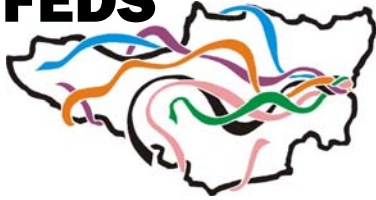


FEDS**Forum for Equality and Diversity in Somerset****FEDS FOCUS October 2007**

NEW! Forum website

The Forum for Equality and Diversity in Somerset, established as a network to promote Equality and Diversity in the community of Somerset and provide consultation, monitoring and facilitation support to public, business and voluntary sector bodies, has now launched its website (www.feds.org.uk). The site explains the values, aims and objectives of FEDS, and the way organisations can be involved. It gives details of its current work and links to the websites of the strand representatives. We would like to invite any equalities organisation to place a link on their website, and if anyone has comments about the site, or wishes to be placed on as a link, please let Nat Stephens know (nats@compassdisability.org.uk).

Community Cohesion Forum

The first meeting of the Community Cohesion Forum took place on 11 September and brought together representatives of equalities organisations in the voluntary sector and the statutory sector and members of the Somerset Strategic Partnership. The voluntary sector representation covers the six equalities strands of race, faith, age, disability, gender and sexual orientation, whilst statutory sector representation is from the Councils, the police service and the health sector. The purpose of the Forum is to champion and promote cohesion throughout the Somerset Strategic Partnership's activity. The initial meeting considered and agreed the Terms of Reference for the Forum and discussed the Community Cohesion Strategy, which is currently in draft form. Phil Dolan, Chief Executive of South Somerset District Council and Equalities Champion for the Somerset Strategic Partnership commended the document for giving a clear and concise view of a cohesive community.

The strategy will be launched at a high profile event in early November, when the Forum is hoping to gain the support of senior members of staff, councillors, MPs, businessmen etc. Richard Pitman of Compass Disability Services, voted in as Chair of the Forum at its first meeting, believes that this support is crucial to ensuring that equalities is imbedded in everything that takes place in Somerset and that a cohesive community becomes a reality. Community Cohesion lies at the heart of what makes a safe and strong community and is essential to the quality of life of local people.

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