



West Lothian Council

**Diversity Week Evaluation
Report**

2009

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the evaluation report for the third West Lothian Diversity Week.

The 2009 event was our biggest yet, beating record attendance figures on previous years – well over one thousand people attended our ambitious and unique range of events designed to promote equality and diversity.

After winning the MJ Magazine UK wide Diversity Achievement of the Year Award, the 2008 event was always a hard act to follow. I am sure you will agree that the scope, quality and range of events outlined in this report show that we took that challenge seriously for 2009.

West Lothian Council is committed to the achievement of equality of opportunity for everyone in our community, and in all that we do as an organisation.

As a council we are always striving to take this commitment further and want West Lothian to be a place where individual needs are recognised, respected and acted upon appropriately to improve our services, and ultimately the environment within which we live and work.

Thank you to all who contributed to Diversity Week in 2009 and I hope you find this report informative and useful.

ALEX LINKSTON

Chief Executive

West Lothian Council

BACKGROUND

Following the success of our first Diversity Week in 2007 and second in 2008, Diversity Week 2009 was designed to raise awareness and involve our employees, partners and citizens in the promotion of equality and diversity. A series of events took place between Monday 23 and Sunday 29 November, details of which are highlighted within this report.

Promoting equality of opportunity is about ensuring that people from different groups do not suffer discrimination. Recognising diversity means understanding how people's similarities and differences can be harnessed for the benefit of the whole community. Diversity Week has helped us move towards this by raising awareness of different experiences, lifestyles and cultures.

The aim of West Lothian Council in striving for excellence is always to provide the best possible services and value for money for our citizens.

A culture of creativity, innovation and excellence in delivery of services is key to achieving this aim. West Lothian Diversity Week actively supports this by increasing the capacity of our employees, partners and citizens to understand the different needs of particular groups within our community.

Diversity Week is also a platform to learn more about your community, challenge misconceptions, promote community relations and develop innovative ideas to achieve equality and promote diversity.

If you have any ideas, suggestions for events or want to get involved in Diversity Week 2010 please contact:

Policy and Equality Team

T: 01506 281068

E: diversity@westlothian.gov.uk

SPECIAL PRE-EVENTS

An Evening with Arun Gandhi

An evening of conversation with Arun Gandhi, grandson of Mohandas Gandhi, the Indian political and spiritual leader of India during the Indian independence movement. Delegates heard of Arun's early life living with his grandfather, and how he has adopted these early teachings through his life and work.

Diwali – Festival of Light

A celebration of the Diwali festival of light held in Broxburn, with music, food and a diverse mix of cultures and religions, promoting the diversity of the West Lothian community.

MONDAY 23 NOVEMBER

LGBT Employment Equality – Lothian and Borders Police

The opening event for Diversity Week 2009. A seminar led by Tricia Cochrane FCIPD, focusing on the work taken forward by Lothian and Borders Police in relation to sexual orientation and transgender equality in the workplace – the event was an opportunity to learn lessons, share practice and hear experiences of employees who have been directly impacted upon by this work.

TUESDAY 24 NOVEMBER

Scottish Country Dance

A performance of Scottish Country Dance performed by people with both physical and learning disabilities. The event took place at the Regal Theatre in Bathgate.

“The dancers were fabulous and the atmosphere marvellous. Big thank you to the dancers, organisers, carers and teachers.”

Amina – Islam and Violence Against Women

Presentation and question and answer session on issues faced in relation to working with violence against Muslim women. Facilitated by Tabassum Sarfraz from Amina.

Recession, Economic Recovery and Equality

A seminar led by Prof. Alisa McKay, focusing on the impact of the global financial situation from a gender equality perspective; including analysis of Government economic recovery plans. Prof. McKay is an economist at Glasgow Caledonian University Business School and Secretary to the Scottish Women’s Budget Group.

Eastern European Market Place

Information and advice stalls from council and partner services aimed at service provision for people from Eastern Europe. Cultural events, food and activities to support community cultural awareness.

THURSDAY 26 NOVEMBER

Equality and Human Rights Commission in Scotland

A seminar outlining the vision and objectives of the new Scottish Human Rights Commission, launched by the Scottish Parliament in December 2008. The session was led by Diego Quiroz, Policy Officer for the Scottish Human Rights Commission.

FRIDAY 27 NOVEMBER

Lord Advocate: West Lothian Violence Against Women Strategy Launch

An event to launch the West Lothian Violence Against Strategy. Keynote speaker for the event was the Lord Advocate, Elish Angiolini QC. The event included the launch of the Rape Crisis Scotland “This is not an invitation to rape me” campaign.

Disability West Lothian AGM 2009

The Annual General Meeting of the voluntary sector organisation Disability West Lothian. The event was a joint session held in collaboration with Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service. Keynote speaker was Simon Hawkins, the first fire fighter in Europe to return to active duty with a false limb. The 2009 West Lothian Good Access Award and the Jamie Andrew Achievement Award were presented.

Howden Park Tea Dance

The launch of a tea dance with music, tea, coffee, and biscuits held at Howden Park Centre, Livingston. This has become an ongoing monthly event.

SATURDAY 28 NOVEMBER

Eastern European Pan Flute Concert

Robert Grudzien from Poland and Georgij Agratina from Ukraine performed in a unique pan flute concert, held in Linlithgow. The event was hosted in conjunction with the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Scotland.

SUNDAY 29 NOVEMBER

West Lothian Multi-Cultural Event 2009

The closing event for the week, the multi-cultural event brought together different communities of West Lothian to share and celebrate diversity. Held the day before St. Andrews Day, celebrating the diversity of cultural influences on West Lothian. Performances included Bangra DJs, pipe bands and ethnic dance troupes. Council and partner advice stalls were on offer as well as a bazaar, face painting, origami and a host of diverse food stalls.

A DIVERSE PARTNERSHIP

Diversity Week 2009 was a unique form of partnership working between the public, private and voluntary sectors in West Lothian.

Diversity is relevant to everyone in our community and the significance and effectiveness of the week would have been reduced if it were not for the involvement of our key partners.

West Lothian Council are grateful indeed for the support of our partners in this initiative. Our partners were Disability West Lothian, Lothian and Borders Police, Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue and West Lothian College.

If you represent a private, public or voluntary organisation and would like more details on becoming a partner for Diversity Week 2010 via event organisation or resource support, please contact:

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