

Essex Probation Area

Single Equality Scheme 2009 – 2012

Section 1		Page
1.1	Foreword by Essex Probation Board Chair	1
1.2	Introduction by Chief Officer	2
Section 2 – General Introduction to Single Equality Scheme		
2.1	Essex Probation Area	4
2.2	Aims and Objectives	4
2.3	Values	5
2.4	Functions and Services	5
Section 3 – Legislative Context		
3.1	Duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005	10
3.2	Duties under the Race Relations Act 1976/2000	11
3.3	Duties under the Gender Equality Act 2007	12
3.4	Religion or Belief	13
3.5	Sexual Orientation	14
3.6	Age	14
Section 4 – Service Delivery and Key Issues for Equality		
4.1	Offender Profile and Monitoring of Service Delivery	15
4.2	Offender Social Identity Information and Practice Guidance	17
Section 5 – Employment and Key Issues for Equality		
5.1	Staff and Gender	26
5.2	Black and Minority Ethnic Staff	27
5.3	Disabled Staff	28
5.4	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Staff	29
5.5	Staff and Age	29
5.6	Religion and Belief of Staff	30
5.7	Employees and their Social Class	31
5.8	Staff Networks	32
5.9	Staff Training	32
Section 6 – Equality Impact Assessment		
6.1	Impact Assessment of Policies	34
6.2	Impact Assessment Panel	34
6.3	Monitoring	35
6.4	Publishing and Public Access to Information and Services	35
Section 7 – Consultation and Community Engagement		
7.1	Staff Consultation	37
7.2	Service User Consultation	38

7.3	External Consultation	39
7.4	Community Engagement	39

Section 8 – Local Area, Partnerships and Procurement

8.1	Essex Population	41
8.2	Social Identity Information – East of England	41
8.3	Partnerships	43
8.4	Procurement	44

Section 9 – Single Equality Scheme Action Plan 2009 - 2012

9.1	Generic Actions	45
9.2	Service Delivery Actions	46
9.3	Employment Actions	51

Section 10 – Appendices

10.1	Abbreviations	55
10.2	Publications	55
10.3	Questionnaire for Service Users	56
10.4	Information from Staff Survey 2008	57

Section 1: Foreword and Introduction

1.1 Foreword by Essex Probation Area Chair

The publication of a Single Equality Scheme represents a significant step forward for Essex Probation Board by facilitating an overview comprising:

- The nature of our work and how this impacts on service users and communities
- Our role as an employer and the experience of employees
- Our commitments to achieve equality of outcome for all of our stakeholders, to take every opportunity to value diversity and to promote good relations between different social identity groups
- The actions we are taking to ensure we meet those commitments

This scheme builds upon our previously published Race, Gender and Disability Equality Schemes and solid foundations in not only monitoring trends in service delivery and employment practice but also taking action to address any concerns that particular groups may face disadvantage.

Essex Probation Board's strategy and policies in relation to equalities and diversity are based on an understanding that every victim, offender, employee or other stakeholder has a unique combination of attributes and life experience. We are committed to capitalising upon, and meeting the needs of, those differences. Within that limitless range of diversity, Essex Probation Board also recognises that predominantly certain strands of social identity, alone or in combination, have been linked with unequal outcomes within the Criminal Justice System and/or the world of employment. This scheme, therefore, explicitly addresses the following strands: Race and Ethnicity, Gender, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief, Age and Social Class.

The Board will assist, and hold to account, managers and staff in demonstrating that diversity among all colleagues, service users, partners and community members is equally valued and respected and that actions deliver equally good outcomes across the social identity strands listed above. We value feedback from anyone interested in our work and welcome assistance with our impact assessment process. Please contact our diversity manager if you would like more information about this.

Bill Puddicombe
Essex Probation Board Chair

1.2 Introduction by Essex Probation Area Chief Officer

In introducing this Single Equality Scheme, I am delighted to have the opportunity to draw attention to some of Essex Probation Areas achievements in relation to equalities and diversity and to chart the way forward in relation to those diversity strands that have already attracted considerable attention as well as to those upon which attention has previously been less explicitly focussed. Not all bodies have included social class as an area for specific attention and I am glad that we recognise, within our Scheme, the continuing inequalities in distribution of wealth, and presence of elitism, with corresponding impact on the life chances of people in Essex.

Celebrating diversity has become an integral part of employment within Essex Probation. There are many examples of this and I have selected three to give a flavour: (1) We have had annual dedicated diversity 'weeks' since 2002 and since 2005 these have taken place in each of our six local delivery units. Our 2009 events were the most successful ever with approaching 60% of our employees attending and, of them 84% rating the atmosphere where they work as either fantastic or alright. (2) Over recent years, highly participative annual Diversity Away-Days allow a cross section of voices to be heard, to hold the organisation to account for actions promised and to contribute to business planning. Those days include: staff from our reference groups for black and minority ethnic staff, disabled staff, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered staff; the equalities and diversity representatives from each local delivery unit; and Board members from the Diversity Committee together with the Senior Manager with lead on Diversity and the Diversity Manager. (3) Increasingly well informed and confident Equalities and Diversity Representatives also ensure that annual diversity action plans are kept live and high profile in workplaces. Since 2007, those representatives have gathered immediate feedback from service users through our 'blue card' mechanism, where difficulties in accessing our services can be reported.

Monitoring staff and service outcomes in a manner that allows comparison across some social identity strands has become embedded within the management information that underpins operational and strategic outcomes. Again there are many examples of this: from being able to reassure ourselves that proposals for Community Orders are made as persuasively for women and black and minority ethnic defendants as they are for white men and that those groups are being equally well assisted to comply with supervision, to being able to identify that we need to take decisive action to ensure that the disability status of offenders is accurately recorded in every case or that the full offender management service is being provided to foreign national offenders.

There is still much to do. I want, for example, a workforce where lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered employees are as comfortable in chatting about their homelife as their heterosexual colleagues. I want us to be persuaded by facts and judge success on outcomes, not value well expressed opinions and elegant prose more than actual delivery. I want us to go the extra mile in making employment and services accessible...and much more. This scheme takes us a step further in achieving our vision, for EPA to be a high performing, innovative organisation working together to provide quality services to offenders and victims, and our commitment to put diversity, equality and fairness at the heart of all we do. I will be keeping a close eye on the progress of our action plan and look forward to celebrating more achievements in the future.

Mary Archer
Chief Officer

Section 2: General Introduction to Single Equality Scheme

2.1 Essex Probation Area

Essex Probation Area has boundaries in line with those of the Police. We serve the same communities as Essex County Council, Southend and Thurrock Unitary Authorities. Essex Probation Area (EPA), part of the National Probation Service, aims to reduce crime and create safer communities. EPA provides protection to the public by reducing reoffending through the delivery of quality services to offenders and in certain circumstances, victims.

This involves providing effective interventions including: unpaid work in the community; offending behaviour programmes; drug and alcohol rehabilitation; developing numeracy and literacy skills; providing training opportunities and increasing employability. Offenders are managed by EPA throughout their sentence by committed and enthusiastic staff who work to increase their motivation to make the changes necessary to avoid further offending and access resources to enhance the likelihood of successful reintegration into communities. Further information about EPA's interventions are contained in Section 2.4.

2.2 Aims and Objectives

EPA's Single Equality Scheme (SES) applies to all aspects of social identity: Race and ethnicity, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, age and social class, not just the parts that are legally required to be covered. The Scheme explains how EPA will meet legal requirements under the general and specific duties that currently apply to the areas of disability, gender and race and extend them to include the other areas of sexual orientation, age, religion and social class. The Scheme will show how it will promote and achieve equality and eliminate discrimination. The SES is applicable to both employees working at EPA and also those using its service.

In drafting the Scheme, EPA has involved and consulted both offenders and employees including those with a disability, from black and minority ethnic groups, of different sexual orientations, age groups, religions and backgrounds. EPA's Equality and Diversity office representatives have also been consulted and had involvement in compiling the Scheme as well as the Impact Assessment Panel, Board Members, National Staff Associations and external groups and representatives. The objectives contained within the SES Action Plan (Section 9) have been set using feedback from all of the above groups together with the

results of monitoring data and priorities set within EPA's Strategy to Meet Diverse Needs. Further information about the involvement and consultation with staff, service users and external parties is contained in Section 7.

2.3 Values

EPA is committed to working in a way that values diversity, achieves equality, promotes understanding and does not discriminate on improper grounds. Policy, practice and the behaviour of Board members, managers and all staff reflect this commitment which applies to the full range of Essex Probation business: employment of staff; work with offenders and victims; contact with the public and other agencies.

2.4 EPA's Functions and Services

EPA's main areas of service delivery include managing offenders subject to community orders and post custodial licences. These can include a range of requirements, including unpaid work, improving literacy and numeracy, increasing employability, offending behaviour programmes, drug and alcohol treatment and hostel residence. Information about these services are contained below:

- **Programmes**

EPA delivers a range of offending behaviour programmes designed to reduce re-offending. Practice guidance has been developed to ensure social identity factors are fully taken into account in programmes, which is detailed in Section 4.2. Programmes currently offered by EPA include:

- **Drink Impaired Drivers Programme** – to deal with issues relating to drinking and driving, providing alcohol education and problem-solving skills to reduce the risk of future drink-drive offences.
- **Aggression Replacement Training Programme** – to improve anger control and the way in which conflict can be handled.
- **Think First** – uses cognitive-behavioural approaches to help offenders understand causes of problems and practical solutions and behaviours to deal with the problems. (This programme will be replaced by the Thinking Skills Programme from July 2009.)
- **Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme** – forms part of a wider domestic violence strategy. An important feature of the programme ensures victims of men attending the programme have been introduced to a Womens' Safety Worker.

- **Offender Substance Abuse Programme** – increases offender motivation and skills to assist in overcoming substance dependence linked with offending.
 - **Thames Valley Community Sex Offender Programme** – for sex offender treatment.
 - **Internet Sex Offender Treatment Programme** – for internet sex offenders.
 - **Cognitive Skills Booster Programme** – enables offenders to apply skills learned to everyday life, especially to those difficult and problematic situations which in the past have resulted in offending.
 - **One-to-One** – a general offending behaviour programme designed to cater for offenders who will experience difficulty completing such a programme in a groupwork setting.
- **Unpaid Work (Community Payback)**
 Unpaid work requires offenders to give up their free time to undertake unpaid work within their local communities as a payback for the crimes they have committed. In the 1990s men were more likely to receive an unpaid work order than women. In more recent years, the number of women being sentenced to unpaid work has increased. EPA's Diversity Management Report which monitors equality of service delivery, reported for the period 1st April to 30th June 2008:
 - Women offenders satisfactorily completed their unpaid work placement 3% more than male offenders.
 - Black and minority ethnic offenders had equal successful completion rates of unpaid work to that of white offenders.
 - Disabled offenders were 4% less successful than non disabled offenders in completing unpaid work. An objective has been included in the SES Action Plan (Section 9) to investigate the reasons for this.
 - **Accommodation and Approved Premises**
 Appropriate and accessible accommodation is a foundation of successful rehabilitation, with data from the National Probation Service indicating that stable accommodation could make a difference of over 20% in reducing reconviction.

Approved premises (hostels) are a criminal justice facility where offenders reside for the purposes of assessment, supervision and management, in the interests of protecting the public, reducing re-offending and promoting rehabilitation. Females are less likely than males to be accommodated in an approved premises. There are currently 5 women only approved premises in England and Wales and therefore this is an issue for all Probation Areas. The

nearest approved premises for women to EPA, is located in Bedfordshire. An objective has been included in the Action Plan (Section 9) for EPA to ensure staff are making referrals to the approved premises in Bedfordshire, where appropriate.

- **Education, Training and Employment**

Enhancing literacy and numeracy skills are key, both to improving the employment prospects of offenders and to their engagement with a range of services. Recent research indicates that employment is one factor that most assists in the avoidance of re-offending. EPA delivers a range of employment, training and education linked activities.

EPA's Diversity Management Report which monitors equality of service delivery, reported for the period 1st April 2008 to 31st December 2008, average basic skills commencements were 4% for men, 7% for women and 4% for Black and Minority Ethnic offenders as a proportion of caseload.

- **Drugs and Alcohol**

EPA delivers drug and alcohol treatment requirements involving regular testing, counselling, information and advice. EPA's Diversity Management Report which monitors equality of service delivery, reported for the period 1st April 2008 to December 2008, on average:

- 41% of female offenders had successfully completed drug treatments in comparison to 47% of male offenders.
- There was 83% successful drug treatment completion for BME offenders compared to 44% for White offenders.
- 42% of disabled offenders had successfully completed drug treatments in comparison to 26% of non disabled offenders.
- 77% of female offenders had successfully completed alcohol treatments in comparison to 62% of male offenders.
- There was 33% successful alcohol treatment completion for BME offenders compared to 66% for White offenders.
- 80% of disabled offenders had successfully completed alcohol treatments in comparison to 60% of non disabled offenders.

EPA will be reviewing the drug treatment services currently provided to female offenders and this has been included within the SES Action Plan (Section 9).

- **The Bridge – Intensive Specified Activity**

Since September 2008, EPA has been operating a new specified activity called 'The Bridge.' This is an alternative to short custodial sentences and

designed to reduce the risk of re-offending by meeting the particular needs of those offenders who currently attract short prison sentences, including those on Licence who might otherwise be recalled to prison. Typically these are offenders who are hard to motivate and engage in interventions, who find it hard to follow rules and who often have entrenched patterns of offending and substantial problems to solve. They are often referred to as 'revolving door' offenders, in and out of prison with all the disruption to their lives and cost to their families and communities that brings. Very often their offending pattern includes stealing from shops, comparatively minor assaults, disqualified driving and breaches of community sentences.

The Bridge includes the following elements:

- Structured activity
- Being closely held to account
- Being closely supported
- Having a mentor as personal coach
- Having progress monitored by an offender manager

At the end of December 2008, a total of 43 offenders had been referred to the Bridge. As the project has only been running for a short period, statistical monitoring data is not yet available. An objective has been included in the SES Action Plan (Section 9) to ensure that monitoring data is collected so that equality in service delivery can be evaluated.

- **Victim Services**

EPA's Victim Contact Unit offers support and information to victims who have experienced serious sexual or violent crime. Victims are consulted on intended release plans, and informed of important events which could affect them. Safety concerns are relayed to the Multi-Agency Public Protection Panels which plan for the management of serious offenders.

Taking up the offer of this service is voluntary on the part of victims. Victim contact take up rates for the period 1st April 2008 to 31st December 2008, were on average, 46% for females and 29% for males. For BME victims of crime, there was a 50% average take up. In comparison, there was a 38% average take up from White victims.

Objectives planned to improve EPA's Victim Services include increasing the use and analysis of victim satisfaction surveys and accessing additional services for female victims of crime, including domestic violence support, through its Public Value Partnership Strategy. These objectives, have been included in the Action Plan (Section 9).

- **Offender Management**

Offender Management is the activity by which all the requirements of an offender's Order or Licence are co-ordinated. The offender is motivated to comply and sanctions are initiated for non-compliance. Through assessment, sentence planning, implementation, review and evaluation, the Offender Manager (OM) ensures an individual response to the needs of each offender in reducing the risk to the public of re-offending. Compliance and enforcement monitoring data is reported in Section 4 of the SES.

Section 3: Legislative Context

Like any other public body in Britain, EPA is subject to legislation to promote disability, gender and race equality. EPA must also comply with legal duties to tackle discrimination and promote equality and good relations in all areas of work. EPA is committed to going beyond the legislation that currently exists and promoting equality in the other areas of age, religion or belief, sexual orientation and social class.

Within this Section, requirements under the race, disability and gender duties are explained, together with legislation relating to age, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

3.1 Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005

EPA are committed to the following general duties under the DDA:

- To promote equality of opportunity for disabled staff and service users
- To eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- To eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disabilities
- To encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- To take steps to take account of disabled peoples' disabilities, even where that involves treating them more favourably than other people.

Specific duties under the DDA include firstly, the publication of a Disability Equality Scheme (DES) demonstrating how we intend to fulfil our general and specific duties. EPA published its' DES in 2006, copies are available upon request or alternatively, the DES can be viewed on EPA's website: www.essexprobation.org.uk.

The second specific duty is to ensure the involvement of disabled people in the development of the DES. EPA ensured staff were involved by holding a consultation event for disabled staff. Issues raised at the event, were included in the DES Action Plan and any outstanding actions have been included in the SES Action Plan (Section 9). EPA ensured the involvement of disabled service users via a brief questionnaire. The following questions were included:

- whether any difficulties had been experienced in dealings with EPA or in accessing our services
- details of the difficulties, if experienced
- suggestions for improving our service overall for disabled service users

Issues identified from the questionnaires were included in the DES Action Plan and any outstanding actions have been included in the SES Action Plan (Section 9).

3.2 Race Relations Act 1976 and Ammendment Act 2000

EPA is aware of, and committed to, taking a proactive approach to meeting the statutory general duties of:

- eliminating unlawful racial discrimination and harassment
- encouraging good race relations
- promoting race equality

The Act also included the following specific duties:

- **To prepare and publish a Race Equality Scheme (RES)** - EPA's RES was published in 2008, demonstrating how we intend to fulfill our general and specific duties, including an action plan, specifically showing how race equality objectives will be achieved over the next three years. Copies of the RES are available upon request or alternatively, the Scheme can be viewed on EPA's website: www.essexprobation.org.uk.
- **To list functions and policies relevant to the race relations duty** - EPA's policies can be accessed via its website. The following EPA policies specifically relate to eliminating racial discrimination, promoting good race relations and promoting race equality:
 - Work with Racially Motivated Offenders Policy – provides practice guidance for each function, when working with racist and racially motivated offenders.
 - Valuing Diversity in Work with Offenders and Victims Policy – provides practice guidance for each function, on working with offenders and victims from diverse backgrounds.
 - Equalities and Diversity Policy – demonstrates how EPA will ensure its commitment to valuing diversity and achieving equality through training, office environments, other policies and support systems.
 - East of England Statement of Commitments – this statement facilitates the development of staff from minority groups including black and minority ethnic employees.
- **Impact Assessment of Policies and Monitoring** – Information about Race and Equality Impact Assessment and monitoring to evaluate service delivery and employment outcomes is included in Section 6 of the SES.
- **Publishing and Public Access to Information and Services** – information on these areas have been included in Section 6 of the SES.

- **Training Staff in the Race Equality Duty** – information about staff training has been included in Section 5.9 of the SES.
- **Reviewing the Race Equality Scheme** - EPA has ensured regular reviews of its RES and published an update on progress of actions annually.

3.3 Gender Equality Act 2006

EPA are aware of, and committed to, taking a proactive approach to meeting their general duties of:

- eliminating unlawful discrimination
- eliminating harassment
- promoting equality of opportunity between men and women

Specific duties under the Gender Equality Act, include:

- **To prepare and publish a gender equality scheme** - EPA published its Gender Equality Scheme (GES) in 2007, showing how we intend to fulfill our general and specific duties, including an action plan showing how our gender equality objectives will be achieved over the next three years. Copies of the GES are available upon request or alternatively, the Scheme can be viewed on EPA's website: www.essexprobation.org.uk.
- **To include objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap** – Included in the GES, was information relating to the average pay for a male and female employee, which showed some disparity. As a result, EPA included in its GES action plan, objectives to encourage more women to apply for higher grade jobs and measures to make lower grade jobs more appealing to both genders. Further information about the gender pay gap and objectives to address the causes, are contained in Section 5.1 of the SES.
- **To gather and use information on how EPA's policies affect gender equality in the workforce and in the delivery of services** - In relation to the delivery of services, EPA's 'Valuing Diversity in Work with Offenders and Victims' policy provides specific guidance to staff in ensuring that the social identity of offenders and victims, in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, class, disability, sexual orientation, class and age is valued. Examples of guidance in relation to gender has been included in Section 4.2 of the SES. In relation to ensuring gender equality in the workplace, EPA's Equalities and Diversity Policy demonstrates how diversity is valued and equality achieved, through training, office environments and other policies and support systems.
- **To consult stakeholders (employees, service users and others) to**

- determine its gender equality objectives** – In order to determine its gender equality objectives, EPA consulted the following stakeholders:
- Employees – via focus groups ensuring that both male and female staff, of all grades and in a variety of different jobs, were included in the consultation exercise. Information from the Staff Survey was also used to determine objectives.
 - Service Users – using information from the offender questionnaires. Further details are contained in Section 4.1 of the SES.
 - Board members and external representatives – consultation with these groups raised similar points to those raised by EPA's employees.
- **To assess the impact of current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality** - Information about gender and Equality Impact Assessment and monitoring to evaluate service delivery and employment outcomes is included in Section 6 of the SES.
 - **To implement the actions set out in this scheme and to report and review the scheme** - EPA has ensured regular reviews of its GES and published an update on progress of actions annually.

EPA recognises its duty under the Gender Equality Act to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment against transsexual people. Further information about transsexual people is contained in Section 4.2 of the SES.

3.4 Religion or Belief

The Equality in Employment Regulations (Religion or Belief) came into effect in December 2003. The regulations apply to vocational training and all aspects of employment including recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, dismissals and training. The regulations make it unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on grounds of religion or belief, or to subject them to harassment or victimisation.

The Equality Act 2006 (Section 46) made it unlawful for a public authority involved in providing goods, facilities or services, to discriminate on grounds of religion or belief by:

- Refusing to provide the person with goods, facilities or services, if they would normally do so
- Providing goods, facilities or services of an inferior quality, or in a less favourable manner or terms, than they would normally do so.

Sections 4.2 and 5.6 of the SES provide information relating to religion and belief and EPA's commitment to ensuring equality in both service provision and employment of staff, regardless of an individual's religion or belief.

3.5 Sexual Orientation

The Equality in Employment Regulations (Sexual Orientation) came into effect in December 2003. The regulations apply to vocational training and all aspects of employment including recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, dismissals and training. The regulations make it unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on grounds of sexual orientation or to subject them to harassment or victimisation.

The Equality Act 2006 (Section 81) made it unlawful for a public authority involved in providing goods, facilities or services, to discriminate on grounds of sexual orientation by:

- Refusing to provide the person with goods, facilities or services , if they would normally do so
- Providing goods, facilities or services of an inferior quality, or in a less favourable manner or terms, than they would normally do so.

Sections 4.2 and 5.4 of the SES provide information relating to sexual orientation and EPA's commitment to ensuring equality in both service provision and employment of staff, regardless of an individual's sexuality.

3.6 Age

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations made it unlawful from October 2006, to discriminate against workers, employees, job seekers and trainees because of their age. The regulations cover recruitment, terms and conditions, promotions, transfers, dismissals and training.

Sections 4.1, 4.2 and 5.5 of the SES provide information relating to Age and EPA's commitment to ensuring equality in both service provision and employment of staff, regardless of an individual's age.

Section 4: Service Delivery and Key Issues for Equality

4.1 Offender Profile and Monitoring of Service Delivery

Social Identity data is collected for all offenders to ensure equality of outcome from their contact with EPA and to ensure social identity is taken into account in all aspects of service delivery. EPA has a range of monitoring systems in place to evaluate equality in service delivery. Outcomes are reported quarterly on EPA's Diversity Management Information Report (copy available upon request).

For the quarter ending 31st December 2008, EPA had a total of 7256 offenders within the case load. The following information provides a profile of these offenders and details compliance rates:

- **Gender**

86% of EPA offenders were male and 14% female and therefore women are a small minority. Compliance data for the period 1st April 2008 to 31st December 2008, showed average compliance rates to be 72% for male offenders and 74% for female offenders. This means that overall, for this period, women were better at attending EPA appointments and interventions than men.

Every offender is asked to complete a questionnaire at the end of their dealings with EPA. Within the questionnaire, offenders are asked to rate the quality of support provided by EPA staff to help deal with any difficulties due to particular needs. Results for questionnaires completed in 2007 and 2008, analysed by gender, showed:

- 95% of female offenders gave a rating of 'excellent' or 'good' support compared to 84% of male offenders.
- 5% of female offenders gave a rating of 'average' support compared to 11% of male offenders.
- No females gave a 'below average' or 'poor' rating compared to 6% of male offenders.

- **Ethnicity**

Black and Minority Ethnic offenders comprised 8% of the total EPA case load. All ethnic groups were represented on the case load with highest numbers from the Black African ethnic group (28% of total BME group) and the Black Caribbean ethnic group (15% of total BME group).

Compliance data for the period 1st April 2008 to 31st December 2008, showed average compliance rates to be 75% for BME offenders and 72% for White offenders. This means that overall, for this period, BME offenders were better at attending EPA appointments and interventions than white offenders.

Results of the 2007 and 2008 EPA Offender Surveys, analysed by ethnicity showed:

- 92% of BME offenders gave a rating of 'excellent' or 'good' support received from EPA staff, compared to 86% of White offenders.
- 3% of BME offenders gave a rating of 'average' support compared to 10% of White offenders.
- 5% of BME offenders gave a 'below average' or 'poor' rating compared to 4% of White offenders.

- **Disability**

EPA has been recording disability from December 2006. Figures show that information is currently collected for 30% of EPA's case load and therefore, collection of disability data has still to be fully implemented. This has been included as an action within the SES Action Plan (Section 9). One challenge in obtaining disability data is that some people have an unwillingness to disclose this information about themselves, because of the stigma that society has previously attached to disability. There is also some confusion amongst offenders and staff, about the definition of disability and people who are covered by the Disability Discrimination Act may not be aware they are. This can particularly be the case in "hidden" disabilities such as dyslexia, heart disease, depression, diabetes, asthma and epilepsy, which affects a person's ability to undertake normal day-to-day activities.

For the period 1st April 2008 to 31st December 2008, the average percentage of offenders with a disability was 4%. Mental illness was shown as the highest type of disability followed by asthma, diabetes and epilepsy.

Compliance data for the period 1st April 2008 to 31st December 2008, showed average compliance rates to be 66% for disabled offenders and 70% for non disabled offenders. Therefore, for this period, compliance for disabled offenders has been lower in comparison to non disabled offenders. An objective has been included in the SES Action Plan (Section 9) to investigate reasons for non compliance for disabled offenders.

- **Age**

EPA deals with offenders aged 18 and over and 17 year olds completing Unpaid Work requirements, by negotiation with local youth offending services. EPA caseload data shows that under 18's comprise 1% of total offenders, 33% of offenders are aged 18 to 24 years, 64% aged 25 to 60 years and 2% are age 60 plus.

Compliance is currently not monitored in terms of age group of offender. This is an area which EPA may wish to review and has been included as an action within the SES Action Plan (Section 9). An additional action is to extend the

age brackets for which data is collected, so that the 26 to 60 years bracket gives a further break down of age.

4.2 Offender Social Identity Information and Practice Guidance

EPA is committed to ensuring equality of access to service provision and delivering equally good outcomes across the social identity strands for all offenders. This section contains information on each social identity area, highlighting main issues and research information. Also included within this section is practice guidance produced by EPA, relating to each social identity strand.

- **Female Offenders**

EPA recognises that due to differences in experience and need between male and female offenders, some differences in the services provided for men and women are required. Data from the Offender Assessment System (OASys) for Probation Areas in the East of England, indicates the following two areas to show the biggest difference in male and female criminogenic needs:

- **Relationship Needs** - 60% of women offenders have relationship needs linked to offending, compared with 37% of male offenders. This data reflects the findings in reports, such as that by the Fawcett Society, who have stated that due to the low number of women's prisons in the UK, half of women prisoners are imprisoned more than 50 miles from home, despite the fact women are far more likely to have dependents.

Data also indicates approximately half of women offenders have experienced domestic abuse. This element of their relationships may also be linked with offending either as a result of dysfunctional patterns of behaviour developed to cope with abusive experiences, e.g. substance misuse, or offending committed under duress. EPA has included an objective in its Action Plan (Section 9) to ensure that EPA employees are aware of local resources, offering services such as relationship counselling.

- **Emotional Wellbeing** - 64% of women offenders have emotional wellbeing needs compared to 40% of male offenders. This data also reflects findings by the Fawcett Society who report 1 in 5 women prisoners have previously spent time in a mental or psychiatric ward and 40% have received help or treatment for mental or emotional problems in the year before coming into prison. EPA has included an

The prevalence of experience of violent or sexual abuse among women offenders is also linked with their higher levels of need in relation to emotional wellbeing.

EPA has set up a working group to look at additional options to better meet the needs of women offenders. Guidance from the Corston Report and NOMS has been included in the action plan developed for the working group. These actions are detailed with the SES Action Plan (Section 9).

Practice guidance developed for working with female offenders includes:

- Where women are likely to be the only female amongst a group of men, when attending a programme or unpaid work, offering alternative choices. These could include arranging for a female volunteer to accompany the lone female offender, postponing attendance to a later date when there will be other females amongst the group or arranging individual placements.
- Offering appointments during the evening and on weekends to improve access for female offenders with caring responsibilities.
- Offering unpaid work placements with flexible start and finish times to fit in with school hours for those offenders with child care responsibilities.
- Offering reimbursement for child-care expenses for women dependant on state benefits to ensure compliance with sentence plan requirements.

- **Black and Minority Ethnic Offenders**

Ministry of Justice Race Statistics published in 2006 report that people from BME groups are 3.5 times more likely to be arrested, 7 times more likely to be stopped and searched and 6 times more likely to be in prison, than white people. People from BME groups currently comprise 26% of the total prison population and make up 16% of offenders under Probation supervision nationally. The Service recognises that BME offenders are at risk of discrimination because of their race, ethnic origin or culture and are committed to combating such discrimination.

Practice guidance issued to staff includes:

- Where a BME offender is likely to be the only BME person within a group when attending a programme or unpaid work, offering alternative

- Ensuring that all Pre-Sentence Reports (PSRs) written for BME offenders are quality assured before being sent to Court. Monitoring data shows that this is not currently being achieved for all BME offenders and therefore, an objective has been included in the SES Action Plan (Section 10) to increase quality assurance rates.
 - Maintaining a balance of respect for different cultures with EPA's overall goal of reducing offending behaviour.
 - Ensuring that BME offenders attending unpaid work placements are not subject to discriminatory attitudes from other group members.
- **Offenders from the Gypsy and Traveller Community**
Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are ethnic groups protected by race relations legislation. Various independent surveys, such as the MORI poll of 2001, found 38% of people cited Gypsies and Travellers as the people most likely to experience prejudice and discrimination.

The East of England area has the largest number of caravans of any region in England, with 1200 located in the county of Essex (2006 data). EPA recognizes that it is important to ensure its' services are inclusive of Gypsy and Traveller groups to develop understanding, build trust and confidence. Currently, within EPA's race and ethnic monitoring, Gypsies and Travellers would fall within the 'White Other' category. Therefore, the Service does not have an accurate reflection of the number of offenders that are from this community. An objective has been included in the SES Action Plan (Section 9), to consider including Gypsies and Travellers as a separate category, within the ethnicity monitoring data to help ensure that policies and functions are applied fairly to these groups.

Practice guidance developed for when working with Gypsies and Travellers includes:

- Be aware that different cultural groups exist within communities and therefore there will be wide variations between people.
- Be sensitive to different life experiences and values.
- Ask if help is required with reading or understanding written information.
- Be aware of the possibility of Spring and Summer travelling patterns.

- **Foreign Nationals**

Foreign Nationals (FN) are defined as 'those that do not hold a British Passport and do not have security of residence in the UK.' The number of FN prisoners within the UK has been rising for the last 10 years, with FNs now comprising 14% of the total prison population. There has been an increase of FN prisoners from EU accession countries although the highest numbers are from Jamaica. Some offences are linked to a FNs arrival in UK, for example having a false passport, other offences, however, are not linked to residence status.

Since January 2009, EPA has begun collecting information on the immigration status of offenders. An objective has been included within the SES Action Plan (Section 9) to consider the statistical information necessary to assess service delivery to foreign nationals.

EPA are committed to ensuring that FNs brought within the criminal justice system are offered services consistent with those offered to British nationals. Practice instructions have been developed for when working with FNs which includes the following guidance:

- To address language barriers from the outset.
- Ensure PSRs take into account residence status when proposing a sentence but consider the full range of appropriate sentencing options.
- Recognise that Immigration and asylum law is complex and therefore no advice should be given. Matters should be referred to the UK Borders Agency.
- To be aware that Probation National Standards still apply.
- Risk Assessments will be required (even in deportation cases).

- **Disabled Offenders**

The population of disabled people in the UK is large with approximately 11 million adults and 770,000 children. This equates to more than 1 in 5 adults and around 1 in 20 children (Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People' Report 2005). Among adults, trends in impairments show increasing numbers of people reporting mental illness and behavioural disorders, while the number of people reporting physical impairments is decreasing.

Disabled people are not being afforded as good opportunities as non-disabled people across a wide range of indicators. They are more likely to achieve lower outcomes in terms of employment, income and education. They are more likely to face discrimination and negative attitudes.

Essex is a rural area and public transport to some areas is limited. This can pose a problem with service users attending appointments at EPA's offices.

EPA has provided staff with details of 'Dial-A-Ride' and similar services that operate in all areas of Essex, to pass on to service users.

An additional challenge, relates to the availability of psychiatric advice and reports for Courts. Offenders Managers are therefore instructed to liaise with Criminal Justice Mental Health teams for advice as to whether a sentencing proposal is appropriate.

EPA has ensured that its services are based on the social model of disability as well as being inclusive and accessible for disabled people. Practice guidance has been developed for when working with disabled offenders including:

- To discuss the provision of reasonable adjustments and ensuring that these reasonable adjustments are implemented.
- Ensuring appropriate Interventions for disabled offenders in all aspects of supervision, sentence planning and within the hostel regime.
- Providing details of transport schemes in Essex, such as Dial-A-Ride, for people unable to access conventional public transport, that have a physical disability or need to transport a wheelchair.
- Providing financial assistance with transportation fares to EPA offices for disabled service users, or people with a health condition which makes walking difficult.

EPA has also produced a good practice guide for when meeting with a disabled person, which has been issued to all staff (copy available upon request). The guide includes the following good practice information regarding communication with disabled people:

- Ensuring communication to a disabled person directly, not to the person accompanying them eg. a sign-language interpreter.
- Always speaking first when meeting a person with a visual impairment and letting them know that you are leaving, so that they are not left talking to an empty space.
- For a person with a hearing impairment, checking in advance how they prefer to communicate, not speaking too quickly and using written notes to help present more complicated information.
- When meeting people with speech difficulties, to speak normally, listen carefully and not to interrupt or pre-empt the end of a sentence.
- For people with learning disabilities, to keep language simple and logical, avoiding covering too much at a time and being prepared to explain things more than once, in different ways, if necessary.
- With dyslexia, comprehensive information has been given on best practice for both written and verbal communication. For written communication, this includes information relating to font type, size, paper, line spacing etc. For verbal communication, this includes

- **Older and Younger Offenders**

Prison population trends for England and Wales, over the last ten years, reveal that the numbers of men aged over 60 and women aged over 50 have trebled. Older prisoners experience accelerated ageing and therefore may experience issues associated with older age from 50 years old. Therefore, chronic illness, infirmity and disabilities will be more prevalent in older prisoners than in people of the same age group outside prison.

EPA has issued practice guidance for working with older offenders that have been released from prison. This includes:

- Ensuring a pre-release health and welfare assessment has been completed by Prison Staff and provided to the Offender Manager to assist in planning for care in the community.
- Using the health and welfare assessment to ensure planning with external organisations (eg. Housing, NHS, social care) for prisoners who may be vulnerable or at risk because of their age or medical condition.
- To monitor the progress of release offenders to ensure that they access the appropriate health, social care and welfare services.
- To ensure older prisoners have registered with a GP.

Practice guidance relating to younger offenders includes:

- Ensuring risks to children and young adults are considered and making links with social services as appropriate.
- When working with young adults, the importance of considering whether they are a child of abusive parents.

EPA has a children & families policy and a new practice instruction is being developed. An action has been included within the SES Action Plan (Section 9) to deploy the practice instruction to all staff.

- **Offenders' Religion or Belief**

Trends indicate a significant increase in the number of Muslim prisoners in the last 10 years, who now represent approximately 11% of the total prison population. The National Offender Management Service have recently employed two Imams who are able to provide advice to Offender Managers on faith issues. An action has been included within the SES Action Plan (Section 9) to update EPA's guidance to make staff aware of this resource.

EPA monitors the faith of offenders to ensure that practical, spiritual and moral needs are considered. However, the monitoring information is not used currently to produce statistical reports aiming to ensure that there is equity of access to services for offenders from all faiths. An action has been included within the SES Action Plan (Section 9) for consideration to be given to include faith within EPA's Diversity Management Report.

The following practice guidance has been developed in relation to faith:

- Ensure information regarding the faith of an offender is collected at the earliest opportunity using EPA's Probation Race and Ethnic Monitoring (PREM) Form.
- To discuss with the offender, any specific needs relating to their religion or belief, such as holy days, festivals or prayer times.

- **Offenders and their Social Class**

Social class in Britain in 2009 retains its links with economic wellbeing, educational attainment, employment prospects, health and security of accommodation. Those from higher and middle class backgrounds are more likely to have academic qualifications. Lack of educational qualifications can reduce the range of jobs and professions open to people. Health and life expectancy is linked with social class. Those from poorer backgrounds have much higher incidences of illnesses such as heart disease. People with money are able to access private healthcare making them able to get a more immediate and individual response to health and/or disability needs.

Greater wealth can lead to more choice in accessing services and less choice can mean that particular needs will be harder to meet. This may relate to selection of accommodation, school, health provider etc. Those in poverty are more likely to be adversely affected by debts and less able to get mortgages, making them dependent on rented accommodation with less security of tenure. In this regard, EPA is conscious of the effects of a down turn within the national economy.

EPA is committed to recognising and equally valuing the differences in culture and style that may result from class difference whilst combatting disadvantage faced by those from poorer households. EPA will act to combat stereotyping based on class and will ensure that no presumptions are made that unemployed or working class offenders lack ability. The objectives we have set in this area link to maximising opportunities rather than reinforcing stereotypical beliefs.

Objectives linked to offenders and their social class include:

- Ensuring all documents are written in a simple accessible style.
- Increasing the number of offenders signing up to basic skills training which will help improve literacy and numeracy and increase job prospects.
- Ensuring all offenders are registered with a GP as a key first step in accessing medical treatment.
- Using mentoring by volunteers to encourage offenders to develop skills.

- **Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Offenders**

It is estimated that 7% of the UK population is gay, lesbian or bisexual (LGB). At present there is no statutory duty placed on public authorities with regard to sexual orientation. However, the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 protect LGB people in the workplace and The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 make it unlawful to discriminate in the provision of goods, facilities and services.

EPA monitors the sexual orientation of offenders. However, the monitoring information is not used currently used to produce statistical reports aiming to ensure that there is equity of access to services for offenders from all sexual orientations. An action has been included within the SES Action Plan (Section 9) for consideration to be given to monitoring and reporting of sexual orientation. During consultation for the SES, feedback from staff around LGB issues, was that they are not always comfortable with asking offenders about their sexual orientation. EPA has included guidance relating to this in its practice instructions, however, as this has been highlighted as an issue, an objective has been included in the SES Action Plan (Section 9) to review staff training.

Practice guidance developed in relation to sexual orientation includes:

- Ensure information regarding the sexual orientation of an offender is collected at the earliest opportunity using EPA's Probation Race and Ethnic Monitoring (PREM) Form and take the opportunity to reassure the offender about EPA's commitment to equality of outcome.
- Where an offender is likely to be the only lesbian or gay person within a group when attending a programme or unpaid work, offering alternative choices.
- To pass on information about LGBT agencies that may be able to provide support, where relevant.

- **Transsexual and Transgender Offenders**

The term transsexual is used to describe a person who intends to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment. Transgendered people express gender in ways not traditionally associated with their biological sex. This includes people who identify with the opposite sex and live as the opposite sex full-time, but do not feel the need to have surgery to change their body.

Lack of support, fear of ridicule and hostility, ignorance and exclusion are all issues that transsexual and transgender people face. In 2001, a study by Manchester University, of transsexual and transgender people in the criminal justice system, found that 50% of Probation Staff, from 11 different areas, had limited knowledge or no knowledge at all, of working with transsexual and transgender people. EPA recognises its duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment against transsexual and transgender people. An objective has been included in the SES Action Plan (Section 9) to provide practice guidance for staff working with transsexual and transgender people.

Section 5: Employment and Key Issues for Equality

EPA employs a total of 466 staff. The majority of staff (65%) are in Operational or Practitioner type roles, 23% are in Administrative or Specialist roles and 12% in Management posts.

5.1 Staff and Gender

Women make up 67% of EPA's workforce and out number men by an approximate ratio of 2:1. This level of representation is fairly consistent with other Probation Areas and also, the public service workforce average of 65%.

In 2008, EPA employees were asked to complete a staff survey covering the following areas:

- Leadership
- Strategic Direction
- Communication
- Teamwork and Involvement
- Training and Development
- Performance Management
- Working for Essex Probation Area

In general, the results for male and female respondents were very similar. In response to the statement 'EPA does not discriminate at all on grounds of gender' 81% of employees strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, with the statement resulting in average score of 4.08 out of 5. Further information can be found in Appendix 10.4 (Section 10).

Consultation with staff on gender issues, has shown that having a female majority practitioner workforce can occasionally cause some difficulties in service delivery to specific groups of offenders. EPA has included an objective in its SES Action Plan (Section 9) to ensure that any potential barriers to male recruitment are overcome.

EPA's Gender Equality Scheme (GES), produced in 2007, provided information on the average pay for male and female staff and showed some disparity between genders. The average salary for a male employee in 2007 was £24,526 and £22,396 for a female employee. This information confirms that EPA has a higher proportion of females in lower grade, administrative type jobs and a higher proportion of males in higher grade, management type jobs. An action has been included in the SES Action Plan (Section 9) for EPA to re-calculate the average pay for male and female staff to determine whether the gap has decreased.

Since publishing the GES in 2007, in order encourage more women to apply for higher grade jobs, EPA has reviewed its advertising process and also set up a mentoring scheme for female managers. Since then, the percentage of female managers has increased from 62% (quarter ending March 2007) to 67% (quarter ending September 2008).

5.2 Black and Minority Ethnic Staff

Within EPA, 5% of employees are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The last 3 years has shown a 1% decrease of BME employees and as a result, exit interview forms for all BME staff were re-examined. Although there were no underlying reasons for leaving linked to racial discrimination, EPA's Diversity Manager will be provided with copies of exit interview forms, for any future BME staff leaving the staff, so that reasons for leaving can be monitored.

To encourage BME applicants for vacancies, EPA has advertised within the Equality Britain publication, Asian 'Clickwala' website and sent vacancy information to the Essex Race Equality Council for distribution to local BME community groups.

All new staff to EPA are allocated a 'buddy' to help them settle in to their new job. New BME staff joining the service are given the option of having an existing BME employee as their buddy. This may be particularly beneficial where there are no other minority ethnic employees at their particular work location.

Over the last three years, the number of BME managers working at EPA has increased from 7% to 11%. EPA has ensured that the National 'Accelerate' scheme has been promoted to BME and disabled managers and has had one BME manager complete the scheme. 'Accelerate' is an intensive two-year Positive Action Learning and Development Programme designed for Black, Asian and disabled middle and senior managers. Its intention is to enable participants to deploy their skills, knowledge and understanding so as to realise their potential and to compete effectively for top jobs in the Criminal Justice Sector. EPA is currently considering setting up a regional mentoring scheme for BME staff and this objective has been included in the SES Action Plan (Section 9)

14 BME employees completed EPA's Staff Survey in 2008, mentioned in Section 5.1 above. Although the sample size was very small, BME staff were generally more positive than staff from the White Group, when answering questions. In response to the statement 'EPA does not discriminate at all on grounds of race' 80% of employees strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, with the

statement resulting in average score of 4.05 out of 5. Further information can be found in Appendix 10.4 (Section 10).

5.3 Disabled Staff

The table below provides information on disabled staff working within EPA:

Total Number of EPA Employees	466
Total Number of Disabled Staff within EPA (quarter ending September 2008)	56 (12%)
Membership of EPA's Staff Enabling and Disability Reference Group (SEDRG)	22
Number of Staff Receiving Access to Work Services (quarter ending September 2008)	20
Number of Assistive Technology Users (quarter ending September 2008)	17

23 disabled employees completed EPA's Staff Survey in 2008, mentioned in Section 5.1 above. In general these respondents were very positive and scored much higher than non-disabled respondents throughout the survey.

In response to the statement 'EPA does not discriminate at all on grounds of disability' 80% of employees strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, with the statement resulting in average score of 4.07 out of 5. Further information can be found in Appendix 10.4 (Section 10).

Key issues for disabled staff, identified through consultation with EPA's Staff Enabling and Disability Reference Group (SEDRG) were regarding:

- Access to Work Services – in some cases, there were delays in receiving equipment and a lack of 'after care' to resolve any on-going problems. EPA's Human Resources department have been made aware of these issues and are working closely with disabled staff to improve the services received from Access to Work.
- Assistive Technology (AT) –issues of compatibility with other computer programmes / software and problems with slow speed have been reported. Many of the AT problems need to be resolved at a national level and EPA have ensured that AT users have been invited to attend the national AT user group meetings so that they are also able to report problems directly. Local Information Services Support Officers have also actively engaged with AT users to find appropriate 'work arounds' in the interim.

Disabled staff were involved and consulted with, in preparing EPA's Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and SES and asked to provide their experiences of: recruitment and career progression; staff support networks; discrimination at work; assistive technology; and services to disabled offenders and victims of crime. Actions relating to each of these areas are included in the SES Action Plan (Section 10).

5.4 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Staff

Despite legislation introduced in 2003, to protect lesbians and gay men from discrimination at work, research suggests discrimination still affects thousands of gay people in their workplaces (Stonewall Report 2007). Research suggests that at least one-third of gay people in UK workplaces are still unable to be open about their sexual orientation at work.

EPA includes sexual orientation on its diversity monitoring form for staff, however, the information is not used currently to produce statistical reports. An action has been included within the SES Action Plan (Section 9) for consideration to be given to monitoring and reporting of sexual orientation.

There were only 7 LGBT employees that completed EPA's Staff Survey in 2008, mentioned in Section 5.1 above. Therefore, the numbers are too small to draw any real conclusions. However, it was pleasing to note that this particular group scored 100% for feeling that they are valued members of the team and for all of the diversity questions. In response to the statement 'EPA does not discriminate at all on grounds of sexual orientation' 82% of employees strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, with the statement resulting in average score of 4.13 out of 5. Further information can be found in Appendix 10.4 (Section 10).

EPA submitted an application for Stonewall's 2008 Workplace Equality Index, for the top 100 employers for LGB people in Britain. EPA received a score of 70%, narrowly missing out on being within the top 100 employers list, which had a minimum score of 71%. Stonewall operate a Diversity Champions programme which acts as a positive driver for change and best practice on LGB issues in the workplace. An action has been included within the SES Action Plan (Section 9) for consideration to be given to joining Stonewall's programme.

5.5 Staff and Age

The age profile of EPA staff, for the quarter ending September 2008, is shown in the table below:

Age Bracket	Number of Staff	Percentage
Under 20 years	0	0
20 – 29 years	92	20%
30 – 39 years	95	20%
40 – 49 years	113	24%
50 – 59 years	127	27%
60 – 69 years	35	8%
70 years +	4	1%

Research has shown age prejudice to be the most common form of discrimination. The University of Kent’s research study found that 29% of respondents were discriminated against because of their age. Age discrimination in the work place became illegal from October 2006 and since then EPA has put the following actions into place:

- Any information relating to an applicants age, together with other social identity information, has been removed from job application forms, so that staff short-listing applicants are unaware of this information.
- All EPA staff reaching normal retirement age are asked if they would like to apply to work beyond retirement age.
- An Apprentice Scheme is operated, enabling any one age 16 and above to gain work experience within EPA’s Information and Systems department.

EPA’s Staff Survey, carried out in 2008, mentioned in Section 5.1 above, included analysis by age group. The results show very little significant difference between the different age groups. In response to the statement ‘EPA does not discriminate at all on grounds of age’ 79% of employees strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, with the statement resulting in average score of 4.03 out of 5. Further information can be found in Appendix 10.4 (Section 10).

5.6 Religion and Belief of Staff

Information regarding an employee’s faith is collected on EPA’s diversity monitoring form. Staff are asked whether they have any specific needs relating to their religion or belief, such as time off for holy days, festivals or prayer times, so that this can be accommodated, where possible.

EPA also allows reasonable unpaid Special Leave for the purposes of Religious Observance if an employee does not use Annual Leave or Time Off in Lieu for this purpose. This may include time off for prayers and fasting. Managers ensure that all requests are considered sympathetically and if reasonably

practical to do so, will adapt an employee's work pattern to enable such needs to be met.

Information on staff religion and belief is not currently used to produce statistical reports. An action has been included within the SES Action Plan (Section 9) for consideration to be given to monitoring and reporting of religion and belief.

Within EPA's 2008 Staff Survey (mentioned in Section 5.1) 80% of employees strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, 'EPA does not discriminate at all on grounds of religion or belief' with the statement resulting in an average score of 4.10 out of 5. Further information can be found in Appendix 10.4 (Section 10).

In 2008, The Ministry of Justice set up a new Faith Forum for all staff, dedicated to developing a better shared understanding of faith in relationship to daily life, particularly in the work environment. EPA has advertised the Faith Forum to staff, with a small number of employees signing up to join. EPA will ensure the Forum is advertised to staff on a regular basis and has included this in the SES Action Plan (Section 9).

5.7 Employees and their Social Class

Social class in Britain in 2009, retains its links with economic wellbeing, educational attainment, employment prospects, health and security of accommodation.

Lack of educational qualifications can reduce the range of jobs and professions open to people and social class can affect selection for interview and jobs. This may particularly be the case in assessment centres that require candidates to give presentations, if the interview panel values style over content. Certain regional and working class accents evoke stereotypes which can also limit job selection or progression at work, if employees are not judged simply on merit.

EPA is committed to adopting fair, transparent and consistent recruitment and selection practices. These are supported and delivered by appropriately trained staff, with the purpose of selecting and promoting individuals on the basis of merit and ability. EPA have the following processes in place to support its' commitment:

- Relevant NVQ qualifications are recognised qualifications as they provide evidence of competence at work not academic study, allowing those with less academic qualifications/experience to gain qualifications.
- Academic qualifications are only required where it is essential for the job.

- EPA develops staff and offers qualifications to support management roles, for example NVQ Level 4 in Management.
- All EPA staff roles are equally valued and staff are not allowed, for example, to refer to an employee in an administrative post as 'only' admin.
- Training will be reviewed to ensure assumptions are not made in relation to class issues.

5.8 Staff Networks for BME, Disabled and LGBT Employees

EPA has the following Staff Reference Groups set up:

- The Minority Ethnic Reference Group Essex (MERGE) for all BME staff
- The Staff Enabling and Disability Reference Group (SEDRG) for all disabled staff
- The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Group for all LGBT staff

The Staff Groups enable employees to meet with other colleagues on a regular basis to network and receive support. The Staff Groups also enable EPA to:

- Receive feedback about the impact of policies and practice on staff members from minority groups
- Consult staff from minority groups, about proposed developments to achieve equality and value diversity within the service
- Apply a range of different perspectives to service delivery and staffing issues

An annual 'Diversity Away Day' is held each year and attended by members of the Staff Reference Groups. Additionally, the Equalities and Diversity Group and Board Members from the Diversity Committee also attend. As well as sharing good practice and networking, the day enables staff to feedback on the annual equalities report and help the Service in identifying priorities for the following year. EPA's most recent Diversity Away Day was held in February 2009 and during this event, input to EPA's SES was included as an agenda item. The SES Action Plan (Section 9) includes suggestions received at the Away Day.

5.9 Staff Training

All employees at EPA receive Equality and Diversity training, at present delivered by the external training organisation 'Equality Works.' This training covers the following areas:

- Good practice in equalities
- Systematic discrimination
- Social identity: race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation, class, age

- How discrimination works
- Legislation relating to race, disability, sex discrimination, sexual orientation and religion
- Challenging discrimination

Employees are also required to complete a Unit on Diversity within their NVQ qualification. This may be supplemented by a Diversity Workbook in the near future.

The requirements to value diversity and achieve equality are also embedded into other specific core training for particular groups of staff, for example:

- Recruitment and selection
- Performance management
- Working with racially motivated offenders

'Diversity Week' is another method used for training and increasing diversity awareness amongst employees. Diversity Week is held annually at each of EPA's seven offices in Essex. Each event has a different theme and themes over the last four years have included:

- Employee well-being – looking at how different cultures keep healthy and offering employees the chance to try out things like tai-chi, Indian Head and Shiatsu Massages.
- Communication – looking at how different communities communicate, sign language and communication through Indian dance and African drums.
- Festivals - featuring displays and information on Eid, Diwali, Christmas and Chinese New Year.
- Identity and Inspiration – looking at who inspires us, watching a role play acted out by the external training company 'Garnett Foundation' including issues of stereotyping, bullying, gender, disability and race. Also, using an interactive voting tool to answer questions about working at EPA.

Equality and Diversity noticeboards are used in each work place to keep staff informed about, and interested in, diversity issues. The theme of the display changes at least four times a year and has included all aspects of social identity: race, gender, disability, religion, sexuality, age and social class.

The annual Diversity Away-Day also regularly includes a training input, with the 2008 Away Day, updating staff on legislative changes in the field of equalities presented by ACAS.

Section 6: Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 Impact Assessment of Policies

EPA's policies and procedures are impact assessed to assess whether the potential exists for negative impact on staff, service users or stakeholders. Also considered, is whether there has previously been any adverse impact on any group and how overall, the policy promotes equality, good relations and eliminates discrimination. Staff, unions and relevant stakeholders are also consulted on new and revised policies as a matter of course.

EPA uses the National Offender Management Services (NOMS) template to impact assess policies. Specific screening questions covering all aspects of social identity: race, gender, disability, religion, sexuality, age and social class are contained within the Impact Assessment form. This enables an assessment of whether there is the potential for any negative impact for employees and service users and whether there are likely to be different outcomes for people, as a result of the policy. Copies of EPA's Impact Assessment Form are available upon request.

6.2 Impact Assessment Panel

EPA's impact assessment panel comprises both internal and external members, including:

- Board Member who is also Chair of EPA's Diversity Committee
- EPA's Assistant Chief Officer with lead on Diversity
- EPA's Diversity Manager
- Equality and Diversity Office Representatives
- NAPO Union Representative
- Director of Essex Race Equality Council
- Chair of local Disability Group (Essex Access Forum)
- Representative from the Royal Deaf Association
- An Independent Lay Adviser, with experience of sexual orientation and disability issues
- Policy Writer

EPA recognises the value of including those not involved with the Probation Service on a day to day basis, lies in them bringing a lay-person's perspective to the function under consideration. Any expertise they can bring as a result of their own social identity, or area of professional expertise, is a further source of added value to the process.

Attending impact assessment meetings can compete with other demands on members of the team and therefore an objective to increase the Panel, has been included within the SES Action Plan (Section 9). EPA currently does not have any service user representation on the Panel and therefore, this is an additional objective. Panel members who cannot attend meetings are encouraged to remain involved in the process as corresponding members.

6.3 Monitoring

When policies are impact assessed, the Panel determines the monitoring data required to examine the impact of a policy. For example, when EPA's Retirement Policy was impact assessed, the Panel agreed that EPA should monitor all refusals by the Service for staff to work beyond normal retirement date, look at the social identify profile of those staff and the reason for refusal.

EPA has a number of additional monitoring systems and mechanisms in place to evaluate service delivery and employment outcomes, to ensure there are no identifiable areas of dissatisfaction relating to discriminatory treatment on the grounds of race, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, age and social class. These systems include the Performance Scorecard, Exit Questionnaires for offenders and staff, EPA's Staff Survey, Annual Equalities Report and Diversity Management Reports, as mentioned in Section 4.1 of the SES.

6.4 Publishing and Public Access to Information and Services

EPA's website (www.essexprobation.org.uk.) contains information relating to:

- EPA's Work – services provided including community payback (unpaid work) and programmes.
- Service Users – how to make a complaint, leaflets, rules of supervision and the Data Protection Act.
- Recruitment - jobs on offer, recruitment events and personnel policies (including impact assessment information).
- Governance – EPA Structure, Board, business plan, policies (including impact assessment information), statement of accounts, finance, performance and annual report.
- Publications - annual report, leaflets, newsletters, presentations, briefings, Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes.
- Contact Information - details of who to contact with a query and how to suggest ideas for unpaid work projects.
- Useful Links - for partner agencies and support services.

All information contained within EPA's website can also be made available in

hard copy, another language or format, for example large print or braille, by contacting the Communications Manager, Essex Probation Headquarters, Cullen Mill, 49 Braintree Road, Witham, Essex, CM8 2DD, telephone: 01376 501626. EPA has ensured that the local Community, particularly those from minority groups, have also had access to information and services. Further information is contained within Section 7.3 of the SES.

Section 7: Consultation and Community Engagement

In developing the SES, EPA has involved and consulted both staff and service users including those with a disability, from black and minority ethnic groups, of different sexual orientations, age groups, religions and backgrounds. EPA's Equality and Diversity office representatives have also been consulted and had involvement in compiling the Scheme as well as the Impact Assessment Panel, Board Members, National Staff Associations, external groups and individuals. The objectives contained within the SES Action Plan (Section 9) have been set using feedback from all of the above groups together with the results of monitoring data and priorities set within EPA's Strategy to Meet Diverse Needs.

In developing the SES, EPA has also built on the work already done to involve and consult internally and externally, in developing its Race, Disability and Gender Equality Schemes and included objectives in the SES Action Plan, relating to the consultation for these Schemes.

7.1 Staff Consultation

- **Employees**

EPA involved and consulted with employees at its annual 'Diversity Away Day' held in February 2009. This was attended by members of EPA's staff reference groups for BME, disabled and LGBT staff (Section 5.8 contains further information about EPA's staff reference groups). Additionally, EPA's Equality and Diversity office representatives and Board Members from the Diversity Committee also attended. Staff were asked to consider equality issues around disability, gender, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, religion and social class for both employment and service delivery. Key points from the consultation exercise have been included in the SES Action Plan (Section 9).

- **Employee staff survey**

Information from EPA's 2008 staff survey, has been used in developing the SES. The staff survey was completed by 352 (70%) of employees. Staff were asked to answer questions and give their scorings on the following areas: Leadership, Strategic Direction, Communication, Teamwork and Involvement, Training and Development, Performance Management and Working for Essex Probation Area. Under the 'Working for Essex Probation Area' section, there were questions relating to diversity and anti-discriminatory practice. Information relating to the staff survey is contained within Section 5 and Appendix 10.4 of the SES.

- **Diversity Week Events**

275 staff members attended workplace diversity events in January 2009. Included within the events was an opportunity to give instant feedback to the organisation on the atmosphere at work and other issues. 84% of staff rated the atmosphere within their office, as either good or fantastic. This exercise revealed some lack of understanding of the purposes of staff reference groups. This will be addressed through the action plan in Section 9. Further information about EPA's Diversity Week events is contained in Section 5.9 of the SES.

7.2 Service User Consultation

- **Service User (SES Consultation) Questionnaire**

Service User Input and consultation for the SES was carried out via a brief questionnaire administered to offenders attending EPA's new specified activity called 'The Bridge' (Section 2 contains information about The Bridge). This group of offenders was viewed as a particularly valuable source of feedback as they were, by definition, those from whom EPA had struggled to gain compliance and engage in services. Key points from the questionnaires have been included in the SES Action Plan (Section 9). Appendix 10.3 contains a copy of the Service User questionnaire.

- **Service User Exit Questionnaire**

Every offender is asked to complete a questionnaire at the end of their dealings with EPA. The questionnaire covers all areas of contact with EPA and contains questions on the following areas:

- Being at court and being sentenced
- Getting to know us and what to expect
- Making plans and keeping going
- Your dealings with us
- Unpaid Work
- General offender behaviour programmes
- Drug programmes
- Developing numeracy and literacy
- Help with employment and training
- Outcomes and future prospects

Information from the exit questionnaires has been included in Section 4.1 and Appendix 10.4 of the SES and key points used in setting objectives for the SES Action Plan (Section 9).

7.3 External Consultation

EPA contacted the following external parties, for their input in the SES:

- National Staff Groups:
 - Lesbians and Gays in Probation (LAGIP)
 - National Disabled Staff Network (NDSN)
 - Association of Black Probation Officers (ABPO)
 - National Association of Asian Probation Staff (NAAPS)
- Impact Assessment Panel (external members):
 - Director of Essex Race Equality Council
 - Chair of local Disability Group (Essex Access Forum)
 - Representative from the Royal Deaf Association
 - An Independent Lay Adviser, with experience of sexual orientation and disability issues
- Minority Ethnic Network Eastern Region (MENTER)
- Essex Police Independent Advisory Group (IAG) Members:
 - Essex Racial Equality Council
 - Autism Anglia
 - Help the Aged
 - Essex Crime and Disorder Partnership
 - Essex County Council
 - South East Essex Multi Cultural Society
 - Age Concern
 - Minority Ethnic Network Eastern Region (MENTER)
 - Transliving International
 - Chelmsford Borough Council
 - Disability Essex
 - Victim Support
 - Thurrock Racial Unity Support Trust
 - Royal Association for Deaf People
 - Southend Ethnic Minority Forum

7.4 Community Engagement

Understanding the needs and concerns of the Community is vital in providing it with protection from crime. It is also important that the Essex public, particularly those from minority groups, understand how we work and the value of what we provide. Community engagement and activities ensuring public access to EPA's information and services has included:

- Participating in targeted community events to provide information about EPA, sometimes alongside other colleagues from criminal justice agencies
- Making presentations about EPA, to Essex BME Community Groups

- Presentation to Essex Police IAG (members listed in Section 7.3)
- EPA Open Days for the Public held in Field Offices
- Recruitment Advertising in the 'Equality Britain' 2008 Directory
- Recruitment Open Day information sent to Essex Race Equality Council for distribution to BME community groups
- Including community members within EPA's Impact Assessment Panel (further information is contained in Section 6.2)

EPA intends to continue engaging with the community and extending the valuable contacts already made, both through partnership working (refer to Section 8.3) and independently. This has been included as an objective within the SES Action Plan (Section 9).

Section 8: Local Area, Partnerships and Procurement

8.1 Essex Population

Essex is the sixth most populous county in England (1.6million) with the second-largest population of any non metropolitan county after Kent. With six major towns: Chelmsford, Harlow, Grays, Basildon, Southend and Colchester, the people living within the Essex Probation Area (EPA) account for a quarter of the population of the East of England region. Population increases of 6.5% are anticipated, with significantly higher increases expected in Harlow, and Grays (16%) which are also two of the more deprived communities in the county. The number of homes in Essex is planned to increase by almost a fifth in the next few years. EPA has links at a pan Essex Level with, for example, the Police, CPS and Criminal Justice Board. Also, at a County Council and Unitary Authority level with, for example, Supporting People and Drug and Alcohol Action Teams.

8.2 Social Identity Information – East of England

- **Ethnicity**

The Eastern Region has slightly smaller proportions of all BME groups than are present in England overall. There is a wide variation in the proportion of BME groups present in the different geographical areas of the region, from 28.1% in Luton to 2.9% in Essex (2001 Census). This can be partly explained by the pronounced rural/urban divisions in the region.

Economic and inward migration is increasing the diversity of the Essex population, especially in areas close to London and in the larger towns. 9.4% of Essex pupils are now from BME communities.

The East of England has the largest Gypsy Traveller population of any region in England, with 1200 caravans located in the county of Essex (2006 data).

- **Health and Disability**

Statistical information, on disabled people in the Essex Area, obtained from the National Census 2001, shows:

	UK	Essex (2001)
Population	58,789,194	1,310,835
Disability / Long-term Illness	10,855,853 (18.5%)	215,471 (16.4%)

Mobility Impairment	7,000,000	Not available
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In the Eastern Region 16.4% reported a long-term illness. This was most commonly reported by people from the White Irish Community (22.1%). Around 15% of Essex adults are estimated to be binge drinkers with an average of 18.5 adults engaging in hazardous drinking. Over half of 15-year-olds in Essex drink alcohol and nearly a fifth are regular smokers. Statistics also show that over 19,000 children and young people have mental health problems in the county.

- **Gender**

The gender division in the East of England region is slightly biased towards female residents (51%). However, this is not consistently found within the different ethnic groups:

- Asian: 46.7% female, 53.3% male
- Bangladeshi: 47.5% female, 52.5% male
- Other Black Group: 46.6% female, 53.4% male
- Other Ethnic Group: 60.6% female, 39.4% male

Within the Asian, Bangladeshi and Other Black communities, the bias towards males could be due to age structures or migration patterns. There is not an obvious explanation for the higher female numbers within the Other Ethnic Group.

- **Age**

Age structures of the different ethnic groups in the Eastern Region vary considerably. The White British group has a very 'flat' age structure, with fewer children (less than a fifth of residents are under 15.) However, in comparison, the Asian group has nearly half of its population under 25. The White Irish and Other White groups have a 'middle-aged' age structure, with the majority of people aged between 20 to 65. There is also a 'middle-aged' age structure within the Black Community Group with more than half of all people between 25 and 55. However, within this Group there is also a larger proportion of children under 15 (19.1%).

Within Essex, around 1700 children and young people are looked after by the local authority, and about 700 are at risk of abuse or neglect.

- **Employment, Housing and Education**

Information from the 2001 Census, shows that within the East of England region, males showed higher economic activity rates than the females, in

every ethnic group. Overall, Indian males showed the highest levels of economic activity (77.9%) and Bangladeshi females showed the lowest levels, with only 26.3% economically active.

Levels of homelessness within Essex, are above the regional average in all but a handful of areas. Over 17,000 units of housing-related support services are provided through Supporting People across a range of client groups.

Educational statistics show that 20% of working-age adults have a degree or high qualification (England 25%) and 17% have no qualifications. (England 14%).

8.3 Partnerships

EPA works closely with a number of partners including Local Authority, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships and Local Strategic Partnerships within Essex. Not only are current issues addressed, but partnership working is also used to plan for the future, where population growth in currently-recognised areas of deprivation will influence considerations of viability, resource and provision across the county.

EPA is part of the Essex Local Criminal Justice Board's Confidence Action Team (CAT). The aim of CAT is to engage with the public and inspire confidence in the work of the Criminal Justice Agencies. Over the last three years, EPA has worked with in partnership to deliver a number of initiatives both to employees working within Criminal Justice and also externally, to the public. These have included:

- Arranging 'Inside Justice' Open Days at local Crown Courts for the general public.
- Producing a DVD on the role of each Criminal Justice Agency, detailing the process of investigation, prosecution and sentencing. This was shown in local shopping centres.
- Participating in several community events, including those arranged by local BME community groups.

A current project CAT is working on, is producing a 'Welcome to Essex' guide aimed at BME residents in Essex. The guide will contain practical information about the law and also contain information on keeping safe. Also to be included, are contact details for support groups and information on how to report race hate crime. The guide will be translated into a number of different languages.

8.4 Procurement

Legislation within the race, disability and gender equality duties have implications for the way that public authorities carry out their procurement function. Public authorities that contract with external organisations to carry out some of its functions, are obliged to ensure that equality requirements are met, regardless of who is carrying out the work.

EPA purchases goods and services from both the private and voluntary sectors and has ensured that the following equality principles have been built into its procurement process:

- Ensuring there is a level playing field for all potential contractors, regardless of disability, gender, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation or age of ownership.
- Ensuring that contractors are aware of EPA's equality and diversity policies and that contractors carry out all work in accordance to these standards.
- Including a requirement in all contracts for compliance with anti-discrimination.

Section 9: SES Action Plan 2009-2012

9.1 Generic Actions

Objectives	Key Tasks	Diversity Strand	Responsibility and Timescale
1. Ensure equality objectives within EPA's SES, relating to race and ethnicity, disability, gender, religion, sexual orientation and age, are achieved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Review Action plan every 6 months, reporting progress to SMT and Diversity Committee. ii) Publish updated Action Plan annually. 	All	Diversity Manager i) 6 Monthly ii) Annually
2. Ensure EPA's policies do not have a disproportionate negative impact on particular groups of staff or service users.	Impact Assess remaining policies & any new policies developed.	All	Impact Assessment Panel Ongoing
3. Increase representation within Impact Assessment Process.	Promote opportunity of Contributing to Impact Assessment to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Community Groups ii) Service Users iii) Staff Reference Group members 	All	Diversity Manager and ACO (Diversity) By April 2010
4. Increase awareness about the work of EPA to community groups within Essex.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Work with the CAT Group to deliver community engagement activities. ii) Continue to deliver the Probation experience in each of the Essex major towns. 	All	Communications Manager Ongoing
5. Increase awareness by staff of the needs of service users from all backgrounds.	Brief practice guidance sheets to be compiled for staff to use as a reference/source of information, for all areas.	All	Diversity Manager By April 2010

9.2 Service Delivery Actions

Objectives	Key Tasks	Diversity Strand	Responsibility and Timescale
ALL DIVERSITY STRANDS			
6. Ensure service users experience equally good outcomes from their contact with EPA, regardless of their race and ethnicity, disability, gender, religion, sexual orientation and age.	<p>i) Carry out regular monitoring of data: breaches, compliance, concordance, basic skills commencements and victim contact take up.</p> <p>ii) Report results of monitoring on diversity report & ensure SMT and Diversity Committee have the information.</p> <p>iii) Agree action where figures show disproportionate rates.</p>	All	<p>Diversity Manager/ I & S Team</p> <p>Quarterly</p>
7. Obtain feedback from service users on their dealings with EPA & analyse results by social identity.	Ensure exit questionnaires are being completed.	All	<p>Field Offices (on going)</p> <p>Performance Manager (to provide annual report)</p>
8. Reduce the risk of harm posed by perpetrators of hate crime and domestic violence.	Continue to train Programme Tutors and OMs in One to One Programme, adapted for use with Racially Motivated Offenders.	All	Training Manager
9. Ensure offenders have equal access to suitable accommodation.	Work with regional group to develop appropriate arrangements and for the management of approved premises.	All	<p>Diversity Manager and ACO (Diversity)</p> <p>By April 2010</p>
10. Ensure the range of interventions provided by EPA is	Review range of interventions currently provided and determine	All	SMT

able to cater for all offender needs.	whether additional or alternative provision is required.		By April 2012
11. Ensure the take-up of Victim Contact Services is broadly similar across all social identity groups.	(i) Use PREM form to collect social identity information for victims. (ii) We will set an objective to increase take-up rates across all social identity groups.	All	(i) Manager-Victims From April 2009 onwards ACO (Diversity) By April 2010
RACE AND ETHNICITY			
12. Collect race & ethnicity data for a minimum of 95% of all service users.	Carry out regular monitoring to ensure Race and Ethnicity section within PREM forms are being completed.	Race and Ethnicity	Diversity Manager/ I & S Team Quarterly
13. Check proposals made on Pre-Sentence reports for BME offenders are good quality and fair.	Ensure QA reports are completed for all BME offenders & that QA reports are analysed.	Race and Ethnicity	Field Offices & Diversity Manager Ongoing
14. Ensure service users from the Gypsy and Traveller Community experience equally good outcomes from their contact with EPA.	Consider including Gypsies and Travellers as a separate category within Race and Ethnicity section on PREM forms.	Race and Ethnicity	SMT By October 2009
15. Ensure Foreign Nationals experience equally good outcomes from their contact with EPA, as British Citizens.	Consider the statistical information required that will enable EPA to demonstrate achievement of this objective.	Race and Ethnicity	SMT By October 2009
DISABILITY			
16. Collect disability data for service users and increase the	Carry out regular monitoring to ensure disability section within	Disability	Diversity Manager/ I & S Team

current collection rate of 30% to 95%.	PREM forms are being completed.		Quarterly
17. Ensure reasons for lower compliance for disabled offenders are not linked to disability.	Investigate reasons for non-compliance for disabled offenders.	Disability	Diversity Manager By July 2009
GENDER			
18. Ensure EPA staff are fully aware of the needs of female offenders.	Training in work with women offenders to be delivered to all operational staff.	Gender	WOWG / Training Manager / All OM Managers By April 2011
19. Ensure EPA staff are aware of local resources and support groups within Essex and provide this Information to female offenders, where appropriate.	Essex Directory of resources and support groups for women to be compiled and issued to all operational staff.	Gender	Diversity Manager By October 2009
20. Ensure women with mental health issues are identified promptly and referred to services and treatment.	Mental health to be included within training in work with women offenders, to be delivered to all operational staff.	Gender	WOWG / Training Manager / All OM Managers By April 2011
21. Offer additional options/services to female offenders to better meet their needs.	Implement WOWG Action Plan: i) offer services in conjunction with external agencies ii) review programme / activity options for female offenders iii) training for staff (action 12) iv) directory of resources (action 13) v) actions from OM	Gender	WOWG By April 2011

	checklist for working with women offenders		
22. Ensure staff are aware of approved premises for female offenders in Bedford and making referrals, where appropriate.	i) Review and re-issue practice guidance on approved premises ii) include in training for staff (action 12).	Gender	ACO (Diversity)/ WOWG By April 2011
AGE			
23. Extend monitoring data currently collected for age.	Includes all age brackets within case load data.	Age	I & S Team
24. Ensure service users of all ages, experience equally good outcomes from their contact with EPA.	Consider including age within compliance monitoring data.	Age	SMT By October 2009
25. Provide increased direction to staff of issues relating to children and families of offenders.	Develop Practice Instruction and deploy to staff.	Age	ACO (Diversity) By January 2010
RELIGION AND BELIEF			
26. Ensure service users, regardless of their religion or belief, experience equally good outcomes from their contact with EPA.	Consider the statistical information required that will enable EPA to achieve this objective.	Religion and Belief	SMT By October 2009
27. Ensure EPA staff are aware of advice available from Imams employed by NOMS, around Muslim faith.	Update Practice Guidance.	Religion and Belief	Diversity Manager By July 2009
SOCIAL CLASS			
28. Ensure documents are written in a simple	Issue Readability Guidance to all staff.	Social Class	Diversity Manager

accessible style.			By July 2009
29. Help improve literacy and numeracy skills for offenders, which will help increase job prospects.	i) Increase the number of offenders signing up to Basic Skills training. ii) Ensure training is delivered at an appropriate level for all abilities.	Social Class	Interventions Managers By April 2010
30. Improve health and life expectancy of people from poorer backgrounds by ensuring they are accessing medical treatment.	Ensure all offenders are registered with a GP.	Social Class	Offender Managers I & S Team (monitoring data) Ongoing
31. Develop access to peer mentoring.	Evaluate initiatives in peer mentoring (e.g. Through The Bridge).	Social Class	Contracts Manager By April 2010
SEXUAL ORIENTATION			
32. Ensure service users, regardless of their sexual orientation, experience equally good outcomes from their contact with EPA.	Consider the statistical Information required that will enable EPA to demonstrate achievement of this objective.	Sexual Orientation	SMT By October 2009
33. Ensure staff have received practice guidance on sexual orientation data collection.	Review practice guidance and re-issue to staff.	Sexual Orientation	Diversity Manager and ACO (Diversity) By January 2010

9.3 Employment Actions

Objectives	Key Tasks	Diversity Strand	Responsibility and Timescale
ALL DIVERSITY STRANDS			
34. To ensure all staff have received diversity training.	i) Ensure all existing staff have attended Diversity training and all new staff receive this upon joining the Service. ii) Through Annual Diversity Week events and Diversity Noticeboard displays. iii) Through guidance	All	Training Manager/ Diversity Manager/ All Managers i) By May 2009 (existing staff), within 3 months of joining (new Staff). ii) Ongoing
35. Recruit a diverse range of staff to work for EPA.	i) Advertise vacancies in publications targetting people from all groups. ii) Distribute information on large recruitment campaigns or open days to Essex Race Equality Councils. iii) Promote job opportunities at community events. iv) Evaluate impact of recruitment through contract with Essex County Council on the workforce profile.	All	HR Manager / Diversity Manager Ongoing
36. Make staff aware of both local and national staff reference and support groups and ensure facilitation of their attendance at meetings and other	i) Publicise both local and national BME staff reference groups at induction events. ii) Send letter out to new staff from ACO (Diversity) about staff reference groups.	Race and Ethnicity, Sexual Orientation, Disability, Religion	Diversity Manager Ongoing

events.	iii) Send out 'all Essex' emails to publicise meetings. iv) Ensure managers are aware of 'Regional Statement of Commitment.'		
37. Ensure reasons for leaving EPA are not due to discrimination or unfair treatment.	Analyse exit interview forms for all staff leaving the Service.	All	HR Manager / Diversity Manager Ongoing
38. Ensure staff are not unfairly subject to discipline or capability cases or raising grievances linked to discrimination or unfair treatment.	Monitor grievances, disciplinary and capability cases. Record on diversity report and ensure SMT and Diversity Committee have the information.	All	HR Manager / Diversity Manager Ongoing
39. Ensure welfare and well-being of staff.	Consider introducing 'wellbeing stocktake' section into Supervision / Appraisal Meetings.	All	SMT / HR By April 2010
40. Ensure staff are able to handle and resolve difficult issues.	Consider additional training options and conflict resolution processes e.g. directed role-play.	All	SMT / Training Manager By April 2010
RACE AND ETHNICITY			
41. Encourage and support the career progression of BME employees.	i) Promote the national 'Accelerate' scheme to all BME & disabled managers. ii) Consider setting up a regional mentoring scheme for BME staff.	Race and Ethnicity	HR Manager / Diversity Manager Ongoing
GENDER			
42. Aim for male and female employees to have an equal	Investigate whether Gender Pay Gap between average male	Gender	HR Manager

average salary.	and female salary has decreased and take further actions to encourage women to apply for higher grade positions.		Ongoing
DISABILITY			
43. Carry out actions to retain the Disability Symbol Award (2 ticks).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Interview all job applicants meeting minimum criteria. ii) Meet disabled employees annually to ensure development. c) Where an employee becomes disabled whilst in employment, make effort to ensure they can stay in employment. 	Disability	<p>HR Manager</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
44. Ensure buildings are accessible under DDA Compliance.	Check Office DDA action plans do not have outstanding items.	Disability	<p>Health and Safety Manager / MSS Managers</p> <p>By April 2010</p>
45. Ensure A.T. and Access to Work services for disabled staff are satisfactory.	HR and I&S Team to resolve outstanding problems.	Disability	<p>HR Manager/ I&S Manager</p> <p>By April 2010</p>
46. Encourage and support the career progression of disabled employees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Promote the national 'Accelerate' scheme to all disabled managers. ii) Consider setting up a regional mentoring scheme for disabled staff. 	Disability	<p>HR Manager / Diversity Manager</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
SEXUAL ORIENTATION			
47. Ensure staff, regardless of their sexual orientation, are treated fairly and not discriminated against.	Consider the statistical Information required that will enable EPA to demonstrate achievement of this	Sexual Orientation	<p>SMT</p> <p>By October 2009</p>

	objective.		
48. Ensure best practice for LGBT staff.	Consider joining Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme.	Sexual Orientation	SMT By October 2009
AGE			
49. Ensure staff, regardless of their age, are treated fairly and not discriminated against.	Consider the statistical Information required that will enable EPA to demonstrate achievement of this objective.	Age	SMT By October 2009
50. Improve employment opportunities for young people (under 20 years).	Consider extending I&S apprenticeship scheme to other functions.	Age	HR Manager / SMT By April 2010
51. Ensure Age Regulations are being adhered to.	(i) Information relating to age is removed from job application forms. (ii) Staff reaching retirement age are offered opportunity to apply for work beyond retirement age.	Age	HR Manager Ongoing
RELIGION AND BELIEF			
52. Ensure staff, regardless of their religion and belief are treated fairly and not discriminated against.	Consider the statistical Information required that will enable EPA to demonstrate achievement of this objective.	Religion and Belief	SMT By October 2009
SOCIAL CLASS			
53. Ensure staff have an understanding of social class issues.	Review current Diversity Training for Staff.	Social Class	Training Manager/ Diversity Manager By April 2010

Section 10: Appendices

10.1 Abbreviations

ABPO	Association of Black Probation Officers
AT	Assistive Technology
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
CAT	Confidence Action Team
DES	Disability Equality Scheme
EPA	Essex Probation Area
IAG	Independent Advisory Group (Essex Police)
GES	Gender Equality Scheme
LAGIP	Lesbians and Gays in Probation
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender
MENTER	Minority Ethnic Network Eastern Region
MERGE	Minority Ethnic Reference Group Essex
NDSN	National Disabled Staff Network
NAAPS	National Assoc. of Asian Probation Staff
NOMS	National Offender Management Service
OM	Offender Manager
PSR	Pre Sentence Report
SEDRG	Staff Enabling & Disability Reference Group
SMT	Strategic Management Team
WOWG	Women Offenders Working Group

10.2 Publications

The following publications have been referred to within the SES and copies are available upon request:

Disability Equality Scheme 2006 – 2009
Diversity Management Report (Employment Data) 2008/9
Diversity Management Report (Service Delivery Data) 2008/9
East of England Statement of Commitments
Equalities and Diversity Policy
Gender Equality Scheme 2007 – 2010
Good Practice Guide - When Meeting Disabled People
Impact Assessment Form
Race Equality Scheme 2008 – 2011
Service User Exit Questionnaire
Staff Survey Report 2008
Valuing Diversity in Work with Offenders and Victims Policy
Work with Racially Motivated Offenders Policy

10.3 Questionnaire for Service Users

Essex Probation Service is currently putting together its Single Equality Scheme. This Scheme will show how we will ensure a fair service for every one.

The Scheme will include consideration of the needs for our service users:

- Men and women
- People of all ages
- People with a disability
- All ethnic backgrounds
- Different religions
- All sexual orientations
- From all social classes

Please help us to improve our service delivery and offer services equal for all, by taking a few moments to answer the questions below.

1. Have you been treated with respect by Probation staff?

Yes No

2. Do you have any particular needs which we should have taken into consideration? (These could include belonging to a minority ethnic group, being disabled, or needing help with literacy, for instance).

Yes No

3. If so, did we take these into account?

Yes No

4. If you have answered No, please could you provide details below:

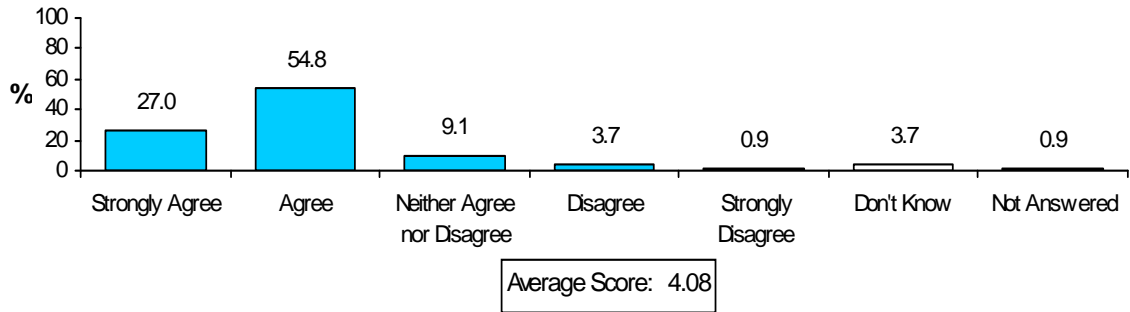
5. Please indicate below any suggestions you have for improving our service overall?

Thank you for completing this questionnaire

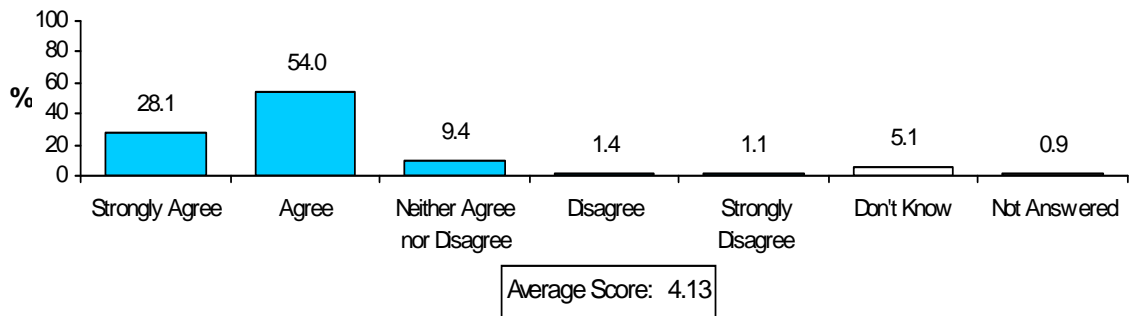
10.4 Information from Staff Survey 2008

Essex Probation Area does not discriminate at all on grounds of:

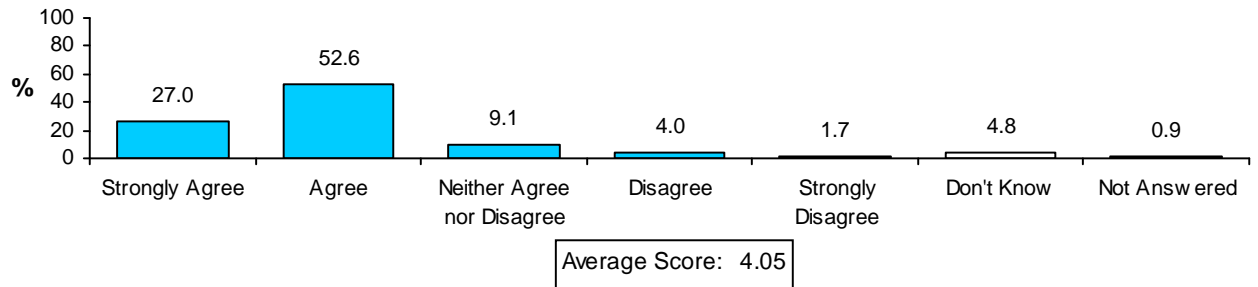
Gender



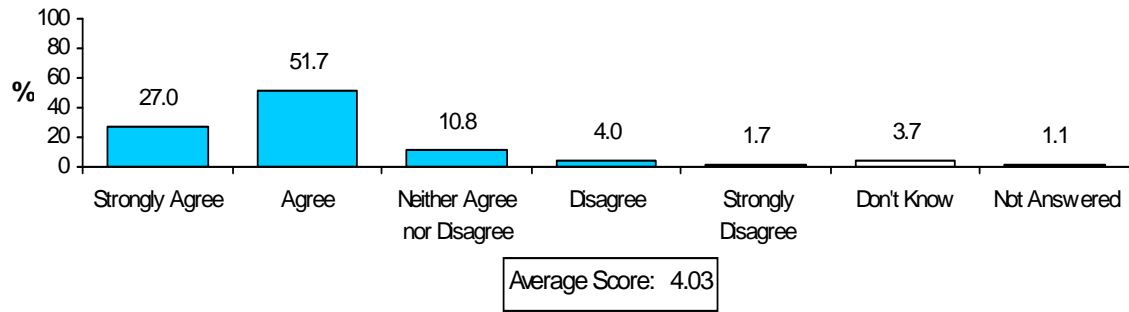
Sexual Orientation



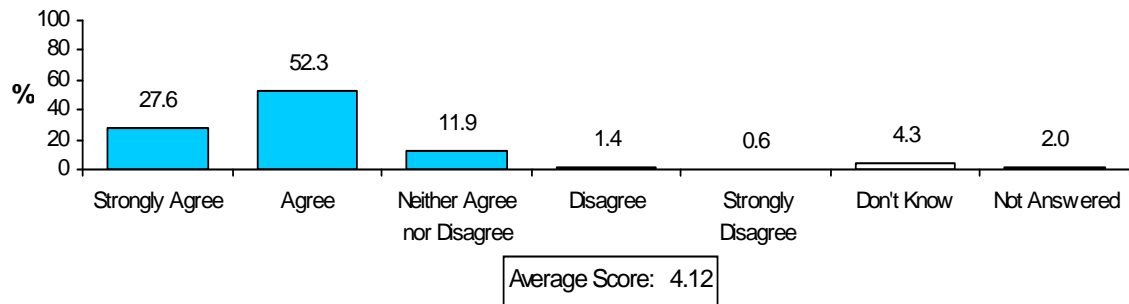
Race



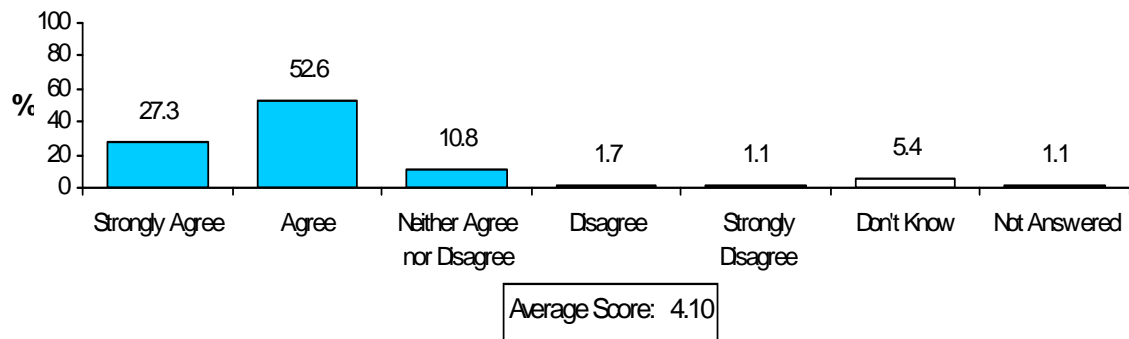
Age



Social Class



Religious Beliefs



Disability

