

# Ceredigion Equality Assessment 2023

Analysis Report of the engagement campaign



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# 1. Method

A regional engagement campaign was undertaken to collect initial feedback on the state of equality in the Dyfed Powys area. The campaign ran from 22 May 2023 until 2 August 2023.

The Mid and West Wales Equality and Diversity group includes Ceredigion, Powys, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire County Councils, Hywel Dda University Health Board and Powys Teaching Health Board, Dyfed Powys Police, the Dyfed Powys Police and Crime Commissioner's Office, Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, the County Voluntary Councils for each county (CAVO, CAVS, PAVO and PAVS), University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Aberystwyth University and Pembrokeshire Coast and Bannau Brycheiniog National Park Authorities.

Together we created a survey (available in Welsh, English, Ukrainian, Russian, Polish, Romanian and Easy Read) and a bilingual poster. People were invited to complete the survey online or to request a paper copy at our libraries and leisure centres or by post via Clic.

In Ceredigion an email message was sent to the list of stakeholders below with a link to the online information and printable copies of the survey and poster attached. Everyone was asked to complete the survey, to display the poster and to share the information with their networks. They were asked to contact us if they needed copies of the survey and the poster to be posted to them.

## Ceredigion County Council stakeholder list:

- Children and Young People Service Provider Forum (105 members)
- Early Years, Childcare and Play group (42 members)
- Ceredigion Council Equalities Workgroup (46 members)
- Ceredigion County Councillors
- Ceredigion Town and Community Council clerks
- Disability Forum members (55 individuals/groups by email plus 199 via their Facebook page)
- Coleg Ceredigion
- Hyfforddiant Ceredigion Training
- Health Board Maternity Voices group
- School services

The information was placed on the Youth Council's MS Teams site and on Ceredigion Council staff MS Teams site. It was also promoted on social media and by a [press release](#) on 25/05/2023.

We do not rely on the online survey alone, however. We have a rich source of evidence from previous engagement campaigns undertaken by Ceredigion Council, and by Welsh Government. This data has informed the revision of our current Equality Objectives and development of our new Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.

A lot of qualitative information has been gathered from comments submitted with the online survey. Further statements were collected at Aberystwyth Pride event in April 2023 and at Ceredigion Children and Young People Festival in August 2023.

Discussions were also held at a meeting with the Disability Forum and with the Children and Young People Service Provider Forum, both in July 2023. A selection of these comments is listed at [Section 3](#).

### **Relevant local engagement and consultation campaigns**

[Childcare Sufficiency Assessment \(June 2022\)](#)

[Play Sufficiency Assessment \(June 2022\)](#)

[Ceredigion Assessment of Local Well-being \(March 2022\)](#)

[Ceredigion Age-friendly self-assessment \(2022-23\)](#)

### **Relevant national engagement and consultation campaigns**

[Anti-racist Wales Action Plan | GOV.WALES \(July 2022\)](#)

[Welsh Government LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales \(February 2023\)](#)

Ceredigion Strategic Equalities workgroup meets regularly. We have discussed our local response to the Anti-racist Wales action plan and the LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales. We have identified actions needed to show our commitment to Victim Support's Hate Crime Charter which the Council signed up to in 2022. We also recognise that some of the actions in our current Strategic Equality Plan require more work.

Concerns have been raised by the Older People's Commissioner for Wales, particularly about the increased dependence on online methods of communication, to which many older people don't have access.

We have also considered feedback from 170 children and 84 parents at Ceredigion play sessions relating to Welsh Government's Child Poverty consultation. They were asked, "What 3 things would make the biggest difference to children and their families now and in the future?" The top response was, "help with the costs of food, fuel and housing" and 2<sup>nd</sup> was "to be treated with respect regardless of age, gender, disability or ethnicity."

## 2. Equality Survey Responses

237 respondents completed the regional equality survey. 72 of the responses were from Ceredigion. 67 of these were from individuals and 5 from an organisation (Ceredigion Local Nature Partnership, Ceredigion County Council, Llandysul Town Council and Llangwryfon and Llanrhystud Community Councils). No paper copies were returned.

There were 73 responses from Carmarthenshire, 28 from Powys, 60 from Pembrokeshire, 3 from Swansea and 1 from 'Hywel Dda'.

The average response rate for UK public consultations stands at 0.7%. The Ceredigion response to the survey itself was lower (0.1% of the population). However, the response rate from people who share characteristics that are protected by the Equality Act was generally higher than our population percentages, examples are shown in the graphs below.

Fig 1.

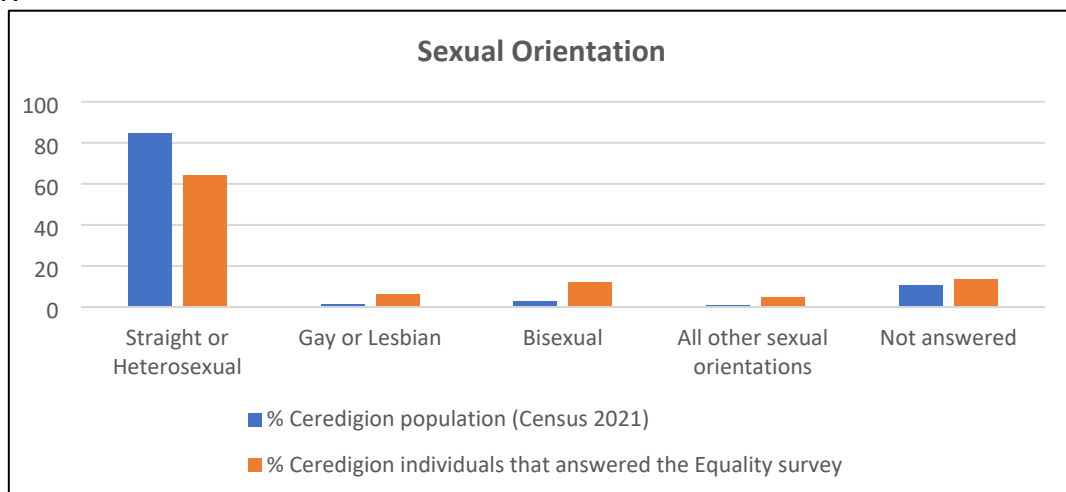


Fig 2.

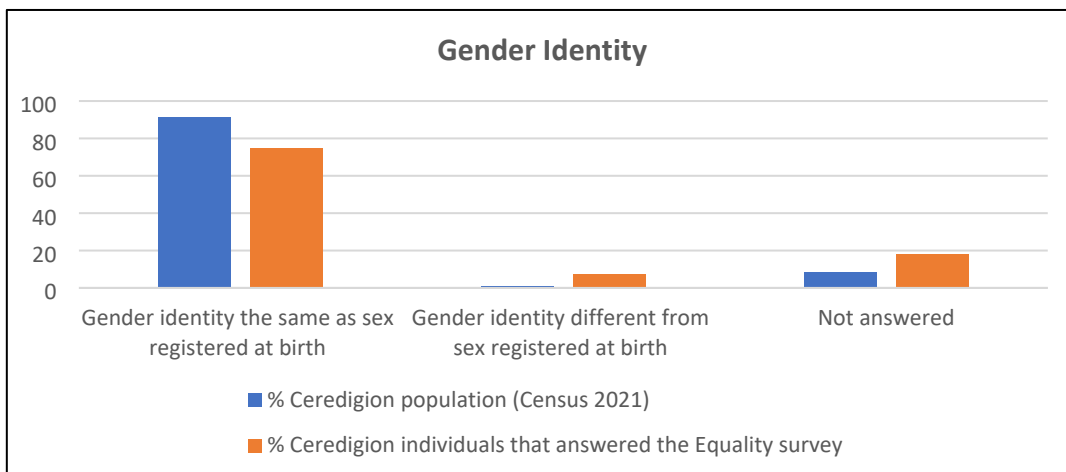


Fig 3.

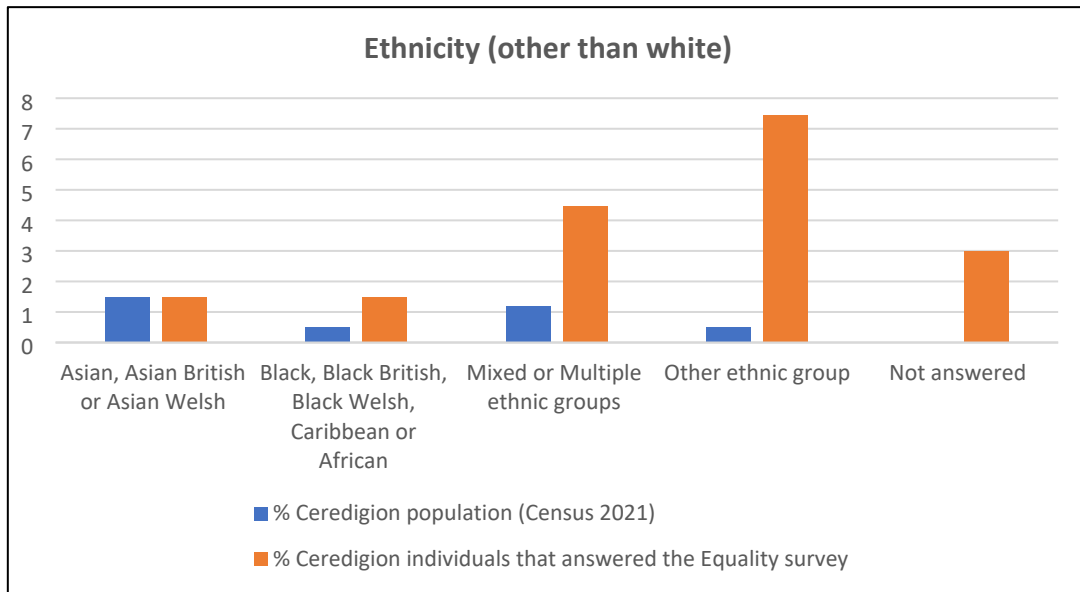


Fig 4.

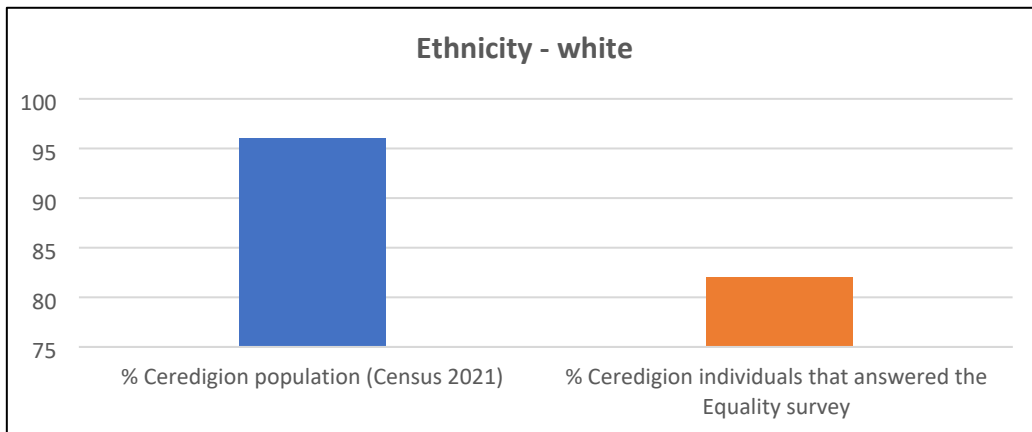
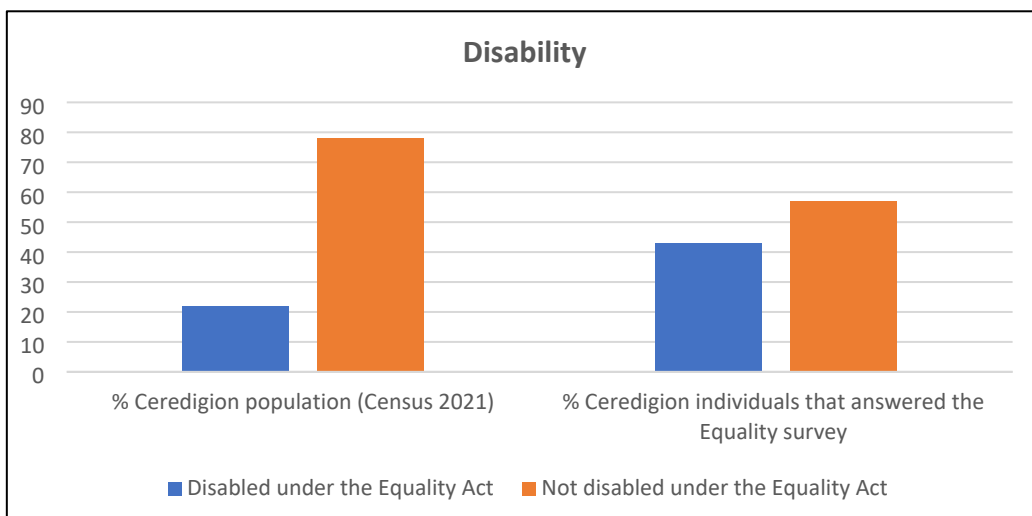


Fig 5.



Our regional equality survey asked people if they felt that specific groups of people had a worse or better experience in six areas of life than the population as a whole.

**The specific groups were:**

- Disabled people
- People from an ethnic minority
- Lesbian, gay or bisexual people
- People who are non-binary
- Trans-gender people
- Younger people (under 25 years)
- Older people (65 years or older)
- Females
- Males
- Single people
- People who are in a relationship
- Welsh speakers
- People who are pregnant or have recently given birth
- Members of the Armed Forces Community

**The six areas of life were:**

1. Education
2. Work and levels of pay
3. Living standards (access to care and support, housing, transport and leisure)
4. Health
5. Crime and access to justice
6. Participation (access to information, influencing decisions, getting on together in the community)

The table on the following page shows the top 3 cohorts that the people who answered our survey felt have a worse or much worse experience of the six areas of life.

The cohort that featured most frequently in the top three categories were:

- People who are disabled (14 times)
- People from an ethnic minority (11 times)
- Older people (6 times)
- Trans-gender people and People who are pregnant/recently given birth (4 times)
- Younger people (3 times),
- Lesbian, gay or bisexual people (twice)
- Females (once)

<b>Six Areas of Life</b>	<b>Have a worse or much worse experience</b>	
<b>Education</b>	<b>1</b>	Being disabled
	<b>2</b>	Being from an ethnic minority
	<b>3</b>	Being pregnant/recently given birth
<b>Work</b>	<b>1</b>	Being disabled
	<b>2</b>	Being from an ethnic minority and being an older person (65+)
	<b>3</b>	Being pregnant/recently given birth
<b>Levels of Pay</b>	<b>1</b>	Being a younger person (under 25)
	<b>2</b>	Being disabled
	<b>3</b>	Being female
<b>Access to Care and Support</b>	<b>1</b>	Being disabled
	<b>2</b>	Being from an ethnic minority
	<b>3</b>	Being transgender
<b>Housing</b>	<b>1</b>	Being disabled
	<b>2</b>	Being from an ethnic minority
	<b>3</b>	Being a younger person (under 25)
<b>Access to Transport</b>	<b>1</b>	Being disabled
	<b>2</b>	Being an older person (65+)
	<b>3</b>	Being pregnant/recently given birth
<b>Leisure and access to the coast and countryside</b>	<b>1</b>	Being disabled
	<b>2</b>	Being an older person (65+)
	<b>3</b>	Being pregnant/recently given birth
<b>Health</b>	<b>1</b>	Being disabled
	<b>2</b>	Being from an ethnic minority
	<b>3</b>	Being an older person (65+)
<b>Experience of Crime</b>	<b>1</b>	Being from an ethnic minority
	<b>2</b>	Being disabled
	<b>3</b>	Being lesbian, gay or bisexual and being transgender
<b>Access to Justice services</b>	<b>1</b>	Being from an ethnic minority
	<b>2</b>	Being disabled
	<b>3</b>	Being transgender
<b>Influencing decisions</b>	<b>1</b>	Being from an ethnic minority
	<b>2</b>	Being disabled
	<b>3</b>	Being a younger person (under 25)
<b>Access to information and digital services</b>	<b>1</b>	Being an older person (65+)
	<b>2</b>	Being disabled
	<b>3</b>	Being from an ethnic minority
<b>Getting on together in the community</b>	<b>1</b>	Being disabled
	<b>2</b>	Being from an ethnic minority
	<b>3</b>	Being lesbian, gay or bisexual and being transgender
<b>Quality of life since 2019</b>	<b>1</b>	Being disabled
	<b>2</b>	Being an older person (65+)
	<b>3</b>	Being from an ethnic minority



### **3. Comments and lived experience**

*(All comments are taken from responses to the regional equality survey unless stated otherwise).*

#### **3.1 Education**

As a bisexual girl I experienced bullying at school (long ago in a different region) which damaged my education. Since then, I have had to struggle to gain access to adult education to repair this damage. I now find that at age 64 I still face barriers to gaining the educational opportunities I seek.

There is disparity in the provision of education and resources to Welsh stream schools and departments, leaving those in underrepresented groups with less access to learning resources.

Although they are in a Welsh medium school, the children speak English with their friends – it's heart-breaking taking our children to a Welsh school for them to speak English.

Ceredigion favours those that are Welsh speaking. The education in secondary schools is of a higher standard if taught through the medium of Welsh than that of English.

*There should be...Protection from bullying for trans and gay students and trans people...should be... included in teaching for Primary and Secondary. (Aberystwyth Pride, 2023)*

Require schools to allow Pride clubs/other identity clubs. Not require them to have them, just to allow them. *(Aberystwyth Pride, 2023)*

Trans and queer friendly quality sex education in all schools. *(Aberystwyth Pride, 2023)*

Make school a better place and stop bullies. *(Children and Young People festival, 2023)*

Better home-schooling activities. *(Children and Young People festival, 2023)*

#### **3.2 Work and Levels of Pay**

I am African. I have applied for jobs and I have not been selected for the first stage, but the jobs are still available on advertisement platforms. Clearly racism is hugely playing a role.

For all public services to have more anti racist training, employ staff from diverse backgrounds, and know that black people can also be Welsh and belong.

Improve hiring processes for peoples of an ethnic minority, ensure that spaces are accessible for disabled people.

Better training. More diverse recruitment and appointments. Do senior officers in public services receive unconscious bias training courses?

People who can speak Welsh can get jobs more easily because it's a requirement on lots of jobs. They have less competition in interviews because there are less Welsh speakers to compete with. I've been unable to apply for jobs I'm otherwise well qualified to do simply because I'm not fluent in Welsh. I think this reduces diversity in the workplace because it's harder to learn Welsh unless you're already surrounded by Welsh speakers and fit with the Welsh in-crowd already, so it self-selects for a small proportion of the community.

You have to be willing to speak English to be able to get most jobs – and every job that I've been in – in Wales – people have made comments on my Welsh accent when I speak English.

Not all Welsh people can or want to speak Welsh, it's forced and discriminated against in employment and health care, it feels on the brink of racism. It should be a personal choice.

Ceredigion prioritises and supports those who are Welsh speaking in employment / earnings opportunities, especially those working within the council. There are very little opportunities for disabled people.

Work opportunities for disabled people is tokenistic and public bodies do not do enough to promote and recruit disabled people in employment beyond lower paid positions. In public services, there are additional barriers, such as the requirement to speak Welsh which indirectly discriminates against deaf people since there are no Welsh accessible courses for deaf people in the whole of Wales.

Better job prospects. (*Children and Young People festival, 2023*)

Better pay for Teaching Assistants. (*Children and Young People festival, 2023*)

Give employees a chance to evaluate their line managers anonymously; allow homeworking where at all possible, especially. for people with disabilities

### **3.3 Living Standards**

*These comments are about access to care and support, housing, transport, leisure and access to the coast and countryside.*

Arrange regular transportation to access services, improve local services, improve access and affordable exercise clubs and support groups.

Work evenings and weekends/ bank holidays like others to get more accessible. Let's have staff back and visible in the community please so we can call in and see them! Stop relying on volunteers and goodwill, it's running out and abused!

Reintroduce day centres in the county to assist carers.

No childcare available for disabled children and teenagers either during term time or school holidays in Ceredigion. This is a long-term problem and has prevented me from returning to work in the healthcare sector. (*Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022*)

My son has multiple and complex needs and attends a resource base educational setting managed by the local authority. There is currently no after school provision in my local town and although we have been awarded direct payments to support him in attending after school enrichment activities, there are no Personal Assistants applying for the post. (*Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022*)

When caring for children with complex needs there is a lot of training hours involved to ensure that we can meet the needs of individual children, this is an additional cost for our staffing budget which is not considered within any funding support. (*Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022*)

Welsh medium childminders are booked up in advance (have a waiting list) and are very limited. It is important to us as a family to have a first language Welsh setting for our children as we are first language Welsh, many of the childminders are not fluent or confident in first language Welsh. (*Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022*)

You need better training on dealing with situations involving adults who have medical conditions and police officers need compassion when dealing with these.

One daughter and partner mid 30's couldn't find anywhere to live in Ceredigion and had to move to Pembrokeshire - only place they could find to live - managed to buy a house.

Generally, the housing situation appears to be horrific - rents are insane as are house prices and the quality of the housing stock inadequate and current grants for insulation using non breathable insulation on older unsuitable housing stock is likely to create severe future issues.

We know that women and LGBTQ+ people are far more likely than men to be victims of domestic abuse including violence, emotional, sexual and financial abuse making them in greater need of housing services but also more likely to face discrimination from housing providers. My personal experience reflects this.

Most private landlords refuse disabled people because they don't want to pay for any adaptations. Disabled people are also more likely to need benefits, because being disabled is extremely expensive; and private landlords often illegally refuse to rent to people who have benefits.

We all love living in our own homes, but we need to explore what could communal living be like, a review is needed looking at shared community arrangements to reduce isolation and consider new developments that make it easier for people as they grow older. (*Age Friendly self-assessment 2022/23*)

More affordable housing for first time buyers. (*Children and Young People Festival, 2023*)

People of colour and LGBT+ people are at greater risk of hate crime in public places including on public transport. As a white woman in a relationship with a black woman I have experienced harassment on public transport in the past and this makes me wary to use public transport now if I can avoid it.

If I could get to workplaces on Sundays, I would be living the dream instead of getting one hour of sleep a night from job search stress, no one wants someone who can't do Sundays.

Very limited spaces for disabled passengers on buses and limited number of accessible taxis. Older people rely on buses which have been cut and communication is terrible about changes.

Coastal footpath and beach access in Ceredigion not accessible for disabled or those with Health issues - very narrow and falling away from the cliff in quite a few places and disabled access to beaches needed with regular public transport to such beaches.

Beach buggy to gain access on beach (*Older people engagement 2022/2023*)

Lack of pavements for mobility scooters and mobility issues (*Age Friendly self-assessment 2022/23*)

I can't access our coastal path because it's not disabled friendly. I would love to access the countryside but most of that isn't disabled friendly either. I would love to see wider earth paths to be able to accommodate a rollator or wheelchair, not tarmac paths as they would spoil it.

Disabled almost everything has steps. Going to use the example of the leisure centre though. Disabled changing rooms from swimming, or other parts leisure centre, often get taken over by families. Or blocked off by staff because they haven't been cleaned alongside the normal changing rooms.

Trans people often can't access changing rooms because they don't feel safe in the main ones. My friends have been harassed. We need more family changing, and private changing, so we don't get the cross over with disabled changing.

Continence management is a big worry, there should be adult and child changing facilities, how much has been made by changing the loos to paid loos?" (*Age Friendly self-assessment 2022/23*)

Let trans people pee in peace. (*Aberystwyth Pride, 2023*)

As a transgender man, I worry every day about my human rights. It's only a matter of time before I will not be allowed to use a male public toilet.

More clubs for 4-year-olds. (*Children and Young People Festival, 2023*)

14+ clubs for young people (*Children and Young People Festival, 2023*)

There seems to be very little for over 10's to early 20's in rural areas. My daughter wants to move to my village with my grandchildren who are under 5 - great now but without a car or public transport, it will be dire in a few years' time.

### **3.4 Health**

Very rural area and Bronglais hospital is on a hill and lacks parking - difficult to accompany a disabled person to appts there. Have dropped at old entrance and had to find parking and then run uphill and take the person to their appt.

As a bisexual woman in a lesbian relationship, I have been denied adequate psychosexual counselling compared to heterosexual counterparts surviving similar breast cancer treatment.

Due to my autism, the doctors dismiss me and don't listen, so I don't bother going.

Travel is difficult when you're disabled, and our trust is over 3 counties. Trans health care is only done by 3 clinics that are in England. 2 of these are in London and have 5 year long waits.

Better mental and physical healthcare for people in the LGBTQ+ community  
(*Aberystwyth Pride, 2023*)

### **3.5 Crime and Access to Justice**

I get over policed a lot, as do my friends, and neighbours. Mostly this is because I'm poor and live in a poor area. This has happened before for being out at night in my wheelchair, being told to move along for just being out. Another time I was moved on by 3 officers for using a bench while having an asthma attack, because I was scaring people.

People of colour I know get stop constantly for silly reasons. Just for walking around.

Aberystwyth is peaceful with plenty of fresh air and a low crime rate. (*Age Friendly self-assessment 2022/23*)

I want every member of the LGBT+ community to feel safe and accepted.  
(*Aberystwyth Pride, 2023*)

Stop propagating transphobic jokes, criticism, discrimination, violence etc and come to see the normality of trans individuals (*Aberystwyth Pride, 2023*)

Aberaeron would be better if you get rid of vapes and drugs. (*Children and Young People festival, 2023*)

Safe spaces for LGBTQ+ people and other minorities. (*Aberystwyth Pride, 2023*)

Racism and disability hate issues are rife. Sexism is rife and it's hard to feel safe.

### **3.6 Influencing decisions**

Things are increasingly online and there can be a digital divide which, arguably adversely affects older people.

I don't believe that Welsh language is treated fairly and equally e.g. community councils lack translation facilities.

Not outward looking very narrow/single minded - managers make decisions they want but cover it by a 'consultation'.

As a Pagan, I often find that if I mention my beliefs, I am not taken seriously in public discussions. I don't feel safe to share my religious opinions outside of closed circles.

I resent the notion, widespread in Ceredigion, that because we have relatively small ethnic minority populations, we don't need to consider the needs or rights of people of colour to participate in public life and influence decisions.

Women's voices are still often not heard, and women are woefully underrepresented at County Council and community council level.

It all depends on what the decision is about. Parents of young disabled people are very forthright as they have always had to shout.

Most decision-making systems are run by older people and participated in by older people, so it can be quite an exclusive environment. I'm thinking of town councils, etc

Men could resign or stand down in favour of women candidates. Or take more responsibility for childcare, eldercare and housework to free up women to participate in public life.

In my experience women are often ignored when they have an opinion.

Involve the communities you serve in a sincere way and not just via complicated consultations which exclude many (particularly lower socio-economic groups) from participating in debates on decisions that may impact their lives.

No one listens anyway, only Welsh speakers and those with council connections have a true say and influence.

There seems to be very little understanding of the relationship between democracy and Community involvement in the County Council. The opportunity to have any real influence or even dialogue is sadly extremely minimal.

Consultation meetings, etc are nearly always inaccessible to deaf people. Thus, if you can't attend, you don't get to influence.

### **3.7 Access to Information and Digital Services**

My wife used to teach IT within the community. Her classes had an age range from 17 to 92. She had people from all of the groups listed. So, all of those who wanted it had the same access to it.

Accessibility isn't always built into online systems, and this can pose challenges for various disabilities.

I know people who don't have the internet at all, and I find they are quite excluded from a lot of information because we tend to presume that everyone has a smartphone and access to a computer.

Old people can afford the technology but can't use it.

A lot of things are now digital, and a lot of elderly don't have access to computers or the Internet.

Please don't forget that not everyone is online. (*Children and Young People festival, 2023*)

Wider promotion of events. Some are still unaware of the fantastic community that there is. (*Aberystwyth Pride, 2023*)

Elderly and disabled are forgotten about and are not included in digital upgrading. Impractical suggestions made and they feel left behind and excluded. It's harder for them.

It depends on the person. Many people I work with have no interest, so opportunity is irrelevant.

Welsh language service is generally lower.

### **3.8 Getting on Together in the Community**

Getting together in a community is difficult in my village as there are different groups or residents who try to organise things who seem to belittle others - so I tend to avoid them and keep to myself.

I'm very lucky to live in a lovely, friendly village.

I can't easily join in, so I am mostly alone.

Mae siarad yr un iaith yn dod â ni'n agosach at ein gilydd, mae'n druenus iawn fod llai ohonom bellach yn fy nghymuned. (*Speaking the same language brings us closer together, it's a great shame that there are now fewer of us in my community*).

Worse being a non- Welsh speaker.

Some protected characteristics are all fashionable now and lots of media/opportunities open for them. Disability and old age is never popular and they get left behind and overlooked.

The community things that go on are usually weekday work times so not available for anyone working or carers. More effort should be made to meet everyone's needs and not to fit in with council employee needs.

People tend to mind their own business and let you get on with it but help each other when its needed (*Age Friendly self-assessment 2022/23*)

People tend to show a lot of consideration to older people in this area. (*Age Friendly self-assessment 2022/23*)

I want every member of the LGBT+ community to feel safe and accepted. (*Aberystwyth Pride, 2023*)

I'd like people to stop yelling slurs at me in the pubs. (*Aberystwyth Pride, 2023*)

I would love a world where people ask pronouns before assuming. (*Aberystwyth Pride, 2023*)

*I wish...*For people to not feel ashamed or scared to live as their authentic self. (*Aberystwyth Pride, 2023*)

### **3.9 Impact of events since the last equality survey in 2019**

*People were asked to consider the impact of Covid-19, Brexit, the war in Ukraine and the cost-of-living crisis.*

Covid was great for caring for a relative - gave the space needed at a time when something was about to break. Also good for my pregnant daughter - gave time and space for both parents to be there. My mother in her 80's in England found isolation during Covid very difficult.

I think young people are really struggling with the interpersonal impacts of being locked-in during covid and rising prices making it harder to get started and make a life.



Being an introvert, I actually benefitted from lockdowns as was finally allowed to work from home - sadly this didn't last, despite how positively it affects my mental health; all is overshadowed by the financial impact of inflation without wage compensation and due to the housing situation in Wales I'm forced to live in a house share with 12 others as it's affordable (I'm miserable).

I would say that those who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, non-binary or transgender, are more accepted now than they used to be.

Cost associated with living with disability has soared and no one recognises that.

Cash is still legal, make sure we can control our own budget. (Children and Young People festival, 2023)

Everyone who isn't rich has been hit by the cost-of-living crisis.

I want to celebrate my next -14th - birthday with my father and grandparents in my Ukrainian house. (Children and Young People festival, 2023)

I want to go back to Ukraine (Children and Young People festival 2023)

#### **4. Conclusion**

All of the above has been considered as part of the engagement and consultation process that has helped us to formulate our draft Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28.

The draft Strategic Equality Plan will now be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee for feedback before being presented to Ceredigion Council Cabinet in October 2023.

If approved, the Equalities and Inclusion team will put the draft plan out to public consultation in Winter 2023. Once the public consultation is concluded and any required amendments are made, the final plan will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee for feedback before being presented to Ceredigion Council Cabinet in February 2024.

The new Strategic Equality plan 2024-28 is scheduled to be published on our website by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.