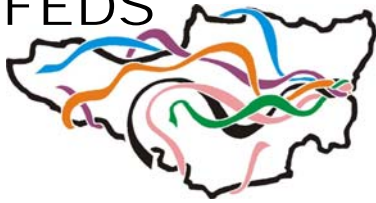


FEDS



## **Forum for Equality and Diversity in Somerset**

FEDS (the Forum for Equality and Diversity in Somerset) is a network of organisations interested in the diversity in our county and in equalities issues. Six strands of equality are brought together through FEDS; age, disability, race, faith, sexual orientation and gender, with a lead organisation representing each on the steering committee. Compass Disability Services are the lead organisation for disability and are also managing the project for two years.

FEDS' aim is to promote equality and diversity and provide consultation and monitoring support to public, business and voluntary sector bodies. The funding is supplied by the Somerset Strategic Partnership and by Somerset County Council.

Membership to the forum is open to any organisation or professional body with an interest in equality.

The FEDS focus over recent months has definitely been on 'One Somerset'. This large event, exploring and promoting the diversity of our communities in Somerset, was held at Taunton Racecourse on 27 April 2007.

The One Somerset stage was hosted by poet Matt Harvey, who, with his sensitively written poems on life, linked together acts as diverse as the Taunton Deane Male Voice Choir, Shallal, a dance theatre for people with learning disabilities, and bands originating from many different cultures. Over 30 workshops raised awareness of issues such as gender or disability equality and introduced fun activities such as playing the Balaphon, a handmade wooden xylophone from Cameroon, and Egyptian belly dancing. An information fair held stands promoting over 100 different organisations or issues, and a small craft fair enabled local artists to sell African paintings, glass jewellery and polish pottery.

The day was hailed a great success and there are hopes, providing sufficient funding can be found, to make this an annual or bi-annual event.

For more information on membership or anything concerning FEDS please contact Alison Mawhood, FEDS Development Worker on 0844 9842828 or [Alison@compassdisability.org.uk](mailto:Alison@compassdisability.org.uk)