

**EQUALITY COMMISSION
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND
Public Authority Progress Report 2003 - 2004**

**Template to assist Public Authorities to report on implementation
of the equality and good relations duties under Section 75 of the
NI Act 1998**

The information required from public authorities will be based on the period from **1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004**. Please ensure that it is submitted to the Commission by **31 August 2004**, electronically (by completing this template) and in writing, with a signed cover letter from the Chief Executive or, in his/her absence, the Deputy Chief Executive.

This year's progress report template builds upon earlier guidance, for purposes of consistency and comparison.

Please report on progress by entering information at the end of each Section in the template. Prompts are included under each Section to help you to assess the extent to which progress has been made within each area. Please note that these prompts are neither prescriptive nor inclusive. It is important that the authority reports on what it views as being relevant in terms of progress being made on implementation of the statutory duties.

Name of public authority (Enter details below)

**Laganside Corporation
Clarendon Building
15 Clarendon Road
Belfast BT1 3BG**

Equality Officer name and contact details (Enter details below)

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Section 1: Strategic Implementation of the Section 75 Duties

Please enter specific progress on implementation of the good relations duty under section 10 of this template.

- Outline evidence of progress made in developing/meeting equality and good relations objectives, performance indicators and targets and inclusion of these in corporate and annual operating plans. Your response should include any targets for 2004-2005.
- Outline steps taken to work with other public authorities in progressing the duties.
- Outline any details of partnership work developed or further progressed with the voluntary and/or community sector as a consequence of Section 75 work.
- Indicate if Section 75 is a standard agenda item for Board and/or Senior Management Team on a quarterly basis.
- Please provide details of the **direct** resourcing of Section 75 work during 2003 –4. This should include staff appointed/directed (*not names*) to specifically advance work on equality scheme delivery, and details of any budget allocation to specifically deliver equality scheme commitments.
- Outline any factors that enhanced or impeded the process of Strategic Implementation during the period.

Prompt:

Have the Board and Senior Officers reviewed the authority's progress report?

Has responsibility for equality been agreed and designated within the authority?

Has a clearly defined organisational structure with resources for implementation of the duties and assessment of policies been established?

Are equality objectives built into the job descriptions and performance targets of relevant staff, and are these reflected in the appraisal process?

(Enter text below)

Laganside Corporation is a small organisation, currently employing 24 members of staff. The Corporation focuses on a single object, statutorily defined in the Laganside Development (NI) Order 1989 as: 'The object of the Corporation shall be to secure the regeneration of the designated area'. Urban regeneration initiatives such as Laganside are used to bring about real improvements in physical infrastructure, people's lives and economic opportunities and to support neighbourhood renewal. Laganside's holistic approach to regeneration demonstrates its commitment to equality which is inherent to the way the Corporation operates, e.g. the responsibilities and actions set out in the Corporate Plan. Indeed equality is at the heart of the Corporation's mission statement: 'Contributing to the revitalization of Belfast and Northern Ireland by transforming Laganside to be attractive, accessible and sustainable, recognised as a place of opportunity for all'.

Underpinning the Corporation's work is a determination to accelerate and enrich the regeneration of the Laganside area by developing strategic partnerships and by selecting those projects that will produce best value for money and additional employment. The Corporation remains committed to providing 'equality of opportunity' and to operating with integrity, equity and professional competence.

The Corporate Plan takes account of the priorities and plans for government in Northern Ireland set out in the document 'Building on Progress 2003 – 2006', which focused on priorities endorsed by the Executive and Assembly in their Programme for Government. The Corporate Plan underlines the Corporation's continuing commitment to the principles of equality, inclusion, partnership and mutual respect, which in turn reflect the mission statement of our sponsoring Department, DSD, 'Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities'. The strategic priorities set out in the Northern Ireland's Executive's Programme for Government provide the framework for Laganside's activities particularly the importance of community, targeting social needs, the development of a competitive economy and attracting international investment to new opportunities. It is these relationships and their connection to sustainable regeneration that add real value in terms of employment and improvements in the quality of our environment. The Corporate Plan enumerates the principles and reflects the commitments and targets set out in the Equality Scheme and commits the Corporation to achieving these. The Corporation is conscious of the need for inclusiveness when carrying out its core tasks.

The table overleaf sets out the Equality Targets: 2003/04 as stated in the Corporate Plan, together with state of play, as at 31st March 2004:

Target	Progress
The Corporation has completed all the Equality Impact Assessments to which it was committed in its Equality Scheme. It continues to monitor all equality issues and will carry out additional Impact Assessments where identified through screening.	Ongoing – equality issues are tabled and progress against Equality Scheme commitments monitored at the quarterly Steering Group meeting.
The Corporation will undertake major consultation exercises each year as circumstances require: these may include, in addition to equality, consultations on planning and development issues relating to the work of the Corporation	Ongoing – see Section 9 of this report for further details
An internal committee has been set up and will continue to monitor and review, on a quarterly basis, the implementation of Section 75 obligations	Ongoing – the Steering Group meet quarterly and minutes are circulated to all staff and the Board
The Corporation will prepare an annual statement on the operation of the Equality Scheme following approval of the Scheme by the Equality Commission	Complete

As reported last year, the general attitude and awareness surveys have been replaced by 'focus groups'. In seeking to obtain more strategically significant information the Corporation has adopted a 'focus groups' protocol to assess attitudes to Laganside and the work it does and to provide information which examines issues central to Laganside's strategy development. The interviewers who conduct the focus group survey are trained to Interviewer Quality Control Scheme standards.

The key subjects of study for the focus groups this time are: Employment and employability benefits, Bringing communities together, Laganlines, Cathedral Quarter, River, Physical Infrastructure, Laganside and Business. The population of the focus groups comprises businesses, local community, general public, river users and non-river users in numbers equivalent to current population statistics. The focus groups take a holistic approach to the impact Laganside has made in terms of effecting change through the regeneration of its designated area. Outcomes from the focus groups are used internally to inform and guide the Corporation on its regeneration strategy. Focus group comments were incorporated into the EQIA Monitoring report for 2003, which was submitted to the

Equality Commission in April. Laganside has produced an EQIA Monitoring report for the past two years.

The 'Good Relations' duty and the 'equality of opportunity' duty are inherent in the procedures, practices and commitments specified in Laganside's approved Equality Scheme. The Corporation is conscious of the need for inclusiveness when carrying out its core tasks and seeks to ensure that its designated area remains a 'neutral' area where all groups will feel comfortable.

Although the Corporation is primarily concerned with physical regeneration, it recognises the importance of social and economic cohesion, and regional integration in achieving its goals. Laganside strives to develop its designated area with a strong commitment to the principles of equality, human rights, cultural diversity, targeting social need and partnership and thereby create an environment in which the Laganside community can have a better quality of life and realise its full potential.

A Steering Group, comprising Senior Management and the Equality Officer, was set up in 2001 to monitor and review progress against the commitments made in the approved Equality Scheme. The Steering Group meet quarterly and the meetings are chaired by the Chief Executive. Minutes from the Steering Group meetings are circulated to all staff and Board members.

The Board is responsible for the statutory duties. The Chief Executive has a personal responsibility to the Board for driving forward implementation of the duties. The Chief Executive is supported in this role by the Directors of the Corporation and the Equality Officer.

The Equality Scheme, through the Finance and Administration Director's report, is an agenda item at each Board meeting. This progress report will be reviewed and signed-off by the Board before submission to the Commission. There are 10 Board meetings per annum.

Equality is a standing agenda item at the Monthly Review meeting. This is chaired by the Chief Executive and comprises Directors and senior staff. This is the forum where new policy and/or changes to current policies is identified.

Equality objectives are built into the job descriptions and performance targets of all staff and are reflected on in the appraisal process. Staff are appraised annually. Laganside has maintained contact as appropriate with the Equality Commission and would take the opportunity at Commission events to seek

confirmation/clarification/advice from the Commission. The Corporation's Equality Officer represented the Corporation at a number of Equality Commission events.

Section 2: Screening & Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

2a)

If a Screening Report has not yet been submitted to the Commission please advise us on the current position with regard to producing this report and forwarding to the Commission.

2b)

- If a Screening Report and EQIA Timetable has previously been submitted to the Commission please provide information on the following, in relation to new/proposed/revised policies during 2003-4:

Please list new/proposed/revised policies screened in or out during the period.

- Outline any factors that enhanced or impeded the process of policy screening or EQIA.

We have already requested (9 January 2004) that an update on progress regarding EQIAs is forwarded to the Commission. If your authority has not yet forwarded this information (deadline date was 29 February 2004) please do so as a matter of urgency.

(Enter text below)

No outstanding actions – Equality is a standing agenda item at the Monthly Review meeting. This is chaired by the Chief Executive and comprises Directors and senior staff. It is the initial forum for identifying new policy and/or changes to current policies. During the period this report refers to no new policies or changes to current policies were identified at this meeting.

A copy of the Corporation's annual EQIA monitoring report covering 2003 was forwarded to the Commission in April '04.

Section 3: Training

- Indicate your organisation's progress on delivery of Section 75 related training and development during the period. Please state if the training is provided within a 5-year Training Plan.
- Outline details of staff and Management Board/Committee training associated with the Section 75 duties/Equality Scheme requirements. Provide details of types of training provision (e.g. general awareness raising, specialist training on EQIA, Screening, and Consultation) and who this training was provided for.
- Please provide details of training on awareness raising (for new staff) and refresher training (for existing staff).
- Provide details of how affected groups have been involved in the development and/or delivery of training.
- Provide a summary of any training evaluations and comments on the benefits of such training.
- Provide details of arrangements to review training needs as a result of staff recruitment, promotion or reorganisation.
- Outline any factors that enhanced or impeded the processes of Section 75 training during the period.

Prompt:

Does the authority monitor attainment of the training objectives contained within its equality scheme?

Has Section 75 training involved input from representatives of the nine categories? If so please state how this happened and if it proved useful?

Has Section 75 training been evaluated? If so, how has this happened and what are the lessons learned?

(Enter text below)

As reported last year, Section 7 of the Corporation's approved Equality Scheme sets out the Corporation's arrangements for training which indicated that the Corporation would work in partnership with DSD (the Corporation's parent department) on training in a number of key areas. However, on further examination of DSD's training plan a decision was taken by the Steering Group that the DSD plan did not fully meet the needs of the Corporation and a separate Laganside Corporation training and communications plan should be developed. A dedicated 5-year training and communication plan was prepared and subsequently

signed-off by the Steering Group. Laganside having its own dedicated training and communication plan does not detract from the Corporation working in partnership with DSD on training should suitable opportunities arise. The Corporation's training plan sets out both the training (implemented up to May 2002) and the actions to be taken covering the life of the Equality Scheme.

A deaf awareness session was incorporated into a staff conference held in June '03. The Corporation was keen to work with a representative group on the development and delivery of the training. Development was consequently arranged in conjunction with the RNID and the deaf awareness session was presented by John Carberry, Training Officer with the RNID. John took Laganside staff through a number of scenarios where a deaf person may experience difficulties. John also facilitated some role play which gave staff an appreciation of such situations. Oral feedback from staff following the deaf awareness session was very positive.

The Equality Officer has attended a number of training/awareness raising events including:

- 'Which way monitoring' seminar – Equality Forum
- Deaf awareness – RNID (John Carberry, as referred to above)
- S75 conference – Equality Commission
- NICEM AGM – NICEM
- S75 Smaller Public Bodies network – Equality Commission
- Sexual Orientation Code of Practice Launch – Equality Commission
- Diversity Matters workshop – Diversity Matters

All new members of staff who commenced employment with the Corporation since June 2001 have had a seminar (based on Equality & Section 75 and New Targeting Social Needs) presented to them, often on an individual basis, as part of their induction training. New employees also receive an individual copy of the approved Equality Scheme during their induction training.

Laganside Corporation is committed to holistic, i.e. economic, social and physical, regeneration of its designated area. As part of that ongoing commitment to the business community in the area, Laganside developed and hosted a free, presentation-based, short information seminar for 'Laganside' employers covering responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act. The presentations covered the following topics:

- Disability Discrimination Act
- Disability issues in the workplace
- Good Practice Examples

Laganside was very pleased to have Estella Dorrian from the Equality Commission and Orla McCann from Disability Action, together with Martin Howell from the Employers' Forum on Disability (NI) as the presenters. There were also stands hosted by organisations, such as the Cedar Foundation and the Disablement Advisory Service, where employers could find a wide range of information and guidance. Attendees also received a complimentary copy of the Employers' Forum on Disability (NI) video, '*enabled*', courtesy of Laganside Corporation. Oral feedback from the event has been very positive.

Section 4: Communication

- Provide details of internal and external communication of the authority's commitment to the statutory duties.
- Provide details of how the authority communicates progress on delivery of the statutory duties.
- Provide details of any review of communication activities to ensure effective communication on progressing the statutory duties.

Prompt:

Do the Board and/or Senior Officers promote the authority's equality objectives in public statements, interviews and external events such as conferences?

Does the authority have a plan for communication of progress on implementation of the statutory duties?

As stated previously minutes from the quarterly Steering Group meetings are circulated to all staff and Board members. Each member of staff has received a personal copy of the approved Equality Scheme.

The Corporation makes public the S75 Annual Progress Report and the annual EQIA Monitoring Report.

Public advertising of equality documentation usually takes place via the public notice column in the three Belfast daily newspapers. In addition, equality documentation is available to view and download from Laganside Corporation's website, www.laganside.com.

'*Laganlines*', the news sheet of Laganside Corporation, (circulation ~180,000 copies) has carried an equality update every issue since April 2001. Distribution of the news sheet, within the 'Laganside Local Community' includes; homes,

businesses, schools, libraries, councillors, community and voluntary groups and other organisations such as – Chinese Welfare Association, Duncairn Senior Citizen's Club, Gingerbread NI, NI Council for Travelling People, Council for Homeless NI, Belfast Chinese Christian Church and NI Association for Mental Health.

Corporate publications including Annual Reports and Corporate Plans include equality issues within their copy. Laganside's approach to regeneration demonstrates its commitment to equality which is inherent to the way Laganside operates.

Transforming Laganside from a derelict, neglected area to a vibrant place, integrated into the city requires continuing management and promotion. Sustaining investment requires local and international promotion. Ensuring continuing community benefit requires on-going proactive engagement.

Section 5: Data Collection & Analysis

- Describe any systems that have been established to supplement your available statistical and qualitative research, including consideration given to using internal organisational data and external networks.
- Describe any systems established to monitor the future adverse impact of policies that have been equality impact assessed.
- Outline any factors that enhanced or impeded the process of data collection and analysis during the period.

Prompt:

Has an audit of data sources been undertaken?

Are the results of awareness or satisfaction surveys used to inform the development and review of policies?

Is relevant external data (for example Census, workforce profiles, customer surveys, and focus groups) used to inform policy development?

Have new information systems been linked to arrangements for screening policies?

(Enter text below)

The Corporation is not a service provider per se, and the preparation of the EQIA consultation documents and final reports to date highlighted the difficulties

surrounding information and data collection. Laganside's designated area is relatively small (203ha) and contains a relatively small number of housing units (~700), hence, it is difficult to obtain relevant and meaningful quantitative or qualitative information or data based solely on the Section 75 categories for residents within Laganside's boundary.

Monitoring the effectiveness of the Corporation's policies etc is based on the impact of regenerating the Laganside area and is evidenced through a number of key measures such as; total investment by March 2004 exceeded £800 million, over 12,000 jobs and 700 homes in the area. Festivals, cultural activities and other events are well established. Forty-four events sponsored by Laganside attracted 48,500 visitors in 2003/04. The Lookout Visitor Centre attracted over 14,000 visitors in 2003/04, including a number of schools participating in EMU visits.

The work of the Corporation is recognised internationally, the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) described Laganside as '...one of the best examples of urban regeneration practice in Europe...'.

Laganside seeks to ensure that its designated area is a 'neutral' area where all groups will feel comfortable. A recent study 'Belfast Area Perception Study' sponsored by DEL concluded: 'Laganside is understood by young people in many parts of the city as a location where there are jobs. Theoretically this should mean it is an attractive location that could have high TSN impact by drawing labour from all parts of the city'. The Corporation's Community Team has developed a community strategy with the objective 'to engage the Laganside community, enabling it to avail of the opportunities arising through the regeneration of the designated area'. A key aspect of this is the implementation and monitoring of the Corporation's New TSN Action Plan.

As referred to previously, the Corporation is progressing a 'focus groups' protocol to assess, in depth, attitudes to Laganside and the work it does and to provide information which examines issues central to Laganside's strategy development.

On completion of an EQIA, the EQIA report contains a number of monitoring actions which will be appraised on an annual basis. The Corporation has, for the past couple of years, produced an Annual EQIA Monitoring Report which sets out details of progress against monitoring actions for individual policies as contained in relevant EQIA reports. This is not a statutory requirement for policies where the EQIA did not show an adverse impact. However, as the Corporation endeavours to operate within the spirit of Section 75, the Steering Group decided, even though no adverse impact was established for any Corporation policy, that all policies

which went through the EQIA process should be monitored and the results set out in a report which would be produced and made available to download from its website: www.laganside.com. A copy of the latest EQIA monitoring report, covering the period Jan – Dec 2003, was sent to the Equality Commission in April 2004.

Section 6: Information Provision, Access to Information and Services

- Outline what action has been taken to review and develop arrangements for the provision of information in accessible formats.
- Detail steps taken to audit/improve arrangements to make affected groups more aware of information disseminated by the authority and the services it provides.
- Describe any arrangements to develop monitoring systems regarding access to information and services to ensure equality of opportunity.
- Outline any factors that enhanced or impeded the process of information provision and ensuring/improving access to services during the period.

Prompt:

Are alternative formats provided where appropriate to enable people from across the nine Section 75 categories to have access to all services?

Does the authority monitor uptake of services as a standard procedure?

(Enter text below)

The Corporation has put systems in place to enable relevant information to be available on request in accessible formats such as Braille, large print, and audiocassette and minority languages for those who have difficulty understanding English. A statement advising of the availability of alternative formats and ethnic languages is usually placed either in public notices advertising the publication or in the publication.

As stated previously, Equality is a standing agenda item at the Monthly Review meeting. This is chaired by the Chief Executive and comprises Directors and senior staff. During this meeting staff are asked if any requests for information etc have been received either in, or for, alternative formats or ethnic languages; responses are recorded.

Urban regeneration initiatives such as Laganside are used to bring about real improvements in physical infrastructure, people's lives and economic opportunities and to support neighbourhood renewal. The Corporation's newsheet '*Laganlines*' carries articles regarding physical development of sites, a diary of events taking place in the Laganside area and a general update regarding work undertaken by the Corporation, including progress against the S75 statutory duties. 180,000 copies of *Laganlines* are produced and distributed within the 'Laganside Local Community' including homes, businesses, schools, libraries, councillors, community and voluntary groups and other organisations such as – Chinese Welfare Association, Duncairn Senior Citizen's Club, Gingerbread NI, NI Council for Travelling People, Council for Homeless NI, Belfast Chinese Christian Church and NI Association for Mental Health.

The need for improvement in people's lives and economic opportunities and the support of neighbourhood renewal are evidenced by measures of deprivation as relates to Laganside Corporation (Laganside wards are defined as the 14 wards immediately adjacent to the Laganside designated area) which show:

- 66% of Laganside wards have multiple deprivation measures that rank in the most deprived 10% in Northern Ireland
- 73% of Laganside wards are ranked in the 10% most employment deprived in Northern Ireland
- 66% of Laganside wards are ranked in the 10% most deprived in Northern Ireland in terms of education, skills and training.

The Corporation has a dedicated Community team whose raison d'être is to engage and secure the participation of local communities in the regeneration of the Laganside area. Among the actions to be implemented by the Community team in pursuit of encouraging, developing and supporting community development, and taking account of the statistics above, is the implementation of a New TSN action plan.

In addition, both the Community and Marketing teams endeavour '*To understand the needs of and communicate effectively with Laganside's audiences, creating and maintaining high levels of awareness on the activity of the Corporation*'.

As set out in Section 9 of this report, in addition to consultation the Corporation held a number of Information Events for the launch of the Laganside Community Grant Scheme. Administration for these events was managed by the Partnership Boards.

As referred to previously, outcomes from the attitudinal focus groups are used internally to inform the Corporation and would include comment on information provision and accessibility.

Section 7: Complaints

- Identify the number of formal Section 75 complaints received by the authority during the period.
- Identify the number of these Section 75 complaints which were resolved during the period.
- Identify the number of these Section 75 complaints which are in the process of being resolved.
- Identify the number of these Section 75 complaints which were not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant.

Prompt:

Does the authority have in place a Section 75 complaints procedure?

Does the authority monitor Section 75 complaints and the issues arising?

Have complaints led to policy changes or an undertaking of an Equality Impact Assessment of a policy relating to a complaint?

(Enter text below)

Laganside Corporation has received zero Section 75 complaints and is unaware of any Section 75 complaints referred to the Equality Commission during the timeframe this report covers.

The approved Equality Scheme sets out the arrangements for dealing with Section 75 complaints

Section 8: Timetable

- Provide an update of your equality scheme implementation timetable, identifying any changes since your previous report. Please detail planned actions undertaken during the year and planned actions outstanding.

Prompt:

Is the authority on course to complete the commitments in its 5-year timetable? If not what action is being taken to ensure completion of timetable commitments?

Do Board and Senior Officers review the implementation timetable on a regular basis?

(Enter text below)

The timetable set out in the approved Equality Scheme remains unchanged.

Section 9: Consultation, participation and engagement

Provide details of organisational arrangements for managing Section 75 consultation exercises and processes e.g. system, processes, methods and communication channels used.

Provide details of processes adopted to participate/engage with affected groups.

Prompt:

Describe the system put in place by the authority to plan and manage consultation exercises.

What are the main consultation methods that you have used?

Have consultation exercises involved consulting on equality/good relations in conjunction with other policy development/review areas e.g. best value, good practice reviews?

Has the authority used the existing communication channels of groups or consortia within the voluntary/community sector? If so please give examples and comment on the usefulness of using such mechanisms.

Have consultation exercises been 'joined-up', in relation to consulting on similar policies at the same time or in relation to joint consultation exercises with other public authorities?

Has the authority developed an overall strategy, plans or processes to engage directly with representatives of affected groups? If so what mechanisms have been used and have benefits been realised?

Has consultation/participation been evaluated and improved during the period? Has evaluation led to better approaches to engagement with affected groups?

As set out in last year's report, arrangements for consulting on EQIA consultation documents, which the Equality Officer managed, were:

- Send hard copy to 'baseline' consultees

- Send hard copy to supplementary consultees
- Advertise in public notice section of 3 daily Belfast newspapers
- Place document on Laganside's website: www.laganside.com
- Arrange consultation meetings, where appropriate

The Corporation has an equality consultation database populated by ~360 groups/organisations/individuals. From this, a 'baseline' group consisting of ~50 groups/organisations representing Section 75 categories, other public bodies, voluntary, community, trade union and the Equality Commission would be sent equality consultation documentation. This is supplemented by relevant interest groups and other groups with a legitimate interest in the matter; the number would vary with the policy undergoing an Equality Impact Assessment and the policy holder would advise on this matter.

Where meetings formed part of the consultation, the Corporation tried to incorporate Equality Commission guidance and has produced a 'consultation checklist' which staff are encouraged to use.

Two consultation exercises took place during the period to which this report refers:

- 1) Consultation on Greater Clarendon/Tomb Street/Little Italy Urban Design framework.
- 2) Consultation on the Laganside Community Grant Scheme.

The first consultation exercise consisted of two workshops. Local businesses in the Greater Clarendon and Little Italy area together with known groups e.g. The Half Bap & Little Italy Ex-residents Association and others, including community groups, were invited via letter with follow-up telephone call to the first workshop. The aim of this workshop was to ascertain a community view of what they thought important. Feedback from the first workshop together with how the design team had taken comments into account formed the basis of the second workshop. Those invited to the first workshop together with other stakeholders, e.g., Planning Service, NIHE etc, were invited to the second workshop via flyers and follow-up phone calls. One of the learning points, which may need to be taken into consideration for future such consultation exercises, is to limit attendance to one representative per organisation.

The Corporation participated in the Belfast City Council meeting regarding Cathedral Quarter across a number of sectors located in the Cathedral Quarter. Laganside's Chief Executive gave presentations and participated in workshops.

The second consultation exercise actually commenced back in Nov/Dec 2001 and centered on the redesign of the Community Events Grant form, which was an output from the 'Community' policy EQIA. This in turn led to the development of a revised 'Activity Grant and new Regeneration Grant'. A number of individual meetings were arranged between Laganside's Chief Executive and Community Team and the Chief Executives and Chairs of the Partnership Boards to outline the scheme and acquire their advice and approval. This led to 5 voluntary sector organisations being approached to complete draft grant documentation, of which 3 organisations did oblige. Following feedback and revision the documentation was approved by the Laganside Board Community Committee, Department and solicitors. Following approval, the Partnership Boards managed the administration of the area launches of the scheme. The Scheme was launched in Feb '04 in South Belfast, 105 were invited, 41 attended; and launched during March in North Belfast, East Belfast and Shankill, were 76, 114 and 84 were invited respectively, with 17, 24 and 17 attending. The Scheme was launched during April in West Belfast where 56 were invited and 21 attended. The Grant Scheme became operational during April 2004.

Section 10: The Good Relations duty

Provide details of steps to progress the good relations duty, such as undertaking a good relations audit, developing a strategy or providing training.

Prompt:

What steps has the authority undertaken to promote the good relations duty?

Has the authority developed a strategy for implementing good relations? If so please provide details of the key elements of this.

Has the authority undertaken an audit of its policies that impact on good relations?

What models or approaches to good relations has the authority adopted?

Has the authority worked in partnership with other public authorities or other bodies to develop its approach to promotion of good relations?

Have any policies been changed to better address the promotion of good relations? If so please provide some detail on these.

(Enter text below)

Good relations and the need to be inclusive are imperative to the Corporation's approach to carrying out its core tasks and seeking to ensure that its designated

area remains a 'neutral' area where all groups will feel comfortable. As stated previously the Corporation has a dedicated Community team whose raison d'être is to engage and secure the participation of local communities in the regeneration of the Laganside area. Among the actions to be implemented by the Community team in pursuit of encouraging, developing and supporting community development is the New TSN action plan, which takes account of the equality duties and is being implemented.

Good relations and the need to be inclusive are imperative to the Corporation's approach to carrying out its core tasks and seeking to ensure that its designated area remains a 'neutral' area where all groups will feel comfortable.

Both the Community and Marketing teams support appropriate initiatives, directly relating to the Laganside designated area that benefit the Laganside local community, businesses and tourists to the area, and particularly enhance access to employment opportunities. During the time-frame this report refers to, a major revamp was undertaken of the Laganside Community Grant Scheme.

Through the new Community Grants scheme, Laganside aims to support initiatives directly relating to the Laganside area that address the needs of and provide benefit to the 'Laganside Local Community'. It is envisaged that the new grant scheme will be launched April 2004.

As mentioned previously the Corporation's dedicated Community Team's raison d'être is to engage and secure the participation of local communities in the regeneration of the Laganside area. Examples of the actions being implemented by Laganside, and the Community Team in particular, in pursuit of encouraging, developing and supporting community development include:

- Development, production and release of water safety videos and DVDs which had local children from different community backgrounds as 'actors'.
- Development and launch of the Laganside Community Grant Scheme. Information events were hosted in the North, South, East and West of Belfast and in the Shankill area. These were managed through the local Partnership Boards.
- All requests for events sponsorship through the Laganside Community Grant have to demonstrate how they aim to encourage participation from the whole community. Applications received on the new application form, effective from

April 2004, must state how the activity satisfies equality guidelines and encourages cross community participation.

- Supporting, through part-funding, the Belfast GEMS '4 Schools Project', which is a cross community project preparing pupils for employment.
- Financial support for the Belfast GEMS initiative. Planned, coordinated and provided financial support for the Belfast GEMS Jobs Fair 2003.
- Sponsoring events for cross community boxing clubs.
- Encouraging school engaged in EMU to use the facilities available at the Lagan Lookout. This is particularly successful evidenced by schools making return visits year after year.
- Sponsoring Common Purpose's 'Your Turn' programme. Common Purpose work with young people from different schools and teach them communication and leadership skills. This is a cross community programme.
- Being one of the main sponsors of the Ulster Orchestra's 'Gulliver Project' where pupils from schools of different denominations wrote and performed their music at a major concert in the Waterfront Hall.

Section 11: Impacts and outcomes

Please provide relevant information about the impact of implementation of Section 75 to end of March 2004. Information provided should be in relation to outputs and outcomes being achieved. Also clarify the outcomes which have impacted on the authority, in terms of efficiency or effectiveness, and outcomes for people in the nine categories.

This could include: details of existing policies changed to better deliver equality of opportunity; incorporation of the EQIA process into policy development; information about impact of new policy (better service provision, alternative service provision, accessibility to services, information gathering on users/non-users of services, satisfaction survey information); information on improved policy/services for the nine categories.

Prompt:

How is policy formulation being managed to take account of the need to mainstream the Section 75 duties?

Are all new or revised policies equality proofed by the authority? If so what processes are used? Is the 7 step EQIA process mainstreamed into policy processes?

Is there any evidence of how newly formulated policies, or existing policies changed as a result of impact assessment, are better delivering equality and/or good relations?

Has EQIA led to better policy making and service delivery? Please provide specific examples. These should indicate which Section 75 groups have benefited from policy changes and how.

What, at this stage, do you perceive to be the main outcomes from implementation of the statutory duties?

(Enter text below)

The Monthly Review meeting is the forum for identifying new or amended policies; this is chaired by the Chief Executive and attended by Directors and senior members of staff.

The quarterly Steering Group is the main arena for monitoring and taking forward the commitments made in the approved Equality Scheme. Progress against the commitments and indicative timetable are reported on at this meeting.

Papers presented to the Board for approval come with the written assurance that equality has been considered.

A significant output has been the presentation-based, short information seminar for 'Laganside' employers covering responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act. Over 400 organisations from the business, community and voluntary sectors based within the 'Laganside Local Community area' an area encompassing the 14 Wards in and surrounding the Laganside designated area, were invited to the event. Nearly forty organisations were represented at the event at which the Equality Commission, Disability Action and the Employers Forum on Disability (NI) made presentations. Attendees also received a complimentary copy of the Employers' Forum on Disability (NI) video, '*enabled*', courtesy of Laganside Corporation. Oral feedback from the event has been very positive.

Other outputs are set out in the Good Relations section of this report.

Section 12: Additional comments on Mainstreaming

The main aim of the statutory duties is to help to mainstream equality of opportunity and good relations considerations into the functions of the authority, leading to better policies and service delivery.

Whilst many of the questions in the previous sections of this template relate to actions on mainstreaming of Section 75 duties we would be grateful if you could provide any additional information/comment which you think may be relevant to your report. You may wish to report here on your view of the:

- extent of mainstreaming of the duties within the authority
- benefits for the authority resulting from mainstreaming
- factors which have impeded mainstreaming
- plans for future effective mainstreaming of the duties.

(Enter text below)

Laganside Corporation is a small (24 members of staff), limited-life organisation which is mainstreaming equality by actions such as ensuring that equality is a standard item on the agenda at strategic meetings such as; the Laganside Corporation Board meeting, the Management meeting and the Monthly Review meeting.

The Corporation, since its inception, has always aimed to be pro-active and innovative in its approach to development issues and has pushed the boundaries by always asking 'what is the best way to do this?' instead of 'what is acceptable?' The Corporation is committed to the delivery of beneficial and sustainable regeneration. Throughout the period of this report the Corporation has made equality issues and the implementation of its approved Equality Scheme a priority in the planning and delivery of its objectives, recognising that equality is inherent to how the Corporation operates.

Because Laganside takes a holistic approach and endeavors to mainstream equality of opportunity and good relations considerations into its functions, trying to separate actions to individual S75 constituencies can then be a challenge.

Section 13: Concluding questions

This short questionnaire is included in the template to enable you to, provide an overall view of the effectiveness of the statutory duties, for your authority and for the Section 75 categories.

QUESTION A

Does the authority believe its work to date on implementing the statutory duties has produced positive benefits for the organisation? (Please tick) YES NO

The Corporation from its inception has endeavored to take a holistic approach to the regeneration of its designated area; Section 75 has confirmed that the Corporation's holistic approach has been appropriate.

If you answered yes to QUESTION A, please tick appropriate boxes below to what extent the duties have:

	Very noticeably	Noticeably	No real change
Increased awareness of equality issues in policy making			
Increased ability to ensure policies are designed and targeted to reflect equal opportunities objectives			
Increased awareness of good relations issues in policy making			
Increased ability to ensure policies are designed and targeted to reflect good relations objectives			
Increased awareness of equality issues in service delivery			
Increased ability to ensure services are designed and targeted			

to reflect Section 75 requirements			
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QUESTION B

Does the authority believe its work to date on implementing the statutory duties has produced positive benefits for groups within the Section 75 categories? (Please tick) YES ✓ NO ___

Laganside seeks to ensure that the designated area is a 'neutral' area where all groups will feel comfortable. In addition, events in which the Corporation is actively involved aim to be inclusive events in keeping with the neutral aspirations for the area.

If you answered yes to QUESTION B, please tick appropriate boxes below on what extent the authority's implementation of the statutory duties has increased equality of opportunity for

	Very noticeably	Noticeably	No real change
Persons of different religious belief			
Persons of different political opinion			
Persons of different racial groups			
Persons of different age			
Persons with different marital status			
Persons of different sexual orientation			
Men and women generally			
Persons with and without a disability			
Persons with and without dependents			

Many thanks, in advance, for reporting to the Commission on your implementation of the duties during 2003 – 4. Please ensure that your completed progress report is forwarded to the Commission

by 31 August 2004. This will enable us to produce and publish the overall progress report for the period in a timely way.

If a final signed off version of your report is not submitted by the closing date please ensure that the Commission receives a 'draft' report by that date.

Information in progress reports that do not meet the deadline date for submission will not be considered in the overall progress report for the year.