



2011-2015

Thames Valley Police Single Equality Scheme

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At Thames Valley Police we are committed to delivering a high quality service to all members of our communities, irrespective of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.

We serve a large and diverse community in the Thames Valley, and it is absolutely vital that our officers and staff are able to engage with different sections of our community and deliver a police service that is truly citizen-focused.

To meet the needs of our changing communities, we need to work in partnership with groups and individuals, and actively listen to views from all sections of society about how we are doing as a police force, and what issues matter to them.

Our officers and staff have a key role to play in building trust and confidence, and ensuring that we deliver our services in a fair and consistent way always upholding human rights.

This Single Equality Scheme sets out how we will deliver services that meet the needs of our diverse communities, while advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations both in the way we deal with the public and within our own workforce under the new Public Sector Equality Duty.

Sara Thornton

Chief Constable, Thames Valley Police

Foreword



Thames Valley Police is committed to delivering services that are relevant and accessible to all, and to promoting diversity and equality of opportunity in the workplace. Thames Valley Police's Single Equality Scheme is an exciting next step towards achieving these goals guided by the principles of the new Public Sector Equality Duty, effective on the 5th April 2011.

The scheme will assist in identifying our priorities in relation to the protected characteristics of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation. The Single Equality Scheme is built upon consultation, measurement and legislative requirements. It will ensure that we have a representative, well trained workforce. It will help us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between all. And most importantly, it will help us as service provider, to meet the needs of our diverse communities.

The Single Equality Scheme is an opportunity for Thames Valley Police to demonstrate its commitment to upholding just and fair relations between people and to achieve our aim of working in partnership to make our community safer.

Richard Bennett

Assistant Chief Constable

Neighbourhood Policing & Partnerships

Headquarters South

Thames Valley Police

August 2011

Introducing the Single Equality Scheme



Our communities

Thames Valley Police is one of the largest territorial police forces in England, covering 2,200 square miles (5,700 km²) across the counties of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, including the Borough of Milton Keynes. Together these areas have an ethnically and culturally diverse population of more than 2.1 million.

Our staff

As at 4th April 2011, Thames Valley Police employs 8,224 people. This includes 4,482 police officers, 3,221 police staff and 521 Police Community Support Officers. The Force is assisted in its work by 546 Special Constables and 615 volunteers.

Percentage of new police officer recruits from BME background

Between April 2010 and March 2011, 11.6% of new police officers recruited externally were from a BME background, exceeding the 10% target.

Percentage of new police staff appointments from BME background

Between April and September 2010/11 10.6% of new police staff appointments from external recruits were from a BME background exceeding the 10% target.

Percentage of new police community support officer appointments from BME background

Between April and September 2010/11 6.5% of new police community support officer appointments were from a BME background.

Women comprise 29.2% of the total number of police officers and 59.8% of police staff (including PCSOs).

The proportion of staff who have declared they have a disability is 0.6% as at 31 March 2011 (includes Police Officers, Police Staff and PCSOs).

Who we are: Thames Valley Police



Support and advice in the workplace

Thames Valley Police provides support for a number of staff associations representing women, visible minority ethnic individuals such as Black & Asian, Christian, Muslim and LGBT police officers and staff. These well-established groups provide a strong pillar of support for the advancement of equality of opportunity, fostering good relations and diversity. They are complemented by the work of the Force Disability Working Group which addresses disability issues in an employment and operational context.

Throughout the Force there is a network of Diversity Advisors who act as a first point of contact for staff and officers. They are trained to guide those seeking advice and support to the appropriate part of the organisation.



Stonewall

DIVERSITY CHAMPION

In January 2011 Thames Valley Police achieved 35th place in Stonewall's annual Workplace Equality Index - an annual benchmarking exercise that ranks the Top 100 Employers in Britain for lesbian, gay and bisexual people. Having been placed 50th in 2010, the improved position is a reflection of the Force's efforts to tackle discrimination and create inclusive workplaces for lesbian, gay and bisexual staff.

Police officer training

Officers acquire knowledge of communities they serve through the Initial Police Learning and Development Programme (IPLDP). A key element of the IPLDP Programme is the involvement of the community in elements of police training.

Officers undertake placements with a wide range of community-based schemes, including MIND (Oxfordshire); Banbury Young Homeless Project; Terrance Higgins Trust; Launchpad (Reading) – assisting homeless people; National Society for Epilepsy; Saheli Asian Woman's Group (Aylesbury) and Hearing dogs for the Deaf.

Who we are: Thames Valley Police



Policing diverse communities

Thames Valley Police seeks to promote justice and fairness not only between our officers, staff, volunteers and contractors but also in our relationships with the communities we serve.

The Force recognises that crime and anti-social behaviour affect all communities but can have a disproportionate impact on minority communities, people with disabilities and the elderly, sick and vulnerable.

An example of how the Force has adapted its approach to the needs of individuals is in tackling anti-social behaviour. Officers attending incidents now complete a risk assessment that allows them to better understand the vulnerability of the victim and family. This triggers a simple prioritisation process that determines the appropriate resourcing level in terms of both the speed and nature of the response.

The Force's values

Equality, fairness and respect are central to the Force's aims, values and strategic objectives, which underpin the Force's strategic plan. Thames Valley Police's Single Equality Scheme complements and builds on the Force's existing strategic framework by setting out in detail how the Force is working to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

¹ The Force's strategic plan can be viewed on the Thames Valley Police website

Our aim

Working in partnership to make our community safer.

Our values

To foster the trust and confidence of our community, we will:

- Treat everyone fairly and with respect.
- Act with courage and integrity.
- Take pride in delivering a high-quality service and keeping our promises.
- Engage, listen and respond.
- Learn from experience and always seek to improve.

Strategic objectives 2011 - 2014

- To cut crimes that are of most concern to the community
- To increase the visible presence of the police
- Protect our communities from the most serious harm
- Improve communication with the public in order to build trust and confidence with our communities
- To tackle bureaucracy and develop the professional skills of all staff
- To reduce costs and protect the frontline.

Who we are: Thames Valley Police



Legislative context

Public sector equality duties

This Single Equality Scheme reflects the Force's legal duty in relation to equality.

The Force's duties under current legislation are outlined below:

Thames Valley Police must prepare and publish one or more, specific and measurable, equality objectives under s.149 (1) Equality Act 2010 (the Public Sector Equality Duty). These must aim to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Public Sector Equality Duty is intended for persons who share a relevant protected characteristic who are:

1. employees,
2. other persons affected by its policies and practices.

The relevant protected characteristics are:

- (a) age;
- (b) disability;
- (c) gender reassignment;
- (d) marriage and civil partnership;
- (e) pregnancy and maternity;
- (f) race;
- (g) religion or belief;
- (h) sex; and
- (i) sexual orientation.

Governance

The Force Diversity Board

The Force Diversity Board, chaired by the Chief Constable, provides overall governance for equality and diversity on behalf of the Force. The strategic lead for equality and diversity is the Assistant Chief Constable for Neighbourhood Policing and Partnerships. The Diversity Board has a broad representative base that includes the Black, Gay, Christian and Muslim Police Associations, Thames Valley Police Women's Network, Reading Racial Equality Council, Thames Valley Police Independent Advisory Group, Thames Valley Probation, the Force Disability Working Group and Thames Valley Police Authority. This ensures that a wide spectrum of views are heard and considered.

Diversity, equality of opportunity and fostering good relations are also independently scrutinised by the Police Authority and independent advisory groups.

Single Equality Scheme



Reporting framework

The Force Diversity Board receives reports on a wide range of diversity and equality matters for scrutiny and approval. This Single Equality Scheme is the source document from which other key documents are derived in support of the Single Equality Scheme Delivery Plan.

These documents are:

- The annual report on progress on the Single Equality Scheme's delivery plan
- The Force Diversity Monitoring Report, which presents the statistical data on equality of opportunity and diversity objectives.

The Single Equality Scheme and its Delivery Plan are reviewed regularly and at least annually by the Force Diversity Board.

Local Police Area (Senior Management Teams)

Local Police Area Senior Management Teams meet regularly, and align their diversity activities with the Single Equality Scheme and guidance provided by the Force Diversity Board.

Equality Impact Assessments

All of the Force's relevant policies are subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to ensure that the likely impact of a policy on different groups in the Force and in the community has been considered. Where a potentially negative impact is discovered, steps are then taken to mitigate or eliminate the negative impact before the policy is adopted. The same process applies to the Force's standard operating procedures.

EIAs are administered by the Equality Schemes Coordinator, located in the Force Diversity Unit.

How we arrived at our priorities

The Delivery Plan is reviewed regularly with an annual report to the Force Diversity Board.

The Force will consult the public, staff associations and trade unions on its Single Equality Scheme and Delivery Plan. The Single Equality Scheme is a 'living' document. The Force seeks to be proactive in using external groups and staff associations as part of its consultation.

In determining its priorities Thames Valley Police has made use of the wealth of data it holds on employment and operational activities, for example, the ethnicity and gender of our staff, types of hate crime such as disability and homophobia, and proportionality data on police stop and searches. This data informs the Single Equality Scheme and its Delivery Plan. Where data shows inequality we have ensured that the Delivery Plan sets priorities to tackle it.

Thames Valley Police does not classify the protected characteristics in a hierarchical order of priority. Efforts to achieve the Public Sector General Equality Duty give equal priority to all the protected characteristics in the Delivery Plan.

² Source: s149(1) Equality Act 2010: this Public Sector General Equality Duty came into force on **5 April 2011**

Single Equality Scheme



Thames Valley Police also consults a wide range of independent reports and best practice, including the report by Sir William Macpherson of Cluny in The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (HMSO (1999)), which contains recommendations for police forces that continue to be reflected in our Delivery Plan.

More recently, the Force has been influenced by reports from the Equalities and Human Rights Commission on stop and search powers and disability harassment.

How the outcomes are to be achieved

The Delivery Plan sets out in detail how we will deliver improvements, both within the organisation and in relation to service delivery. It is structured under five main headings. Each of the actions is owned by a member of the Chief Constable's Management Team. The Force Diversity Board is responsible for scrutiny of the Delivery Plan and for reviewing the annual progress report.

Time-scale for implementation

1. Publication of this Single Equality Scheme is aimed at complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty which came into effect on 5th April 2011.

2. By the 31st January 2012 the Force must publish information [the Force Diversity Monitoring Report] relating to persons who share a relevant protected characteristic who are:
 - (a) its employees,
 - (b) other persons affected by its policies and practices.
3. By 6th April 2012 the Force must publish its Equality Objectives [the Delivery Plan].
4. The information must be published in a manner accessible to the public.

Further information

Thames Valley Police's Single Equality Scheme was agreed by the Force Diversity Board on 3rd June 2011.

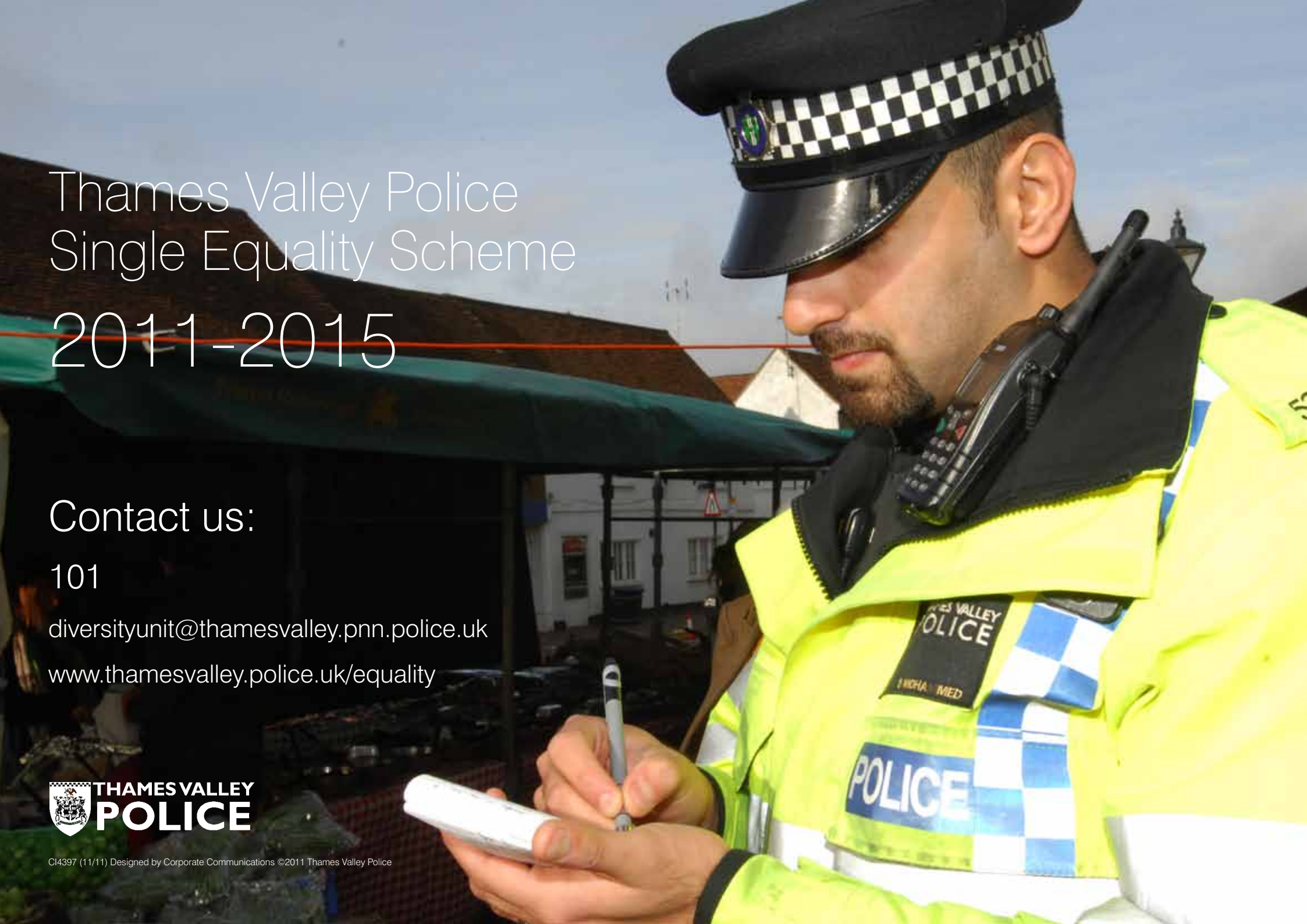
Any queries or comments in relation to the Single Equality Scheme are welcomed and should in the first instance be addressed to the Head of the Diversity Unit, Thames Valley Police.

Printed and large format copies of this document are available on request via the diversity unit.

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Single Equality Scheme



Thames Valley Police Single Equality Scheme 2011-2015

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www.thamesvalley.police.uk/equality

