



## **Equal Opportunities in Rural Scotland: Working together on a practical vision to bridge current barriers to social inclusion**

### **Conference Report**

HIEF/Scottish Government/EHRC Event

26<sup>th</sup> February, 2008  
Drumossie Hotel, Inverness

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## 1.0 Introduction

The Highlands & Islands Equality Forum (HIEF) was funded by the Scottish Government Equality Unit, Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and European Social Funding, to hold a conference which aimed to bring together people from all parts of Scotland to discuss issues of rurality in respect of Equal Opportunities. Whilst such discussions have taken place previously, this event aimed to move the debate beyond identifying where barriers exist to identifying practical ways in which they can be overcome. In particular, the EHRC was keen to examine how they might engage with rurality issues in their work.

### 1.1 Executive Summary

#### 1.1.1 What we set out to do and why

Working together with the Scottish Government Equality Unit and the EHRC, HIEF was keen to progress the national discussion on rural issues. It was important for our conference to go beyond just *talking* about the issues to delivering real outputs that would influence the Equality & Diversity agenda moving forward. In particular, there was an opportunity to influence the strategy of the EHRC. During the planning stages of the conference, the EHRC committed to a series of three follow-up round table discussions that would use the findings of the conference to look at taking forward some key issues. This allowed us to use the conference to gather information on barriers to equal opportunities caused by rurality along with suggested, feasible solutions, and to focus on actual actions in the later discussion events. For that reason, the findings from the later discussions are included in this report as they represent the final outcome of the conference.

Although we didn't want to spend long going over old ground, it was necessary to start the process by sharing our understanding of the barriers to equal opportunities and to highlight those that were specifically caused by the fact that we live and work in a rural environment. We did this by inviting people to tell their personal stories of facing discrimination, and facilitated group discussions then worked to identify key emerging themes. Further discussion then centred on how we might all work together on practical solutions. This delegate activity was set against a backdrop of key speeches that highlighted the vision of the Government and Commission and took us through the experiences of a large organisation (the police) and a small voluntary sector project (Cowal Befriending Scheme). Ailsa Spindler, the Highland Services Manager of the Terrence Higgins Turst, professionally chaired the full day conference. Many delegates commented on the way she kept things running to time and HIEF is very grateful for her valuable contribution to the event.

#### 1.1.2 Our delegates

133 delegates from a variety of areas, sectors and interests came to the Drumossie Hotel, Inverness on 26<sup>th</sup> February to discuss the rural dimension of barriers to equal

opportunities in Scotland. HIEF tried hard to attract a diversity of attendance, but use of an Inverness venue and reliance on HIEF's Highlands & Islands network as the prime source of contacts meant that the delegate list didn't realistically capture the full diversity of the Scottish rural demographic: 64% of delegates came from the Inverness area; 75% were women; very few were under 25 years old; and 66% were white Scots. However, we did attract people from most parts of the country (apart from Borders) and from some ethnic minority groups. Our audience was largely a mix of public (51%) and voluntary (41%) sectors: 25 delegates were equality & diversity officers; 30 represented community planning partnerships; 24 work in government; 16 were from equality stakeholder groups; and 14 delegates deliver advocacy work. There was also a good spread of interest across the different equality strands.

### **1.1.3 What we learned from our organisation of the event**

The process of organising such a large event on equality in a rural setting also brought its own learning:

- It is difficult to ensure inclusivity and accessibility to an event arranged at short notice as delegates attending a rural conference need to take extra time out of their schedules for travel, and travel arrangements can often be complicated and expensive. All future events will need to factor in the cost and timescales of delegates attending from rural areas.
- We were lucky with the weather but one speaker had to choose a different travel route due to cancellation of ferries. In future, it might be wise to avoid holding events in winter months
- There is a lack of interpreters and other support services in rural areas. This means that we have to employ people from further away (south of England in the case of the palantypists). This adds the same complication as for delegates travelling long distances – extra time out of the office, travel subject to disruption etc – and all of this impacts on both the willingness for people to take on the job, and the extra expenses incurred due to travel time, overnight accommodation and subsistence costs.
- The fact that people were keen to attend evidences the support for rurality issues and the need for similar events in future
- It was easier to communicate with people in the Highlands & Islands due to HIEF's established network. There was less representation from other parts of rural Scotland and this is likely to be a combination of a) not enough people being contacted through poor communication network; b) an unwillingness to take time out of busy work schedule to travel north; and c) HIEF's name in Highlands & Islands is respected and connected with important and worthwhile events but those outside of the area may not know who we are or what we do. This suggests the need to develop a country-wide network of those interested in rural issues



#### **1.1.4 What we learned from our speakers**

Ros Meiklem, Director for Scotland, EHRC outlined their vision of a listening Commission. In their role as enabler and enforcer of equality legislation, they take rurality seriously and want to engage with rural communities to inform their strategy.

Paddy Tomkins, HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland took us over the (sometimes painful) journey that the Police have followed over the years from the Stephen Lawrence enquiry to their present position as trailblazer of good practice. This journey has included building confidence in communities, considering the diverse needs of individuals and working in partnership with others to overcome challenges of rurality.

Lesley Irving, Team Leader for Race, Religion and Refugee Integration, Scottish Government Equality Unit gave the government perspective on the conference topic. In this, she demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of rural challenges including demographic change and the subsequent threat to fragile communities. There was a heartening commitment from government to addressing the issues and we were all encouraged to use the public duties to good effect to abolish discrimination.

Pauline Livingstone, Co-ordinator, Cowal Befriending Scheme, talked us through her project, a case study that delegates warmed to because of its sincere motives and practical solutions which make a real difference to people in a very remote part of the country. It was inspirational to hear that helping people as individuals with individual needs naturally leads to compliance with equality legislation; as a by-product, not as an aim in itself.

#### **1.1.5 What we learned from our storytellers**

It was very difficult to find people who were willing and confident enough to tell very personal stories in front of a large group of strangers. We particularly struggled to find stories of age discrimination, perhaps because those who are very young or very old find it particularly daunting to speak publicly. We were very grateful, therefore, that a few brave volunteers agreed to share their very poignant and powerful personal stories which reminded us all why we need to continue to push for change.

Our storytellers gave us real evidence of barriers faced because of disability, race, gender, belief and sexual orientation, but they also told of how they turned negative experiences into a good quality of life. For most, it was down to their positive, 'can do' attitude. Support from family and friends is very important, and those who lack this have the added hurdle of facing family hostility as well as that of the wider community. We also learned of some practical solutions such as ESOL (English as a Second Language) lessons at times most suitable for those who need this service. Where we had two storytellers on one theme, their experiences differed, and this highlighted the diversity to be found even within the various equality strands. Indeed, it reminds us the diversity of people in general; there are no 'norms' as we are all different one to another.

### **1.1.6 What we learned from our workshop discussions**

(NB: In addition to the findings in our workshops, we also invited delegates to send us further thoughts on the key issues as we appreciate that the time restrictions may have meant that we were not able to capture everything.<sup>1</sup>)

Although we focussed on the rural dimension of equality, it was difficult and perhaps a bit unrealistic to separate this out from the more general experience, but by compiling the key themes that came out of the different sessions of the day we can evidence that living in a rural area poses particular challenges and exacerbates more general barriers to social inclusion. For example, whilst we might feel that transport is an issue that affects urban as well as rural areas, and that the lack of accessible public transport in rural areas affects all sectors of the rural population, it actually impacts more adversely on groups of people who have no other means of travel such as those with disabilities and women with young children. Reliance on flights and ferries to get to support services can be very problematic if they don't join up with services on the mainland. Another general barrier that has a rural dimension was the perceived lack of sensitivity to the needs of a diverse population in areas where there has not been a history of diversity across the equality strands. Comments were made that rural communities took longer than urban ones to change attitudes and change their practice.

In summary of what we learnt from our conference, the issues were as follows:

### **1.1.7 Key barriers to equal opportunities in rural Scotland:**

1. Rural identity is perceived as homogeneous, resists change, and sees diversity as a threat
2. Prejudicial stereotyping
3. Inter-strand tensions
4. Small town mindset/ rumours; lack of confidentiality & sensitivity
5. Visibility/ Invisibility & lack of voice
6. Lack of 'critical mass'
7. The geographical challenges of small scattered communities
8. Transport
9. Communication
10. Lack of services & opportunities

### **1.1.8 How we should address these barriers:**

#### **1.1.8.1 Awareness raising /challenging discrimination owned by us all**

We should develop more in-depth awareness and sensitivity of the general public, emphasising the fact that diversity brings benefits to all and is not a threat to any individual identity. Family acceptance and support is very important and parents have a key influence on children's attitudes to themselves and others. It is important to get over

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<sup>1</sup> The findings from this exercise are included in Appendix VIII Summary of Conference Learning.



the benefits to be gained from change to good practice, and to get employers to change their priorities.

Awareness and education of rights and responsibilities should be made available to all sections of the community. Collectively, we need to challenge assumptions and recognise the diverse needs of a diverse society in all we do. We need to consider the widest aspect of communication, going beyond the use of language to manner, dress, cultural significance and meaning. In communicating, we need a better awareness of how our messages are likely to be received by the full diversity of our audiences. We should use plain English and avoid jargon.

#### **1.1.8.2 Capacity Building by public agencies**

Resources: Public agencies including the government and the commission should provide resources, policy templates, toolkits etc. They should also build local relationships, empower local decision-making and devolve purchasing power to communities and Community Planning Partnerships. There is a need for better provision of communication support services in rural areas and the high cost of this should be considered in all funding applications. A better awareness of the Scottish Accessible Information Forum (SAIF) would improve effective, accessible communications.

Knowledge and Expertise: Public agencies should support and empower different interest groups to build relationships and mutual trust through a better understanding of each other. This could be supported by research into different cultures and transferral of the understanding that this brings.

There is also a need for passing on of practical measures such as Minibus Driver Awareness Schemes (MIDAS) licences, with equality and diversity training becoming mandatory for all Work & Pensions staff and everyone who comes into contact with children throughout the full education system from primary school to teacher training college; this focus on education to be the number one priority under the public duties.

Networks and partnership working: Groups should be encouraged to come together to discover commonalities so that we build the capacity of intra-strand work such as interfaith, intergenerational etc. as well as links between the different equality strands. Service Providers should engage with minority groups (not just those covered by the public duties) to learn their needs and should promote the involvement of isolated individuals in the community. For example, links could be built between schools and those most isolated from society. Where there is no 'critical mass' of special interest groups, intermediaries such as Citizens' Advice Bureaux, Health agencies and Job Centre Plus should be used to assist the two-way communication of key information. Champion role models such as footballers could also help in building relationships in communities and sharing good practice.

There needs to be a joined up approach to getting key messages across rural areas. For example, funding of equalities would benefit from the growth of funding agency

networks. More use could be made of volunteering (such as local transport schemes) with care being taken to ensure a wider diversity of volunteers and increased opportunities for volunteering during paid work hours.

Service Provision: Community Transport schemes (in addition to subsidised public transport) would benefit from investment and a joined up approach to timetabling. The government needs to consider that free transport to the elderly is only a benefit if it is available for them to access. The last government census only asked *employed* people about their experience of public transport: The next census should include a question directed at *unemployed* people to measure the full impact on rural communities.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) communication helps overcome some of the barriers to communication across geographical boundaries by joining up groups and providing important services, but because this technology is not always accessible or affordable, we need also to invest in hard copy material for those without Internet access.

In service provision, we need to remember that 'one size doesn't fit all' and consider the changing demography in future planning. Best value decisions should be based on social impact not just cost, and there needs to be a strategic approach to delivering a more even service across country.

As well as finding out what new services are required and what could benefit from further investment (eg 'meals on wheels'), we should also remember to promote existing schemes such as Access to Work etc. We need to ask what services are required rather than tell people what we consider will work best for them.

Confidence building and support for marginalised groups: As well as striving to take down the barriers that people face in society, we should also encourage an assertive response from victims and encourage them to claim their rights. It may help to explain how ICT networks can provide a useful tool in gaining confidence eg when social networks are used as a stepping stone for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people to 'coming out'. We should also establish better support measures for jobseekers with mental or physical impairments.

Building communities: It should be a key aim to integrate minorities into communities and ESOL has an important part to play in this. Families can be brought together with the supportive use of ICT with training courses for the elderly and befriending schemes etc delivered in village halls, community Post Offices etc

Other measures such as Community Transport solutions, more young carers' projects, resourcing of mosques, synagogues etc will help to bind communities together into sustainable units. Local authorities will then find it easier to identify groups of common interest to engage with in their community plans and public duties.

### 1.1.8.3 Legislation

Local agencies should promote the need for a Single Equality Bill and use the medium of Human Rights to promote all equalities. There needs to be a higher commitment to enforcing existing legislation and ensuring that employment agencies don't exploit in-migrants. Public authorities should enforce the 'no parking' restrictions that aid accessibility at bus stops etc and a revision of the Blue Badge scheme is needed to remove the current disparity across disabilities

Transport urgently needs to be forced to become fully accessible and new thinking such as increased rights to flexible working to allow for travel in rural areas could bring about radical improvements. It could be made a mandatory part of interviews for customer service jobs to ask questions on equality and diversity. Reduction of government tax on fuel in rural areas would also reduce barrier to equal opportunities, especially in regard to accessing services over large distances.

### 1.1.9 Round Table Discussions

Two initial discussion groups were held in Dumfries on 19<sup>th</sup> March and in Glenrothes on 20<sup>th</sup> March, to bring together personnel from the EHRC, local stakeholder groups and public agencies to discuss three key issues: What core activities and responsibilities the EHRC should deliver in rural Scotland; What we can achieve by working together; and How we will work together to achieve this. A full list of the outputs from these groups was collated and taken forward to the final group discussion in Inverness on 17<sup>th</sup> April, where delegates were asked to consider a summary of the information gathered at the conference and Dumfries and Glenrothes discussion groups, and from this, to establish two key objectives and relevant SMART actions for the EHRC to take forward to address the rurality aspect of equality & diversity.<sup>2</sup> The resulting objectives and actions were agreed:

#### 1.1.9.1 Objective #1: Access to advocacy / individual casework in rural areas

##### Actions:

- Publicising and promotion of EHRC advocacy role
- Referral role: adequate funding of relevant local agencies – linking; networking
- Ensure quality and professionalism
- Mapping of existing provision (identifying standards) and coverage
- Develop strategy to look at rural imbalance of provision
- Develop strategy to look at rural imbalance of provision
- EHRC to train and fund local groups of voluntary organisations to deliver / provide support to individual cases (in addition to helpline)

<sup>2</sup> You can read the full details of the three round table discussions in Appendix IX Summary of Round Table Discussions, and view a pictorial representation of the summarised outputs from all events in Appendix X Pictorial Summary of All Outputs

### **1.1.9.2 Objective #2: Communicate clearly services and functions of EHRC in a way that takes account of challenges of rurality**

#### **Actions:**

- Produce a statement that clearly explains in plain English what the EHRC does for whom
- Use diverse ways to get message to people in rural areas (eg doctors' surgeries, town halls etc)
- Highlight that you offer educative packages / tools, and that these will be relevant to communities that haven't presently got a large diversity (ie reinforce message about diversity being relevant to all)

#### **1.1.10 In conclusion:**

We could perhaps have anticipated some of the themes which emerged from the conference but, in addition to learning some new ideas, we now have some very extensive evidence from a variety of sources as to what the key issues are. Also, the wide engagement in the discussions gives a clear mandate for collective ownership and actions. As far as we know, this is the first time a national event has been held on the topic of rural issues and one of the strongest messages we received was that equality is not the remit of any one sector of society, but is owned by us all. It is not a question of coming up with a wish list of things we want the Government and Commission to address, it's more about how we can all work together and, by each playing a part, how we can collectively be effective in bringing about positive change that will allow all who are able and who want to contribute to our society to have an equal opportunity to do so, and for all the people in our communities to have the same, fair access to the services they need.

#### **1.1.11 Next steps**

HIEF felt that the conference was a positive step forward in achieving these aims and were heartened that 94.3% of delegates rated the conference as excellent or good. In the follow up discussion events, we had to summarise much of the findings from the conference to allow us to move forward to actions, but the point was well made that we must not lose the detail of all the information we have collected. So I make no apology for the length of this report and the inclusion of many appendices: this information took a lot of work to develop and we need to record it so that interested parties have full access to the richness of it all. Also, this conference and subsequent round table discussions is only a first, somewhat imperfect step on what will be a long journey. We have not captured all there is to know but we made the decision to create actions from the wealth of information already known to us

#### **1.1.12 Thank you**

The Conference and subsequent discussion sessions were a great success and this was only made possible by the hard work of a great many people. HIEF would like to

thank everyone who helped with the organisation of the events, who contributed on the day and who provided the necessary funding.

## **And now, some fuller details of the event:**

### **2.0 What we learned from our conference speakers**

#### **2.1 <sup>3</sup>Ros Meiklem, Director for Scotland, Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC)**

Ros made it clear that the EHRC was in listening mode and looking for ways to work together with everyone to bring about real, on-the-ground change by a genuinely open and accessible commission aiming to remove barriers to social inclusion and fairness.

*“The EHRC’s vision is a society built on fairness and respect, people confident in all aspects of their diversity”.*

We learned about the EHRC’s role and functions and in particular, the new relationship between the Westminster-funded EHRC and the Holyrood-funded Scottish Commission for Human Rights. Although both an enabler and an enforcer, the EHRC’s emphasis is on working constructively with various agencies, building an understanding of the issues and work to be done, and channelling limited resources to most effective use. There will be a greater emphasis on campaigning, lobbying and education.

The Commission is taking a structured approach to their work, as seen in their one year and three year plans. Their focus on life chances helps focus on outcomes rather than processes, and they are taking time to gain a clear understanding of the issues before moving to tackle them. The EHRC will also focus on changing policy and improving organisational performance: That’s about influencing government, influencing new legislation, looking at how they use the public sector duties to improve performance, in rural areas as well as in urban ones. They recognise the need to influence the private sector and make the link between economic prosperity and development and equality, and to engage and involve the public. Their strategy is concerned with narrowing gaps and tackling unequal chances in life – the gaps in question being Poverty, Caring, Opportunity and Identity.

Ros closed by remarking: “There are masses of other good stuff going on out there. It *is* making a difference; we *can* overcome the barriers. The commission is committed to supporting you in work on developing and taking note of that good practice”

EHRC Helpline – Scotland

Telephone: 0845 604 5510; Textphone: 0845 604 5520

Fax: 0845 604 5530; 9am – 5pm, Monday – Friday [www.equalityandhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityandhumanrights.com)

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<sup>3</sup> Cf Conference Report Appendix (I) for a transcript of Ros Meiklem’s speech

## 2.2 <sup>4</sup>Paddy Tomkins, HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland

Paddy started by discrediting the nostalgia around 'halcyon good old days' by saying that the Police Force he joined 29 years ago was "more overwhelmingly male, [ ] white, [ ] heterosexual: It was misogynistic, often brutal and not very sensitive to the needs of the communities it served". The Stephen Lawrence enquiry was a harrowing experience to have lived through but one that led to radical change in the police: Nowadays they listen more and try to be receptive and sensitive to needs of the individuals and communities that they serve.

*"[Diversity is] actually central and fundamental to our success. It's not about political correctness. It's at the very core values of policing in Britain, the things I took an oath about when I joined. It's about equality and justice..."*

For co-operative working (policing by consent) to be effective, the police aim to build the confidence of individuals and communities. Their service has to be tailored to the needs of the individual, as a 'one size fits all' approach doesn't work. A diversity strategy helps drive culture change as it measures progress. Another benchmark event was the screening of 'The Secret Policeman' that showed some new police recruits acting in a racist way. The showing of this film caused serving police personnel to feel hurt and shamed but the overall reaction was one that took things forward again. Prompted by action by the Commission for Racial Equality, the David Herbert Smith review in England and Wales was another painful experience but one which highlighted the improvements in the police service.

However, the police accept that there is no room for complacency and they need to continue their momentum in today's new environment with all the challenges and opportunities that this holds, not least a new relationship with a new equalities and human rights commission. There is a need to move away from thinking of people in silos and think of them as individuals with perhaps multiple needs.

In cities, there are sufficient numbers of people to create special interest communities that the police can engage with. The sparsity of the population in rural areas throws up other challenges and Paddy urges agencies to work together, sharing knowledge and expertise to create a loud, joint and clear message that a listening public sector can hear and engage with. Collaborative working with intermediate agencies such as Citizens' Advice Bureaux and health practitioners in remote areas can be very beneficial to all parties. It allows the police to convey messages about the supportive aspects of their service and learn about under-reported crime such as domestic violence.

The police have now to consider how they continue their journey: They've gone from race relations to community relations to equal opportunities and diversity: The next step

<sup>4</sup> Cf Conference Report Appendix (II) for a transcript of HMCI Paddy Tomkins' speech



is to go beyond consultation to inclusion of the diversity of the community in delivering services.

### **2.3 <sup>5</sup>Pauline Livingstone, Co-ordinator, Cowal Befriending Scheme**

Pauline gave a spell-binding account of her hands-on experience of tackling inequalities in the very rural area of Cowal where access to services and amenities is made very difficult because of the lack of public transport. This can lead to an isolated existence for many elderly people. Changing demographics have led to the outward migration of younger people leaving the elderly without family support, and often living in small, remote villages that are largely full of empty holiday homes. The percentage of elderly people is higher (35%) in Cowal than in Scotland in general (21%), and the only contact many have with the outside world is when home helps or medical support services call in briefly.

The Cowal Befriending Scheme is dependant on volunteers and it soon became apparent that, like their clients, these were mostly women. Over a period of time, the project has worked to increase the diversity of both, making interesting discoveries along the way. The biggest barrier seemed to be an unwillingness to enter into long-term one-to-one relationships with clients, but encouraging volunteers to undertake whatever particular duties they are comfortable with (such as dog walking or driving clients to appointments etc) seems to allow their involvement to develop naturally.

For clients, the single most benefit is getting out of the house now and then. For this to happen, the project team have had to tackle issues such as accessible transport. They found that a diverse age range has diverse needs and that more people can be helped by merely bring them together to provide their own companionship.

Volunteers use modern Internet technology to help families stay in touch over wide distances, providing support where the clients cannot use emails unaided. They also provide a friend to accompany older people who have to face the stress of ferry and road or rail travel to large city hospitals, where they might face frightening procedures or receive difficult news. Through this, the volunteers have learned about the main concerns of many people and have produced accessible information packs as an alternative to having to access the Internet to find relevant answers to questions. By understanding the individuality of clients, the project has looked at delivering services that meet the needs of a diverse age range that has many different interests. They have revisited and blown apart old stereotyping such as thinking that older people have no interest in sport. Instead, they have come up with imaginative ways of adapting sports such as curling to be accessible to those who may be in their 90s or even over 100 years old.

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<sup>5</sup> Cf Conference Report Appendix (III) for a transcript of Pauline Livingstone's presentation

Perhaps the quote from Pauline that really summed up the essence and rationale of good practice was,

*“... it made us realise that to work equal opportunities you sometimes have to offer really unequal levels of support, and that was really a turning point for the whole project. We haven't done these things to tick the boxes of equality: We did them to make the project better, but by doing that we'd found we were looking at all of the different equality strands and addressing equal opportunities”.*

## **2.4 <sup>6</sup>Lesley Irving, Team Leader for Race, Religion and Refugee Integration, Scottish Government Equality Unit**

Lesley's opening remarks urged the audience to ensure that the event progressed beyond the usual talking shop to focussing on actual outcomes. She then proceeded to demonstrate that the Scottish Government's Equality Unit has a good grasp of the issues that are particular to rural areas; both inequalities within rural areas and between rural and urban communities. Her experience of race issues means that she is aware of long-term misunderstandings such as thinking that racial diversity (and therefore racial discrimination) is confined to urban areas. She also mentioned the complexities of racial discrimination as being separate to the issue of colour.

Looking over the other equality strands, Lesley touched on issues of the visibility of certain groups, the close knit nature of rural communities and the lack of adequate support services because of low concentrations of those needing support – all of which make it difficult, for instance for gay people to 'come out'; for people from minority faith groups to secure collective worship; or for victims of domestic abuse to find refuge.

The lack of accessible public transport is another recurring theme, and it was highlighted that whilst some services are accessible, the patchiness of this means a lack of joined up infrastructure, particularly between ferries and buses.

Outward migration is a serious issue in fragile rural communities which are battling to retain a viable diversity, and finding ways of attracting and retaining young people in these areas is vital for them to survive into the future. The age demographic is particularly affected when young people migrate to the larger towns and cities.

Gendered division of labour has historically been different in urban and rural areas. In rural communities, work was not so separate to the home so that women played an integral part in everything yet are only given credit for specific skills such as traditional knitting. Rural life has also relied on physical work such as farming and fishing, factors that can exclude those who are less strong – such as those with a disability. Whilst we

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<sup>6</sup> Cf Conference Report Appendix (IV) for a transcript of Lesley Irving's presentation

might value the physical attraction of rural Scotland, we need to be aware that someone with a physical impairment may not always have the same access to it as others.

Lesley called for us to banish outdated stereotyping and work together using the public duties as a framework to ensure we involve a diversity of people along with strong leadership to bring about real change. Faced with the demographic challenges, we need to go beyond thinking of diversity to ensuring everyone has the equal opportunity to realise their potential.

*“ the task for all of us right across Scotland is to move [ ] towards the kind of Scotland that we all aspire to, a country that genuinely is  
‘One Scotland for All’ ”*

### 3.0 What we learned from our storytellers<sup>7</sup>

#### 3.1 Storyteller 1 - Barriers faced because of deafness

Storyteller 1 (S1) is a lady who began to lose her hearing during her time at school and in early working life. A proficient lip reader, she presently has a demanding job in the private sector. Her life story evidences many incidents where lack of sensitivity resulted in her feeling angered and bemused by doctors, (‘men in white coats barking at [her]’), struggling to learn from teachers who spoke behind her or covered their mouths with their hands, and ridiculous ‘solutions’ to her impairment such as the humiliation of being chained to an electrical socket which would deliver a shock if the fire alarm went off! As much social activity for younger people is centred around music, she often felt excluded. Not many cinemas have subtitle facility and those who do only offer it at unsociable times such as Wednesday afternoons.

Technology can be a help but it also has restrictions: Making what should be a five minute call to a Call Centre can involve a 25 minute conversation carried out from the public space of her workstation rather in privacy on a mobile phone, an option available to others. Communication support in general is a huge challenge; there is a presumption that all deaf people use British Sign Language (BSL) and even if suitable support is available it’s not really feasible for this to be provided at every business meeting or interaction during the day.

The lack of sensitivity leveled at our storyteller could have caused her to become self-effacing and accepting of inequalities, but instead she became more assertive. The reason she is able to laugh at herself for being several steps behind everyone else in aerobic classes is largely down to the influence of her parents. Although her experience is mainly urban, it is obvious that the difficulties she faced would have been increased in a rural setting where trips to the cinema would be more problematic and the dependence on technology would be greater.

<sup>7</sup> Cf Conference Report Appendix (V) for fuller details of all stories

### 3.2 Storytellers 2 & 3 - Barriers faced because of race

Storyteller 2 (S2) was a fulltime female student in Poland who came to Scotland for a few months to improve her English, only to stay longer than initially intended. She has had several work experiences and claims that some people are fair and welcoming whilst others are more discriminatory.

Education is very important to S2 and she highly values the Scottish education system which has supported her ambition to study medicine. It is her opinion that those who are academically educated and read broadsheet newspapers are less discriminatory than those who have poor literary skills and read tabloids. Comments such as 'Poles do drugs' may be levelled at her regularly but come from a minority of people who turn to influencing weaker people when faced with her own challenging of such blatant prejudice. She had once been on the brink of making a formal complaint at work but chose not to 'cause a fuss' as she was moving on anyway and wanted to leave 'on good terms'.

She was employed through a Spanish agent who did not provide much support. He made it difficult for her to take time out of work for part-time education. It was when he told her that she was too stupid to study medicine that she found her resolve to fight back, at which point he backed down saying that he had only been joking. She finds it hard to talk on behalf of the Polish community because she only socialises with them at weekends; for the most part she integrates with Scots. However, her opinion is that, as a general group, they are lazy in learning English, partly because there is such good support with interpretation when needed. It was good to hear that she has confidence in the Highlands & Islands police.

Storyteller 3 (S3) is a Chinese woman who has been in the UK for 28 years and is married to a Scotsman. Initially, others in the *Chinese* community expressed surprise that she didn't work in a Chinese restaurant where many 'give in' to regular abuse by drunken customers demanding free meals. Whilst the Chinese community understands the role of the police, they remain reluctant to contact them for help.

Chinese immigrants are largely low-skilled and envy the wider opportunities available to more highly skilled groups such as the Poles etc. Community elders work hard to educate and integrate their children, overlooking their own needs in the process such that the older generation come late in life to learning English. It is difficult to fit ESOL lessons around unsocial working hours of catering and so initiatives such as Highland's Workers' Educational Association (WEA)/International Women's Group ESOL lessons at 1.30 – 4.30pm are very much appreciated.

S3 feels that there is a need to educate middle management about 'why' things such as interpretation services are needed. The Chinese Association don't like when they are told what is being provided rather than being asked about their diverse needs.

In both of the stories on race, it is apparent that lack of awareness or understanding of different cultures can lead to unacceptable behaviour persisting in society. Personal confidence also seems to be a common factor in turning things around into more positive experiences. It is therefore valuable to exchange understanding of our diverse cultures such as why do Scots 'address the haggis' and why do Chinese wish each other wealth at Chinese New Year? Sharing, especially through the education system, will benefit all.

### **3.3 Storyteller 4 - Barriers faced because of gender**

Storyteller 4 (S4) is a 'transwoman', a woman who was designated at birth as being male. The name she gave is not the one on her birth certificate. She told of an upbringing in which parents, teachers and doctors attempted to make her more masculine by attending an all male school, receiving injections of testosterone to 'improve behaviour', and being directed into the building trade 'to be a man' etc. Attempting to conform to what was expected of her by society led to a marriage in which she was subjected to domestic abuse resulting in permanent injury.

Following a divorce, she had to move from a rural area to a city as living in a small community became difficult. Still living as a man, S4 met a new wife and fathered a son before moving to rural Scotland to provide a good quality of life for their family. Their marriage has always been an honest relationship in which S4's wife is very supportive, but life became difficult when a family member came to stay with them. S4 had to hide her true gender and found the frustrations of not being able to be 'herself' so great that she has built a second house in which she can spend time alone and relaxed in her identity.

A critical incident in her story is a major car accident a few years ago when she left home for her first public outing dressed as a woman. Even when seriously injured, her desperation to hide her transexualism by getting out of female dress before the local emergency services arrived was more pressing than her personal safety. Several of the local community emergency and health personnel know her only as a man and she feared being 'outed'. A similar experience came later when she took a stroke whilst 'dressed' and again put her personal safety second to a need to hide her gender. It was following this second near-death experience that she made the decision that 'if she survived, she was going to be herself'.

Up until this point, she had thought she was 'the only one' in her community who had gender dysphoria. It didn't help that 99% of all Internet searches of 'transexual' related to pornography. Her initial reaching out to others involved the set up of a website/chat room for people in her area, which revealed the existence of an 'invisible community'; she wasn't alone or 'the only one'.

She now feels that there is a mix of views in her local rural community with more liberal views coming from 'incomers' to the area. There is an acceptance that transexualism is okay but 'not in my back yard'. People are more comfortable if she doesn't launch any

high profile campaigns or push for her rights. Whereas many might advocate 'coming out' they are not always comfortable with those who do. Much prejudice and many barriers still prevail, and can be down to lack of awareness. For instance, S4 can't get a credit card in her female name, so when dressed as a woman, she has to pay by cash. This caused an incident in a hotel where she was subjected to the humiliating and frightening trauma of a vice squad raid of her room following hotel staff allegations that she was a prostitute. In closing, S4 said: "I don't want to think there is prejudice out there, but I know there is"

### **3.4 Storytellers 5 & 6 - Barriers faced because of sexual orientation**

Storyteller 5 (S5) is a young, homosexual male who grew up in a small town in Dumfries & Galloway. He knew from the age of about 9 that he was 'different', and his experience is very much that of feeling that he was the 'only gay in the village'. Because he was growing up during the period when AIDS was linked to homosexuality and so many people were scared of those who were gay, it was not easy to 'come out', especially in a small rural town which was very sports-orientated. To be different to the general expectation that males were sporty made life difficult.

S5 had to leave the village to 'come out'. At university, he used the anonymity of the city and alcohol as a prop to give him the confidence to 'come out'. The positive reaction of friends surprised him but he then worried that word would get back to his home and parents. However, he couldn't face them and instead told them by telephone and using indirect language. Having now moved back to his home town, S5 feels more comfortable about his sexuality. A common response is "I don't like gay people but you're okay". He feels there is an acceptance because he has made himself visible. He now works for an organisation that supports sexual orientation issues and is seen as the 'only professional gay in the village'

There is a culture of silence that surrounds gay people in small communities. Although statistically there should be over 100 homosexuals in S5's small town, he only knows of 7 so many must be living closeted lives in a community where "everyone knows everyone else's business" and where rumours and small town gossip are real barriers to making yourself visibly different to others.

Storyteller 6 is a young, lesbian woman who brought up in a very religious family in the islands, where sexuality was a taboo subject in the home. By observing family reactions to icons such as Boy George, she learnt that homosexuality was not socially acceptable. Initial attempts to broach the subject with her mother were very discouraging. Even when she was away from home at university, she didn't feel she could talk to anyone about this issue.

So when she returned to the island, she went down the path of conformity, marrying and having children, but she remained unhappy until she met someone who called herself a lesbian. This was a turning point which opened up a whole new set of possibilities and when S6 found the courage to tell her husband and children about her sexuality, she



found them very accepting and supportive. However, resistance from other family members made life very difficult for around two years. She has found, however, that she has become a stronger person because of the adversity she experienced. Despite the fact that no Registrar on the islands will officiate at a civil partnership, discrimination is not always overt. S6 has rarely been insulted to her face but she is aware of a general hostility that suggests the community needs help if it is to combat discrimination against homosexuals.

If you champion a cause on a rural area you stand alone, whereas in a town you could form a pressure or lobbying group. In rural areas, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people very much use drugs and alcohol as props to give them both courage to face others as they 'come out', or solace for those who keep firmly 'inside the closet'. Because of this, the gay scene is associated with drugs and alcohol and this makes it too frightening for some to want to join; the substance abuse undermines the apparent camaraderie that looks attractive and which isolated gays crave.

### **3.5 Storyteller 7 - Barriers faced because of religious belief**

Storyteller 7 (S7) is a young Christian woman living on an island who told of her experience of coming to a living faith after being brought up in a non-religious family. It can be difficult for people to share such a personal account of their private lives and S7 requested that we did not record her story.

### **3.6 Storytellers – Barriers faced because of age**

Unfortunately, two storytellers who had offered to share their experience of barriers faced because of being young or old had to cancel at the last minute.

## **4.0 Conference Outputs**

From all of the speeches, storytelling and discussions throughout the day, the following themes emerged.<sup>8</sup>

### **4.1 Barriers to equal opportunities in rural Scotland – and some possible solutions**

#### **4.1.1 Rural identity is homogeneous, resists change, and sees diversity as a threat**

##### Solutions

- Grow sensitivity; challenge assumptions
- Take account of diverse needs
- Don't 'conform to norm'
- Grow awareness of what diversity adds
- Provide resources, policy templates, toolkits etc

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<sup>8</sup> Cf Appendix VIII Summary of Conference Learning for a comprehensive list of evidenced examples

- Research different cultures
- Empower people/communities to build relationships and mutual trust

#### **4.1.2 Prejudicial stereotyping**

##### Solutions

- Encourage assertive response from victims
- Awareness-raising of general public
- Ensure employment agencies adhere to legislation/don't exploit in-migrants

#### **4.1.3 Inter-strand tensions**

##### Solutions

- Bring groups together to discover commonalities
- Use of champion role models (football?)
- Legislation: Single Equality Bill
- Intra-strand work/capacity building (interfaith, intergenerational etc)

#### **4.1.4 Small town mindset/ rumours; lack of confidentiality and sensitivity**

##### Solutions

- Use Human Rights to promote all equalities
- Family acceptance & support important; parents influential to children's attitudes to self/others
- More in-depth awareness-raising to change attitudes
- Encourage victims to claim rights
- Service Providers to engage with minority groups to learn needs

#### **4.1.5 Visibility/ Invisibility and lack of voice**

##### Solutions

- Share good practice
- Involve isolated individuals in community
- Use ICT networks as stepping stone to 'coming out'
- Grown learning of positive role models and forge links
- Awareness/education of rights & responsibilities for all
- Integrate minorities into communities – ESOL important
- ICT tuition for elderly – library/village hall internet access
- Community Transport solutions to address isolation in rural areas
- More young carers' projects

#### **4.1.6 Lack of 'critical mass'**

##### Solutions

Local Authorities to:

- Make best value decisions on social impact not just cost
- Support funding agencies to grow supportive networks in rural areas
- Develop a strategy to give more even service across the country
- Help minority groups to form links so that public agencies can identify and engage with them
- Use intermediaries such as Citizens' Advice Bureaux, Health Agencies, Jobcentre Plus to connect minority groups with public agencies
- Address resourcing of mosques, synagogues etc
- Ensure adequate services for elderly eg meals on wheels
- Support befriending schemes
- Give paid time off to volunteers
- Create links between schools and those isolated in society
- Devolve decision making and purchasing power to communities/Community Planning Partnerships
- Use village halls as focal points to bring people together
- Gear up to demographic change (especially age)

#### **4.1.7 Small scattered communities**

##### Solutions

- Use of ICT with support as required to keep families in touch
- Befriending scheme to accompany elderly to hospital etc

#### **4.1.8 Transport**

- Timetabling/Investment in Community Transport schemes – not necessarily subsidised public transport
- MIDAS licences
- Question in next census on public transport for unemployed
- Government to be aware that free public transport is lost benefit to those who can't access it
- Public authorities to enforce 'no parking' restrictions that aid accessibility at bus stops etc
- Revision of Blue Badge scheme to remove disparity across disabilities
- Overhaul accessibility of transport
- Engage diversity of volunteers for local transport of elderly/disabled

#### **4.1.9 Communication**

- Consider widest aspect of communication – ie beyond words to manner, dress etc
- Grow awareness of how our messages are received
- Avoid jargon
- ICT communication across geographical boundaries to join up groups and provide services

- But retain hard copy material for those without Internet access
- Convey message that 'one size doesn't fit all'
- Better awareness of SAIF
- Mandatory E&D training in all levels of education, starting at primary and on into teacher training college – to be No 1 priority under public duties
- Build in cost of communications support to funding applications
- Support locally-sustainable initiatives such as ICT solutions delivered through village halls, community Post Offices etc

#### **4.1.10 Lack of services & opportunities**

##### Solutions

- Better support for jobseekers with mental or physical impairments
- Promote better awareness of Access to Work schemes etc
- Increased rights to flexible working to allow for travel in rural areas.
- Equality and Diversity training to staff in Work & Pensions
- Mandatory questions on equality and diversity in interviews for customer service jobs
- Public bodies/quangos to be more accountable for making positive change happen
- Get over benefits of change/good practice
- Get employers to change priorities
- Joined up approach vital to getting key messages across
- Reduce government tax on fuel in rural areas

## **5.0 Who attended the Conference?<sup>9</sup>**

162 people registered to attend the conference, 133 of whom attended on the day. Data was recorded from 123 people.

Women outnumbered men 3 to 1 – 74.8% of delegates were female; 25.2% male.

90.2% of all delegates were in employment (18.7% working part-time) and 21.1% stated that they did voluntary work.

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<sup>9</sup> Cf Appendix VII Event Evaluation for a comprehensive breakdown of the Delegate Profile

### 5.1 Age of delegates

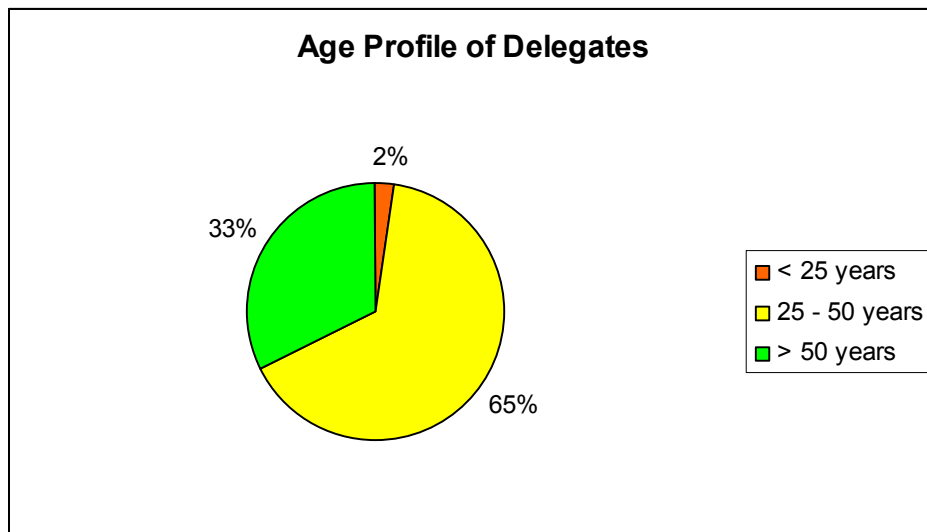


Figure C1: Pie chart of Age Profile of Delegates

Most delegates were in the 25 – 50 age range with only 2% being younger than 25

### 5.2 Sector of delegates

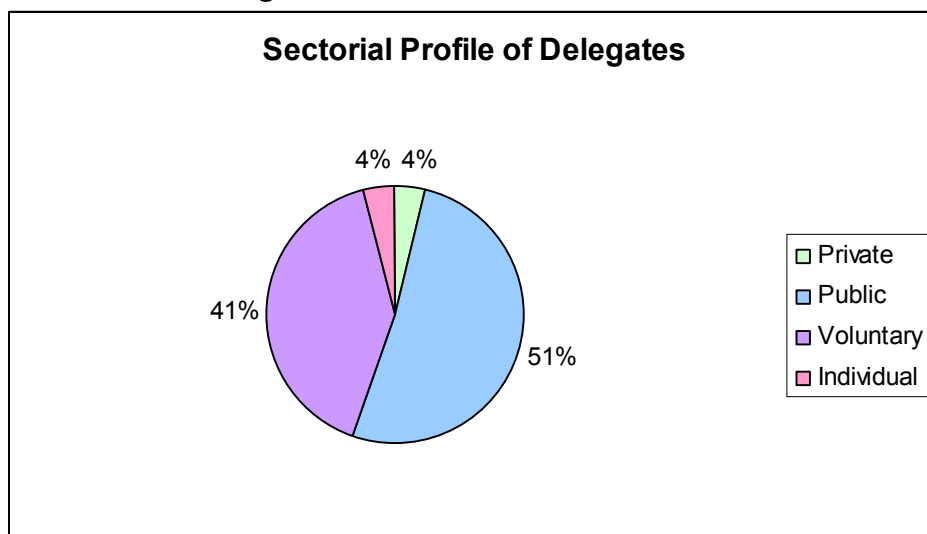


Figure C2: Pie chart of Sectorial Profile of Delegates

The majority of delegates came from the public sector, but attendance from the voluntary sector was also substantial

### 5.3 Employment of delegates

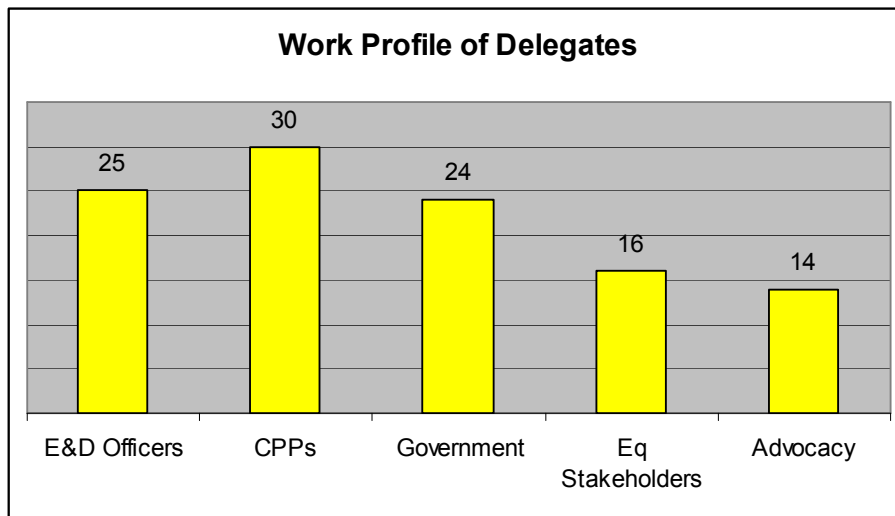


Figure C3: Pie chart of Work Profile of Delegates

25 delegates were equality & diversity officers; 30 represented community planning partnerships; 24 work in government; 16 were from equality stakeholder groups; and 14 delegates deliver advocacy work

### 5.4 Geography of delegates

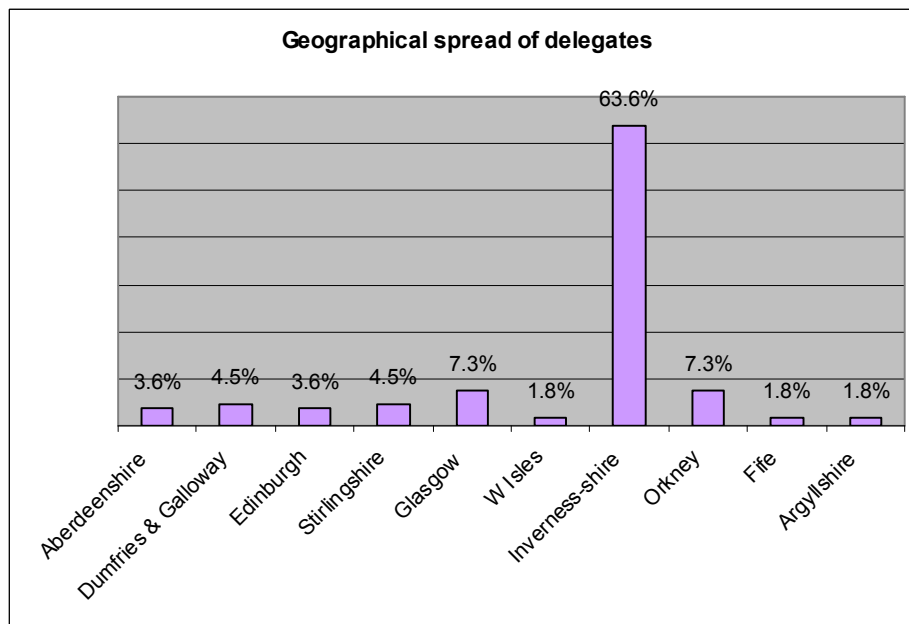


Figure C4: Bar chart of Geographical Spread of Delegates



The overwhelming majority of delegates came from the Inverness area (63.6%) with at least some representation from most of Scotland's other rural areas, one notable exception being the Borders area.

### 5.5 Caring responsibilities and health of delegates

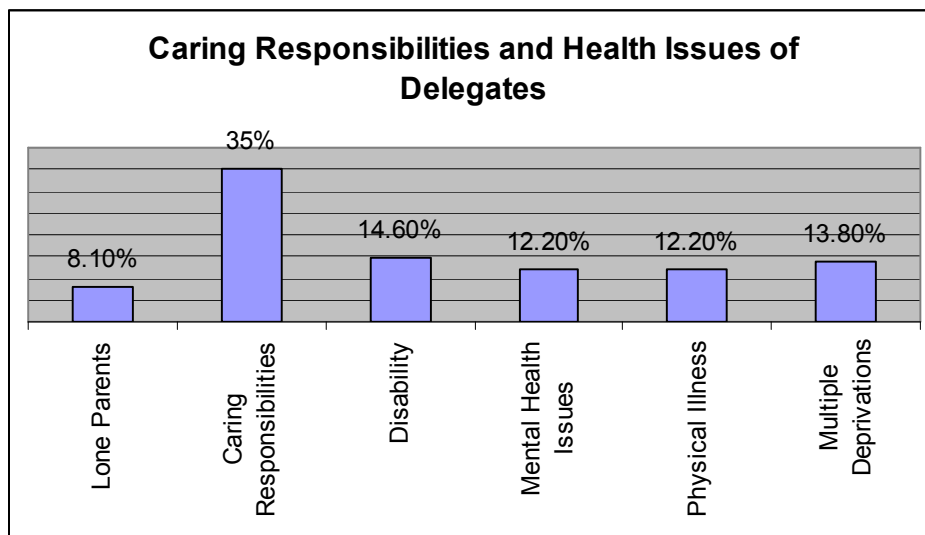


Figure C5: Caring Responsibilities and Health Issues of Delegates

35 % of delegates (both male and female) said they had caring responsibilities; 8.1% said they were lone parents.

14.6% have disabilities; 12.2% have mental health issues and 12.2% have a physical illness. We made provision for 8 people with mobility impairments, 4 who had visual impairments; and 3 who had a hearing impairment. Unfortunately, we were unable to provide British Sign Language interpretation due to a lack of local and national resource and so one delegate who requested this support was unable to attend. We felt very bad about this but had to accept the situation after several weeks of searching across the length and breadth of the UK.

Of the 19 people who had special dietary needs, 13 were allocated a vegetarian lunch and 6 others were given specially-prepared plated meals. One of the vegetarian lunches was an agreed compromise for someone who would have preferred Halal food.

Interestingly, 13.8% of delegates consider that they experience multiple deprivations or barriers in life.

## 5.6 Ethnic mix of delegates

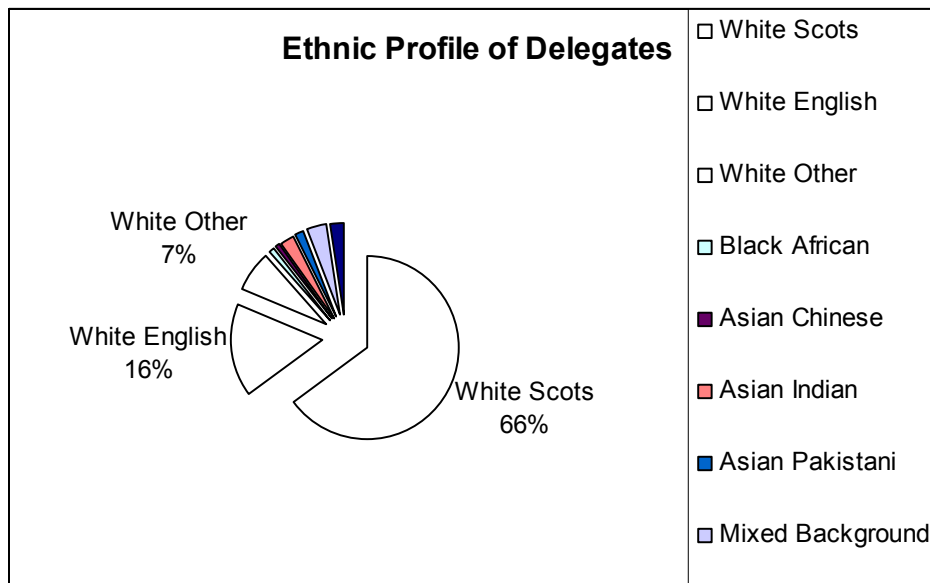


Figure C6: Pie chart of Ethnic Profile of Delegates

The overwhelming majority of delegates were white: 65% Scots; 16.3% English; and 7.3% other. The remaining diversity came from ones and twos of different ethnicities as shown in Figure C6

## 5.7 Delegates' interest in equalities

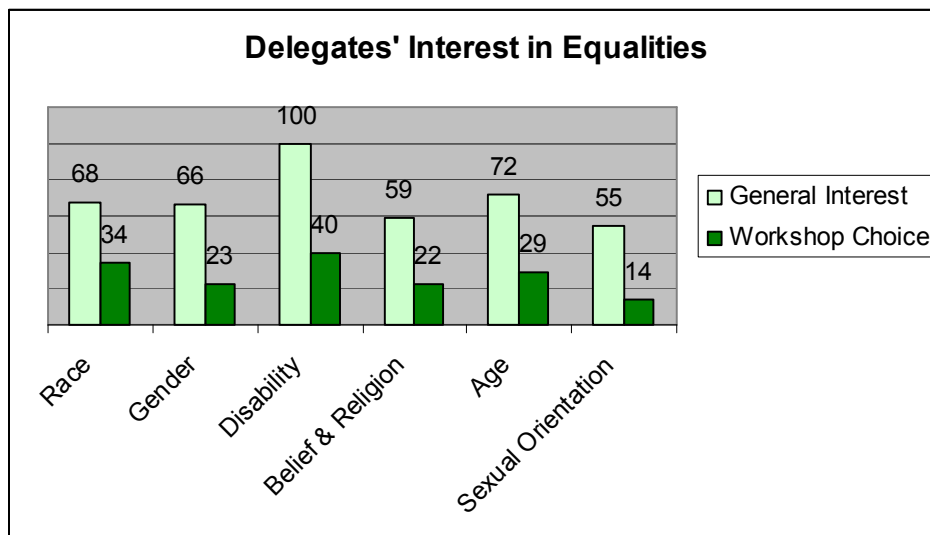


Figure C7: Bar chart of Delegates' Interest in Equalities

Highest general interest was for Disability (N=100) with Age (N=72), Race (N=68), Gender (N=66), Belief & Religion (N=59) and Sexual Orientation (N=55) following closely

It was interesting to compare this general interest in the different aspects of equality with delegates' preferred choices of workshop. Whereas disability is the first choice for both, interest in age is overtaken by preference of race when choosing a workshop.

Workshop preferences were: Disability (N=40); Race (N=34); Age (N=29); Gender (N=23); Belief & Religion (N=22); Sexual Orientation (N=14)

## 6.0 Event Evaluation<sup>10</sup>

### 6.1 Evaluation of whole event

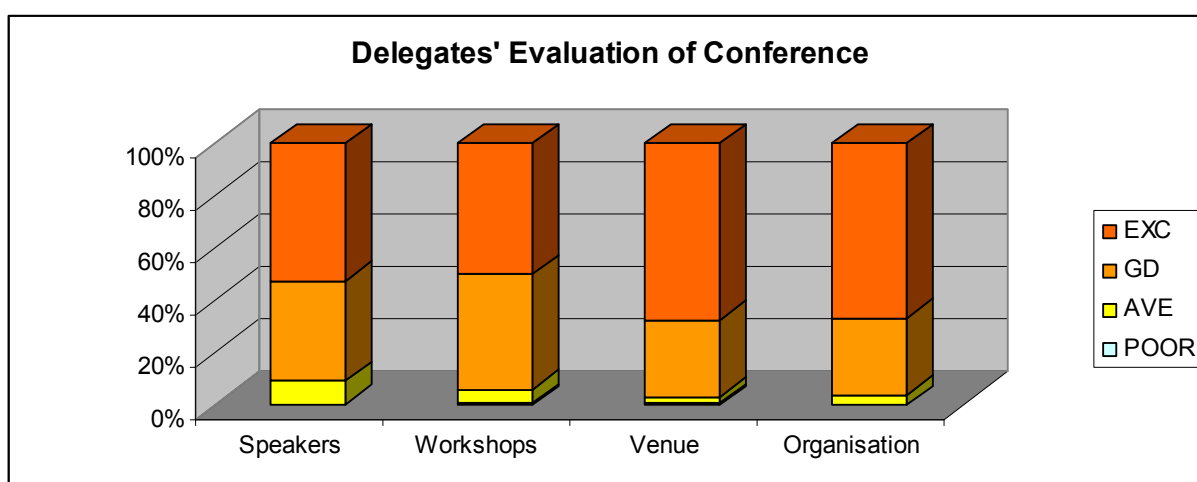


Figure C8: Bar chart of Delegates' Evaluation of Conference

Overall, 94.3% of delegates rated the conference as excellent or good

### 6.2 Evaluation of Workshops

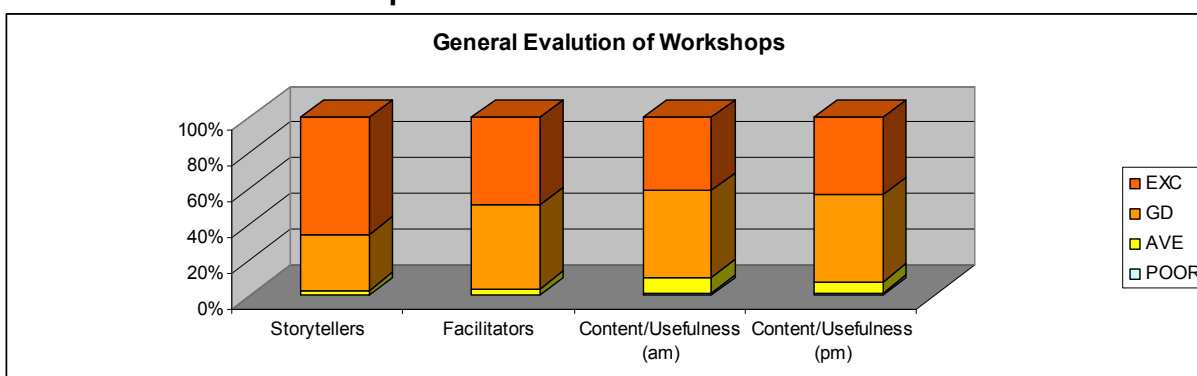


Figure C9: Bar chart of General Evaluation of Workshops

<sup>10</sup> Cf Appendix VII Event Evaluation for comprehensive details including some verbatim comments from delegates

HIEF/Scottish Government/EHRC Event Conference Report Spring 2008  
Equal Opportunities in Rural Scotland: Working together on a practical vision to bridge  
current barriers to social inclusion

94 % of delegates on average rated the workshops as excellent or good  
Within this, 66% of delegates thought our storytellers were 'excellent'

HIEF would like to thank again all sponsors of this event and all those who worked hard  
on the day and behind the scenes to make this event so successful.

## **7.0 Appendices**

### **7.1 Appendix I**

## **Equal Opportunities in Rural Scotland: Working together on a practical vision to bridge current barriers to social inclusion**

26<sup>th</sup> February, 2008

### **Conference Report Appendix (I)**

**Transcript of speech by  
Ros Meikelem  
Director for Scotland, EHRC**

***“A Vision for rural Scotland”***

I want to say a bit about our strategy priorities, and in particular, how I think they tie up with priorities for rural Scotland. But I think the main purpose of being here today is to listen and to find out from you what you think the priorities are, how those should shape our future strategies, and how we can work with you to really make a difference to the issues that you're struggling with. The commission was originally called the CEHR, but when we opened our doors, we changed it around to put equality at the front, because it seemed to be a really important message to say, "We're not about being a commission, we're not about bureaucracy, we're about equality." So the title now is the Equality & Human Rights Commission.

Our strategy for the coming year is focused on narrowing the gaps. What I want to talk about is how we see this relating to rural Scotland. So a bit about us, much of which will be familiar, so I won't dwell on it. We're an independent body covering England, Scotland and Wales, and we were established by the Equality Act 2006. We came into being on 1st October last year and we replaced the Disability Rights Commission and Commission for Racial Equality but with a much wider brief than the sum of those three. We're independent of government, although we're funded from Westminster. We're not funded by the Scottish government.

We work across all areas of equality, so we work on the six areas that are protected by legislation and working across the boundaries of those, recognising that people don't just face one kind of disadvantage, many people experience discrimination, as Ailsa said, in more than one area in their lives. They may be elderly and disabled and minority ethnic, and any combination of the different kinds of inequality and minority can add another dimension to that. We'll look at all aspects of inequality that affect a person's life and chances. Our job is to eliminate discrimination, promote and protect human rights as well as reducing inequality. I really like the way that that's phrased in the legislation. Normally legislation is very dry and it's all about what you may not do, but the legislation that set us up is very positive. It says we should be working for a society in which people's ability to achieve their potential is not limited by prejudice or discrimination, and protection for each individual's human rights, respect for the dignity and worth of each individual and each individual has an equal opportunity to participate in society. I really like that because it's so positive and because of the emphasis on the individual. This is not just about large numbers of people in big cities facing discrimination, it's about anyone, wherever they are, even if they're the only one in their community, sometimes especially if they're the only one in their community, and it's their right to fulfill their potential and be treated with respect and have equal dignity and worth. In addition to that, the right to participate in society: We're aiming for mutual respect between groups based on understanding the value of diversity and a shared respect for equality and human rights. It is about groups and social relationships, but it comes down to every individual and their rights.



In Scotland, we have the privilege, as well as having the commission to oversee our strategy we have a statutory committee chaired by Morag Alexandra, and that committee is established in law and makes sure that Scotland's interests and Scotland's situation are reflected in my commission's activity and priorities. I head the Scotland directorate which is charged with putting all that into practice in Scotland. Alongside us, we have the Scottish Commission for Human Rights, which will come into being next week on 3rd March, which was established by the Scottish Parliament and which has a special brief to look after human rights issues relating to devolved matters, and we'll be working in very close partnership with them. I think it will be a great strength to us to have them alongside us, helping to keep a very strong and firm focus on human rights.

What do we actually do, as my mother keeps asking me? We see ourselves as first of all an enabler. We're there to enable organisations to meet their moral and legal obligations, so the things that were in place before, the public sector duties, anti-discrimination legislation, all the legislation that protects the six groups affected by law, that's still there. We still have the same job that the old commissions did, to monitor what's being adhered to and to take action when it isn't. So we're there to support organisations to meet their obligations and to provide advice and guidance in both private and public sectors.

We're also there to enable individuals to claim their rights and understand their rights. We have a helpline, and the number will be up there later on<sup>11</sup>. The helpline is there for individuals and organisations. Please use it. The helpline can provide information as well as advice on a whole range of equality issues. It's there five days a week and from this week it's going to be opening in the evenings on Wednesdays. It's underused at the moment. Please spread the word. The helpline is a fantastic resource that the commission brings to Scotland.

We're also there to enable groups in the community and communities and campaigners to achieve change on the ground. We have got a grants programme. We're still working on how best to use that strategically, but that is there as a resource to support and enable communities to bring about improvement. And we also have the website, also still under development, but when it's fully up and running and functional, that will be a great resource as well for groups and communities.

We're there to persuade people, persuade the public, persuade stakeholders, and persuade policy-makers that equality is in all our interests. That's through campaigning, through education. I come from an education background; I've worked in further education for most of my career, and good to see on the list that there are some college people here. Education and forming people's ideas, widening people's thinking about the world I think is a key part of what we're here to do, as well as the campaigning and

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<sup>11</sup> Cf pg 36 for details of EHRC Helpline

the selling side. Understanding needs to go a bit deeper than that, and education and opinion-forming I think is a long-term project.

We also need to do research to inform public understanding and we need to do behind-the-scenes influencing of policy-makers and legislators and public bodies. We need particularly to tackle misinformation in the media about human rights and that will be a big priority for us alongside the new Scottish Commission.

Finally, we enforce the law and we will make directed use of our enforcement powers in case work and inquiries and investigations. The vision that the commission has for its work is a society built on fairness and respect, people confident in all aspects of their diversity. We can perhaps discuss your reaction to those words. I get an interesting mixed reaction to the focus on "fairness" rather than using the word "equality", and the use of the word "diversity" and I know both of these are quite controversial. If you have thoughts about that, I'll be interested to hear them. But the research that's been done suggests that those words have a broad acceptability with the public and communities in general, and those are the key words that we will be promoting in our publicity.

Our strategic thing is about narrowing gaps and tackling unequal chances in life. The focus on life chances helps us to focus on outcomes. A lot of the worst of the reputations of commissions like ours is that we focus on processes, we focus on making people tick lots of boxes and put in returns and produce reports and so on and actually don't pay enough attention to the difference that it makes. Our strategy needs to look at outcomes, and by taking life chances as the focus, we think that will help us to define the outcomes that we're trying to achieve.

So our strategic priorities for the next period: We're looking at a one-year business plan and then a three-year strategic plan after that. The strategic priorities focus, first of all, on definition and targeting and measurement, which may sound not much like making a difference, but unless you understand what you're trying to change and can measure whether you're changing it, all your effort can be misdirected. So we're going to work on getting a clear, shared definition of what we mean by "equality", a clear understanding of where the key areas are, where we should be focusing our energies - and making sure that we have a robust evidence base to help us focus in that way. That, I think, is a very important area for rural interests to have an input into, because when you're identifying key arenas for action, there's always a risk of looking at the areas where numbers are big and I think we've all got to make sure that doesn't happen and that we target rural poverty, rural inequality as one of those key areas and the different factors that creates unequal right chances in rural areas.

Our second focus is on changing policy and improving organisational performance. That's about influencing government, influencing new legislation, looking at how we use public sector duties to improve performance. There's another area where I think there are a lot of issues that maybe haven't been given enough attention; about

how public bodies covered in rural areas really use their duties effectively. We need to look for good practice and make sure that those bodies get as much attention and as much support and guidance as the public bodies in the urban areas. We want a robust model of public sector bodies, not a bureaucratic one.

We also need to influence the private sector and make the link between economic prosperity and development and equality. We need employers to realise that unless they make full use of available talent, they will not develop their businesses to the maximum. And unless they gear what they offer to the full range of customers, they won't expand, they won't do as much business as they could. I think again that's very relevant in rural areas. Are we making sure that employers do everything they can to improve access to employment for everybody in their area so that people don't feel they have to leave to get on? And are they attracting the full range of people into the countryside to enjoy it and to bring their money into the countryside?

Engaging and involving the public. We want to be genuinely open and accessible, not closed. We'll be using all the modern technology that I don't understand, like uTube channels and so on to engage in every way with people. We can't be everywhere all the time, although it's great to get out of the central belt, but we can and will do that as much as we can, but we'll also use the technology to support it. And we need to -- they call it in the strategy: develop new narratives and accounts - but I think that's just about trying to develop a new shared understanding of what we're trying to achieve, and make that as widely understood as possible, and make sure it's relevant to our changing society. Things are changing very fast. I've learnt in reading background for today that things are changing in the north of Scotland faster than I'd realised in terms of inward and outward migration and that's creating very different patterns in society and our thinking about equality and human rights needs to keep up with that.

In terms of what we're actually going to do in the coming year, there are four gaps that we're trying to narrow. *The poverty gap*: That's just for starters. Once we've done that, we'll move on to other things. But we will be focusing not just on the traditional view of discrimination but on poverty and how that relates to discrimination and inequality, looking at all the different factors that contribute; again, particular factors in a rural setting that mustn't be ignored. One of the challenges we have in Scotland is convincing our colleagues down south that pensioner poverty is as much an issue as child poverty, because different demographics in different areas of the country mean those are perceived differently. In the countryside, poverty impacts differently on different groups and we need to take that into account.

The *caring gap* is a huge priority for us and it relates to two things: quality of care and the work that we need to do on independent living and on the appropriateness of social care for the full range of people who need it, but also on the work place and people who are carers and how they can combine other work with their caring responsibilities and making sure that work places are flexible enough to accommodate that. We'll be working with employers to try and improve practice from that end as well

as working with the government to support independent-living initiatives and lobbying to maintain and develop the policy of free personal care for the elderly, which I think is still under scrutiny and still very uneven in its implementation in different areas.

Narrowing the *opportunity gap* is about skills and employment and aspiration. When we're looking at that, we need to consider what's driving young people away from rural areas and what skills do we need to keep in the rural areas to enable them to prosper and to be balanced and diverse communities? What can we do that would make a difference to keeping those skills and building that diversity? In rural areas, we will need to make sure that we take account not just of things like skills and occupational segregation, but access issues and transport. It's been pointed out to me that I tend to make assumptions. I complained that I couldn't find a bus to get me to this hotel and somebody said to me, "That's what it's like here." That's something that's easily overlooked when we're talking about aspirations and skills and employment opportunities.

Finally, the *identity gap*: This term isn't self-explanatory, but it's about people's right to be respected and good relationships across different groups, and structural inequalities but also people's right not to be harassed, not to be victims of violence and homophobia and bullying. I think that's a very big issue in small communities where we know there is massive underreporting of hate crime that goes on and we know that people need confidence that someone wants to know when these things happen and that something will happen as a result of reporting and that the public bodies and other agencies need to understand the particular challenges that people face with the greater visibility that you have as a minority in a very small community. We'll be working extensively on hate crime and violence and bullying over the coming year and probably over three years. We need to work with you to work out how to do that effectively in ways which will actually make a difference in rural communities. So as far as the future is concerned, I can see that as just the start. We want to continue to co-operate with you and your colleagues in planning and delivering action for change. I'm delighted that we're having follow-up seminars to today's event and that will be an action plan process, it won't just be talking shops, and we would see this dialogue continuing and we need to work out ongoing ways of supporting you.

We see the public sector duties as an enabler of change in all areas including rural areas and we need to work with you to think how that can be made a reality. In some places they work reasonably well, in some places they're really a token gesture as much as anything. We need to make them real everywhere and think what can we do to make an even better set of public sector duties when the new legislation comes in that brings them all together.

We need reliable data as a leader for change. Who uses services? Who doesn't have access to services? And how does that impact on equality, for example? We all need to stop complaining when people ask us to fill in forms to monitor who we are, because that kind of data is exactly the stuff that we should be using as a leader for

change. But it's important that that's not just about collecting numbers and saying, "There are a lot of people of this type, therefore we need to put our energy there." It's not about numbers, it's about rights, which comes back to monitoring whether everybody has access to their rights as an individual.

We need to find and promote good practice where it happens and demonstrate to everybody that the barriers can be overcome, we can make a difference. We know in the commission already that there's a lot of good practice about and a lot of it's been initiated by people in this room. We know there's really good work going on with lesbian and gay people in Dumfries and the borders. There's a lot of good work with migrants in the Highlands. We're pleased to see the centre for intergenerational practice taking roadshows around the country. There are masses of other good stuff going on out there. It *is* making a difference, we *can* overcome the barriers. The commission is committed to supporting you in work on developing and taking note of that good practice. I'm looking forward to learning more today about the practical action that we can take and to take that forward in our future discussions.

So I've left a very short time for my questions, I'm afraid, but there are the details of the helpline and how you can contact us. Do, please, follow up your relationship with us and keep in touch with your ideas and your questions.

EHRC Helpline – Scotland  
Telephone: 0845 604 5510  
Textphone: 0845 604 5520  
Fax: 0845 604 5530

9am – 5pm, Monday – Friday

[www.equalityandhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityandhumanrights.com)

## **7.2 Appendix II**

### **Equal Opportunities in Rural Scotland: Working together on a practical vision to bridge current barriers to social inclusion**

26<sup>th</sup> February, 2008

#### **Conference Report Appendix (II)**

**Transcript of speech by  
HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland,  
Paddy Tomkins**

***“A Journey in Equality and Diversity”***



I did manage to sit in some of the workshops before the break and I was stimulated by what I heard. I'm very conscious that in a way I'm going to share an experience as well in terms of my journey, as the heading is, in terms of diversity and the approach to diversity in the police service, particularly in Scotland. You will have observed that I'm not actually a Scot. I came to Scotland six years ago from Central London and I brought many interesting experiences in that regard as well. I'm certainly not going to lecture you about the right way to address diversity. The more I have to do with meeting the challenge of diversity, the more I realise I have much to learn and much yet to do. This is a sharing experience.

So the journey is one for me of 29 years. I now rejoice in the glorious title of Chief Inspector of Constabulary Scotland. I have big business cards. But I actually joined, as all people do in the police service, as a young, naive and very inexperienced copper 29 years ago, almost exactly when I joined Sussex police. The force I joined 29 years ago has narrowly reflected the society from which it was drawn but with some significant differences. It was more overwhelmingly male, more white, it was overtly heterosexual, it was misogynistic, often brutal and not very sensitive to the needs of the communities it served. I find a degree of irony occasionally when we're talking about the halcyon days of policing being 30, 40, 50 years ago, because I think, while we get it wrong a lot now, what we're trying to do is be much more understanding and responsive to the needs of individuals and communities which we serve now.

I suppose the issue of diversity - we didn't use the word 29 years ago - didn't really come to the forefront of my mind until later in my career when I worked for the Metropolitan Police Service and I, along with my colleagues, lived through the period, served through the period of the murder of Stephen Lawrence in South London, the shameful professional response, or unprofessional response, from the Metropolitan Police Service of which I was a member. The investigation of that murder, of course, no comment: It was a harrowing experience, not half as harrowing it was for the family of Stephen Lawrence and for the community, but harrowing for the police service as well. It's a dreadful way to learn lessons, but it's also a very compelling way for an organisation to go through that sort of catastrophic experience.

Back then I was a middle ranking officer and I began to realise the diversity. We were still largely talking in the language of police and race relations, starting to understand that it's not an optional extra, not something we put up on the walls of policing to decorate what we do. It's actually central and fundamental to our success. It's not about political correctness. It's at the very core values of policing in Britain, the things I took an oath about when I joined. It's about equality and justice, and those are words that often don't sit very happily on modern tongues but are applicable to the police, for the reasons I joined and I think still the reasons people do join the police service.

The other aspect that became clear to me was that I'd heard as a mantra, an unconscious repetition of the words that the values of policing in Britain, Scotland,



England, wherever, are those of policing by consent. I have come to think that consent does not mean acquiescence or passivity; it means active co-operation between individuals and the police, between communities and the police. If we're to have policing by consent, then we must have confidence. Confidence is a precursor before you agree to anything. Before you agree to undergo a medical procedure - I was going to say before you agree to have a haircut, but that's probably not an issue for me - you must have confidence in the practitioner. There's an issue that we must not only understand the community we serve, but convey to them a sense of that understanding and our professional competence: Even then we must explain what those strengths are.

When I took that oath I referred to earlier on, we also talked about to serve without fear or favour, which for some time has been a great get-out for the police service because it actually helped us prevent - well, helped us to avoid wrestling with the really difficult issues of serving the needs of diverse communities, which is that we, in the old days I described earlier, tended to see serving without fear or favour meaning giving everybody what we thought was appropriate and to the same level, irrespective of what their needs or particular circumstances were. It was a one-size-fits-all approach, and of course I and we have changed in our understanding that the one-size-fits-all approach is anathema to the needs, to the sort of service that we want to be part of. It's actually about equality of treatment according to the needs of the individual and according to the circumstances in which they find themselves.

When I used to be chief constable in the Borders police, I used to go to as many of the diversity awareness training sessions as possible. At the time I was there, they ran in all police forces and now they run for people who join the police service. This was police and support staff: Some had been in police services as many years as me; others were new joiners. Over three years, I saw a transition from the approach of the audience to a really active engagement and the sort of hard challenging I've just heard some of in the workshops that went on earlier on. The point I made was: What's this diversity thing then? Why are we doing this? Why do we need to do this? Is it about political correctness? Is it about preventing terrorism, about preventing riots? Why is this imperative? The more I considered it, and having had some interesting experiences myself bringing my family from south of England to settling in the Borders where we are now, was this simply about ensuring that every member of the community comes to us? Many don't come to us and sort of receive our service at a distance, if you were, or sometimes by proxy. Would this actually deliver the service that we would want for any member of our family, our children, in whatever the circumstances they find themselves? It's about turning labels into people - and that's a very glib thing to say, I realise that - but it was a sort of realisation for me and a realisation I've tried to make real for as many colleagues as possible. I think people have made a great deal of progress; people are more sensitive. Of course, as you've been discovering in your conversations this morning, the more one seeks to understand, the more complex things become, the more challenging things become. But hopefully they also equip us to give a more sophisticated response to that complexity of need.

On coming to Scotland as chief inspector of constabulary six years ago, I was asked to take on what was then the police business restorations area. We don't like one-word titles, we use as many words as possible in all our titles. So one of the first issues I addressed (because that was largely addressing the agenda that still needed to be addressed from the lessons learned from the tragic murder (inaudible) in Glasgow) was the need to move from this sort of silo approach of race relations to a much broader approach that recognised diversity. Perhaps I'll come to that in a moment. We sought to articulate where we were and what we aspired to do as a police service through the formulation of diversity strategy. Everyone has strategies these days, so we had a diversity strategy drawn up not by senior managers but practitioners looking at good experience across the UK and beyond.

I suppose that was our benchmark, our template against which our services were to be judged as events unfolded. The first - one of the early events that unfolded following the development of the strategy was the screening, and it pains me to think of this, of "The Secret Policeman". Anyone seen that? Put your hands up, audience participation is good. Thank you, back there. I think it was something of an indicator of how far the police service had moved in general terms. When I came to work the next morning after the screening of "The Secret Policeman", there were some constables there for a training force, there were people milling about doing stuff I know not what but milling the way people do at reception areas of various buildings, and they were all absolutely appalled and ashamed to be connected with what they had seen on their television screens. The anger was almost palpable that they had been betrayed by someone who wore the same uniform as them. These were, if you recall, the filming of the behaviour, the racist behaviour of some new recruits in England and Wales, having been in the police for no more than a few weeks in the north of England, outrageous behaviour. But again, the whole police service suffered as a result of that, the public screening of that, but also responded in a different way, I think, than the way it would have responded some years before.

Interestingly, also, it received a different sense of response and support from many communities with whom they had been working about the nature of this. Of course you'll recall that the Commission for Racial Equality, as it was then, commissioned and used their statutory powers to have a formal investigation into the police service in England and Wales under their legislation and under the leadership of David Herbert Smith. But interestingly, further investigations in England and Wales did not apply to Scotland who conducted a formal review under the Workers Law Associates banner to look at police and race relations. Earlier on, it broadens out to aspects of other minority communities.

We went through the process, we went through the investigation, or the independent review, and you'll recall that perhaps the CRE response in England and Wales was critical. Herbert used the phrase "the ice-cold heart of middle management needs change in the police service in England and Wales". We were interested in your experiences in that regard, and interesting to see what they said about Scotland, but that didn't come out in Scotland in the same way. What they said, rather gratifyingly, and

this was published just after the G8 event, was that actually they saw the efforts that police in Scotland had made, and I quote, "to be an exemplar amongst public authorities in Scotland in terms of dressing diversity communities." That is not a cue to be complacent, but it was an indicator to show the way we had moved on - An independent review: I took some pride in that.

But of course, with the business areas - changes to the diversity business area, portfolio holders, senior police officer level, a range of strands of diversity; we were also working very hard in other areas. It was pleasing again to get recognition from groups like Stonewall for the work going on in that regard, a concern for what we were doing and training officers on how to support the needs of Alzheimer sufferers and so on.

I don't think of these as plaudits and self-congratulation, but I give you an indication of the areas we were addressing and are now addressing our minds to. That's the point where we're now in a position of greatest risk. As soon as somebody says you did very well, my natural reaction is, "Oh, that's okay, we can relax and everyone else has to catch up", which of course is the worst possible thing to do. Now we have this call to arms to redouble our efforts within the service. Of course, we're all working in a new environment that offers us some opportunities and some challenges for us in the police service: A unified commission for equality and human rights is going to be working in a different legal framework. The peaks and troughs in terms of the availability of legal redress for discrimination are going to be leveled fairly quickly and that's going to be something of an injunction, an exhortation to large corporations, which I was part of.

I think this reflects - the creation of this unified commission reflects - the sort of thinking we were trying to reflect a few years ago by going for diversity, in that silo approaches do not in my view meet the needs of any individuals. People suffer from multiple forms of discrimination and they'll move and change in terms of emphasis according to circumstance. It's certainly the case that the bigots who seek to discriminate or denigrate individual people or communities do not themselves choose, they don't specialise in racism or sexism or homophobia, but they'll take their opportunities where they can get them. It's important to respond or to anticipate that. It's important from our perspective in terms of resources and effective use of resources not to remain in this silo mindset. I think we've made considerable progress in that regard.

I know what you're addressing here; this is all sort of a bit metropolitan and larger than what you're talking about here. I know you're wrestling with the issues of sparsity, rural communities, dispersed communities, and while I have some sort of insight into that, I don't pretend it's on the scale you deal with in the Highlands now and in other areas of northern Scotland.

I would like to say I've come here with solutions, one, two, three, you do this and it'll be great, but I find it's very, very difficult and I'm sure you find it very difficult. The point about the success that we have seen in the cities is you get a critical mass of advocates, of interest groups, of activists, which is very much harder to build in a rural area. So I

think that just as police, other public authorities or any endeavour should not be addressing diversity on a silo basis, the sort of experiences you bring with you today, your life experiences, they need to be shared with others, they need to be - there needs to be - collaboration for the compliance of these agencies in order to get that more powerful voice heard.

I think it's the case now that public services are more prepared to listen, are keen to listen, and are actively trying to listen. So if the voice can be made sufficiently loud, there will be a positive response. I think if we can get public services and societies to recognise the difference and accommodate people's needs, then things will change and we'll start-up a virtuous cycle of improvement. But it's important to get that coalescence of clarity of message.

Some of the things I heard earlier on I hadn't heard before. They're very impactful messages, but if they're not reaching the areas of senior executives and senior managers..... I don't think people actively want to avoid adjusting services, but they need to understand what the needs are. I'm just trying to make the point that collective action is vital to ensure the rural minority voice is heard.

There are examples where there are practices being particularly beneficial in a rural context. Instances like remote reporting of these crimes, particularly hate crimes, in a police context is a good example. We work with people like the Citizens' Advice Bureau to help us deliver our services and help them deliver theirs: There can be benefits from that rather than just the process. This acts as a focal point for communication itself. We have the chance to make a balanced perception of the police so people can make an appropriate response.

In the context of GP surgeries, health clinics and so on, we know in terms of criminality when the scourge is affecting Scotland - violent crime in the public space or in the home in terms of domestic abuse - We know it's vastly underreported, possibly up to 70 per cent underreported. If we can get people to share with us the information through proxies like doctors and so on, we can respond by focusing our services more appropriately.

There are examples of where that's actually been done, the change in emphasis around child protection (inaudible) which I think continues and it's everyone's job to make sure it's all right for children is a concept which should be expanded to other areas of work. I think that also there's the question for us of where do we go from here generally? We've gone from community and race relation, then community relations, then we've gone to equal opportunities, risk diversity, what are we going to talk about next? What's the next evolution of this process?

Organisations like Halifax, Bank of Scotland, organisations in the public sector like the police who are seeking to still be ahead of the competition, if you will, are now we're talking about inclusion. We can buy in expertise, try to bring in a more representative

workforce, but what we need to do is include the actual people we're seeking to deliver services to. That doesn't mean just consulting people - I'm sure the people here have been consulted until they don't want to see another questionnaire or fill in another online survey - but actually getting people in to deliver the services. Even that phrase 'getting people in', 'making a move', 'come to us', is wrong; somehow we have to use new opportunities afforded by technologies and so on to include all interests in delivering policing in the context I'm talking about, services.

So in summary, delivering diversity in the rural context is hugely challenging, very difficult, but I think that we are making progress. I think opportunities do exist and I think the very fact that you are here today gives a sort of critical mass, I'll use the phrase again, to convey to bodies like the new commission, just what is required in the rural community for Scotland and beyond.

### 7.3 Appendix 3

### 7.4 Appendix IV

## **Equal Opportunities in Rural Scotland: Working together on a practical vision to bridge current barriers to social inclusion**

26<sup>th</sup> February, 2008

### **Conference Report Appendix (III)**

**Transcript of presentation by  
Pauline Livingstone,  
Co-ordinator, Cowal Befriending Scheme**

***“A Case Study of Overcoming Barriers”***



I'm Pauline Livingstone. I'm the co-ordinator of Cowal Elderly Befriending Scheme working in Cowal in Argyll and as the name suggests we befriend the elderly. I have some slides today to illustrate some of the points.

Here is a map of the area that we cover.

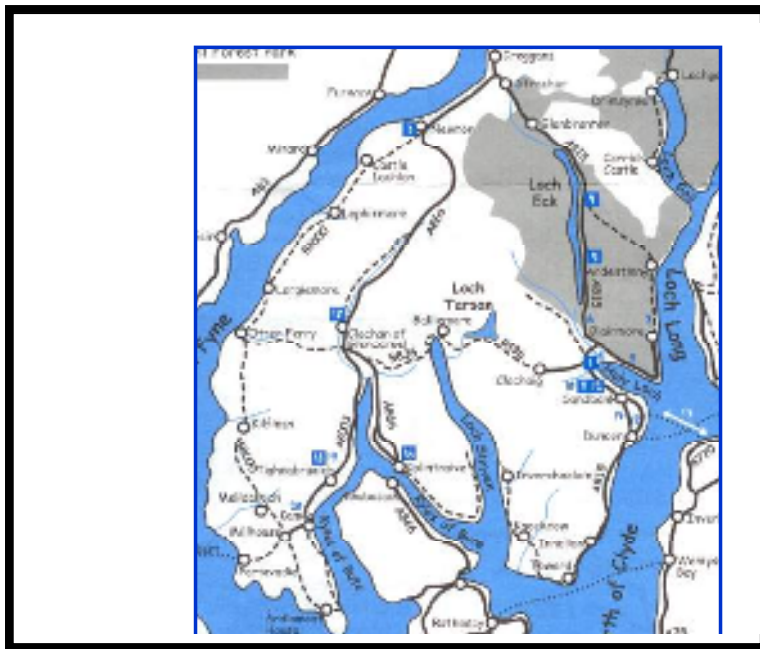


Photo of map of Cowal Peninsula

The one main town, Dunoon, is towards the bottom right there, but we cover the whole rural area from up in the top corner right down to the bottom and all the communities down at Loch Fyne there. We're not competing for rurality, but there is a single track called 'Hell's Glen' on maps. A lot of communities are only reached by single track, so we have an hour or an hour and a half before we get to the first of our clients.

For the elderly, I think rurality impacts on almost all aspects of their daily life.

Access to services: quite often in small communities, there are no services, so access isn't that much of an issue because if there isn't a service you can't access it. Public transport is very limited – except for buses, but a lot of elderly people can't get on to the bus anyway.

Access to community facilities: If you don't have transport you can't access community facilities and even getting to your friends and family in rural areas can pose particular difficulties. It's the same in areas across Scotland: The changing demographics, the way population has shifted, means families have moved away to find work; a lot of young



people can't afford houses in these villages. Other people move in, and you end up with holiday homes. There's a village where one client is the only person living in a row of eight houses. All the rest are holiday homes and she's in her 90s and almost blind. She has no neighbours now, but she lives in a beautiful house. This is the picture in a lot of these rural villages. A lot of people retire to these villages. We were talking about that in the workshop. It's a lovely area: People come there to retire, as long as they are in a couple and are healthy, everything is fine. But when they become ill or when they lose their partner, if they don't have a local support, they find themselves very isolated in these rural villages.

I've been asked to talk about some of the things we have done to address some of the inequalities faced by the rural elderly. We receive some funding from Argyll and Bute Council and as a small independent voluntary organization and Scottish Charity, we do try to work towards the council's equality strands and are monitored on how we work towards it. Although we try work on all the strands, in a project like ours, some have more impact on our day-to-day work. For us its Age, Disability and Gender. In Cowal we have a particularly high elderly population. In Scotland it's 21%. In parts of Cowal it's already 35% and heading to over 40% in the next five years. This poses particular issues for services.

Our project started when an elderly man went to his councilor and asked, "Do we elderly people have to get you to notice us by going out vandalising bus shelters? When are you going to look at our needs?" The council listened and set up a little pilot project with a rural challenge grant and looked at the needs of the elderly and what would make a difference. From this the Befriending Scheme was born. When the scheme started, it was overwhelmed by referrals. All the agencies, the Health Services, Social Services, realising the isolation of the elderly both in the town and in particular in rural areas, swamped the project with referrals but they couldn't hope to meet the demand.

It was about then that I came into post. We had 70 people on our waiting list and we offering a service to about 30. We realised that we weren't meeting the needs that were out there and that there were lots and lots of gaps. There were lots of elderly people living at home; changes in the way community care was provided meant that people were helped to stay at home but if they had needs that would be met by nurses and home helps, these might be the only folk that they saw. They didn't have visitors; friends and family moved away, or had died before them and they could go two or three weeks with only a home help rushing in for 15 minutes once a day.

We didn't seem to be able to work with men very well -the clients in the project were mostly women. The volunteering service seemed to attract women and we didn't have any male volunteers. We didn't have any young volunteers. There just seemed to be so many gaps in what we were doing and we couldn't offer any service to people with greater support needs.

We realised we had to improve things, we had to look at our project and start addressing some of those inequalities, some of those barriers that people were finding in taking part in our service. We looked at why people were referred. They might have been ill, suddenly facing one of the major illnesses such as a stroke or hip replacement; have been ill for a long time and lost confidence in going out; they might have lost their partner and were finding it very hard to deal with; they might just have become so ill and frail that they weren't able to go out by themselves anymore. They were still living at home but feeling isolated and depressed and there are now many studies showing strong links between depression and dementia. There were many reasons that people were referred to us.

We looked at the age profile of clients being referred and realised that we were having people referred from 65 to 102: That's a 40-year gap; you would never expect someone of 15 and 50 to want to do the same thing, to access the same service, so why did we think that this group would want to access the same services?

Our volunteer profile: we wanted to include volunteers from a range of different backgrounds. We had potential volunteers of all shapes, sizes and skills but we weren't successful in keeping them. All our volunteers were middle-aged women. We realised we were missing a lot of opportunities, if you add into that the extra problems of trying to do this in rural areas, we knew that we were facing quite a big challenge. What we were actually looking at was unequal opportunities and we really had to do something about it.

It actually took quite a lot of time; to involve all the different stakeholders in the project; the clients, the volunteers, the funders and the referring agencies. We wanted to involve them all in designing a better service. Over the next two years we designed a range of befriending services that people could be referred for.

The traditional one-to-one model, with volunteers, recruited, trained and supported to visit people at home.

Out and about: Using a wheelchair accessible minibus to get people out the house - that's what most people asked for. "If I could just get out the house, I know I'd feel better". We were able to go to lunch clubs and design clubs and groups of our own to take people to. Group work like this enabled us to include more people, so we were able to work through the waiting list. At the last count we were able to include 162 clients by changing the way we worked.

Peer befriending: Older people don't always need other people to befriend them. If you can get them together in a group, they do it themselves and we were able to facilitate that group work, getting six or seven people out, leaving them in a restaurant for an hour or so, coming back, picking them up. It was also a very good way of introducing people who moved into the area, getting them to one of the clubs and things we were running. People who moved to the area to be near family could now be included in the local elderly networks.

Keep in touch. A lot of our older people; their families were far away, too far away to visit - Canada and New Zealand. Grandchildren were scattered all over the world. Some of them - although there is a rise in silver surfers - didn't really know or use technology, they didn't know how to e-mail. So we created our e-mail service, Keep in touch. Now we've got granny and great-granny at hotmail.com. We help them with the e-mail service they tell us what they want to say, when the replies come back we post them out, we can send pictures backwards and forwards, and have been able to create this network all round the world, of people keeping in touch with their families.

Hospital support: If you have to go to hospital and you don't have someone to go with you, especially for our area where a visit to a consultant means a ferry journey and then transport to one of the big hospitals, perhaps in the Paisley or Glasgow area, it can be really, really scary. It's often assumed by doctors and consultants that every elderly person will have someone that can take them, can go with them and explain what's going on. But a lot of people don't, and some GPs had asked us if we could support people with this. We support them to attend what might be 'bad news' appointments, and help them follow-up afterwards. We don't have medical knowledge, we just act as caring friends and we will see people through courses of treatment that they may otherwise be unwilling to undertake.

We created both a Drop In and an Outreach information service. A lot of people, a lot of their anxieties are over, "Where will I get money now my husband has died?" What happens to his pension? Can I keep my house?" We realised that there was a real lack of information for older people, accessible information. A lot of it is, "Go to [www....](http://www....)." People, if they are upset, don't do things like that. They find it very difficult. So we take on the role of providing them with the information in an accessible format. We recruited an information officer and he created packs we can take out to their homes. The Message in a Bottle scheme for the Ambulance Service, we have been doing that all across rural Cowal for over a year.

With those services we found that it really changed the whole profile of the project. We could reach a lot more people and people could move between the services. They might start with hospital support and then feel they wanted to go to lunch club because other services were available.

With volunteers: it wasn't just about one-to-one. Some people are reluctant to get into the commitment that a one-to-one relationship with the elderly can be, but by offering a range of different roles - they could drive people, they could help the peer befriending service. We found by doing that we not only attracted male volunteers but we attracted young volunteers. It had benefits across the whole project. We've now got over 30 volunteers ranging in age from 19 to 84, more than a third of them are male and we even have some young men.



Photo of young male volunteer helping elderly gentleman from minibus

Here we have one of our young volunteers who does escort on a minibus.

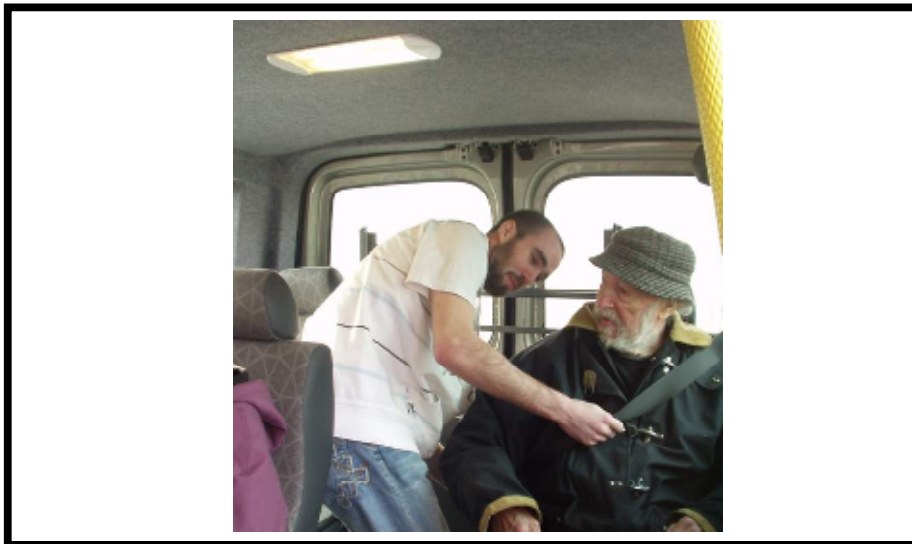


Photo of volunteer helping gentleman to fasten his seatbelt



Photo of 5 elderly ladies enjoying a cup of tea in a restaurant

This is peer befriending; a group of ladies with various disabilities out together enjoying an afternoon out.

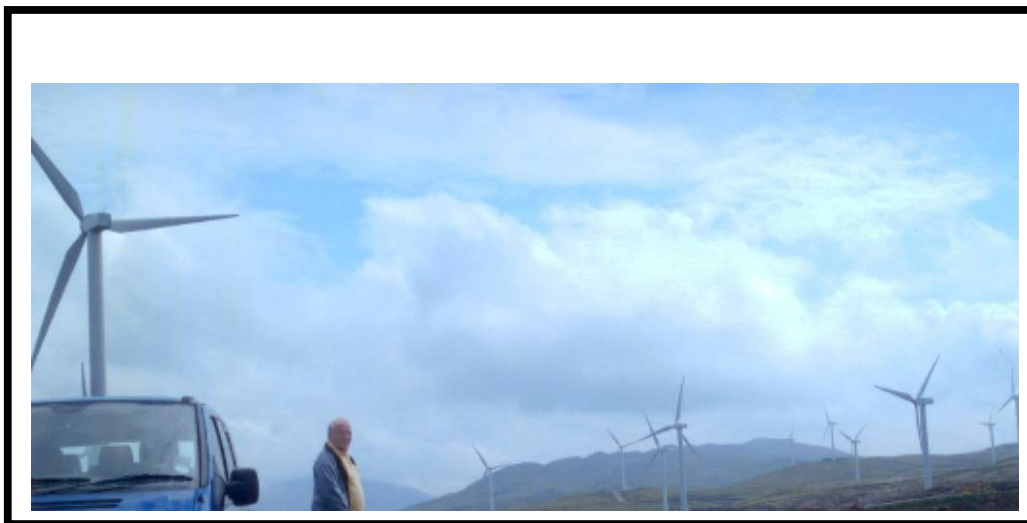


Photo of man against backdrop of a wind farm

This is out and about on a slightly wider scale. This was very attractive to get men involved.

Also we use sport. You might think that when someone gets to a certain age, they can no longer enjoy sport.





3 snapshots of a village hall with elderly men playing indoor curling

This is indoor curling; played on a wooden floor with specially adapted equipment. This has proved really popular with men. We sometimes see a real needle and competitive spirit in some of the teams.



Photo of 2 men playing indoor curling

This is Lochgoilhead village hall. Mr. Hossack on the left will be 103 in May. He still drives and comes to our curling club and thoroughly enjoys it.



Photo showing one lady using a ramp to launch the curling stones, and another lady using a pusher stick to push the stone forward

We also have a little video showing how it works: People can use the ramps if they have particular mobility difficulties or can use the little pusher sticks to throw the curling stones up the floor.



Photo of Information Officer helping an elderly lady to use a computer



This is a photograph of our Keep in Touch service: When we looked at being more equal, we tried to spread it to everything we did. When we recruited an information officer, he was 70. To avoid any ageism we had fully anonymous recruitment procedures. The skills that he brought were fantastic and he related very well with the clients - that's him helping Jean to e-mail her son in Canada.



Photo of volunteer using ramp to help a lady in a wheelchair enter the minibus

One of the main areas we had to address was disability; how we could include people with disabilities. This picture shows our first bus. When we were able to get a second bus, we involved the sensory impairment team and got a much more accessible vehicle with a range of adaptations, including wide door steps, flip up seats and bright yellow grab rails throughout.

When we started looking at how we worked with people with dementia, we looked at some studies that said activity was a good way of working with people with dementia; keeping people active and involved can really help to delay the progress of this disease. We started a small, supported walking group, using the Paths to Health model. What I like about this slide is that the picture shows two clients, a volunteer and a support worker out walking and I'll bet you can't actually tell which is which, given that our age profile of volunteers is up to 84.



Photo of 4 elderly people - two clients, a volunteer and a support worker

Volunteering: sometimes the barriers for volunteers can pose difficulties, particularly the hidden barriers. Some people face more barriers than others. That is Cathy, a retired nurse, perfectly suited to volunteer with our scheme. This young man, however, faced almost every barrier to volunteering. He had mental health problems, had been in prison; had poor literacy skills. He came to tell us why he couldn't befriend; he'd like to.... ..but... So after hanging about the project for six months helping in the office and with setting up halls for the groups we asked him if he could help walk someone's dog. He said, "I could do that. It's not befriend. I can't talk to anybody but I can walk the dog". Another lady who kept her car although she could no longer drive: He said, "I could help take her out in her car but I couldn't befriend, I couldn't talk to anybody". Finally he took someone swimming, which, if you are a volunteer manager, the thought of a young person taking someone, frail and elderly swimming is a nightmare, but he did it, very successfully and that marked a turning point, not only for that volunteer and client, but for the project, because it made us realise that the with the right support - almost everyone has something to offer.

The support this volunteer required to do those things was an hour's support for every hour of volunteering, but that made us realise that to make it work, to offer equal opportunities you sometimes have to offer really unequal levels of support. We haven't done these things to tick the boxes of equality: We did them to make the project better, but by doing them we'd found we were looking at the different equality strands and addressing equal opportunities. We've a long way to go but we feel we have made a start and it has really benefited our project to do this.

**Equal Opportunities in Rural Scotland: Working together on a  
practical vision to bridge current barriers to social inclusion**

26<sup>th</sup> February, 2008

**Conference Report Appendix (IV)**

**Transcript of speech by  
Lesley Irving,  
Team Leader for Race, Religion and Refugee Integration  
Equality Unit, Scottish Government**

***“Equality & Rural Issues:  
the Scottish Government Perspective”***

It's a great, great pleasure to be here today and inspiring to see so many people who have come out on a rather wet, windy day up here to join us to look at equality in rural areas. A very impressive gathering at a very impressive event, and I also want to say before I start a big thanks to Morag and all of you who organised this conference for putting together a tremendous event which I'm sure we'll get very positive outcomes from, because that's the point of the day, to get outcomes. It's not just to sit around and talk about things that we all know are issues that exist and move beyond that. What I'm going to say now is perhaps a bit of going back over what we know are the issues, but also hopefully looking forward to and thinking about some solutions.

We have heard from speakers and you've all had an opportunity in the workshops to talk about what the issues are in rural areas, what are the barriers that people face in their daily lives. In the workshops this afternoon, we'll be going on to think more succinctly about what we can do to move those barriers. I think it's interesting to reflect about how equality issues have been perceived in the past. People used to think there couldn't be racism in rural areas, for example, because there were few people from minority communities; not none, but few. That makes an assumption that people can't be racist in the absence of large numbers of people from minority communities and that's not the case.

We know racism is present in rural areas and we know the changes happening in Scotland's demographic, which has brought an increasing number of people here in rural Scotland where previously there wasn't the infrastructure, there weren't the services, there wasn't the experience of providing for the communities; and that has brought significant challenges to all parts of Scotland. There obviously have been (inaudible) in rural areas too. Falling populations meant necessities and services such as schools could be in jeopardy. Migration brings people to do the less popular types of work, and create healthy rolls in the schools which bring the funding to keep them open for the whole community.

Racism isn't just about skin colour: We have invisible as well as visible minorities. In that respect, in Scotland we have minorities of English-born people. There have been in the past not always the equality for English people in parts of rural Scotland. We have our gypsies and travelers who have been in our rural communities for centuries. Their experiences of living in those areas have not always been positive. They have suffered and continue to suffer exclusion and racism to a quite unacceptable degree. In some places, there are going to be impressions that the new white migrants are being preferred over visible minorities for employment. The care sector is one area where this has been suggested, for example. I think it's quite important that we ensure that new communities don't become some kind of acceptable community, more acceptable than visible communities because they look more like the majority population. Where there is racism, it should be challenged and not pandered to.

Looking across the equality groups as we are today, there are issues for people right across the board. We're all quite familiar with the 'only gay in the village' as seen on the

TV: It's not so much of a laugh when it's you, as has been mentioned earlier. Again (inaudible) in rural areas, a similar situation there has been a lack of infrastructure, a lack of services, and something people have no experience of providing. In rural areas where everybody knows you and your family, it can be difficult to have a private life. Coming out is easier in places where there are identifiable gay places and a gay culture, and much harder where that is absent.

For people with physical disabilities, our beautiful countryside can be very isolating, making you dependent on others in a way you would not be in a city. In the cities, there are many buses services, for example, which are accessible if you're in a wheelchair or if you have difficulty getting up steps. It's not like that in Scotland; there are only a limited number of buses you can access. I have had a connection with Arran over the years and I know the buses that meet the ferries there are not accessible. You can access the ferry because that is accessible and has lifts and so on, but once you get off the other side, the bus that meets you is not an accessible bus. Obviously some people need a carer to look after their needs; other people are more able to be independent and live a life on their own, but they do require services, as we've heard, to be available to support them - and where there are no services, you get less choices.

For many people faith is an important aspect of their lives. But dwindling populations in rural areas have closed many churches or merged them with neighbours. People now have to travel further to celebrate their faith, but that's one thing for people who follow the Christian faith (inaudible). We have supported an outreach project, for example, which has been trying to contact Jewish people in isolated rural communities and has found many out of the larger population centres. Many of them have not been able to practice their faith with their own family for many years; haven't been able to participate in services. Worshipping with a group is an important part of faiths and can be difficult to access in rural areas.

As we heard earlier in Pauline's very interesting presentation before lunch, there are increasing numbers of older people in our rural communities. Obviously, as has been the case for many years now, young people are leaving and seeking opportunities that they feel they can't get in their home areas. It's important obviously for all communities to have a mix, to have diversity, so we do need to find a way of retaining our younger people in our rural communities as well as making sure that our older people have the services that they need and deserve, because it is both ends, not just older people.

Coming to gender, I think it's important not to get stuck in stereotypes of rural communities being old-fashioned and light years behind their urban counterparts. Traditional gender roles; obviously women in the communities have always worked in rural areas; worked the land; turned a hand to whatever needed being done; heavy machinery; spent many hours planting and harvesting. I remember a film that greatly impressed me a few years ago, a film about Shetland called (inaudible) about women's lives and their contribution to the economy and life of the island that was much more than the work done in the towns, very much more than they received recognition for it.



The women worked in the fields, ploughed and harvested; no aspect in the life on the Shetlands that they didn't participate in. Yet the only the only thing that was recognised was the knitting (inaudible). This was by an exhibition about work on the islands which didn't have a single woman represented in it. So women in urban areas may have choices about not to work, but women in rural areas have done so.

When there's an imbalance related to gender, many women experience abuse from men and their partners. Living in a rural community can make things very much more difficult. In a village, women are experiencing abuse and find a lack of privacy. It can be very hard to seek safety when you won't be able to leave the village without being seen by someone who can mention it to your partner: Or, if you live on an island and there are only so many ferries a day and he's standing there watching every one. I worked for Women's Aid and remember women and children taken off the islands lying in blankets in the back of someone's car; terrified they would be taken back home. I can remember receiving several phone calls from a woman living in an isolated house in a rural community, who had to speak quietly; there were no neighbours. She couldn't drive; was completely dependent on her partner. She wasn't allowed any money, and even if she could get enough to go, the nearest bus stop was a two-mile walk from her house. She wasn't literally locked in the house, as some women can be; there wasn't any need to do that because she might as well have been. The reality was that she was trapped. In a town or city, she could have gone to a neighbour's house or walked to get help, but not where she was living.

For people in the equality groups living in rural areas (inaudible) we all fall into at least one of those groups and often move between them, in and out as we go through our lives. Inequality of opportunities, discrimination, abuse, lack of services, all feature. In addition to that, as is the case, obviously, anywhere in Scotland, there is the complicating factor of isolation. We talked a lot about it in our workshop this morning, where you're the only gay, the only minority ethnic family or faith or only family with a disabled member. You can be isolated in the city as well, but you're more likely to be able to find services and you're more able to access them without everybody in the community knowing about it. You're more likely to be able to see people with the same experience as you. Your own experience is more likely to be visible. There is more likely to be data available for service providers to be able to access the suitability of their services. Hopefully that has changed and will continue to change as we improve our monitoring. (inaudible) people can help themselves in support. Transport, as we've heard, can be difficult and frequently expensive; petrol tends to be more expensive in rural areas.

So there is inequality; there's discrimination in rural areas and there is also an inequality between urban and rural areas in terms of people accessing and using our services. I think we need to think about it in everything we do. It's simple when you think about it, but we need to start doing it. We're approaching people to carry out cross-strand inequality assessments; to go beyond their strand and to include age, faith and sexual orientation as well. We need to also factor in the added difficulty caused by (inaudible).

We are increasing our understanding of equality as we go forward and we need to increase our understanding of the difficulties in parts of Scotland. For instance, in the work that we did in the Scottish Executive towards our national statement and action plan of equality, we convened a working group to look particularly at minority experiences in rural areas. That was a very important piece of work and we were lucky to have the help of several people in this room involved. In a sense, there were no surprises in the issues which emerged, but the strategic group's work is a reminder that things are different in the rural areas and we must take notice of that difference in developing policy.

Whether Scotland-wide, the government or health board-wide, the strategic group recognised the need to develop the infrastructure to support communities. They also highlighted the need for leadership and it was suggested we should ensure rural Scotland is included in any work we do. Just as we would advise in other equality contexts, policy-makers do need to consult communities in rural areas; but need to go beyond sending out the questionnaires to the usual suspects; to listen and take account of what we are being told and ensure that there's no unintended disadvantage being caused as a result of our policies being implemented. People from rural areas working in policy development and implementation is crucial and should become commonplace. We need to take every effort to include somebody with a rural perspective in every working group or strategy group that we establish.

I think the avoidance of stereotypical assumptions is important: That's something that came up in our workshop this morning. We used to get patronising people like myself who assume the countryside is years behind but things have changed and we now have access on a much more - not equal - but a more equitable way to all the knowledge in the world. We don't all have broadband or if we do, it doesn't always work, but that the situation is evolving and improving. Increasingly people in rural areas do have opportunities to be globally connected (inaudible) without having to go where the customers are. It is possible now to work for an urban-based employer but to live in rural parts of Scotland and enjoy the benefits of that while still taking forward a thriving career.

There's no doubt that our communities in Scotland are changing very rapidly and that the change in the last few years has gone up the scale. The change in the demographic; the influence of having new communities that we haven't had in the past has had significant impact, possibly a greater impact in rural areas than in the cities at times where there have been established minority communities. There's no doubt the diversity in rural areas is increasing and that's always a benefit. In many ways; economically, socially and culturally.

For me, I think it's important that we don't get stuck at diversity and say 'if we're diverse, that's fine'. Of course it's great to have diversity, but without equality, diversity means that some are more equal than others. For me, it's important to not only celebrate diversity but to hang on to the need to be equal; to go back to Ros's vision of a world



built on fairness and respect, where people are all equal. So, it's a challenge; I don't think anybody in this room would understate that. There's a challenge to achieve equality in rural areas, as it is to achieve it anywhere. It may be many years off, saying that we'll have equality anywhere in Scotland, I think, but alongside that work to achieve equality in rural areas, we know that we need to be persistent; we know that we need to think outside the box; we know that we need to be creative and find new solutions; but we need to rebalance many of the relationships that exist in our society. There are many feelings about why some people are treated less well than they should be treated themselves. It's an important aspect of that: One we need to keep a sight of and one we need to think of talking about moving beyond diversity and achieving.

There are benefits for all of us in a Scotland in which we can all reach our potential without discrimination to hold us back. In rural areas, the barriers may be different or additional, and more effort may be required to overcome them because of course, importantly, equality is not about treating people equally, it's about giving people what they need and, in some places if we need more support for some people to achieve the same outcomes, that's what it's about. It's not about treating everybody equally; it's about giving people what they need to achieve their individual potential. I think we all have a good idea by now about what these barriers are, and after today we'll have a better idea. But the task of today, the task for all of us right across Scotland is to move beyond that, to move towards the kind of Scotland that we all aspire to, a country that genuinely is 'one Scotland for all'.

## **7.5 Appendix V**

### **Equal Opportunities in Rural Scotland: Working together on a practical vision to bridge current barriers to social inclusion**

26<sup>th</sup> February, 2008

#### **Conference Report Appendix (V)**

#### ***Stories of what it is like to face barriers to equality in Rural Scotland***

## **Thank You**

HIEF would like to thank all our storytellers for sharing some very personal information with a group of strangers. We are very aware that working with equality issues is not their profession and that they are unused to public speaking. It took great courage for them to take part in the conference and we hope that they will be encouraged by the delegates' feedback which showed how much they valued hearing first hand accounts of the issues we are trying to combat.

## **Storyteller 1 - Barriers faced because of deafness**

Storyteller 1 (S1) is a lady who began to lose her hearing during her time at school and in early working life. She presently lip reads and holds down a demanding job for a private company.

Her experience at school was dependant on which teachers were good communicators. She had to sit at the front of the class because of her impairment but then teachers would either talk to the class from behind her or cover their mouths with their hands so that it was difficult to make them out. A series of trips to hospital was frightening for a young girl and she tells of her lasting impression of 'men in white coats barking at me'.

When she lost her hearing completely whilst in employment, the staff didn't want to have her around. Her insistence that she could continue to do her job was met with concerns over health and safety in case the fire alarm went off and she couldn't hear it. She was subjected to being chained to an electrical socket which would deliver a shock if the alarm went off! All of this lack of sensitivity could have caused her to become self-effacing and accepting of inequalities, but instead she became more assertive.

She was debarred from applying for a mainstream bursary for higher education and was directed towards a bursary for disabled people, so she went instead to work for the Disability Rights Commission where she was assured of fair treatment. Since the dissolution of the DRC, she is facing the new challenges of working outside of a protective environment.

Socially, she finds it challenging because so much is centred on music that she often feels excluded. She laughs at herself for being several steps behind everyone else in her aerobic class. Her life has been spent in cities such as London where the experience is very different from that of rural areas. People in the cities tend to be more fascinated by deafness, whereas people in rural areas tend more to shy away from it; see it as a problem or barrier.

Call centres are a huge barrier to people with diminished hearing. It can take about 25 minutes to complete what should be a five minute conversation. It is difficult to find a quiet spot in which to make the call – especially at work if you are using technology to

aid the call as this ties you to the public space of your desk. Technology is certainly one of the key ways forward, but we may need to slow it down in some cases.

It is good that there are some internet sites which tell which films are available with subtitles, but not many cinemas have the technology – or do not want to use – subtitles. They might offer a special session on a Wednesday afternoon, but who wants to go to the cinema then? During the Pantomime season, the screen with subtitles is in a different place from the action on stage – this could be an issue for stage management awareness?

Communication support is difficult – there is an assumption that deaf people use British Sign Language(BSL) but this isn't always the case – Railway staff need to be made aware of this. Even if you do use BSL, it may be possible to arrange interpreters for big events, but it's not really feasible for every business meeting or other interaction during the day.

Parents can be highly influential in determining your attitude to your impairment. It is helpful to focus on the issues as they arise rather than on the disability. We need to get away from the symbol of the wheelchair as it is not helpful in getting people to understand disability.

### **Storytellers 2 & 3 - Barriers faced because of race**

Storyteller 2 (S2) was a fulltime female student in Poland who came to Scotland for a few months to improve her English, only to stay longer than initially intended. She has had several work experiences and claims that some people are fair and welcoming whilst others are more discriminatory. She worked in a fish factory in for one year and found this very hard with unsociable working hours in an isolated workplace – and she had no car. S2 has prospered through the education system and is planning to study medicine. She works part-time delivering pizzas and enjoys this better than the monotony of the care home.

When she worked as a healthcare assistant in a nursing home, some people were excellent; some not so good. S2 thinks it depends on education – her observation is that those who were academically educated were less discriminatory than those who had poor literary skills etc. She said that she distinguished between those who read tabloids and broadsheets. Comments such as 'Poles do drugs' were a daily feature but these only came from one or two individuals. Once they learned that S2 would stick up to them, they stopped saying things to her directly but still continued to influence those who were weaker. She had once been on the brink of making a formal complaint at the care home but as she was moving on anyway she chose not to cause a fuss – she wanted to leave 'on good terms'.

She was employed through a Spanish agent who did not provide much support. He made it difficult for her to take time out of work for part-time education. It was when he

told her that she was too stupid to study medicine that she found her resolve to fight back and he backed down saying that he had only been joking. S2 finds it hard to talk on behalf of Polish community because she only socialises with them at weekends; for the most part she integrates with Scots. However, she feels that they are lazy in learning English, partly because there is such good support with interpretation when needed. She voiced a confidence in the Highlands & Islands police.

Storyteller 3 (S3) is a Chinese woman who has been in the UK for 28 years and is married to a Scotsman. "I am his take-away from Hong Kong". When she came to the UK 28 years ago (Shrewsbury), it was common to be asked by the Chinese community 'Why you no work in Chinese restaurant?'

Those in restaurants face abuse by drunken customers demanding free meals. They give in so as not to cause trouble but this just perpetuates the problem. They understand the role of the police but are reluctant to contact them for help.

Chinese people envy skills of the Poles etc as they are low-skilled. They work hard to integrate their children, overlooking their own needs in the process such that the older generation come late in life to learning English as they consider education to be for young people. It is difficult to fit ESOL (English as a Second Language) lessons around the unsocial working hours of catering. The Highlands & Islands are good because of support from many agencies such as the WEA/International Women's Group who run ESOL lessons at 1.30 – 4.30pm which is a convenient time.

There is a need to educate middle management about *why* things such as interpretation services are needed. The Chinese Association don't like when they are told what is being provided rather than being asked what their needs area (they are all diverse). Use of language such 'Chinky' meaning a Chinese meal is very offensive and may be a lack of understanding of the effects that leads people to carry on using the term out of habit.

Personal confidence seems to have been a common factor in turning things into a positive in both the above cases. It is good to exchange cultures. For instance, it is interesting to understand why Scots 'address the haggis' and why Chinese wish each other wealth at Chinese New Year? Sharing and using the education system will bring benefits.

### 3.3 Storyteller 4 - Barriers faced because of gender

Storyteller 4 (S4) is a 'transwoman', a woman who was designated at birth as being male. The name she gave is not the one on her birth certificate. Her parents took lots of measures to try and make her more masculine; sending her to an all male school, prescribing injections of testosterone to 'improve behaviour' (Dr Shipman was her doctor), and directing her into the building trade 'to be a man'. Then followed an abusive marriage in which S4 was a battered husband. She had boiling water poured over her

head and was permanently scarred so that she now has to wear a wig. Following a divorce, she had to move from a rural area in Northern England to a city as living in small community became difficult.

S4 met a new wife through amateur dramatics, had a son, and moved to the north of Scotland to escape the drugs and violence of Manchester. This was an honest relationship from the start and S4's wife has always been very supportive. However, things became difficult when S4's (Mormon) father-in-law came to stay. This led to severe frustration of not being able to be 'herself', so she built a second house just for herself in which she can spend time alone and relaxed in her identity.

She had a serious car accident about four years ago. S4 had dressed as a woman for her first public trip to Inverness, and even when seriously injured, she desperately tried to hide her transsexualism and was more concerned about getting out of female dress before the emergency services arrived than about her personal safety. She wouldn't go to hospital straight away, preferring to go home first to change her underwear before her wife drove him to the local community hospital. S4 knows several staff there from her drama group and didn't want them to know about her gender.

S4 led a frustrated life for about 7 months, living in a caravan and not getting the opportunity to 'go out' till she thought she would die if she didn't go out. So she dressed again as a woman but tragically took a brain haemorrhage as she left the caravan. Once more, she was so determined not to be found as transgender that she concentrated on changing clothes, removing nail polish and make up etc even whilst feeling the stroke working on her. This was a real life-changing experience. She woke up in Aberdeen hospital unable to see, hear or speak. After surviving and fighting back to health, she decided that 'if she survived, she was going to be herself'.

Living in a remote part of the north of Scotland, S4 "thought [she] was the only one". 99% of all Internet searches of 'transsexual' came up with pornography. She started up a website chat room for transgender people in Caithness. She continued working as self-employed in the building trade and one day, a lady customer gave her a present of a glass nail file and asked if she was 'trans'. S4 was afraid of the local rumour culture, but realised that people must be seeing something in her that she was not aware that she was exuding. In her online chat room, she is anonymised as 'Angel' and yet others refer to her as a woman. This lady customer urged S4 to go to a local clinic where she got good support.

S4 feels that there is a general acceptance in her local community but that this comes mainly from 'incomers' from the south who hold more liberal views. She feels that acceptance is due to her not fighting causes or pushing for rights but just quietly going about her life. However, within the male community, there is a perception that she is 'gay, lady boy'; it would seem that tolerance is limited to Not In My Back Yard. S4 is now facing a new challenge as she prepares to meet someone from the chat room face-

to-face for the first time and she is quite apprehensive. Everyone says to 'come out' but are not always comfortable when you do.

S4 can't get a credit card in her female name, so when 'dressed', she has to pay by cash. This caused an incident in a hotel where identification was asked for when paying for the room. The Vice Squad then raided the room saying that there had been an allegation that she was a prostitute. S4 says, "I don't want to think there is prejudice out there, but I know there is".

### **Storytellers 5 & 6 - Barriers faced because of sexual orientation**

Storyteller 5 (S5) is a young, homosexual male who grew up in a small town in Dumfries & Galloway which has a population of circa 3,500 population. He is presently 33 years old and knew from the age of about 9 that he was 'different'. His experience is very much that of feeling that he was the 'only gay in the village'. Because he was growing up during the period when AIDS was linked to homosexuality and so many people were scared of those who were gay. This made it hard to come out, especially in a small rural town which was very sports-orientated and where there was an expectation that males were sporty. To be different to this made life difficult.

When he left school, S5 chose to leave and go to the city to university and used alcohol as a prop to give him the confidence to 'come out'. The reaction of friends surprised him as they had all suspected anyway and found it no big deal. He then worried that word would get back to his home and parents but he still couldn't face them. So he 'did it' over the telephone in an indirect manner, eluding to a question his father has asked years ago rather than stating clearly that he was homosexual.

Having now moved back to his hometown, S5 feels more comfortable about his sexuality. A common response is "I don't like gay people but you're okay". He feels there is an acceptance because he has made himself visible. He now works for an organisation that offers support to young homosexual people, and is seen as the 'only professional gay in the village'.

S5 had to leave the village to 'come out'. The only other account of someone coming out was when two men ran away together, leaving two shattered families behind. The message he took from that was that if you came out, you would have to run away. Although statistically there should be over 100 homosexuals in his small town, he only knows of 7 so many must be living closeted lives. "Everyone knows everyone else's business": Rumours and small town gossip is a real issue that makes it hard to come out, to make yourself visibly different to others. There is a culture of silence that surrounds gay people in small communities.

Storyteller 6 (S6) is a young, lesbian woman who was brought up in a very religious family in the islands, where sexuality was a taboo subject in the home. She still lives there. She remembers her mother's horrified reaction to Boy George and learnt from this



that there must be social rules governing what is acceptable or not acceptable. Initial attempts to broach the subject with her mother were very discouraging. Even when S6 was away from home at university, she didn't feel she could talk to anyone about this issue.

So when she returned to the island, she went down the path of conformity – marrying and having two children. However, she felt very unhappy in her life. When she met someone who called herself a lesbian it opened a whole new set of possibilities, and S6 separated from her husband. She found the courage to tell him and her children about her sexuality and found her children very accepting and supportive. However, others such as her mother made it very difficult and this took its toll on her for around two years. She has found, however, that she has become a stronger person because of the adversity she experienced.

No Registrar on the island will officiate at a civil partnership. However, discrimination is not always overt: She has rarely been insulted to her face, but she is aware of a general hostility. S6 feels that the islanders really need help in combating their own prejudice against homosexuals: Her mother's religion demonises gays.

If you champion a cause in a rural area you stand alone, whereas in a town you could form a pressure or lobbying group. In rural areas, lesbian, gay and bisexual people very much use drugs and alcohol as props to give them both courage to face others if they come out, or solace for those who stay firmly 'inside the closet'. Because of this, the gay scene is associated with drugs and alcohol and this makes it too frightening for some to want to join; the substance abuse undermines the apparent camaraderie that looks attractive and which isolated gays crave.

### **Storyteller 7 - Barriers faced because of religious belief**

Storyteller 7 (S7) is a young Christian woman living on an island who told of her experience of coming to a living faith after being brought up in a non-religious family. It can be difficult for people to share such a personal account of their private lives and S7 requested that we do not record her story.

### **Storytellers – Barriers faced because of age**

Unfortunately, two storytellers who had offered to share their experience of barriers faced because of being young or old had to cancel at the last minute.

## **7.6 Appendix VI**

### **Equal Opportunities in Rural Scotland: Working together on a practical vision to bridge current barriers to social inclusion**

26<sup>th</sup> February, 2008

Conference Report Appendix (VI)

#### **Flipchart Notes from Workshops**

## Workshop (1) Disability

App VI Table 1:

Example	Underlying Issues	Possible Solutions	What needs to Happen – and why	Who needs to what, how and by when?
Too much focus on adults when we look to the needs of disabled people.	Needs of disabled children – education and communication – are different from adults and this isn't currently being addressed.	Awareness-raising, particularly in schools	Awareness raising needs to be communicated in a relevant way to different age groups (cf communication issues below). For example, young people can engage in fun activities to learn key messages	
<p>"Does she take sugar?" – people speaking to disabled people through their carers.</p> <p>Lack of communication compounds issues of isolation due to rurality.</p>	<p>We need to consider the widest aspects of communication, appreciating that this is beyond just words and includes our manner, how we dress, act etc.</p> <p>We need to be aware of how our messages are being received and avoid jargon.</p> <p>Often, we make assumptions as to how people want/are able to communicate especially in regard to provision of alternative formats. There was division of opinion as to whether the work of the DRC made the issue more confrontational than was helpful</p>	<p>Technology can be both a help and an additional barrier. It can help communicate across geographical boundaries and join up groups who would otherwise be isolated. It can also help with provision of services to widespread groups. However, hard copy information which is vital to many (eg visually impaired) and those without internet</p>	<p>Those who provide services need to understand communication issues.</p> <p>Education should start in schools.</p> <p>We may feel we know how to communicate clearly but we need others to listen and react accordingly.</p>	<p>Mandatory equality &amp; diversity training should start in primary schools when they are still curious, open-minded and accepting. We also need to target/prioritise all education facilities including secondary schools, colleges and universities and it was felt strongly that</p>

<p>Good communication is required where there is a lack of concentrated communities and the associated lack of services and support.</p>		<p>access/ computer hardware etc, is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain. Assumptions are made that everyone can access website info downloads. Technology can also be expensive. Awareness-raising of communication issues is very important – we need to convey message that ‘one size doesn’t fit all’. In particular, we need to broaden awareness on this issue for legislators.</p>	<p>Better awareness of SAIF is required by all.</p>	<p>E &amp; D training needs to be core part of teacher training agenda.</p> <p>Schools, teachers’ training and other education establishments should be the number one priority for local authorities’ actions under their Disability Equality Duties.</p> <p>Equality &amp; diversity should be mainstreamed into education courses – both academic and vocational. This should be mandatory – particularly in course which involve any form of communication such as media courses.</p> <p>E &amp; D awareness training needs to go beyond just school children and teachers</p>
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				<p>to all who are involved in the education and shaping of young people. Eg should include parents, janitors, kitchen and admin staff etc</p> <p>Make training fun and interactive to enable key messages to be learnt willingly.</p>
<p>Wheelchair symbol is associated with 'disability'</p>	<p>Wheelchair symbol taken to have a negative meaning – it is meant to denote 'accessibility' but more often evokes negative feelings.</p> <p>It underlines the general public's willingness to 'pigeon hole' people. We are not sensitive to the needs of the individual.</p> <p>It reinforces the idea that all impairments are visible – if you are not visibly impaired, then you are not disabled.</p>	<p>Society needs education and there needs to be some sort of 'compulsory' programme.</p> <p>We should encourage more positive language that is sensitive to needs. We should refer to 'people with disabilities' instead of 'disabled people' and wording could reinforce the fact that toilets, parking spaces, buildings etc are 'accessible' not 'disabled'.</p>		

		However, due to the many issues in rural Scotland, it was felt important to prioritise the provision of these facilities ahead of considering less urgent actions in regard to wording.		
<p>73% of working aged people who are visually impaired are unemployed.</p> <p>Often, people with visual impairments seeking work are told to go and find unpaid work in the voluntary sector (both demeaning the individual who has skills to offer the commercial workplace, and belittling the</p>	<p>In general, there is a lack of support in getting people with disabilities into work.</p> <p>There is little knowledge of Access to Work.</p> <p>Employers make negative misinformed assumptions about what people with disabilities can offer.</p> <p>It is difficult to challenge bad practice in rural areas – especially the islands (eg Shetland) – where it is difficult to find the necessary specialised legal knowledge and expertise to take the case to court. To pursue, it can result in high legal costs to bring in legal counsel from the mainland or to secure services in a limited market.</p> <p>In rural areas, much of the employment on offer is manual – agriculture, roads,</p>	<p>Better support for jobseekers with mental or physical impairments.</p> <p>Increased rights to flexible working to allow for travel in rural areas.</p>	<p>Promote better awareness of Access to Work Schemes etc</p> <p>More widespread promotion of flexible working hours</p>	<p>Add awareness in Disability Awareness training (and other E&amp;D training) to staff in Dept of Work &amp; Pensions.</p> <p>All people who are recruiting into customer service etc should have mandatory questions on E&amp;D at interviews. That way, people will seek out the information to prepare for their interview.</p>

voluntary sector as a second class opportunity)	ferries etc – and this can be a barrier to many with disabilities. An urban setting would offer more suitable job opportunities. Also, travel from remote rural areas into towns where the work is, is yet another barrier to those with disabilities.			
It is easier to get a job in a city than in rural Scotland	<p>Rural workplaces have limited access to new, fully-accessible buildings. There is a high level of listed buildings in the older small towns and villages, so making them accessible is a problem.</p> <p>As stated above, the high level of manual labour and transport issues make it difficult for someone who has a disability to secure suitable work</p>	<p>Public bodies/Quangos should be more accountable for making positive change happen.</p> <p>We need to get over the benefits of change/good practice.</p> <p>We need to get employers to change priorities.</p> <p>A joined-up approach is required to get these important messages across to relevant parties.</p>	<p>Reduce government tax on fuel in rural areas to make transport more affordable (precedent has been set with the road equivalent tax on ferries and discounted flights for islanders).</p> <p>In the next census, ask those unemployed a question on public transport. Past census gives a false impression of the impact of transport in rural issues because it only asked those who are already employed.</p> <p>We need to overhaul accessibility of public</p>	<p>We need the willingness of government to listen and act (as with discounted flights etc)</p> <p>All of us to keep organisations to account / to enforce compacts</p> <p>Call for UK legislation on Blue Badges to be changed</p> <p>Agencies such as HIEF, SCVO etc to write to MSPs, MPs etc to make them aware of the issues.</p> <p>Call for radical shake-up of public transport (as well as supporting and</p>



			<p>transport.</p> <p>We should reorganise how the government and others give support to people with disabilities. For example, it is all very well saying that there is free public transport for those who are older or who have impairments, but this is no benefit if there is no public transport available! And the sparse service that exists is not fully accessible.</p> <p>Groups who deal with disability issues should work with the local authorities (as part of the Disability Equality Duty) to look for solutions.</p> <p>Public authorities need to reinforce the 'no parking' restrictions that are</p>	<p>encouraging alternatives such as community transport schemes).</p> <p>Disability groups and local authorities to work together in partnership</p>
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			<p>supposed to help accessibility at places such as bus stops etc.</p> <p>There is a need for revision of the Blue Badge scheme which presently discriminates between certain types of disabilities and is inconsistent region to region.</p>	
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## Workshop (2) Race

App VI Table 2:

Example	Underlying Issues	Possible Solutions	What needs to Happen – and why	Who needs to what, how and by when?
Lack of understanding/information about different communities which leads to people being victimised. Where are you from?	<p>Stereotyping.</p> <p>Occupational segregation.</p> <p>Isolation.</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> generation – visible/different.</p> <p>Fear of retribution</p>	<p>Trade Union support.</p> <p>Challenge ignorance.</p> <p>Service delivery – individuals as well as groups.</p> <p>Education</p>	<p>Education – parents as well as young people – holistic approach.</p> <p>Media</p>	<p>Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- criminal justice system</li> <li>- offender programmes</li> </ul> <p>Approach – tailor</p> <p>Who delivers?</p> <p>Messages?</p> <p>Quality control</p> <p>Context</p>

				Individuals can start now then move on.... Don't assume understand all experiences. Include victims/it's everybody's job
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### Workshop (3) Gender

App VI Table 3:

Example	Underlying Issues	Possible Solutions	What needs to Happen – and why	Who needs to what, how and by when?
Ignorance and hate	Not enough education and training, Distance and isolation. Fear of change. Whole population approach. Hard to get info in remote/rural. Challenge phobia/hate attitudes (eg faith + trans)	Move One Scotland campaign (Link to local w/ local identity) to be <u>not</u> just race. Need multi-layers solution systems approach. Shared local ownership – roles defined	*Co-ordinated approach. *National campaign w/ local outcomes -> Schools work/curriculum. *Support employers not just through training -> make sure good + prioritising need -> focus on competency increases. *Train + win over senior manager. *Good resources.	*Working in partnership means active group with all strands on national + local level. *Increased capacity to participate on equality issues <u>not</u> just strand based. * Link w/existing networks of community councils + CPPs * Govt resources and leadership *Use/employ local people and monitor impact.

Lack of confidentiality + affects us all	Scotland as a village. Not just public sector but also business Always hear horror stories in a village – life/death Leaving rural areas impact on family life. Guidance exists but how is it enforced? How do you communicate effectively across our organisations?	Need trustworthy staff. Training. Everyone take responsibility (after attending) -> need to cascade info & learning. Ask community into our workplaces. 2-sided dialogue. Challenge our public authorities. Police ACPOS National working groups	+ Translating policy into individual responsibility and instilling confidence in workers to apply common sense in applying policy. + contact each other. Speaking to people is fundamental to $\Delta$ understanding and avoids tick box exercise. + encourage people to think 'what if it was you?'	+ Training for frontline staff & lone workers not just induction -> followed up, for those who commission training. + shared concordat between agencies re confidy & chief executive level + develop remote reporting + policy needs to be enforced + make mission statements basis for all induction training +staff able to communicate confidential policy to service users + increase k & u of data protection act
Lack of professional /personal understanding. Awareness. Tolerance	Fear. Unknown/change. Power imbalance. Visibility <u>or</u> not. Apathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Empower people/communities</li> <li>- Relationships + build mutual trust</li> <li>- In rural areas use church/faith groups to raise awareness</li> <li>- Consensus exercise between</li> </ul>	<p>*Get non-equality remitted staff involved (leadership issues)</p> <p>*networks formed on a local strategy</p>	<p>* strong messages/leadership from govt -&gt; and how we measure outcomes</p> <p>* what does outcome focus mean – need good baseline data -&gt; need consistent approach to measuring</p>

		strands - Leadership message a priority - Public bodies get own house in order (from top to bottom)		*appreciative enquiry  * more focus on assets/positive
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**Exp/Issues (rural) - gender**

- Confidential – data protection as an excuse
- Centralisation of services (Scotland wide basis)
- Training -> from areas & communities (trainer->training)
  - Personal xp + confidence (invest in users)
- Peer support
- Use of Community Development App...
- Support community groups/NGO -> funding/financial support of volunteers
- Discriminatory attitudes of staff
- Review funding criteria
- Use of a facility eg school not used
- Who pays piper calls tunes
- Flexibility to seek local answers
- Discriminatory casework
- Education for schools
- Communication & partnership working

**Workshop (4) Age****App VI Table 4:**

<b>Example</b>	<b>Underlying Issues</b>	<b>Possible Solutions</b>	<b>What needs to Happen – and why</b>	<b>Who needs to what, how and by when?</b>
Young people think that if you are old you are stupid – respect & dignity. The opposite can also be true. Stereotypes - Technology - Relationship gaps. Higher increase of being subjected to age discrimination eg work	Deficit model of aging. Services created for people who do not need any or much stimulation – SERVICE DESIGN. Drug & Alcohol Services/Money focussed on young people. Legislation exists for children & young people but older people have 'guidance'	e.g. Free tuition on ICT for elderly through library Internet access. Legislation. Service design.	Community Transport solutions to address isolation of people living in rural communities. Young carers projects – more of them. Best value decisions should not be based on financial cost alone. Look at social impact etc. Accept the demographics – gear up communities for the only people living there being over a certain age. Funding – ring fencing?	Recruit over 65 & under 20. Accessible, affordable transport. Culture & Attitude – all. Support volunteering 0 cut red tape. Involve service users in policy design and decision-making.
Rural Housing – Young people. Isolation. Village Halls key. Post Offices. Dispersed families in rural	Commuters living in rural areas engaging in communities. Post Offices closure. POCSA – affecting adults volunteering?	Village Halls / Post Offices	<u>What has got to happen?</u> <u>Community Transport/Public Transport</u> - Timetabling - <u>Investment</u> in Community Transport initiatives, schemes & not necessarily subsidised public transport.	Devolved decision making & purchasing power to communities/community planning process (Transport) CTA. Volunteering  <u>What:</u> Paid time off for



areas – lack of interaction. Cars – access to cars – Big retail parks.			MIDAS licences.  <u>Isolation</u> - Address poverty... - - Return 'meals on wheels' 'Adopt a grandparent' scheme	volunteering. Linking older people with schools. Village halls
			<u>Service Delivery/Design/Impact</u> - CPPs not - All service providers to prove how they have taken people's needs into planning, design etc (social human impact) - Standards - Equality Audits of service provision - Elderly abuse - Petrol prices.	Address disclosures Action points followed up – implemented Include commercial sector in addressing rural equality Housing policy – Single structures

## Workshop (5) Belief & Religion

App VI Table 5:

Example	Underlying Issues	Possible Solutions	What needs to Happen – and why	Who needs to what, how and by when?
No place to pray in Inverness	Numbers required to justify mosque	Resourcing		
Youth – lack of insight into Islam; Citizenship	No teacher	Research		
Wick – small numbers; complaint from other group	Support?	Access to services		
W. Isles - history	Tolerance? “Personal”			
Peer pressure	Negative perception			
Modernity; Non judgemental; Unity; Tradition	Citizenship: Following the crowd; Wither and die; Need for change	Legislation; <u>Single Equality Bill</u>		
Homophobia; Transphobia; Inter denominational; religious hatred; Islamophobia	Churches/Faiths working together Visibility Inter faith dialogue Small communities	Dialogue Schools - education		

**Solutions**

*Outcome focus*

*Prioritisation*

*Leadership*

*Community*

*Challenge ignorance*

*Challenge inappropriate behaviour*

*Education*

*Universities*

*Access to information*

*Challenge (how) elected reps/police/CPPs*

*Mainstreaming*

*Cultural Awareness*

*SG? LA*

*Media*

*CP Partnerships*

*Dialogue*

**Role of EHRC**

*Remote premium*

*Challenge*

*Resourcing (sourcing)*

*Supporting*

*Sustainability*

*Education*

*Communicating*

*Partnership*

## Workshop 6 (Sexual Orientation)

App VI Table 6:

Example	Underlying Issues	Possible Solutions	What needs to Happen – and why	Who needs to what, how and by when?
Ill prepared for 'scene'; Parents hearing rumours;	Historical illegality; Domestic abuse; Closeted lives (sexual ill health) Drugs/Alcohol used as a coping strategy	Use Human Rights to promote ALL equalities  LGBT Young people vs support for older people  Family acceptance and support	Provide resources for services/organisations around equality & diversity (eg policy templates, toolkits etc)	Develop partnerships
Having to leave home to come out	Small communities have a 'single' view which entrenches homophobia;	Employer training; education (start early). Build on accepting communities (Arts)	Present the human face of LGB(T) issues – stories, meet people, role models.  Media – build relationships to encourage positive media representation.  Awareness-raising etc through arts etc using eg touring theatre etc with LGBT themes.  Schools work? Youth groups	
Lack of critical mass	Affects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relationships</li> <li>- community</li> <li>- services</li> </ul>	Go to the 'big city' to meet other gays / positive role models	Educate service providers <b>and</b> LGBT people about available services.	Resourcing an issue – NHS, Local authorities

	- activism  No support therefore pressure to 'carry the banner'		Data collection – data monitoring – who? Data gathering – needs?  Safe and confidential and anonymous / different methods - impact assessments  Presentations, talks etc for organisations/community groups	
Patchy internet access; Only gay in the village	isolation	Be involved in local community.  Use stepping stone approach to being out – eg ICT	Awareness/education for LGBT people themselves – rights/choices	
Harassment; rumours and gossip	Subterfuge; not able/fearful of using public transport and meeting in groups		Create narrative re carriers/accessibility. Create clarity about duties, responsibility, legal issues	
sexual taboos; more pressure to conform	Conflict of 5 strands - religion	Respect of other views – find common ground	Target other strands for awareness raising.  Political influence and leadership  Broaden focus beyond just sex. Give people language/build confidence – to talk about whole gamut of	National leadership + targets – Scottish Government  Influence single outcome agreements – groups/local organisations/individuals  EHRC should influence resourcing for equalities work (sexual orientation)

			emotions etc	
			Build on good practice	

Sexual Orientation Group – Outcomes, Outputs, Next Steps  
 In Rural Areas.....

- 1) *Employers, organisations and the wider community are educated and more aware of LGB(T) issues and people*  
 ✓✓✓✓✓
- 2) *LGB(T) people are able to come out and are accepted and supported by the communities in which they live*
- 3) *LGB(T) people have the chance to meet other LGB(T) people and find positive role models (Champions) in a way that feels safe, accessible and appropriate for them* ✓
- 4) *LGB(T) communities and other communities find common ground (based on human rights framework) and respect each other's views/identity*
- 5) *Homophobia, heterosexist, negative stereotypes and cultural norms particular to rural communities are challenged in order that diversity may flourish.* ✓
- 6) *That LGB(T) people have good access to local services (both mainstream services)* ✓
- 7) *Partnership working key to all outcomes*

**Services**

\_> Cross strand impact assessment of services

→ creating off shelf toolkits for organisations to help them with eg equality policy etc.



## **7.7 Appendix VII**

### **Equal Opportunities in Rural Scotland: Working together on a practical vision to bridge current barriers to social inclusion**

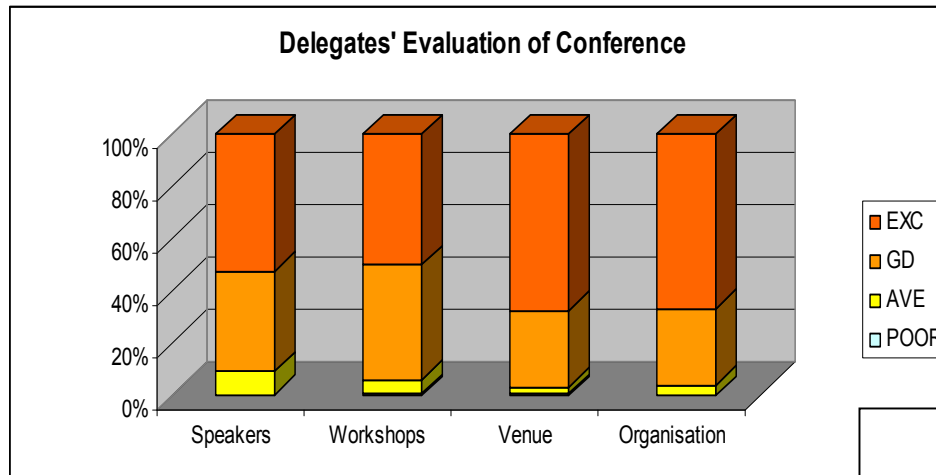
26<sup>th</sup> February, 2008

#### **Conference Report Appendix (VII)**

#### ***Conference Evaluation and Delegates Feedback***

## Evaluation

**Overall, 94.3% of delegates rated the whole conference as excellent or good**



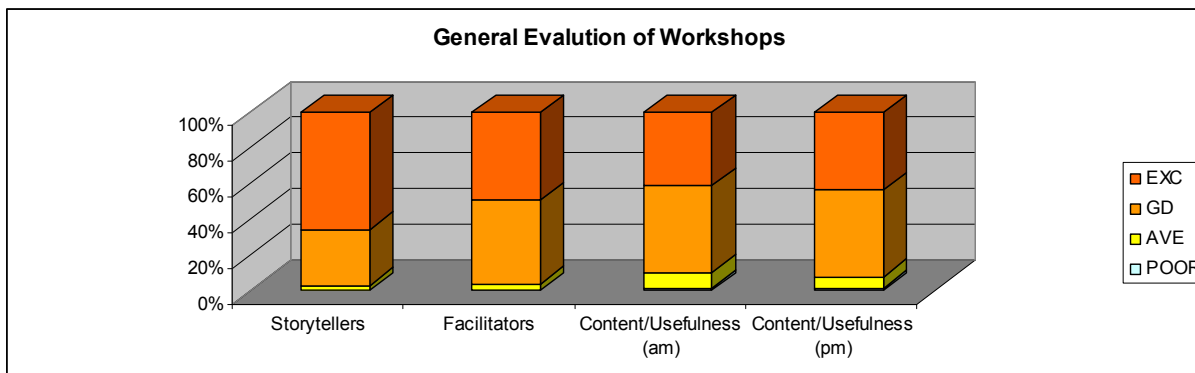
**Appendix VII, Figure 1**  
**Bar chart of Delegates' Evaluation of Conference**

	Speakers	Workshops	Venue	Organisation
EXC	53%	50%	67%	67%
GD	38%	44%	29%	29%
AVE	9%	5%	2%	4%
POOR	0%	1%	1%	0%

**OVERALL Ex/Gd 94.3%**

**Av/Poor 5.7%**

**Appendix VII, Table 1**  
**Delegates' Evaluation of Conference – Supporting Data Table**



**Appendix VII, Figure 2**  
**Bar chart of Delegates' Evaluation of Workshops**

**94 % of delegates on average rated the workshops as excellent or good.**  
**Within this, 66% of delegates thought our storytellers were 'excellent'**

	Storytellers	Facilitators	Content/Usefulness (am)	Content/Usefulness (pm)
<b>EXC</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>GD</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>49%</b>
<b>AVE</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>POOR</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>
	97%	96%	90%	92%
<b>EX/GD</b>	<b>94%</b>			
<b>AVE/POOR</b>	<b>6%</b>			

**Appendix VII, Table 2**  
**Delegates' Evaluation of Workshops – Supporting Data Table**

Ros Meiklem				Paddy Tomkins				Pauline Livingstone				Lesley Irving			
EXC	GD	AVE	POOR	EXC	GD	AVE	POOR	EXC	GD	AVE	POOR	EXC	GD	AVE	POOR
39	41	4	0	37	36	13	1	67	14	4	0	35	37	10	0
84				87				85				82			
46%	49%	5%	0%	43%	41%	15%	1%	79%	16%	5%	0%	43%	45%	12%	0%

Appendix VII, Table 3

Delegates' Evaluation of Speakers

Storytellers				Facilitators				Content/Usefulness (am)				Content/Usefulness (pm)			
EXC	GD	AVE	POOR	EXC	GD	AVE	POOR	EXC	GD	AVE	POOR	EXC	GD	AVE	POOR
48	23	2	0	41	39	3	0	33	39	7	1	34	38	5	1
73				83				80				78			
66%	32%	3%	0%	49%	47%	4%	0%	41%	49%	9%	1%	44%	49%	6%	1%

Appendix VII, Table 4

Delegates' Evaluation of Facilitators

Accessibility				Refreshments				Hotel Staff				Light and sound			
EXC	GD	AVE	POOR	EXC	GD	AVE	POOR	EXC	GD	AVE	POOR	EXC	GD	AVE	POOR
55	27	3	2	58	25	2	0	68	18	1	0	51	31	2	1
87				85				87				85			
63%	31%	3%	2%	68%	29%	2%	0%	78%	21%	1%	0%	60%	36%	2%	1%

Appendix VII, Table 5

Delegates' Evaluation of Venue

Pre-event Info				Conference Pack				Format and Content of Event				HIEF Helpers			
EXC	GD	AVE	POOR	EXC	GD	AVE	POOR	EXC	GD	AVE	POOR	EXC	GD	AVE	POOR
53	26	8	0	54	28	5	0	57	29	1	0	67	18	0	0
87				87				87				85			
61%	30%	9%	0%	62%	32%	6%	0%	66%	33%	1%	0%	79%	21%	0%	0%

Appendix VII, Table 6

Delegates' Evaluation of HIEF's Organisation



**Following the conference, 78% of delegates claimed that their awareness of equality and diversity had grown, 11% thought the event focused on knowledge that they already had, and 10% felt their awareness to be still insufficient**

After attending the event do you feel that your knowledge on equalities:		
Has Increased	Is knowledge already had	In still insufficient
68	10	9
87		
78%	11%	10%

**Appendix VII, Table 7  
 Equality Awareness amongst Delegates**

### Delegates' Verbatim Comments on the Conference/

## Delegates' Verbatim Comments on the Conference

### Appendix VII, Table 8

#### Comments on Speakers/Speeches

##### Comments on SPEAKERS / SPEECHES

POSITIVE COMMENTS	CONSTRUCTIVE COMMENTS
Impressed by point by Paddy Tomkin - you don't realise discrimination till you experience it yourself. VERY IMPRESSED by Pauline - we met diversity needs by making the project better to serve the needs of the project users	Pauline's presentation was inspiring - pity she had to rush - could have a longer slot perhaps
Pauline Livingstone's overview of her project was most interesting and delivered in a very professional manner for someone who had never given a presentation prior to this event!	[Lesley Irving's speech] Might have been better as first presentation in that it provided much context/info.
Pauline's speech was excellent, seemed very passionate	Average speaker (Lesley Irving) - spoke too fast - difficult to follow
Pauline Livingstone's presentation was a revelation and very well presented	Lesley's speech too fast
Pauline's report was supremely interesting. Cowal Scheme have a 'gem'. Well done	I missed Ros due to the lack of taxis at Inverness Airport, sorry. Pauline's presentation was the only one that for me adequately addressed the 'rural issue'
Pauline's presentation was excellent; real, inspiring and down to earth	Missed last speaker as had to leave early. I felt the speakers could have done with more time to be really effective

Good choice of speakers and integration of messaged eg Ros talks about outcomes rather than processes and Pauline demonstrates how looking at an improving service outcomes	Speakers went on and on and because they were script read they seemed quite boring.
Really excellent speakers. Really excellent and inspiring talk from Pauline	
Excellent speakers!	
good mix of speakers/presenters	
All speakers were very good	
great choice of speakers	
Alisa was an excellent chair and really set the tone for the day!	
Thank you so much, well worth it!	

**Appendix VII, Table 9**

**Comments on WORKSHOPS**

**WS 1 (Disability)**

ws#	POSITIVE COMMENTS	CONSTRUCTIVE COMMENTS
1a	Time as always. Good to hear new points come up - v interesting ref access to justice (Shetland experience)	I was disappointed in the afternoon workshop which I felt only addressed well-worn themes and bypassed the rural issues almost completely
		As so often happens outcomes & how to achieve them run out of time
1b		I was in 1b, split between different workshops - felt that gave me a lack of continuity

**Appendix VII, Table 10**

**Comments on WORKSHOPS**

**WS 2 (Race)**

2b	really found the workshops useful	
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**Appendix VII, Table 11**

**Comments on WORKSHOPS**

**WS 3 (Gender)**

3	very powerful way to communicate key messages	need more time
		Transgender is only one aspect of gender issues, and whilst very enlightening, I would have found a broader approach to gender more useful

**Appendix VII, Table 12**

**Comments on WORKSHOPS**

**WS 4 (Age)**

4	Good discussion and well facilitated	unfortunate that neither storyteller was able to attend
	Excellent facilitating ws4. Felt everyone was able to have their say - well done	

**Appendix VII, Table 13**

**Comments on WORKSHOPS**

**WS 5 (Sexual Orientation)**

5	interesting way of addressing issues	Needed quieter environment - interrupted by through- traffic
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**Appendix VII, Table 14**

**Comments on WORKSHOPS**

**WS 6 (Belief & Religion)**

6	very interactive. Very much enjoyed taking part	
	Kamran was brill. Very informative. Plenary session first class too	

**Appendix VII, Table 15**

**Comments on VENUE**

**Comments on VENUE**

**POSITIVE COMMENTS**

**CONSTRUCTIVE COMMENTS**

light & sound excellent in hall,	sound very poor in crush area
refreshments excellent	Facility itself excellent - public transport not good apparently
Good to have it typed up as speakers spoke (excellent skill)	no public transport
	The heat and lack of natural light was stifling
	main room too hot
	Moray Suite - cold
	air conditioning/cooler temp
	It was a shame you didn't have a venue accessible by public transport (also mentioned by Ros Meiklem!)
	Staff were walking up and down wooden stairs during workshop
	some breakout spaces were in public circulation spaces
	access to afternoon tea/coffee would have been good



**Appendix VII, Table 16**

**Comments on ORGANISATION**

**Comments on ORGANISATION**

**POSITIVE COMMENTS**

**CONSTRUCTIVE COMMENTS**

Wider-ranging issues - a tall order to address in 1 day, but seems to have been achieved	Frustrating events ran late therefore shorter breaks. Limited time for questions
Probably only one speaker after the workshops which could then be longer & possibly more productive. It would leave time for questions to the speaker	Clearer instructions regarding format and structure of workshops would have been helpful
Huge results from such a few people!	Some of the workshops were too big (difficult to control, I admit)
all was exceptional - Ailsa's input especially	
HIEF helpers excellent.	

**Appendix VII, Table 17**

**What has gone well?**

Gone Well?
well done
whole conference was excellent
everything
everything
everything was done very well thank you
The whole event
The whole event
Whole organisation of the day
very well organised event!
most of it
you have done quite well
Overall a really informative, meaningful event - lots of good discussion, thoughts and ideas
The organisation and content was excellent

Tightly structured. Short sessions made it easier to listen and concentrate
workshops very interesting
Venue, format and content
breadth of speakers
speakers
Good case studies - Pauline and storytellers - personal experiences
story-telling excellent
rich mix of attendees, speakers
Certainly attracted a delegate mix
bringing together such a wide range of interesting and committed people
Good chairmanship
chair excellent
good chair
Comfortable, well set-up, good agenda - very strict chair - good for her!
Timekeeping (thanks, Ailsa)
kept to time; good input and content
kept time - good speakers - enough workshop time
Tried hard to keep to the time - appreciated
The palantypists were awesome - it was really helpful to have the service

excellent combination of formal organisation & informal ambience
interesting and varied content, food, timings of each session about right
choice of venue; publicity; organisation; menu and content of day was fantastic, and the carrot - oops! - lollipop idea was brilliant
friendly, welcoming. Dinner last night - great idea!
Very inclusive, well-organised and lively event. Thank you and well done
Made peoples needs available
made everyone comfortable
bringing together partners & individuals to achieve awareness on multi aspects
round table' the fresh views expressed by the Scot Exec + lip speakers
evaluate all groups input into a common presentation at the end
religion
clear information and organisation
the communication before the event was very good
it was very well organised and interesting
good all round organisation
The assistance given was thoughtful and unobtrusive - very good
everything was very good & encouraged participation
plenty of space for workshops. Organisation of workshops good
all very relevant and useful
food
Everything seemed to work seamlessly

## Appendix VII, Table 18

### What could we do better?

Could do better?
nothing
nothing immediately obvious
would have liked to be able to look at other strands in more detail and learn more about them
more individual stories/talks like the befriending - real life
Workshops smaller so everyone encouraged to speak, afternoon workshop too long
Smaller workshop groups
Smaller breakout groups. A long time sitting by the end of the day
workshops too long
Perhaps could have had stands to display the work of different organisations represented. Perhaps feedback to participants could include links to appropriate websites, there seemed to be organisations I hadn't heard of and I would like to know more about
more time
would have been great to have had the chance to participate in more than one workshop
Found out quite late that application to attend had been successful
not have conflicting workshop venue information in the packs
signpost of workshops
Atmosphere in conference room/lighting. Choice of lunch food

Sometimes difficult to hear near the back and also difficult to read (ie distance). Possibly leave more room nearer to the front for wheelchairs and be directed there

Quieter workshops area

better ventilation - fresh air needed

perhaps contact details of candidates/facilitators etc (providing they admit disclosure)

Perhaps include accessibility issues for other groups as well as disability ie guidelines for workshops, appropriate language, respect etc

explained layout of buffet so less queues and know variety of food on table

Halal food if possible. Although vegetarian food was ok it was a bit bland and not enough selection

## Appendix VII, Table 19

### Final positive general comments

General Comment (Positive)
Encouraging to see and hear that rurality is becoming more visible in national policy etc. Though necessary to look at equality and diversity strands separately would like more time looking at overarching issues which all contribute to same issues around
really good speakers; informative; thought provoking
less talk of what rurality and diversity is - and more about how to tackle it/solutions
It was interesting to note that due to the different local authorities areas' approach to Eq Ops and Diversity, some areas are less advanced than others
Good speakers and appreciated the storytelling workshops especially. Very good event generally, thanks
Big thanks to those prepared to share their stories - a very effective way to ge the message across
The session on belief/religion was very informative
Storytellers - Church of Scotland and Muslim - wonderful speakers
new views and issues
got some good ideas to take things forward both at my work and in my community
good event - useful for ideas
very beneficial from a policing perspective
Thank you for paying for travel expenses



**Appendix VII, Table 20**

**Final constructive general comments**

<b>General Comment (Constructive)</b>
I can't help feeling that this event has somehow a missed opportunity to really address the challenges of the equality agenda in remote and rural Scotland
It was difficult to focus on rurality in the workshops - inevitably the wider issues intruded. However one speaker especially concentrated on the rural issues and she was excellent - this was Pauline. Lesley also v good
A ministerial personal appearance would have been much better
We need to get down to more grass roots level to people often junior but meeting the public
not enough time for sharing good practice
It would have been useful to be involved in more than one group to hear a wider range of issues
I especially would have liked to have been able to take part in more than one workshop and for that reason I feel the whole thing begs repetition
It would be very helpful to set up some discussion groups on your website to follow up the themes discussed (but you may already have these)

## **7.8 Appendix VIII**

### **Equal Opportunities in Rural Scotland: Working together on a practical vision to bridge current barriers to social inclusion**

26<sup>th</sup> February, 2008

#### ***Conference Report Appendix (VIII) Summary of Conference Learning***

## CONFERENCE LEARNING

Underlying Issues	Examples from Speakers	Examples from Storytellers	Examples from workshops / additional comments	Possible Solutions
<p><b>Lack of commitment/leadership.</b></p> <p>Confidence may be as much a factor as low awareness. Many sen managers and cllrs, ministers etc are afraid to take bold steps</p> <p>Public duties may seem too complicated</p>				<p>Awareness-raising that is more in-depth than just understanding legal requirements. Interaction with various groups to build levels of confidence and ease</p> <p>Case for single equality scheme.</p> <p>Positive actions required that are outcome focussed. At next review of schemes, place emphasis on 'doing' things.</p>
<p><b>Visibility/invisibility (lack of voice)</b></p>	<p>Elderly people at home are often an 'invisible' issue. Isolation is a real issue – hurried short visits by support services are insufficient to combat depression and</p>	<p>Transgender people being afraid of being 'outed' when using emergency services such as police and ambulance</p> <p>Isolation of minorities – transgender /</p>		<p>Awareness-raising</p> <p>Some facilities get it right – share good practice?</p> <p>Be involved in local community.</p> <p>Use stepping stone approach to being out – eg ICT</p> <p>Awareness/education for LGBT people themselves – rights/choices</p>

	<p>associated early mental decline</p> <p>Race issues are separate to those of colour – potential for visible racial diversity to be treated differently from white ethnic groups</p>	<p>homosexuals may think they are only one in their community because of invisibility and social stigma which makes it difficult to ask</p>		
<p><b>Numbers (critical mass)</b></p> <p>Funding and resourcing is targeted at areas of concentrated need leaving smaller communities (such as the Polish community?) without support</p> <p>Disperse population makes it difficult to grow support communities with shared interest</p> <p>Low capacity of support groups makes cross-strand working too much of a challenge so pattern is to</p>	<p>Police frustrated at lack of groups they can engage with to learn needs of communities (different to urban experience)</p> <p>Faith groups cannot secure collective worship</p> <p>Rural communities have larger</p>	<p>Difficult for gays to 'come out' in small communities – may use alcohol or drugs to give courage or to 'cope' with pain of staying 'in the closet'</p> <p>Having to leave home to 'come out'</p> <p>'Culture of silence' around homosexuality – leads to</p>	<p>Lack of critical mass Affects Relationships; community; services; activism</p> <p>No support therefore pressure to 'carry the banner'</p> <p>Small numbers of those practising faiths - complaints from different faith groups</p> <p>Rural Housing – Young people.</p> <p>Isolation.</p> <p>Village Halls key.</p> <p>Post Offices.</p> <p>Dispersed families in rural</p>	<p>Major bodies to allocate specific funding that focuses on need not numbers</p> <p>Major bodies to fund those who can help grow supportive networks in rural areas – needs strategy that gives more even service across the country</p> <p>EHRC and S Gov to support activity such as research and data gathering re this issue</p> <p>S Gov to consider specific</p>

<p>put resources into building up single issue groups.</p> <p>Low numbers of groups make it difficult for CCPs to fulfil legal obligation to engage.</p>	<p>focus on physical occupation making it difficult for those who are physically less able to do this type of work</p>	<p>feelings of isolation</p>	<p>areas – lack of interaction. <i>Cars – access to cars – Big retail parks</i> Commuters living in rural areas engaging in communities. Post Offices closure. <i>POCSA – affecting adults volunteering?</i></p>	<p>Qs in 2011 census</p> <p>Those facing exclusion to form links that enable collective engagement with service providers – also use of intermediary agencies such as CABx, Health Agencies, JCP etc</p> <p>Employer training; education (start early). Build on accepting communities (Arts) Present the human face of LGB(T) issues – stories, meet people, role models. Media – build relationships to encourage positive media representation. Awareness-raising etc through arts etc using eg touring theatre etc with LGBT themes. Schools work? Youth groups</p> <p>Go to the ‘big city’ to meet other gays / positive role models Educate service providers <b>and</b> LGBT people about available services.</p>
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				<p>Data collection – data monitoring – who?</p> <p>Data gathering – needs?</p> <p>Safe and confidential and anonymous / different methods - impact assessments</p> <p>Presentations, talks etc for organisations/community groups</p> <p>Resourcing an issue – NHS, Local authorities</p> <p>Resourcing issue for mosques, synagogues etc</p> <p><i>Village Halls / Post Offices</i></p> <p><u>What has got to happen?</u></p> <p><u>Community</u></p> <p><u>Transport/Public Transport</u></p> <p>- Timetabling</p> <p>- <u>Investment</u> in Community Transport initiatives schemes &amp; not necessarily subsidised public transport. MIDAS licences.</p> <p><u>Isolation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Address poverty...</li> <li>- - Return 'meals on wheels'</li> </ul> <p><i>'Adopt a grandparent' scheme</i></p> <p>Devolved decision-making</p>
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				<p>&amp; purchasing power to communities/community planning process (Transport) CTA.</p> <p>Volunteering</p> <p><u>What:</u></p> <p>Paid time off for volunteering.</p> <p>Linking older people with schools.</p> <p>Village halls</p>
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<p><b>Rural Identity</b> Rural communities can be thought of as homogeneous when they are very diverse and need more localised consideration when allocating resources and facilities</p>	<p>Police experience is that 'one size doesn't fit all'</p> <p>The 'elderly' have a diverse age range and need a corresponding diversity of activities and support</p>		<p>Need to balance LGBT support for young people with support for older people</p> <p>Youth – lack of insight into Islam; Citizenship – no teachers available</p> <p>Lack of professional /personal understanding. Awareness. Tolerance Fear. Unknown/change. Power imbalance. Visibility <u>or</u> not. Apathy</p> <p><i>Too much focus on adults when we look to the needs of disabled people.</i> <i>Needs of disabled children – education and communication – are different from adults and this isn't currently being addressed</i></p>	<p>Provide resources for services/organisations around equality &amp; diversity (eg policy templates, toolkits etc)</p> <p>Avoid generalisations about the homogeneity of rural communities.</p> <p>Take care that 'mainstreaming' is not taken as getting everyone to conform to a 'norm' – diversity should be supported not ameliorated.</p> <p>Any national strategy on integration needs to reflect not only urban/rural diversity but also diversity within rural communities (one size doesn't fit all)</p> <p>Explain that diversity adds to what we have and takes nothing away</p> <p>Don't make equality a tick box exercise – deal with each individual issue and challenge, and you'll find</p>
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<p>Fear of losing cultural identity in face of increased diversity</p>				<p>that you are making equality &amp; diversity happen</p> <p>Research into different cultures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Empower people/communities</li> <li>- Relationships + build mutual trust</li> <li>- In rural areas use church/faith groups to raise awareness</li> <li>- Consensus exercise between strands</li> <li>- Leadership message a priority</li> </ul> <p>Public bodies get own house in order (from top to bottom)</p> <p>*Get non-equality remitted staff involved (leadership issues)</p> <p>*Networks formed on a local strategy</p> <p>* Strong messages/leadership from govt -&gt; and how we measure outcomes</p> <p>* What does outcome focus mean – need good baseline data -&gt; need consistent approach to measuring</p>
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				<p>*Appreciative enquiry</p> <p>* More focus on assets/positive</p> <p><i>Awareness raising, particularly in schools</i></p> <p>Awareness raising needs to be communicated in a relevant way to different age groups (cf communication issues below). For example, young people can engage in fun activities to learn key messages</p>
<p><b>Lack of sensitivity</b></p> <p><b>This may be external symptom of other issues such as inadequate funding (eg concern over mixed wards in mental health hospitals)</b></p>		<p>Teachers putting person with disability at front of class.</p> <p>Doctors unaware of how intimidating they can be. Chaining a deaf person to an electric socket in case fire alarm sounds</p> <p>Social life is</p>		<p>Awareness raising needs to be less superficial. Not enough to let people know that they have to comply with legislation – need to understand how attitudes are formed, their consequences on quality of a person's life, and how they can be challenged</p> <p>Parents' attitude is influential – focus on issues as they arise rather than on the disability</p> <p>People facing barriers to be more assertive in demanding their rights</p>

		<p>difficult for those with hearing impairments – no use offering subtitled films at unsociable times</p> <p>Ethnic groups being told what can be offered to them rather than being asked what their needs are</p> <p>Transgender people cannot get credit cards in their acquired gender – hotel staff suspicious of cash payments</p>		<p>Better awareness of service providers and engagement with minority groups to learn their needs</p>
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<p><b>Prejudicial stereotyping</b></p>	<p>Old people don't do sport</p> <p>Racism can't happen in rural areas</p> <p>Shetland women only recognised for their knitting when do many other jobs in community</p>	<p>'Poles do drugs'</p> <p>Transgender people equated with pornography</p>	<p>Historical illegality of homosexuality;</p> <p>Small communities have a 'single' view which entrenches homophobia;</p> <p>Peer pressure: Negative perception of faiths</p> <p>Young people ( ) think that if you are old you are stupid – respect &amp; dignity. The opposite can also be true.</p> <p>Stereotypes -Technology - Relationship gaps. <i>Higher increase of being subjected to age discrimination eg work</i> Deficit model of aging. Services created for people who do not need any or much stimulation – SERVICE DESIGN. Drug &amp; Alcohol Services/Money focussed on young people. <i>Legislation exists for children &amp; young people but older people have 'guidance'</i></p>	<p>Assertive response from those being harassed. Strive to integrate into community – ESOL lessons important</p> <p>Awareness-raising of general public.</p> <p>Free tuition on ICT for elderly through library Internet access.</p> <p>Legislation. <i>Service design</i> Community Transport solutions to address isolation of people living in rural communities. Young carers projects – more of them. Best value decisions should not be based on financial cost alone. Look at social impact etc.</p>
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			<p><i>Ignorance and hate</i> Not enough education and training, Distance and isolation. Fear of change. Whole population approach. Hard to get info in remote/rural. <i>Challenge phobia/hate attitudes (eg faith + trans)</i></p> <p>Lack of understanding/information about different communities which leads to people being victimised. Where are you from? Stereotyping. Occupational segregation. Isolation. 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> generation – visible/different. Fear of retribution</p> <p>Wheelchair symbol is associated with ‘disability’ Wheelchair symbol taken to have a negative meaning – it is meant to denote ‘accessibility’ but more often evokes negative feelings. It underlines the general</p>	<p>Accept the demographics – gear up communities for the only people living there being over a certain age. Funding – ring fencing? Recruit over 65 &amp; under 20. Accessible, affordable transport. Culture &amp; Attitude – all. Support volunteering 0 cut red tape. <i>Involve service users in policy design and decision-making.</i></p> <p>Move One Scotland campaign (Link to local w/ local identity) to be <u>not</u> just race. Need multi-layers solution systems approach. <i>Shared local ownership – roles defined</i></p>
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			<p>public's willingness to 'pigeon hole' people. We are not sensitive to the needs of the individual. It reinforces the idea that all impairments are visible – if you are not visibly impaired, then you are not disabled.</p>	<p>*Co-ordinated approach.          *National campaign w/ local outcomes -&gt; Schools work/curriculum.          *Support employers not just through training -&gt; make sure good + prioritising need -&gt; focus on competency increases.          *Train + win over senior manager.          *<i>Good resources.</i>          *Working in partnership means active group with all strands on national + local level.          *Increased capacity to participate on equality issues <u>not</u> just strand based.          * Link w/existing networks of community councils + CPPs          * Govt resources and leadership          *<i>Use/employ local people and monitor impact.</i></p> <p>Trade Union support.          Challenge ignorance.          Service delivery – individuals as well as groups.</p>
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				<p>Education Education – parents as well as young people – holistic approach. Media Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Criminal justice system</li> <li>- Offender programmes</li> </ul> <p>Approach – tailor Who delivers? Messages? Quality control Context Individuals can start now then move on.... Don't assume understand all experiences. Include victims/it's everybody's job</p> <p>Society needs education and there needs to be some sort of 'compulsory' programme. We should encourage more positive language that is sensitive to needs. We should refer to 'people with disabilities' instead of 'disabled people' and wording could reinforce the fact that toilets, parking spaces, buildings etc are</p>
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				<p>'accessible' not 'disabled'. However, due to the many issues in rural Scotland, it was felt important to prioritise the provision of these facilities ahead of considering less urgent actions in regard to wording.</p>
<b>Small town rumours</b>		<p>Fear of 'rocking the boat' at work as job opportunities scarce in rural area.</p> <p>Restaurant trade give in to bullying by customers</p>	<p>People ill prepared for 'scene' when disclosing sexual orientation; Parents hearing rumours;</p> <p>Subterfuge; not able/fearful of using public transport and meeting in groups</p>	<p>Ensure employment agencies for immigrants give good service</p> <p>Use Human Rights to promote ALL equalities</p> <p>Family acceptance and support important</p> <p>Create narrative re carriers/accessibility.</p> <p>Create clarity about duties, responsibility, legal issues</p>
<b>Lack of confidentiality</b>			<p>Affects us all Scotland as a village. Not just public sector but also business</p> <p>Always hear horror stories in a village – life/death</p> <p>Leaving rural areas impact on family life.</p> <p>Guidance exists but how is</p>	<p>Need trustworthy staff. Training.</p> <p>Everyone take responsibility (after attending) -&gt; need to cascade info &amp; learning.</p> <p>Ask community into our workplaces.</p> <p>2-sided dialogue.</p>

			<p>it enforced?  <i>How do you communicate effectively across our organisations?</i></p>	<p>Challenge our public authorities.  Police ACPOS  <i>National working groups</i>  + Translating policy into individual responsibility and instilling confidence in workers to apply common sense in applying policy  + Contact each other.  Speaking to people is fundamental to <math>\Delta</math> understanding and avoids tick box exercise.  + <i>Encourage people to think 'what if it was you?'</i>  + Training for frontline staff &amp; lone workers not just induction -&gt; followed up, for those who commission training.  + Shared concordat between agencies re confidentiality &amp; chief executive level  + Develop remote reporting  + Policy needs to be enforced  + Make mission statements basis for all induction training  + Staff able to</p>
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				communicate confidential policy to service users + Increase knowledge & understanding of data protection act
<p><b>Geography – small, scattered communities</b></p> <p>Exacerbates issues like communication, capacity building, support group, service provision (including translation &amp; interpretation), capacity/resource required to attend meetings &amp; events, etc</p> <p>Conflict of interest between groups can be more accented in small rural</p>	<p>Lack of joined-up, accessible public transport</p> <p>Outward migration leaves older people without family support network and living amongst empty holiday homes</p> <p>Anyone trying to escape from domestic abuse will find it hard in rural/island communities</p>	<p>Difficult for gay person to be open with family and friends in islands with strong religious culture</p> <p>If you champion your cause in rural Scotland, you stand alone (in towns you would be able to form a support group)</p>	<p>Modernity; Non judgemental; Unity; Tradition</p> <p>Citizenship: Following the crowd; Wither and die; Need for change</p> <p>Homophobia; Transphobia; Inter denominational; religious hatred; Islamophobia</p>	<p>Build in costs to funding applications (costs of travel, translation services etc are much higher than in urban areas). Support locally sustainable initiatives such as ITC solutions delivered through village halls, community post offices etc.</p> <p>Find ways to bring groups together where they can discover commonalities as opposed to differences</p> <p>Use of champion role models (football?)</p> <p>Engagement of volunteers for local transport of elderly/disabled (aim to attract diversity of volunteers)</p> <p>Use of ICT – with support as required to keep</p>

<p>communities eg faith/LGBT or inter-racial or inter-faith groups etc.</p> <p>Can be resentment at 'incomer's who may be young, different race (English) etc. Are gypsy travellers a 'rural issue'?</p>				<p>families in touch</p> <p>Befriending scheme to accompany elderly to hospital appointments etc</p> <p>Target other strands for awareness raising. Political influence and leadership Broaden focus beyond just sex. Give people language/build confidence – to talk about whole gamut of emotions etc Build on good practice National leadership + targets – Scottish Government Influence single outcome agreements – groups/local organisations/individuals EHRC should influence resourcing for equalities work (sexual orientation) <i>Cross strand impact assessment of services</i> creating off shelf toolkits for organisations to help them with eg equality policy etc.</p> <p>Legislation; <u>Single Equality</u></p>
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				<u>Bill</u> Churches/Faiths working together Visibility Inter faith dialogue Small communities Dialogue Schools - education
<b>Possible lower awareness in rural areas</b> (could be that we always associate diversity with cosmopolitanism of cities?)  May not consider equalities as a priority?  Differing priority between the strands.		City people fascinated by deafness, rural people more uncomfortable		Awareness raising campaigns citing 'killer facts'  Emphasise business case argument
Communication			"Does she take sugar?" – people speaking to disabled people through their carers. Lack of communication compounds issues of isolation due to rurality. Good communication is required where there is a lack of concentrated communities and the associated lack of services and support.	Technology can be both a help and an additional barrier. It can help communicate across geographical boundaries and join up groups who would otherwise be isolated. It can also help with provision of services to widespread groups. However, hard copy information which is vital to

			<p>We need to consider the widest aspects of communication, appreciating that this is beyond just words and includes our manner, how we dress, act etc. We need to be aware of how our messages are being received and avoid jargon.</p> <p><i>Often, we make assumptions as to how people want/are able to communicate especially in regard to provision of alternative formats. There was division of opinion as to whether the work of the DRC made the issue more confrontational than was helpful</i></p>	<p>many (eg visually impaired) and those without internet access/ computer hardware etc, is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain. Assumptions are made that everyone can access website info/downloads. Technology can also be expensive.</p> <p>Awareness raising of communication issues is very important – we need to convey message that ‘one size doesn’t fit all’. In particular, we need to broaden awareness on this issue for legislators Those who provide services need to understand communication issues.</p> <p>Education should start in schools.</p> <p>We may feel we know how to communicate clearly but we need others to listen and react accordingly. Better awareness of SAIF is required by all. Mandatory equality &amp; diversity training should</p>
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				<p>start in primary schools when they are still curious, open-minded and accepting. We also need to target/prioritise all education facilities including secondary schools, colleges and universities and it was felt strongly that E &amp; D training needs to be core part of teacher training agenda. Schools, teachers' training and other education establishments should be the number one priority for local authorities' actions under their Disability Equality Duties. Equality &amp; diversity should be mainstreamed into education courses – both academic and vocational. This should be mandatory – particularly in course which involve any form of communication such as media courses. E &amp; D awareness training needs to go beyond just school children and teachers to all who are involved in the education</p>
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				and shaping of young people. Eg should include parents, janitors, kitchen and admin staff etc Make training fun and interactive to enable key messages to be learnt willingly.
<b>Lack of opportunities in rural areas</b>			73% of working aged people who are visually impaired are unemployed. Often, people with visual impairments seeking work are told to go and find unpaid work in the voluntary sector (both demeaning the individual who has skills to offer the commercial workplace, and belittling the voluntary sector as a second class opportunity) In general, there is a lack of support in getting people with disabilities into work. There is little knowledge of Access to Work. Employers make negative misinformed assumptions about what people with disabilities can offer. It is difficult to challenge bad practice in rural areas – especially the islands (eg	Better support for jobseekers with mental or physical impairments. <i>Increased rights to flexible working to allow for travel in rural areas.</i> Promote better awareness of Access to Work Schemes etc <i>More widespread promotion of flexible working hours</i> Add awareness in Disability Awareness training (and other E&D training) to staff in Dept of Work & Pensions. <i>All people who are recruiting into customer service etc should have mandatory questions on E&amp;D at interviews. That way, people will seek out the information to prepare for their interview.</i>

			<p>Shetland) – where it is difficult to find the necessary specialised legal knowledge and expertise to take the case to court. To pursue, it can result in high legal costs to bring in legal counsel from the mainland or to secure services in a limited market.</p> <p>In rural areas, much of the employment on offer is manual – agriculture, roads, ferries etc – and this can be a barrier to many with disabilities. An urban setting would offer more suitable job opportunities. Also, travel from remote rural areas into towns where the work is, is yet another barrier to those with disabilities.</p> <p>Rural workplaces have limited access to new, fully accessible buildings. There is a high level of listed buildings in the older small towns and villages, so making them accessible is a problem.</p>	<p>Public bodies/Quangos should be more accountable for making positive change happen. We need to get over the benefits of change/good practice.</p> <p>We need to get employers to change priorities.</p> <p><i>A joined-up approach is required to get these important messages across to relevant parties.</i></p> <p>Reduce government tax on fuel in rural areas to make transport more affordable (precedent has been set with the road equivalent tax on ferries and discounted flights for islanders).</p> <p>In the next census, ask those unemployed a question on public transport. Past census gives a false impression of the impact of transport in rural issues because it only asked those who are already employed.</p> <p>We need to overhaul</p>
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			<p>As stated above, the high level of manual labour and transport issues make it difficult for someone who has a disability to secure suitable work</p>	<p>accessibility of public transport. We should reorganise how the government and others give support to people with disabilities. For example, it is all very well saying that there is free public transport for those who are older or who have impairments, but this is no benefit if there is no public transport available! And the sparse service that exists is not fully accessible. Groups who deal with disability issues should work with the local authorities (as part of the Disability Equality Duty) to look for solutions. Public authorities need to reinforce the 'no parking' restrictions that are supposed to help accessibility at places such as bus stops etc. <i>There is a need for revision of the Blue Badge scheme which presently discriminates between certain types of disabilities</i></p>
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				<p><i>and is inconsistent region to region.</i></p> <p>We need the willingness of government to listen and act (as with discounted flights etc)</p> <p>All of us to keep organisations to account / to enforce compacts</p> <p>Call for UK legislation on Blue Badges to be changed</p> <p>Agencies such as HIEF, SCVO etc to write to MSPs, MPs etc to make them aware of the issues.</p> <p><i>Call for radical shake-up of public transport (as well as supporting and encouraging alternatives such as community transport schemes).</i></p> <p>Disability groups and local authorities to work together in partnership</p>
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<p><b>Media</b></p> <p>Often sensationalises the negative aspects of a story. Rural press makes issues more 'personal' and therefore can have a more profound effect on an individual and their family than in a city paper where readers are less likely to know the person involved</p>				<p>The issues that can work against rural press can be made to work for it. Use local knowledge to build positive relations with different groups. Report disabled sportsman's success in sports page rather than as a story about overcoming adversity; publicise local support groups etc</p>
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## **7.9 Appendix IX**

### **Equal Opportunities in Rural Scotland: Working together on a practical vision to bridge current barriers to social inclusion**

EHRC Round Table Discussions, 2008  
Dumfries, 19<sup>th</sup> March  
Glenrothes, 20<sup>th</sup> March  
Inverness, 17<sup>th</sup> April

#### ***Conference Report Appendix (IX) Summary of Round Table Discussions***

Equality and  
Human Rights  
Commission

Scotland  
equalityhumanrights.com

## Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) Regional Discussions – Dumfries 19<sup>th</sup> March and Glenrothes 20<sup>th</sup> March

### **Aim of the sessions was:**

To explore and commence dialogue on how the EHRC can work most effectively with rural stakeholders - focussing on what we can do together.

### **Key Objectives**

- Explore in depth how the EHRC can best deliver its functions across Scotland including rural areas
- Build upon the recommendations of the rural equality conference held on 26th Feb. 2008.
- Bring together representatives from different mandates to build a dialogue between mandates
- Explore potential models of practice for the EHRC



### Compilation of discussion outputs

Q1. **What** core activities and responsibilities do you think the EHRC should deliver in rural Scotland - prioritise as 'must haves' or 'nice to haves'

#### **'Must Have' responsibilities of the EHRC:**

- Overseeing Public Sector Duties (PSD) work to deliver real change – including leading by example with own PSD and drilling down to detail and advice on Impact Assessment and setting expectations for practice delivery
- Achieving a balance between guidance and enforcement – but taking note that legislation makes people listen(business)
- Promotion of partnerships and networks that join up stakeholders and individuals
- Provision of clear guidance on equality and human rights – listed in bullet points and summaries
- Providing a lead on opportunities for diverse groups to meet - build on good local practice/partnerships
- Clarification of who does what within the EHRC
- Promotion of better translation provision and promotion/enforcement of accessibility for all
- Development and enforcement of equalities leadership for equalities in rural areas esp. councillors/Senior management teams/CPP/Schools – addressing issues of accountability; majority resource perspective (direct support at those who need it regardless of 'critical mass' numbers); equality as a core issue (equality as an ADD ON is not a valid legal or moral argument); combating fear of councillors; correcting misunderstanding of political correctness
- Promotion of the part everyone must play in delivering equality (ie not just an HR issue)
- Interpretation of legislative changes and training at local level (transfer of expertise).
- Building confidence on the ground – (linked to training)
- Facilitation of more joined-up partnerships: Education of different equality strands: Work with decision/policy makers
- Ensuring representation of all sectors on delivering equality (public, private and voluntary) and facilitating greater cross-sectoral sharing of information/good practice

- Communication of EHRC activity - accessible communication(low MB web sites) - link to SAIF
- Delivery of attitudinal/cultural change(enabling & persuading)
- Celebration of diversity and individual challenges
- Watchdog to prevent media's negative approach to equality
- Provision of leadership on national issues
- Facilitation of public education on citizenship

**'Must Have' activities of the EHRC:**

- Facilitation of good quality training (esp. sourcing locally) - targeting service deliverers and senior management buy in from day one. Also ensure training at local level (transfer of expertise) on any changes to legislation.
- Provision of funding (or direction to help find other sources of funding) that supports local engagement - this is a resource issue as many local groups currently face going to the wall. We need more funding & capacity development/building for individuals - going to where people are rather than where there are concentrations of numbers). Ensuring financial autonomy locally would help people challenge local authorities.
- Growth of knowledge of rurality as a discreet issue that impacts on rural communities (include in EIAs) and promotion of activity to drive positive change – building capacity and sustainability where required to address key issues. This will include understanding of density issues in rural context (e.g. 36 languages in D&G); links between rurality, lack of opportunity and poverty; dependence on public sector for employment and services; isolation of minority groups and individuals
- Identification of key champions within organisations
- Development of mechanisms to promote good practice (ties in with training)
- Overseeing activity at ground level via middle levels of organisation – eg ensuring polices are being monitored, impact assessed etc
- Undertaking rural specific research

**'Nice to have' responsibilities and activities of the EHRC**

- Development of narratives
- Development of the rural parliamentary function
- Addressing issues such as poverty and regeneration (community not physical) and the living wage

**Q2. What can we achieve by working together? - list achievable outcomes**

**Working together, we can:**

- Benefit from transfer of expertise by sharing existing (and new) resources and good practice, and by sharing training - multi disciplinary, done locally through diversity working group - open to all agencies
- Accredited standards / qualifications for practitioners and trainers: Work in partnership to deliver training - increase capacity to small & island rural communities to address equality - creative solutions from partnerships
- Devise long term strategies/outcomes for cultural change
- Engage with technology to increase inclusion - language line/plain English/video links - networking knowledge of options across rural Scotland
- By consultation and working together on issues that impact on rural areas, we can build a better understanding of the challenges in rural areas; particularly demographics
- Promote and deliver good practice
- Collectively drive monitoring mechanisms and other tools to support the requirements of the PSD eg look at EIA as tool that prompts local training (can be both bottom up & top down)
- Secure the buy-in and engagement of leadership to drive compliance with equality legislation, EIAs and good practice (by building knowledge of who the leaders and influencers are and what their power bases are. There is a need for professional membership to reflect competencies in equality (role for EHRC & CPD). We all need to know who the leaders are in our various agencies (including knowing who to contact for what in the EHRC)
- Build confidence by awareness training that promotes the positive business case argument for good practice and

changes understanding of 'pc' from 'political correctness' to 'professional competence'

- Make positive use of legislation
- Form local networks
- Create a knowledge and skills framework for public agencies and embed equality performance into staff appraisal systems
- Work across strands
- Be seen to be out and about, reaching far corners of rural Scotland
- Produce a co-ordinated approach to equalities research
- Focus on practicality rather than on a theoretical approach
- Provide hard copy publications, and promotional literature/ briefings
- Identify running themes and issues
- Campaign on rural issues

**Q3. How will we work together to achieve this? - list SMART actions (include who needs to participate)**

- Integrate equality into day-to-day business of service providers so that it becomes ownership of everyone. Do this by promoting the positives of diverse communities and by use of EIAs. Role for public bodies to promote.
- Provide events/training between and within equality strands and address professional knowledge gaps
- Make media aware of their responsibility to convey positive messages. Do this by engaging with national and local media possibly through instigation of award schemes for journalists. Role for voluntary sector
- Use civic participation to encourage diversity at electoral/leadership levels.

- Drive forward the use of user friendly language(inclusion
- Build networks and relationships with communities/individuals. Role for EHRC to engage with local organisations
- Define who our leaders are. Role for CPPs
- Build understanding of the challenges to equality faced in rural areas, particularly demographics
- Undertake research on equality/rurality issues. Role for EHRC to deliver/facilitate joined-up strategy
- Share good practice, working in joint partnership and identifying champions and case studies
- Share training resources and toolkits, monitoring mechanisms etc
- Build awareness of the bigger picture eg by monitoring helpline trends (identifying rural issues) and by keeping abreast of the work undertaken by Scottish Government on rural issues
- Work together on Single Outcome Agreements by developing validation events and awards incentives, cost benefit analysis, business case, pragmatic examples etc
- Adopting a themed approach across the strands - don't fragment message or make it too complex
- Tackle local media accountability.

Q4. a) **What** are the key barriers we face in **promoting** equalities in rural Scotland? (as opposed to what are the barriers to equality

Finding space on existing (growing) agendas and getting the priority and importance in staff development and policy implementation challenges

4 b) **How** can we overcome these?



## Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) Regional Discussions - Inverness

### Our Aim:

To take forward the learning from the rural equality conference held in Inverness on 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2008 and the round table discussions between the EHRC, local stakeholder groups and public agencies held in Dumfries on 19<sup>th</sup> March and Glenrothes on 20<sup>th</sup> March; and from this, to agree key objectives and relevant actions for the EHRC to take forward to address the rurality aspect of equality & diversity.

### Key Objectives:

- With reference to the key findings from the previous events of February and March, agree or disagree that the key expectations of the role of the EHRC are to Lead, Connect and Act – or suggest alternative roles or wording as appropriate
- With reference to previously-identified rural issues and identified opportunities for partnership working, decide which you would consider as short-, medium- or long- term objectives.
- Prioritise objectives and SMART actions for the EHRC to take forward

### Event Outputs

In workshop 1, delegates were asked to review the information on rurality issues gathered at the conference and the findings from the round table discussions in Dumfries and Glenrothes as to what was expected of the commission (and others), and from this identify some short-, medium- and long-term objectives for the EHRC.

**The following table captures the outputs of Workshop 1 – Small Group Discussions**

#### Q1. Identify short, medium and long-term EHRC Objectives

SHORT-TERM	MEDIUM-TERM	LONG-TERM
Clear communication of functions and services of EHRC using mechanisms sensitive and appropriate to challenges of rurality	Exploring means of engagement with equalities groups in rural areas – working across strands	Promotion of working in partnership with public and private agencies to address issues of equality in rural areas

Face-to-face engagement (important going forward)	Develop business case for taking rural issues forward. Business case relevant for rural areas	Reduce inequalities in rural areas
Using partners for communication (information sharing trusted source especially in rural)	Get information / data about equalities issues in rural areas	Reduce isolation – equality as everyone's business
Identify issues/campaigns where rurality is important (eg transport)		
Person in EHRC given remit for children – to give children a voice		
Advocacy – individual cases		

The groups then agreed in plenary discussion to take forward two objectives: -

1. Access to advocacy / individual casework in rural areas
2. Communicate clearly services and functions of EHRC in a way that takes account of challenges of rurality

Delegates in workshop 2 worked in two groups, each identifying supporting SMART actions for one of these objectives. The outputs were as follows:

/Table of Objectives and SMART Actions

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	MEASURE	OWNER?	TIMESCALE
<b>#1. Access to advocacy / individual</b>	Publicising and promotion of EHRC advocacy role	Number of cases monitored	EHRC with support of local partners	

<b>casework in rural areas</b>	Referral role: adequate funding of relevant local agencies – linking; networking	Number of phone calls taken and number of referrals made	Links to point above eg publicise alongside of existing local advocacy	
	Ensure quality and professionalism			
	Mapping of existing provision (identifying standards) and coverage	Review and publish provision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- make recommendations</li> <li>- where is/isn't provision</li> </ul>	EHRC / other agencies who provide services / community groups / customer groups - use existing provision	Short-term
	Develop strategy to look at rural imbalance of provision			Medium-term = developing strategy: Long-term = getting the right provision in place
	Develop strategy to look at rural imbalance of provision			



	EHRC to train and fund local groups of voluntary organisations to deliver / provide support to individual cases (in addition to helpline)	Existence of training sessions. Review and evaluation from groups re. changes	Improve networking with public and voluntary bodies	
<b>#2. Communicate clearly services and functions of EHRC in a way that takes account of challenges of rurality</b>	Produce a statement that clearly explains in plain English what the EHRC does for whom	Show statement to 100 people (who live outside city/ urban areas) and ask if they understand	EHRC	Within 6 months
	Use diverse ways to get message to people in rural areas (eg doctors' surgeries, town halls etc)	Standard Question for all service users should be 'How did you hear about us?' Also identify rural and urban service users by asking for first half of postcode (service users can opt out of Q). Also long-term 'shoppers' survey' to check awareness of non-service users	EHRC/ local councils – eg Put helpline number at top of council tax bills	Getting message across = priority in first year: Measuring = more long-term
	Highlight that you offer educative packages / tools, and that these will be relevant to communities that haven't presently got a large diversity (ie reinforce message about diversity being relevant to all)			

## **7.10 Appendix X**

### **Equal Opportunities in Rural Scotland: Working together on a practical vision to bridge current barriers to social inclusion**

Conference 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2008

EHRC Round Table Discussions, 2008

Dumfries, 19<sup>th</sup> March

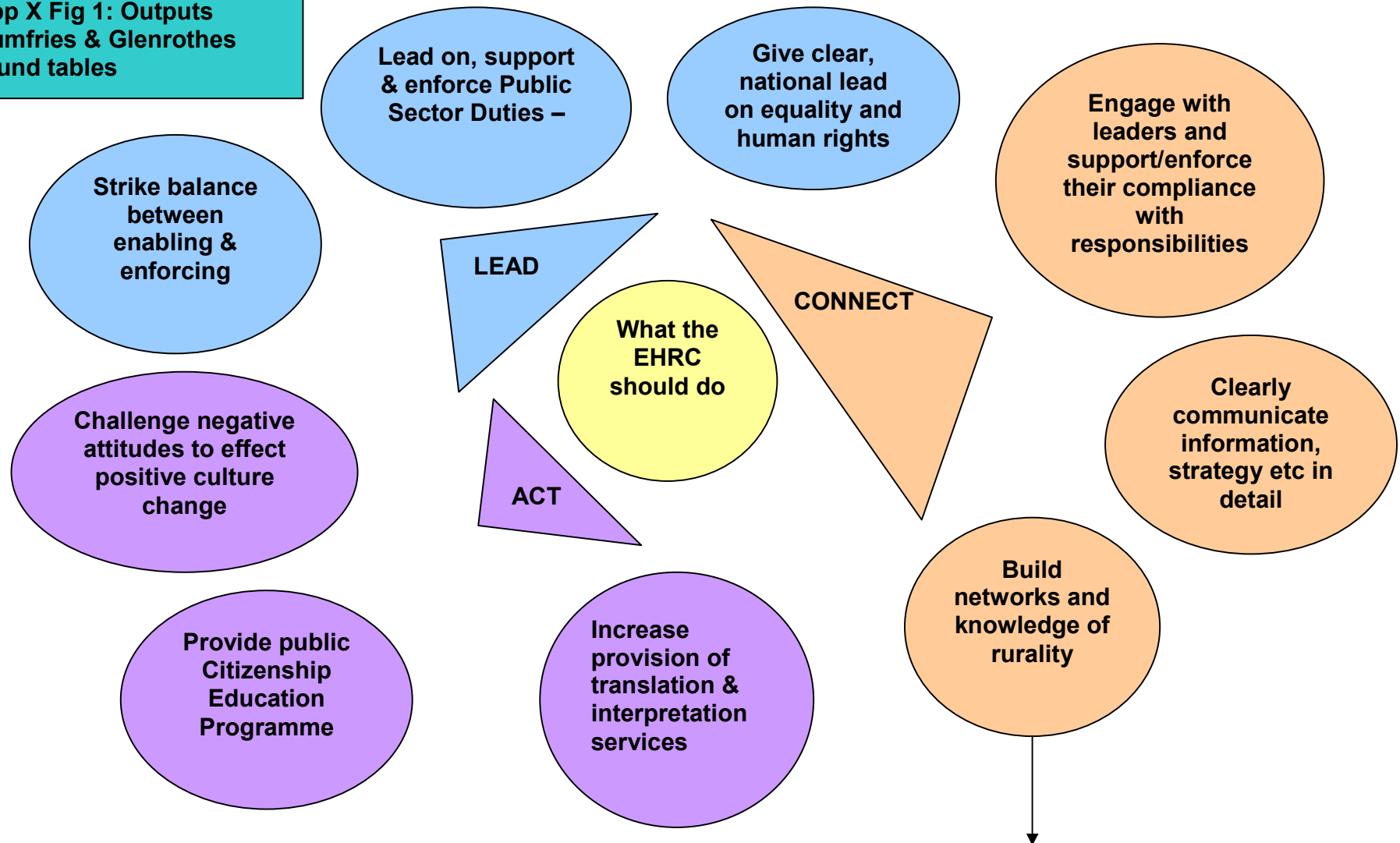
Glenrothes, 20<sup>th</sup> March

Inverness, 17<sup>th</sup> April

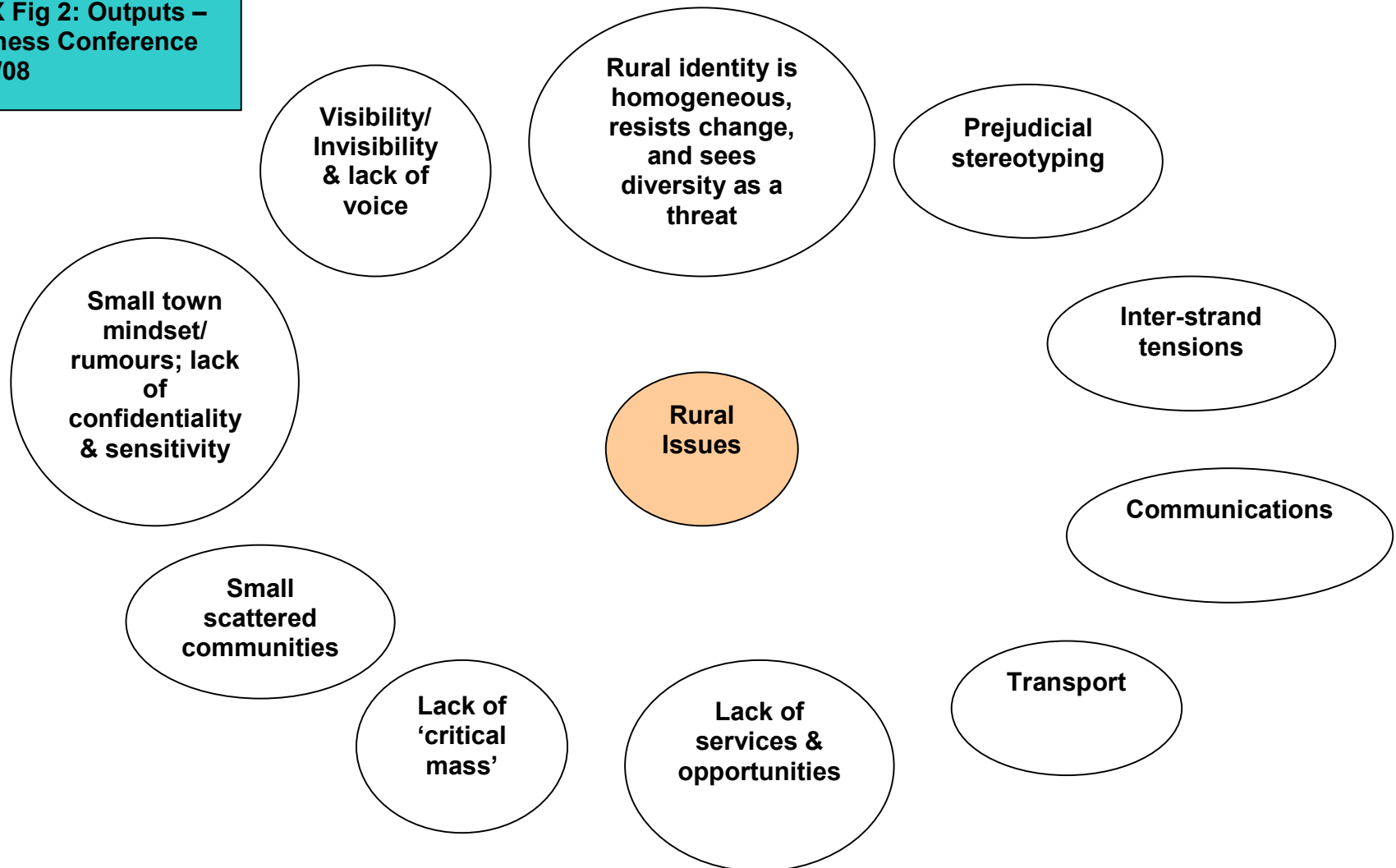
#### ***Conference Report Appendix (X)***

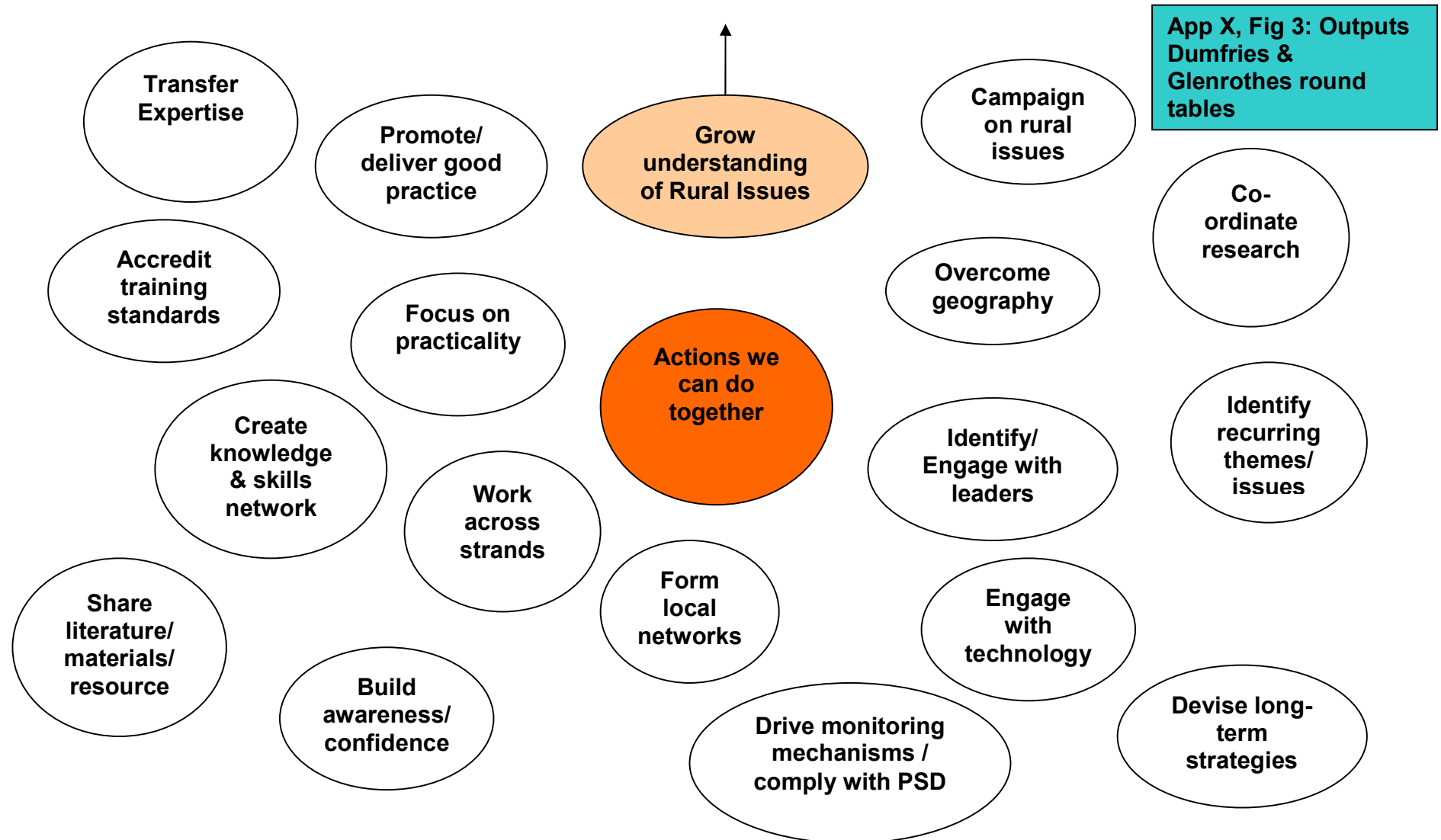
#### ***Pictorial Summary of All Outputs from Conference and Round Table Discussions***

**App X Fig 1: Outputs  
 Dumfries & Glenrothes  
 round tables**



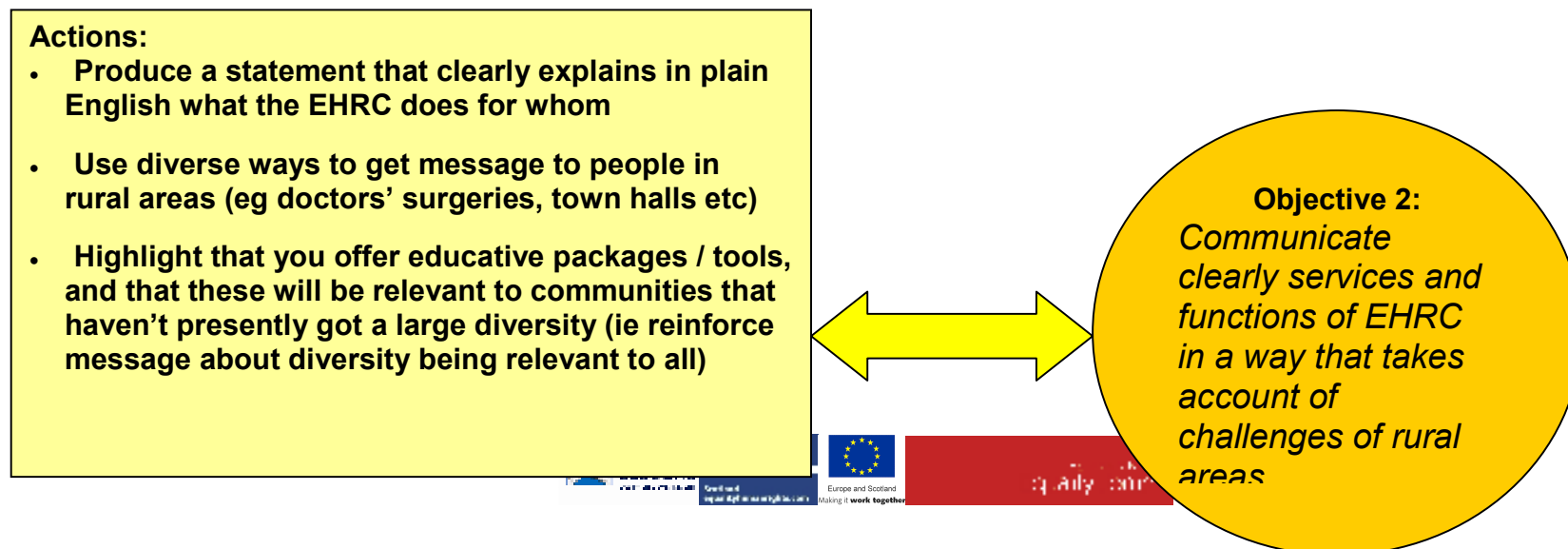
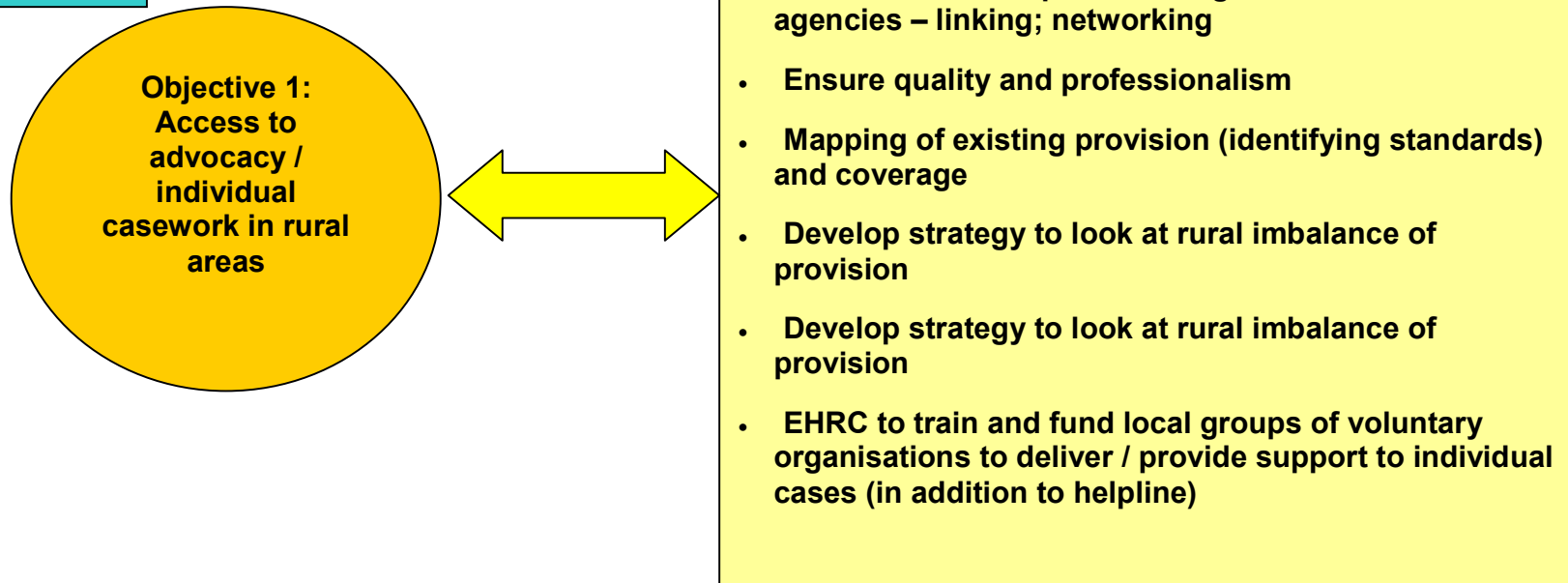
**App X Fig 2: Outputs –  
Inverness Conference  
26/02/08**





**Final Objectives for the EHRC to take forward:**

**App X, Fig 4: Outputs  
 Inverness round table**



## 8.0 Glossary of Acronyms used in this report

BSL	British Sign Language
EHRC	Equality & Human Rights Commission
ESOL	English as a Second Language
HIEF	Highlands & Islands Equality Forum
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
MIDAS	Minibus Driver Awareness Schemes
SAIF	Scottish Accessible Information Forum
WEA	Workers' Educational Association