

Easy read version



Disability Action Plan 2019 - 2024

Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk



**INVESTORS
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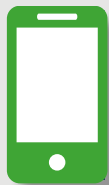
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You can also read it on our website. Go to

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/daeras-equality-scheme#toc-4>

and <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/consultations>

The central point of contact for the implementation and review of the Disability Action Plan, or to get a copy of this document in another format is:



- **Telephone: 028 7744 2027** and ask for the **Equality Officer - Cindy Fowler.**

If you have a hearing difficulty you can contact the

Department via **Text Relay**. Dial **18001 028 7744 2027**



- **Email: EqualityDiversityPublicAppointments@daera-ni.gov.uk**



- **Visit** our webpage at: **www.daera-ni.gov.uk**



- **Write to:** Cindy Fowler - Equality Officer
Ballykelly House
111 Ballykelly Road
Limavady BT49 9HP

About us

We are the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).

What do we do?

Here are some of the things we do.



- We look after the development of farming, forests and fishing in Northern Ireland.
- We provide a service to look after the health and welfare of animals, fish and plants.
- We look after environment and rural development in Northern Ireland.
- We provide research, expert advice and education.
- We look after some parts of public health in how food is made.

1. Introduction

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs has developed a new Disability Action Plan for the next 5 years (2019 to 2024).

The new Disability Action Plan tells you what we hope to do over the next 5 years. We will look at the Action Plans every year and make changes as needed.

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs will work towards the targets in this plan.

2. What we did

To help us make plans we looked at what the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs does:

- We ensure the quality of our food is of a high standard.
- We support farmers and farms.
- We help make sure our environment is safe and healthy.
- We take care of our forests.
- We help to keep our rural areas sustainable.



Then we thought about what we can do as part of our daily work that may benefit people with disabilities and/or ensure those people will have an equal chance to use our services.

3. Disability Action Plan

Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) - the law about disability says that the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs has to:

- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life.



It also says that the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs has to write a Disability Action Plan which shows how they will do this.

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs will assess the impact of all new plans and policies to promote opportunities for people with disabilities by making changes and adjustments.

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs will talk to people with disabilities and include their views in the new Disability Action Plan.

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs has a ***purpose*** to create:

“Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone”.

What do you want to change?

What do we want to change?

We want to raise awareness of disability and diversity* within staff teams.

* By 'diversity', we mean individual differences whether it be physical, age, race etc.

How will we do this?

- We will train staff on issues around disability and diversity.
- We will tell staff about disability/diversity issues and events.
- The Department will attend meetings with all the Northern Ireland Civil Service Departments on the issue of disability and diversity.
- We will continue to promote the JAM Card initiative within the department.
- The Department has dedicated staff in place specifically raising awareness of diversity and helping to increase the diversity of our workforce.
- The Department, as part of NICS, is signed up to the Mental Health Charter to ensure support for managers and staff and promote mental health and wellbeing in the workplace.
- We will set up a Disability Forum and encourage people from Disability Led Groups to be members. We would hope this would help us to identify any problems that may be faced by people with disabilities (staff, customers and stakeholders) when trying to use our services and then we can take action to stop this from happening.

What do we want to change?

We want to raise awareness of difficulties faced by people with disabilities, and make sure they are listened to.

How will we do this?

We will involve people with disabilities and groups through consultation to talk to them and get their views:

- We will make sure that all our information, materials and meetings are accessible to everyone.
- We will meet with people and groups before or during consultations.
- We will produce information in Plain English and user friendly formats. This will include Easy Read.

All information will, where possible, be made available in other formats on request:

- We will provide alternative formats, which may include Braille, audio formats (mp3 or DAISY), large print, usually within 20 working days.
- We will look at how best to communicate with children and young people, people with disabilities (in particular people with learning disabilities) and minority ethnic communities. Where appropriate, this will include Easy Read.

What do we want to change?

We want to support people with disabilities already working in the Department.

How will we do this?

- We will work with Department of Finance who are responsible for Human Resource issues and offer up suitable placements through the Northern Ireland Civil Service Work Experience Scheme for People with a Disability.
- We will support any recommendations from the Department of Finance who are responsible for Human Resource issues, and the Northern Ireland Civil Service Disability Champion and Working Group(s).
- We will put in place any changes that are needed to enable our staff with disabilities to continue to work.

What do we want to change?

We want to make life better for people with disabilities.

How will we do this?

- We will continue to promote the availability of our accessible forest parks through working with local councils and other groups who deal with disability interest groups.
- We will continue to improve our forest parks to make sure more areas are accessible for people with disabilities.

How will we do this?

- We will continue to promote our Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme (NIRDP) (2014-2020) to people with disabilities in the rural and farming areas. By doing so we will help to take away some of the things that stop people with disabilities taking part in this programme.
- We will continue to fund things such as the Community Rural Transport network which enables many people to access services which they would otherwise struggle to do.
- Our colleges (College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise - CAFRE) will continue to encourage students with a disability to enrol in our courses by: providing a dedicated support officer; promoting the accessibility of the college facilities; providing a variety of learning support; and by attending transition events for students with disabilities.
- We will always use the 'Guaranteed Interview Scheme' when recruiting people on to our public boards*.

* By public boards we mean a group of people who are given a role on our board. These boards have responsibility for making sure the different areas of work we are responsible for are delivering what the public need and expect (a list of our boards is given on page 11).

How will we do this?

- We will prepare an appointment plan which will be detailed and encourage applications from people with disabilities.
- We will consult persons with disabilities as well as groups representing those with disabilities when making changes to or improving our forests. This will help us to ensure there is 'nothing about us without us'.



4. Public Boards

We have responsibility for 5 Non Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB). These are:

Executive NDPBs:

- Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI).
- Agricultural Wages Board for NI (AWB).
- Livestock and Meat Commission for NI (LMC).
- Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority (NIFHA).
- Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside (CNCC).

North South Implementation Body

DAERA is jointly responsible for one North South Body:

- The Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission (FCILC).

Ad-Hoc Advisory

- TB Eradication Partnership (TBEP).
- College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) College Advisory Group.
- Review of Decisions - External Panel.

5. How you can respond to this Action Plan

- To find out more about this discussion document; or
- To tell us what you think about it.



- **Telephone: 028 7744 2027** and ask for the **Equality Officer - Cindy Fowler**. If you have a hearing difficulty you can contact the Department via **Text Relay**. Dial **18001 028 7744 2027**



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