



Westmorland
& Furness
Council

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Phase 2 Update and Action Plan

April 2026 – March 2028

Easy Read Version



What this document is about

This document explains what the Council is doing to make Westmorland and Furness a fair, equal and inclusive place for everyone. It tells you what EDI means, what progress we have made so far, what we plan to do from April 2026 to March 2028, and how we will check that our work is helping people. This plan covers residents, staff, councillors, partners and anyone affected by the Council's decisions.

What EDI means

EDI stands for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. Equity means people sometimes need different types of help so that everyone has the same chance to succeed. Diversity means that people are different in many ways, including their background, culture, disability, age, religion, or gender. Inclusion means everyone should feel safe, welcome and able to take part in work, services and community life. These three ideas work together to help create fairness.

Our legal duties

We follow the Equality Act 2010, which protects people from unfair treatment. It covers protected characteristics like disability, race, sex, age, religion or belief, and more. We also follow the Public Sector Equality Duty. This means we must stop discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and support good relationships between different groups. We publish reports each year to show our progress.



Who this plan includes

This plan includes everyone who lives, works, studies or visits Westmorland and Furness. We focus on groups protected by law, such as disabled people, older people, younger people, LGBTQ+ people, and people from different ethnic or religious backgrounds. We also support other groups who may face challenges, such as Armed Forces families, people who have lived in care, people living in poverty, and people who live in very rural areas.

What we have done so far

We have made many positive changes already. We created learning programmes so staff and councillors can learn about EDI. We improved how we recruit new staff, making the process more accessible and fairer. We introduced a translation and interpretation service so more people can understand information in their own language. We reviewed our buildings to see where access can be improved. We built strong partnerships with community groups to understand real experiences and challenges.

Our goals

We have three main goals.

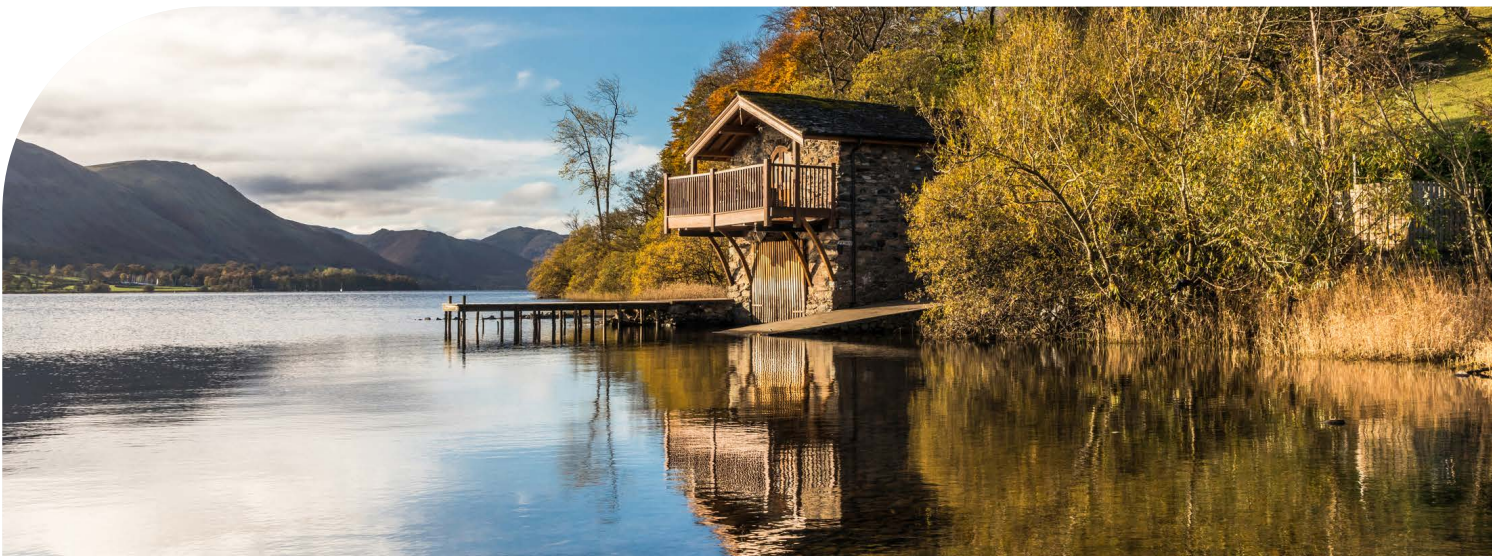
- **Goal 1:** Build EDI into everything the Council does, including decision-making and planning.
- **Goal 2:** Understand our communities better so we can design services that meet people's needs.
- **Goal 3:** Support a diverse workforce where all staff feel included and can develop their skills. These goals help us stay focused and track our progress clearly.

What we will focus on next

In the next phase, we will create a Race Equity Action Plan and an Accessibility Action Plan. These will help us reduce inequality and improve access. We will also focus on rural areas, where people may struggle to access services. We will strengthen digital and online services, making them easier to use. We will support staff networks to help staff share their experiences and influence change. We will work closely with external partners to improve community cohesion and address issues like racism or discrimination.

How we will check progress

We check progress in different ways. We collect data about our services, communities and workforce. We listen to feedback from staff, residents and partners. We review updates regularly through our senior leadership teams. Every year, we publish a public report so everyone can see what we are doing well and where we need to improve. This helps us stay open and accountable to the public.





Translation Services

If you require this document in another format (e.g. CD, Braille or large type) or in another language, please telephone: **0300 373 3300**.

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