



**Herefordshire**  
Infrastructure Consortium

**HEREFORDSHIRE INFRASTRUCTURE  
CONSORTIUM**

**A DIVERSITY STRATEGY**

**JUNE 2006**

Adopted in principle 6/6/06

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Funded by the Here Office

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Department for Environment  
Food and Rural Affairs

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**Annex 1 Consortium Membership**

## **Voluntary Sector Infrastructure**

The physical facilities, structures, systems, relationships, people, knowledge and skills that exist to support, develop, co-ordinate, represent and promote frontline organisations and community groups

Voluntary organisations and community groups make a major contribution to the quality of life in Herefordshire. They range from very local groups of volunteers organising activities and events in their own communities to countywide organisations, employing many staff and delivering key public services. Many voluntary organisations and community groups specialise in working with the most disadvantaged and excluded people in the county and have developed an expertise in this area.

**It is essential that equality of opportunity, good community relations and an awareness of possible/potential discrimination are promoted across the voluntary sector.**

All voluntary and community organisations need advice, information and support of one kind or another at some time. They also need to have ways in which they can influence and contribute to how public services are designed and delivered now and in the future. The focus of the work of the Consortium is to bring together the voluntary sector organisations that deliver infrastructure services in Herefordshire, to co-ordinate the delivery of those services and to drive forward improvements in the level, spread and quality of the support services that are available within the County.

### **A Strategy and Action Plan**

has been developed by Herefordshire Infrastructure Consortium to describe its role and the activities it will undertake to ensure that effective support mechanisms are in place, are easily accessible across the county, make the best possible use of resources available and are responsive to the needs of the voluntary organisations and the community groups they serve.

The Herefordshire Infrastructure Consortium has a vision of  
**A STRONG, VIBRANT AND EFFECTIVE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR IN HEREFORDSHIRE**

It has committed to three objectives to realise this vision:

1 To help voluntary and community organisations to influence local and regional strategy and policy

They will achieve this by

- 1a Facilitating and supporting the 'voices' of the sector
- 1b Driving forward strategy and policy development

2 To ensure that support services are fit for purpose and easily accessible

They will achieve this by

- 2a Leading and empowering start up and development
- 2b Co-ordinating information, advice and assistance to meet identified needs

3 Build collaborative mechanisms to deliver the other two objectives

They will achieve this by

- 3a Building a consortium fit for purpose
- 3b Establishing strong links with partners and stakeholders

The Consortium has agreed to **Shared Principles**

- Valuing voluntary action and community involvement
- Valuing an independent and diverse voluntary and community sector
- Striving for accountability, openness and honesty in its work
- Developing a co-operative and collaborative approach to its work
- Promoting diversity and best practice

For the current Consortium membership, see Annex 1

## 2 MINORITY GROUPS

One of the actions to which the members have committed themselves is to ensure that infrastructure services are accessible and delivered in an equitable way to everyone no matter who they are.

### MINORITY GROUPS

The Consortium recognises that people might experience discrimination and be disadvantaged for a number of reasons including

- Race, Ethnic Origin or Nationality
- Religion or Belief
- Culture
- Disability (physical/mental impairment, progressive/chronic illness)
- Age (children/young people/adults/older people)
- Gender and sexuality

In Herefordshire it is also necessary to add

- Geographical location to take account of rural isolation and deprivation
- Income - lower than in the region and the UK
- Seasonal migrant working/employment status

### 3 THE HEREFORDSHIRE CONTEXT

Herefordshire has a population of 176,900 (Estimate ONS June 2002). In this rural county, just under half of the population live in villages and hamlets scattered across the county. Hereford City has a population of about 55,000 (31.4%) and the market towns are much smaller, ranging from 11,000 to 2,500.

High levels of inward migration have resulted in a 10% growth over the decade to 2003, much greater than in the rest of England and Wales, but are expected to slow down from 2003 – 2011. In common with the rest of England and Wales, the total population is expected to increase by 3%, but the changes in age groups will be quite marked:

- Numbers of people over retirement age are expected to increase at a significantly higher rate than elsewhere
- The number of young people and those up to the early forties age group will decline

These changes will have implications for the voluntary sector and the services that it provides.

Other significant factors are

- Both the population and the public and voluntary service providers in the county have limited experience of diversity issues
- A low proportion of residents from Black and other minority groups although anecdotal evidence suggests that numbers have increased over recent years
- Gypsies and Travellers are the largest minority group
- Increasing and high numbers of seasonal agricultural workers, generally between 18 and 25
- Lower earnings than regionally and nationally with longer working hours
- Rural social exclusion, particularly for minority groups
- Limited access to rural services including transport, affordable housing, health and social care
- Many marginalized people have little or no access to support networks
- Low levels of literacy, numeracy and skills for life
- Increasing demand for English for speakers of other languages

## 4 KEY STATISTICS

### Gender of Herefordshire residents

- Male 48.7
- Female 51.3

Source ONS June 2002

### Age profile of Herefordshire residents

| Age group    | 2003          | Forecast      |               | Forecast Change 2007-11 |                 |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
|              |               | 2007          | 2011          | Hfds                    | England & Wales |
| 0-4          | 8900          | 8007          | 7656          | -14%                    | 2%              |
| 5-14         | 22300         | 20838         | 19341         | -13%                    | -7%             |
| 15-24        | 17800         | 20031         | 20013         | 13%                     | 6%              |
| 25-34        | 18700         | 15503         | 15508         | -17%                    | -2%             |
| 35-44        | 25800         | 25852         | 22734         | -12%                    | -5%             |
| 45-54        | 24800         | 25839         | 27821         | 12%                     | 15%             |
| 55-64        | 23800         | 26577         | 27437         | 15%                     | 9%              |
| 65-74        | 18100         | 19367         | 22199         | 23%                     | 11%             |
| 75-84        | 12600         | 13034         | 13785         | 9%                      | 3%              |
| 85+          | 4100          | 5120          | 5981          | 47%                     | 28%             |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>176900</b> | <b>180168</b> | <b>182475</b> | <b>3.1%</b>             | <b>3.4%</b>     |

Source GAD, ONS and Hfds. Council research team

### Ethnicity of Herefordshire Residents

| Ethnic Group                  | % Population |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| White British                 | 97.5         |
| White Irish and Other         | 1.6          |
| Mixed                         | 0.4          |
| Asian or Asian British        | 0.2          |
| Black or Black British        | 0.1          |
| Chinese or other ethnic group | 0.2          |

Source 2001 Census

### Gypsy and Traveller Communities

This is the largest minority group in the county, but was not a category reliably counted in the 2001 Census. However an OPDM twice yearly 'caravan count' gives a useful estimate – in July 2004 84 caravans were counted in Herefordshire, a decrease from 119 in July 2003 and 142 in July 2001.

### Religion of Herefordshire residents

| Religion  | % Population |
|-----------|--------------|
| Christian | 79.01        |
| Buddhist  | 0.20         |
| Hindu     | 0.06         |
| Jewish    | 0.07         |
| Muslim    | 0.10         |

|                 |       |
|-----------------|-------|
| Sikh            | 0.04  |
| Other religions | 0.26  |
| No religion     | 12.55 |
| Not stated      | 7.71  |

Source 2001 Census

### Origin of Seasonal Agricultural Workers in Herefordshire

| Country        | Number         |                |             |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|
|                | 2001           | 2002           | 2003        |
| New EEA States |                |                | 224         |
| Ukraine        |                |                | 1539        |
| Bulgaria       |                |                | 374         |
| Belarus        |                |                | 299         |
| Russia         |                |                | 292         |
| Romania        |                |                | 210         |
| China          |                |                | 162         |
| Other          |                |                | 73          |
| Unknown        |                |                | 25          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>c. 1000</b> | <b>c. 1000</b> | <b>3198</b> |

Source The Home Office and West Mercia Constabulary

Since the entry of the accession countries into the European Union, European citizens no longer need a visa to come to work in the UK. This has led to a large increase in the number of migrant workers here in any one year. In 2005 research by West Mercia Constabulary suggests that 22000 came into the county throughout the year. The vast majority of these stay here only for the season and then return home. Research is now being undertaken by West Mercia Constabulary to establish countries of origin and how many people are in the county at any one time.

### Sexuality

The 2001 Census records 176 persons living as same-sex couples. This equates to 0.1% of all residents of 16 and over

### Disability

There are no figures on the number of people with disabilities in Herefordshire and those with limiting long-term illness (LLI) are used as a proxy.

The 2001 Census revealed the following self-defined figures:

- 31435 (18%) of all people have an LLI
- 13140 (13%) of the working age population with an LLI
- 33% of all households have at least one person with an LLI

## CONSORTIUM DIVERSITY ACTIONS

**TO ENSURE EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY, GOOD COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND A COMPLETE LACK OF DISCRIMINATION ARE PROMOTED ACROSS THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR.**

### DIVERSITY ACTION 1

**Support voluntary organisations and community groups to audit their service accessibility and to develop diversity policies**

This will be developed as part of the proposed Delivery Plan (see May 2006 HIC Action Plan Objective 2b) and if necessary could include developing model diversity procedures and policies for the sector.

**Timescale** September 2006 onwards

### DIVERSITY ACTION 2

**Develop Continuing Professional Development training for staff and volunteers to ensure they respect and consider diversity in all their activity**

Training will be offered to all HIC members and the staff in their organisations. Training should include such elements as

- Exploring and valuing diversity
- Current legislation
- Examining attitudes, feelings and perspectives on equality, difference and diversity
- Undersanding diversity in rural areas
- Developing reflective thinking, empathy, understanding and sensitivity
- Conducting Equality Impact Assessments
- Other skills to assist in extending equality of opportunity

**Timescale** September 2006 onwards

### DIVERSITY ACTION 3

**Conduct Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs), monitoring and evaluation for HIC existing and new projects**

EIAs are a thorough and systematic way of assessing and consulting on the effects that a service is likely to have on people from a minority group. They are designed to be challenging but not over-complicated. They are not an exact science and a common sense approach should be adopted. Those leading EIAs need to be prepared for changes in the way they work. The aim is to take the perspective of the beneficiary or service user and all relevant staff, both HIC members and staff in their organisations, should participate.

EIAs are based on the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 which places a 'general duty' to

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between racial groups

### **Equality Impact Assessments**

Guidance will be made available to staff on conducting assessments that will include:

- **Key information** - service being assessed, lead staff member and other participants, date of assessment, aims and target group of the service
- **The General Duty** – how does the service try to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality and good relations
- **Training and development** – needs of staff and programme of ongoing training
- **Partnerships and procurement** – requirements on partners and contractors to meet the Race Relations legislation
- **Assessment of Equality Impact** for each category of minority group - areas of concern and good practice within the service, actions to address any issues of accessibility, promotion, marketing and publicity, monitoring and service take-up and consultation
- **An Action Plan** to list actions arising from the EIA with timescales, lead responsibility and aims. This will be included in the project/service plan

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Where appropriate Diversity monitoring and evaluation will be undertaken for projects and take its place as an integral part of service monitoring. Questions will record beneficiaries' age, gender, disabilities, religion/belief, ethnicity/nationality, sexual orientation and postcodes.

**Timescale** September 2006 onwards

### **DIVERSITY ACTION 4**

A member of HIC will be elected to take lead responsibility for the Diversity Strategy and ensure that its actions are carried out, monitored and reviewed on an agreed regular basis. They will also undertake to liaise with stakeholders including both public and voluntary partners.

Diversity reports will be made twice yearly at HIC meetings.

**Timescale** June 2006

## **ANNEX 1**

### **CONSORTIUM MEMBERSHIP (as at May 2006)**

The core members are

- Age Concern Herefordshire and Worcestershire
- Community First Herefordshire and Worcestershire
- Community Voluntary Action Ledbury and District
- Herefordshire Council for Voluntary Youth Service
- Herefordshire Voluntary Action

There is also a Wider Reference Group comprising

- ABLE
- Cultural Consortium
- Churches Together
- Herefordshire Citizens Advice Bureaux
- Herefordshire Association of Local Councils
- Herefordshire Community Foundation
- Herefordshire Council
- Herefordshire Equality Partnership
- Herefordshire Partnership
- Herefordshire Sports Council
- Herefordshire Voluntary and Community Sector Learning Partnership
- Herefordshire Voluntary Sector Assembly Steering Group
- Partners for Social Enterprise Herefordshire and Worcestershire
- Rural Media Company
- Statutory Youth Services
- The Alliance
- Welcome to Our Future