resources continue to be targeted at 15 libraries in the lowest 10% Super Output Areas and Urban Village areas through outreach and community engagement, including two central libraries in Belfast and Derry/Londonderry.

An extensive programme of activities such as reading, storytelling, reminiscence, art projects and outreach visits was provided to vulnerable groups at risk of isolation including:

- mental health and well-being groups
- homeless people and the most vulnerable in society
- people affected by Dementia and Autism
- ethnic groups and traveller communities
- rural dwellers
- groups for men, women, elderly people
- LGBT groups
- Cross Community groups.

Highlight events included:

- Welcome Wall. As part of Community Relations and Cultural Awareness Week 15 libraries held a storytime and craft session to create welcoming messages for Syrian families arriving in Northern Ireland
- Storytelling, Information Stand and Drag Queen Storytime as part of Belfast Pride Festival
- A Picture Paints a Thousand Words. A literacy/art project with groups of older people
- World Book Night. Gifting books and promoting libraries with organisations such as Welcome Organisation, ASCERT strengthening families' programme, People Plus NI supporting young people into employment.
### Disability and Sensory Impairment

Libraries NI is committed to promoting positive attitudes and extending access to services for older people, those with a disability or unable to access services independently by removing barriers and supporting digital inclusion through regular activities in many libraries e.g.

- All public access computers have JAWS and ZOOMTEXT assistive software and 20” screens enabling people with sight impairment to access ICT and virtual library services
- Loop Systems and Minicom service available in all libraries to improve and promote accessibility of services for people with speech impairment or hearing loss
- A number of partnerships support provision of services to people with disabilities e.g. NOW, Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) and Association of Talking Newspapers Northern Ireland (ATNNI)
- Hidden Disabilities initiative to review how to join Libraries NI for people with disabilities, improve communication and reduce barriers to access
- JAM (Just a Minute) card for people with learning disabilities to alert staff that the cardholder needs patience and time when interacting with them
- Access2books provides picture books in giant print and Braille for young children.
- Memory cafés and Reminiscence sessions for people with Dementia
- Multi-sensory storytelling using storysacks, story puppets and Bag books.

### Premises

Libraries NI continues to work to ensure that library buildings and vehicles are easily accessible to as wide a range of customers as possible. Where appropriate we consult with customers in planning developments and utilise information provided by organisations representing specific user groups.

Accessibility improvements include:

- Upgrading of a number of libraries to provide improved access to and throughout the building
- Providing improved visual contrast colour schemes to assist people with sight impairment
- Upgrading of car parking and access to buildings.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Children and Young People</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children and young people are assisted to achieve their full potential by supporting both cognitive and social development. A range of activities, programmes and events is provided to develop pre-literacy, literacy, learning, information seeking and digital skills and to foster a love of reading. Programmes include:</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Rhythm and Rhyme</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A free programme of rhymes, stories and songs for preschool children aged 0-4 and their parents/carers (some in partnership with SureStart groups) held in libraries and in outreach settings. This year, for the first time, we offered an associated Rhythm and Rhyme Challenge. Rub-a-dub Hub, the early years' section of Libraries NI website also contains rhymes, rhyming information and fun activities to help parents and carers develop their child’s communication and language skills.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Storytime</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>A free programme of stories and poems for children aged 4-8 years, held in libraries or in outreach settings. Some storytimes are delivered in the Irish language.</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Class Visits</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A free programme to introduce children to library books and digital resources, encourage library use and develop information literacy skills. Delivered to nursery schools, primary schools, a quality assured programme offered to Year 4 and Year 6 in all primary schools, post primary schools and special needs schools.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Reading Groups</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delivered in many libraries to encourage adventurous reading for pleasure, share enthusiasm for books and develop confidence in expressing opinions:</td>
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</table>
  - Junior Reading Groups for 7-9 years and 9-11 years
  - Teenage Reading Groups for 12-15 years
  - Chatterbooks groups for 7-11 years. |

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<tr>
<th><strong>Big Summer Read</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A personal reading challenge in all branch and mobile libraries throughout July and August with a theme of Travel and Transport and available in the Irish Language.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other initiatives included:

**Harry Potter. A History of Magic Exhibition!**
The exhibition was displayed in five libraries from November 2017 – March 2018 and was accompanied by invited school audiences and children with Science Starz.

**NI Science Festival/Fact February**
Libraries NI hosted the launch of NI Science Festival in Belfast Central Library. Other events and displays were held in libraries to support the Science Festival and to promote non-fiction/fact books.

**Digital Inclusion**
Libraries NI is committed to promoting greater equality of access to learning opportunities and information resources, both print and digital, to enable adults to become better informed and skilled in order to participate more fully in employment, family and community life.

Many Digital Inclusion events and programmes are successfully delivered through effective partnership working.

Events and programmes of activities provide information relevant to people’s needs focusing on job seeking, health, business, finance, community and improving digital literacy skills. Examples include:

- access to relevant and reliable information, advice and support
- Virtual Library with access to free and accurate information and online resources including Access to Research, Cobra and Mintel databases
- Digital Inclusion workshops and programmes
- Got IT and Go ON - ICT support delivered by library staff to develop ICT skills
- National Initiatives such as Silver Surfers Day and Festival of Learning
- support materials were created to accompany the roll out of Universal Credit.
### Support for Health and Wellbeing

Libraries NI supports Health and Wellbeing by providing access to health information and signposting to other organisations as well as delivering and hosting a range of activities and events. Many Health and Wellbeing events and programmes are successfully delivered through effective partnership working. Examples include:

- Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing to promote evidence-based health messages to contribute to improved health and wellbeing
- Your Health is your Wealth Road Shows
- Teenage Health Fairs
- Events and talks using Smoothie bikes and Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) lamps to promote healthy eating and raise awareness of mental health issues
- RNIB events to support digital inclusion in the Online Today project
- Partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support to provide information stands in all libraries.

Libraries deliver a number of on-going activities to promote health and mental wellbeing and combat social isolation including:

- Tea and Newspapers
- Mindful Colouring
- Knit and Knatter.

### Community Relations and Cultural Diversity

#### Cultural and Creative Development

Libraries NI delivers a range of inclusive events, activities and exhibitions designed to widen access to culture and the creative arts, promote understanding of the value of culture in improving community wellbeing and celebrate diversity. Libraries offer accessible, inclusive venues providing a shared social space where individuals and communities can participate in community activity and learn about different cultures.

Libraries NI facilitated events from major festivals including Féile an Phobail (West Belfast Festival) and EastSide Arts, working with a range of partner organisations as well as individual artists and performers to successfully deliver creative programming.
Cultural activities delivered in libraries include Music clubs, “Lift the lid” piano sessions, art classes, dance, creative writing groups, poetry reading groups, Irish language classes, Nasca festival including bi-lingual storytelling and talks in the Irish language.

**Storytelling**
Libraries NI Storyteller in Residence, Liz Weir, delivered an extensive programme of storytelling, workshops and reminiscence events reaching over 6,000 people in libraries, primary schools, residential homes, prisons and memory cafés. The range of storytelling activities included storytelling on themes of respecting and celebrating difference to improve understanding of other cultures and traditions.

**Exhibitions and Displays**
Libraries offer welcoming and neutral venues which are accessible to local communities and attract people who may not feel comfortable in a formal gallery setting.

Libraries with gallery spaces hosted art and photographic exhibitions and a number of touring exhibitions were facilitated in partnership with Play Resource, HMS Caroline, Oxfam, BBC and National Museums Northern Ireland (NMNI).

Highlight initiatives included:

- Creativity Month in March promoted the Creative Industries of Television and Film. Programming included creative writing workshops, talks and clinics and “Creative Conversations” with industry professionals
- Community Relations and Cultural Awareness Week on the theme of Safe Space, Shared Place. Libraries delivered and hosted a strong programme of events including multicultural storytelling for children, reminiscence and historical reflections, including for the first time exhibitions from Northern Ireland Prison Service locations
- photographic exhibitions by individual refugees and a dance and music celebration by Du Dance NI with Beyond Skin for Refugee Week
- a staged reading by Ad Hoc Theatre Company entitled “Judgement at Nuremburg” to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day.
Cultural Heritage

Access to cultural heritage, both local and national, enriches society through nurturing creativity, imagination, pride in our past and a sense of place. Sharing space and interests in and across communities and working extensively with a range of partners creates a platform to share ideas and raise awareness of cultural differences. Heritage staff collect, preserve, exploit and provide access to material which relates to cultural heritage and initiate and organise talks, activities and exhibitions.

Talks and exhibitions marked significant anniversaries in the Decade of Centenaries and included women’s suffrage and the “Representation of the People Act”.

The 500 year anniversary of the Reformation was marked by a joint touring exhibition produced by Libraries NI and Public Records Office Northern Ireland (PRONI).

“Hidden Treasures” is an initiative in which Libraries NI Board members, staff and others are invited to select items from the archives and the Fine Book Room as a way of promoting these collections. The selections are available to view on the Libraries NI website.

Other activities to promote interest in our shared heritage include:

- family history workshops and events promoting Heritage resources
- local and Family history talks
- Digital Film Archive (DFA) partnership with Northern Ireland Screen. Presentations delivered across Libraries NI and in outreach locations e.g. Alzheimer’s Support Groups
- Irish language events and talks
- partnership events with the Ulster Scots Agency included the hosting of travelling exhibitions
- workshops delivered to non-traditional users and socially excluded groups
- focused Heritage collection development.
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<tr>
<th>Marketing and Communications</th>
<th>There was a 23.7% increase in likes and follows on Facebook and Twitter during the year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media growth and activity continued with increased likes, follows and views on our Twitter, Facebook, Flickr and YouTube pages.</td>
<td>69 videos were uploaded and there were 32,195 views during the year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Content on the Libraries NI social media channels was extended with video available to support customer needs.</td>
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</table>
## Appendix Two: Libraries NI Disability Action Plan April 2014 to March 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Action By</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
<th>Expected Outcome</th>
<th>Examples of Progress 2017/18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disability Awareness</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensure Libraries NI Board Members and staff are aware of their responsibilities under the relevant legislation to include Disability Discrimination Order (NI) 2006, Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.</td>
<td>Staff Development Manager</td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>Increased awareness of disability legislation and obligations and Libraries NI’s Equality Scheme.</td>
<td>All staff are made aware of relevant Disability and Equality legislation and associated Libraries NI Policies, Procedures and processes at Induction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure staff are aware of the Disability Action Plan as appropriate</td>
<td>All Managers</td>
<td></td>
<td>Action measures are routinely incorporated in the business and service planning process.</td>
<td>All Line Managers have a responsibility to ensure that relevant Policies and Procedures are brought to the attention of staff.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hidden Disabilities initiative ongoing to review joining processes for people with disabilities, including hidden disabilities, to improve service delivery, reduces barriers to use and improve communication.</td>
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<td>The JAM (Just a Minute) card initiative ongoing for people with learning disabilities, to alert staff in public services that the card-holder needs ‘Just a Minute’ of patience and time when interacting with them.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Service planning included targets relating to improving services for people with disabilities e.g. Dementia and Autism.</td>
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</table>
Develop partnerships to support and enhance service delivery to individuals and user groups with specific needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
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<th>Timescale</th>
<th>Expected Outcome</th>
<th>Examples of Progress 2017/18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disability Training</td>
<td>Staff Development Manager</td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>Improved engagement with customers, widening of access to services and effective use of resources.</td>
<td>A Memorandum of Understanding signed with the Patient and Client Council to facilitate access to health information in a neutral, trusted venue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure appropriate induction and training plans are in place to promote positive attitudes and take account of the needs of individuals and groups with specific needs.</td>
<td>ICU/ICT</td>
<td>2014-2017</td>
<td>Staff equipped with appropriate skills to engage with all customers. Improved access to information and or training on disability for all staff.</td>
<td>Initiatives delivered through a range of partnerships for example: - Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB), Macmillan Cancer Support, Cedar Foundation, Aware NI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate training tools on disability included on the VLE section of the Intranet.</td>
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<td>Training during 2017/18 included:</td>
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<td>• Equality Scheme Awareness</td>
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<td>• CAL eLearning Diversity Now module</td>
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<td>• Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Awareness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Action By</td>
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<td>Expected Outcome</td>
<td>Examples of Progress 2017/18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Libraries NI as an Employer</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>On-going</td>
<td>Recruitment and selection policies and procedures comply with relevant legislation.</td>
<td>Libraries NI complies with its equality obligations under the anti-discrimination legislation and its Equal Opportunities Policy applies to all who work for it or who apply for work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comply with equality obligations under employment and anti-discrimination legislation ensuring equality of opportunity including use of the Employment Monitoring Questionnaire as recommended by ECNI.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Needs of employees with disabilities taken into consideration.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensure policies and procedures are in place to support employees who are or who become disabled.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Support provided for staff.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide staff counselling service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide staff counselling service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review of the Disability Action Plan</td>
<td>Equality Group</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>Plan will be updated as part of annual progress report</td>
<td>Progress against action measures recorded</td>
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Review the plan and report on progress.