

Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority

Disability Action Plan

September 2009

Please note that this document is available on request in alternative formats including:

- **Large font**
- **Audiocassette**
- **Braille**
- **Computer Disc**
- **Main minority ethnic languages**

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DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority

Introduction

1.1 Under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), the Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority (NIFHA) is required when carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need to:

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life ('the disability duties').

Under Section 49B of the DDA 1995, the NIFHA is also required to submit to the Equality Commission a **disability action plan** showing how it proposes to fulfill these duties in relation to its functions.

1.2 As Chairman and Chief Executive of NIFHA, we are committed to implementing effectively the disability duties and this disability action plan. We will allocate all necessary resources (in terms of people, time and money) in order to implement effectively this plan and where appropriate, build objectives and targets relating to the disability duties into corporate and annual operating plans.

We will also put appropriate internal arrangements in place to ensure that the disability duties are complied with and that this disability

action plan is effectively implemented. We will ensure the effective communication of the plan to staff and that all necessary training and guidance for staff is provided on the disability duties and on the implementation of the plan.

We confirm our commitment to submitting an annual report to the Equality Commission on the implementation of this plan as well as carrying out a five yearly review of this plan.

Responsibility for implementing, reviewing and evaluating this disability action plan and the point of contact within NIFHA will be:-

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- 1.3 We confirm our commitment to submitting an annual progress report on the implementation of this plan to the Equality Commission and to carrying out a five year review of this plan, or plans submitted to the Equality Commission over the five year review period.

A copy of this plan, our annual progress to the Equality Commission and our five year review of this plan will be made available on our website www.nifha.co.uk.

1.3a **Consultation**

NIFHA is committed to engage effectively with disabled people in the drafting, implementation, monitoring and review of this Plan.

NIFHA is committed to carrying out consultation in a meaningful manner in the development of its disability duties.

In addition we are keen to seek the views of disabled people in relation to the development of the Plan. This will be achieved through direct contact with disability organisations and joint working with other Northern Ireland public bodies.

As part of the consultation process barriers to effective consultation will be removed by ensuring accessibility to documents in appropriate formats. Information will be made available on request in accessible formats including, Braille, large print, disc and audio cassette. Information will also be made available in accessible formats in a timely fashion. It will also be important to establish with disabled people the basis for dialogue and engagement during the life of the Plan.

1.4 **Functions**

The Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority (NIFHA) is an executive non-departmental public body (NDPB) sponsored by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for Northern Ireland (DARD).

The Authority is a statutory body established in 1973 under the Harbours Act (N.I.) 1970 and the Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority Order (N.I.) 1973 and is responsible for the three fishery harbours and harbour estates of Ardglass, Kilkeel and Portavogie.

The Authority is a relatively small public body employing a total of 23 people most of whom are operational staff based at the three harbours.

The primary functions of the Authority are:

- To improve, manage and maintain the harbours and harbour estates.
- To operate such facilities as may be provided at the harbours.
- To dredge and maintain the harbour berths, channels and entrances.
- To lease, dispose of, or develop land vested in the Authority.
- To make Bye-Laws to control the day-to-day running of the harbours and associated facilities.

1.5 **Public Life Positions**

The Authority consists of a Chairman and up to eight Board Members. Responsibility for appointing these positions lies with the

Department for Agriculture and Rural Development for Northern Ireland which follows best practice guidelines on making public appointments. These appointments are monitored and regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

The Authority engages with stakeholders via a Port Users Group in each harbour.

2. **Previous Measures**

NIFHA has already taken a number of measures to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage their participation in public life as a result of the duties under Section 75. These include:

- Disability Awareness training
- Section 75 training
- Consultation with equality and relevant disability groups (including consulting on the drafting, implementation, monitoring and review of this Plan).
- Formalised consultation schedule with Port User/customer groups
- Annual staff monitoring
- Implementing Workplace Policies and Reasonable Adjustments
- Behaviour at work policies
- Policy Proofing
- Including accessibility facilities in maintenance and capital works projects

2.1 **How the Disability Action Plan will be distributed**

The Disability Action Plan will be circulated to established consultees and Port User Groups and can be accessed on the NIFHA website **www.nifha.co.uk**

NIFHA will, through our ongoing work with people with disabilities and people with learning disabilities, find appropriate ways of communicating the Plan. The Plan will be produced in clear print and plain language, will be available in alternative formats on request, including large print, Daisy, Braille, audio cassette and computer disc.

All employees will receive a copy of the Plan.

3 **Action Measures**

Outlined below are the measures which we propose to take over the next five years ending in 2012.

NIFHA: Appendix 1 – Action Plan

Theme: Mainstreaming Disability Duties

Measures	Timescale	Performance Indicators/ Target
Ensure new disability duties taken into consideration when proposing new or revising existing policies	Review on an annual basis	New duties built into Compliance Measures (screening) and reported in Annual progress report Better promotion of equality for disabled people and due regard paid to positive attitudes and encouraging participation

Theme: Training

Measures	Timescale	Performance Indicators/Target
Ensure all staff and officers receive the appropriate training on their duties under the DDA and complementary legislation (Priority given to staff involved in recruitment and selection)	2009 and ongoing	All staff trained in disability awareness including frontline staff in the Harbours. Positive staff response to training sessions.

Theme: Information and Communication		
Measures	Timescale	Performance indicators/Target
Evaluate effectiveness of current internal and external communications programme and identify areas for improvement.	By March 2010	<p>All forms of communication are assessed in relation to the two duties and disability and equality generally.</p> <p>Review this action and keep under review.</p> <p>Documents provided in alternative formats where required.</p>
Upgrade website to improve accessibility for persons with a disability	By March 2010	<p>Basic website upgrade completed by March 2009.</p> <p>Reported in annual report and communicated to key consultees.</p> <p>Comments by Port Users at regular harbour meetings.</p>

Theme: Accessibility		
Measures	Timescale	Performance indicators/Target
<p>Ensure disability access issues are effectively addressed on the following capital work projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fish market upgrade Kilkeel to include welfare facilities for disabled persons. 	Dec 2010	<p>Improvements completed with improved accessibility for disabled persons.</p> <p>Comments / opinions of Port Users at regular harbour meetings.</p> <p>Reported in annual report and communicated to key consultees.</p>
Theme: Working with third parties		
Measures	Timescale	Performance Indicator/ Target
<p>Ensure joined-up approach to disability issues in each council area, Ards, Down and Newry and Mourne.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Joined up approach to Disability Duties reported in the annual report.</p> <p>More positive attitude to disability and more effective actions to address accessibility issues.</p> <p>Comments of local disability officers in councils considered.</p>

Theme: Encouraging Participation in Public Life		
Measures	Timescale	Performance Indicators/Target
To keep under review any employment opportunities for people with disabilities; for example opportunities offered by USEL	Completed by March 2009	Opinion of employee and report on effectiveness of opportunity from facilitating body (e.g. USEL).
To encourage and support the representation of disabled persons on Harbour Port User Groups	By March 2010	Level of participation reported in annual Equality Commission report.