

# St Albans City and District Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2025 – 2030



**Welcome Diversity**

**Challenge Inequality**

**Grow Together**



**St Albans**  
City & District Council



St Albans District  
Equality, Diversity and  
Inclusion Partnership







# Foreword

**W**e are proud to introduce this updated Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy as a joint effort led by the EDI Partnership. The strategy embodies our commitment to making St Albans District a community where everyone feels they belong, and where every person, regardless of background, ability, or circumstance, can thrive and contribute. Through the collective efforts of local organisations, community groups, and stakeholders, we've helped to create a vision that reflects our diverse community and its values of inclusivity, respect, and shared growth.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Partnership plays a pivotal role in shaping this vision. By bringing together partners across the community, from local services and advocacy groups, we are better equipped to understand emerging issues, share resources, and implement meaningful actions. This strategy is an important step in ensuring that equality, diversity, and inclusion are at the heart of everything we do, whether that's promoting accessible services, tackling inequality, or empowering underrepresented groups.

Together, we believe that everyone has a role in making our district a better place to live, work, and grow. We are committed to ensuring that voices from all parts of our community are heard, respected, and represented.



**Lisa Reiner and Stephen Craker**

Partnership Development Lead, Citizens Advice St Albans District  
Chief Executive, Communities 1<sup>st</sup>  
Co-Chairs of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Partnership

**T**olerance, kindness, friendliness, and a sense of belonging are what turn a locality into a community. Our vision is a place where everyone feels welcome and where people of all ages, all ethnicities, all backgrounds, and all abilities have the opportunity to live happy, confident and independent lives. We know we have a local population that wants these things too, and that many people are willing to play their part to make things better for everyone. Our action plan will help support everyone to do this.

The Council plays a key role in community leadership and place-shaping. We have developed this strategy because we believe equality, diversity and inclusion should be central to the delivery of our local services. We want to ensure our Council is a welcoming and accessible place where people have a voice, are listened to and get the quality services they expect and deserve.

Strong local partnerships are a feature of the way agencies work together in St Albans District. We hope that this strategy, which has been developed with participation from many of our partners, will help us as we work to transform more of our services.



**Amanda Foley**

Chief Executive, St Albans City and District Council

# Introduction

This strategy has been developed by St Albans City and District Council and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Partnership to help understand the local challenges, what changes our community wants to see, and how we can make those changes.

The Equality Act 2010 is a law that protects everyone from discrimination. It means that discrimination or unfair treatment based on certain personal characteristics is against the law.

The Equality Act applies to discrimination based on these protected characteristics:



Age



Race



Disability



Religion or belief



Gender reassignment



Sex



Marriage and civil partnership



Sexual orientation



Pregnancy and maternity

The Act also means that public bodies such as councils have to prevent discrimination. **This is called the Public Sector Equality Duty.**

Councils must consider the needs of people with protected characteristics, when planning or carrying out their public duties or services.

The Council must make sure we do the best we can to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- improve equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
- support people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it to get along together.

## St Albans City and District Council's Equality Policy

The policy describes the Council's promise to act fairly and tackle discrimination and harassment, understanding the importance of the diversity of St Albans District and its people. It sets out how you can expect to be treated as a customer (including as a resident, stakeholder, business or organisation) using our services, as a business or organisation working with us, and as a Council employee.

The Equality Policy sits alongside this Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.





“Feeling truly welcome and represented would encourage me to engage more actively with the community and contribute to making it an even better place to live.”

Resident



# Strategy Development

In 2022 we published the 2022-24 Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for St Albans City and District Council. Partners, community groups, residents, and staff were widely consulted on this strategy. This document updates the strategy for the period 2025-30.

We spoke to the groups that contributed to the original strategy and to others. We asked them how well they thought we had delivered on our previous commitments and what more they felt we could do to make the District a fairer and more inclusive place to live. The Daylight Club, a group for people with disabilities visited us at the Council and told us what they needed to be able to participate fully in the community.

We also carried out a survey – District residents were invited to respond to the consultation on our website or by telephone or paper.

The Faith and Culture Enterprise (FACE), St Albans District Access Forum (SADAF) and Communities 1st hosted sessions on the strategy to help us reach as many people as possible.

We went to community events including Herts Pride and St Albans Festival where we talked to visitors about the strategy and the work of the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Partnership.

St Albans City and District Council employees also contributed their views and ideas to this strategy.

We have listened to all the comments and used them to make this strategy. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Partnership will continue to provide feedback to help shape future plans.

“We would like a place where you can be yourself, without judgment.”

St Albans Ansar Scouts









# What difference have we made so far?

We looked at the action plan from the 2022-24 strategy and asked residents, partners, community groups and staff what they felt had been successful in 2022-24.

- ✓ We redesigned our Equality Impact Assessments, which are checks to ensure that the decisions we make do not negatively affect different groups of people. We made the process clearer and ran training sessions for staff. We have shared our new practice with colleagues in our neighbouring districts to assist them with their processes.
- ✓ The 2024 Windrush Festival was held alongside the Alban Day Festival featuring participation from Black-led churches in the procession. This event was a partnership between Active Lifestyles, The Faith and Culture Enterprise (FACE), St Albans Cathedral and St Albans City and District Council.
- ✓ The Council hosted training and awareness sessions for staff and community partners on vision loss, mental health, dementia, neurodiversity, disability, hearing loss, introduction to BSL and understanding Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.
- ✓ Staff and Community Diversity Champions Scheme. 20 staff and 13 community members have completed a Level 2 course in Equality and Diversity. The Champions use their knowledge and experience to bring suggestions for change to the Council. They also support initiatives at Older Persons Day, Interfaith and Black History Month events and have advised on the new Equality Impact Assessments.
- ✓ Corporate Peer Challenge in 2023 identified that there is a positive approach to equalities, diversity and inclusion across the organisation with strong political engagement and that the creation of the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Partnership was an innovative approach to cementing the importance of EDI across the whole organisation and holding the council to account for its actions.
- ✓ NeuroSpace, a group for neurodivergent Council staff was set up as a safe space to discuss issues, share tips, support each other and make suggestions for improvements to the workplace.
- ✓ The Council and Everyone Active worked together to install a new Changing Places facility in Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre for use by visitors to Verulamium Park. It opened in June 2024.

**“Accessible, clean toilets are vital to people with disabilities so they are able to go out and take part in everyday activities.”**

St Albans District Access Forum



- ✓ We worked with St Albans District Access Forum, a group of residents with disabilities, carers and community organisations working to improve access in the District. They have helped to put in new disabled parking bays in the city centre, met with high street store owners to voice concerns about access and contributed to changes at the street events.
- ✓ The Council signed the Unison Anti-Racism Charter in October 2023, a commitment from our leaders to recognise the need and benefit in championing a racially diverse workforce and challenge racism internally and externally wherever it arises in relation to the organisation.
- ✓ The major street events (Alban Festival, the Feastival and Christmas Cracker) implemented British Sign Language interpreted performances, accessibility viewing areas and safe zones to increase inclusion.
- ✓ St Albans Faith and Culture Enterprise has grown to over 75 members working together to raise awareness, increase tolerance and create opportunities to work in partnership to promote community cohesion. They have delivered an annual interfaith event and facilitated events aimed at fostering good relations between the police and young people.
- ✓ Local community and faith groups co-curated the following exhibitions with St Albans Museums: St Albans Masorti Synagogue on Arriving & Belonging: Stories from the St Albans Jewish Community; Trestle Theatre Company on All About Us, an exhibition celebrating the creativity and resilience of the learning disabled community, and Active Lifestyles and Leeannas Wish on Becoming Us, the lives of African Caribbeans in St Albans.



# What we know about St Albans District

The health of people in St Albans District is generally better than the England average. St Albans is one of the **20%** least deprived districts / unitary authorities in England.

The District overall ranks 306 out of 317 lower tier local authorities in England with rank 1 being the most deprived.

However, some areas in the District fall into the 2019 indices of multiple deprivation, including areas within the wards Batchwood (34), Sopwell (47), Cunningham (119), Colney Heath (134), Redbourn (138), and Harpenden East (170) (where 1 is the most deprived and 690 is the least deprived).

According to Department for Work and Pensions data from 2022-23, **8%** of children live in relative low-income families, **6%** live in absolute low-income families.

In 2021, **9.7%** of households in St Albans District were estimated to be in fuel poverty (Sub-regional fuel poverty data 2021).

At 2020-22, life expectancy at birth was 81.6 for males, 85.2 for females. The national figure is 78.9 years for males, 82.8 years for females (Life expectancy for local areas in England between 2020 to 2022).

**26.5%** of St Albans District residents are from an ethnic minority, that is, not White British.

**White / English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish or British 73.5%**

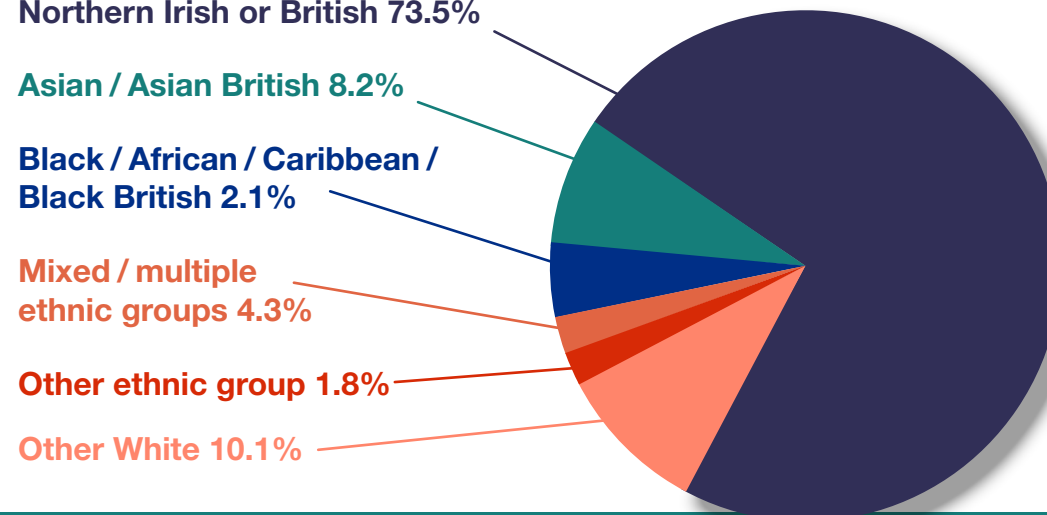
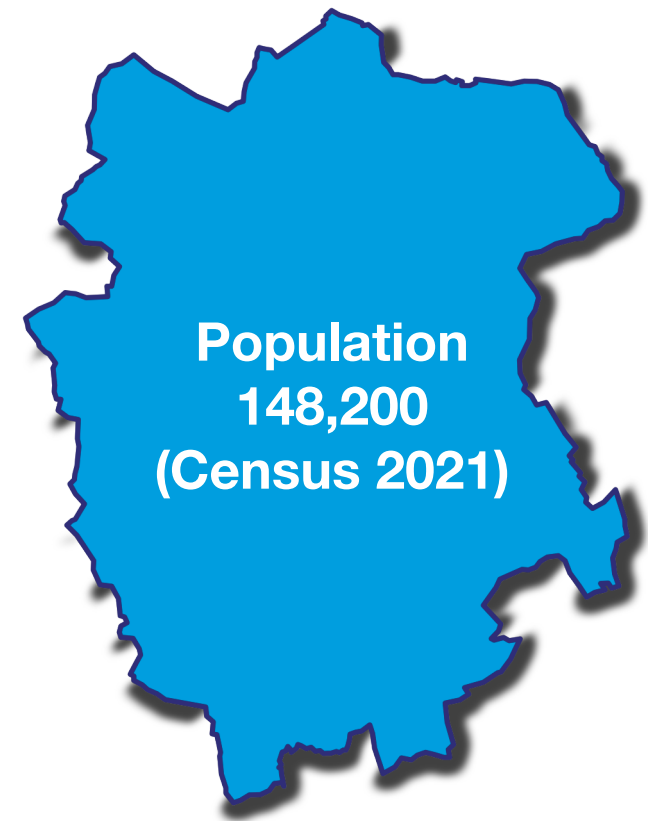
**Asian / Asian British 8.2%**

**Black / African / Caribbean / Black British 2.1%**

**Mixed / multiple ethnic groups 4.3%**

**Other ethnic group 1.8%**

**Other White 10.1%**





In 2021 **13.4%** of St Albans residents had a long-term illness or disability (St Albans District Census Data 2021). In the whole of England, **17.7%** of the population had a disability according to the 2021 national Census figures.

### Age of residents from the 2021 Census

Age (years)	% in the District
65 and over	17.2%
16 - 64	61.1%
Children 15 and under	21.6%

In 2021, **2.2%** of residents aged 16 and over recorded their sexual orientation as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual at the Census. However, **6.61%** of residents did not answer this question.

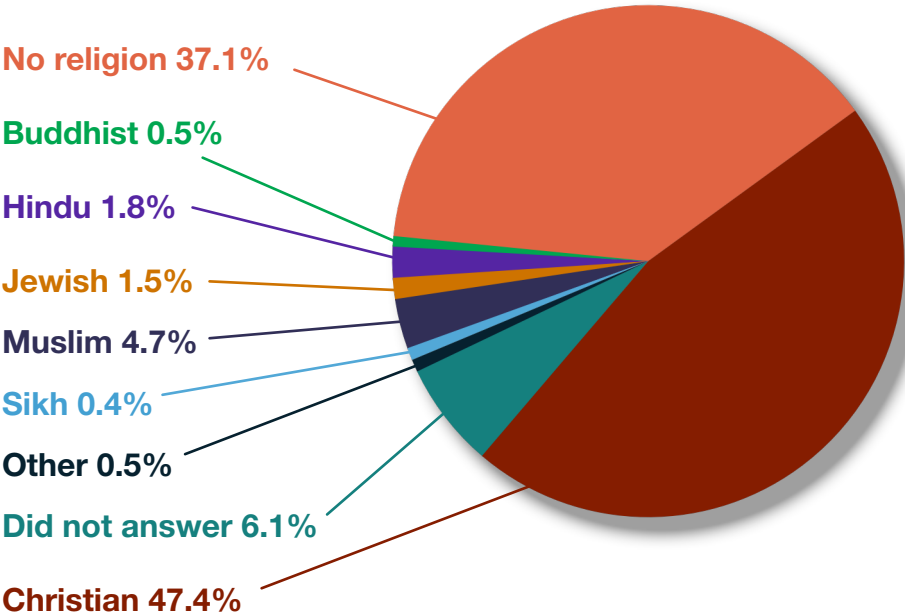
4,956 households in the District have council tenancies; 47 residents are in sheltered housing; 1,200 are housing association tenants; 190 people live in temporary accommodation (as of October 2024).

32 individuals (5 families) have been resettled in the district through formal government Afghan resettlement programmes (ARAP / ACRS).

Since 2022, 213 St Albans residents have hosted 469 people from Ukraine.

There are approximately 2,000 Hong Kong British Nationals (Overseas) in the District as of 2024 (source: Hong Kong Hub, The East of England Local Government Association’s Strategic Migration Partnership).

### Religious make-up of the District



“We need to find out if people from different cultural backgrounds are accessing services and if not, why not.”

Faith and Culture Enterprise (FACE)

# Our Strategy

In 2022 we agreed our approach. In 2025 we have updated these commitments. Having listened to what people told us:

## We will:

- ✓ Make equality, diversity and inclusion central in our approach to everything we do.
- ✓ Work together with local groups and organisations to make sure we have a fair and collaborative approach to help local people.
- ✓ Treat all our customers (including residents, stakeholders, businesses and organisations) fairly and make sure those who need the most help get the support they need.
- ✓ Help people who are lonely and want help to get the support they need.
- ✓ Challenge racism and discrimination in whatever form it shows itself.
- ✓ Listen to residents, staff and partners and involve them in our plans so that everyone is part of making our District a good place to live, work, study and visit.



"If St Albans was more inclusive, I would feel better about being me."

Herts Pride



## Housing, safety, community and wellbeing

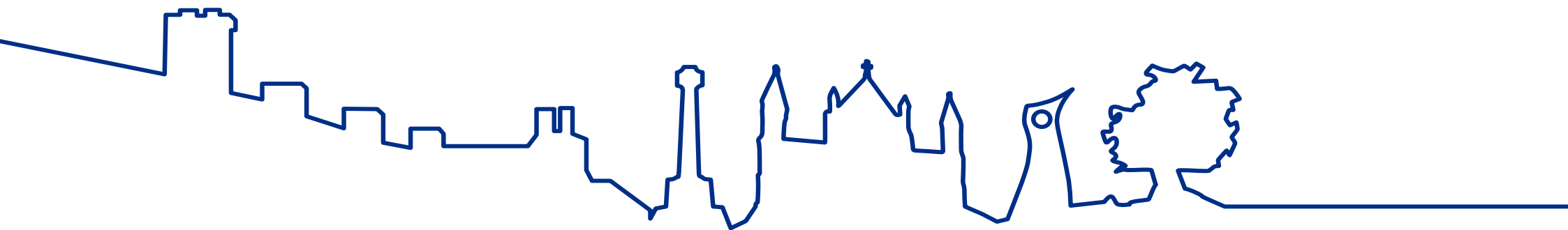
### We will:

- Continue to provide homes for social rent to eligible people and build more homes either ourselves, or with partners.
- Make sure that we treat tenants with fairness, courtesy and respect in all of our interactions.
- Listen to and respond to tenants' concerns and improve resident engagement.
- Support people who are experiencing poverty to access help and advice.
- Ensure that the grants we provide to local groups target the people who need the most support.
- Work with the Police to help make the District a safe place for everyone.
- Listen to young people to understand what we can do to support them to continue to live, work and study in the District if they wish to.

## Public Areas

### We will:

- Make sure that the District's leisure and cultural centres are accessible and affordable and that our parks and green spaces are welcoming and safe places for everyone to enjoy.
- Remain committed to ensuring that disabled motorists have access to parking close to town centres and places of interest and have easy access to other parking services.
- Work with Hertfordshire County Council to make changes so that if you have a disability you can enjoy the District's public spaces.
- Work with partners and businesses to ensure provision for accessible toilet facilities in the district.
- Work with local groups to make sure events held on district council land are accessible and that people from all different backgrounds can feel welcome and take part.



## Delivering an excellent service

### We will:

- Give our staff and councillors equality, diversity and inclusion training and invite key contractors and suppliers to train alongside us so they can also deliver inclusive informed services.
- Check our job advertisements, application forms and the way we treat our staff to see if we are doing the best to encourage people from all different backgrounds to work for us and thrive in the workplace.
- Share what we know about equality and diversity with local businesses. This will help them to be more inclusive too.
- Make sure that when we are deciding which suppliers to use, we prioritise high standards in equality, diversity and inclusion.

“I will implement the learning from the policy and training into all aspects of my work, and regularly check my practice to ensure I do not become complacent.”

St Albans City and District Council Employee

## Communication and Accessibility

### We will:

- Make sure the way we present our services on the Council website, in our printed documents and in our communications with our customers (residents, stakeholders, businesses or organisations) is accessible and inclusive.
- Offer help to people to learn to use computers or mobile phones for Council services if they do not already know how or need some more help.
- Write to, telephone or meet face to face with people who cannot use a computer or mobile phone.
- Improve ways that our customers can feedback to us on our services to suggest improvements or changes.
- Ensure our council strategies have Equality, Diversity and Inclusion as an important part, including:
  - Council Plan
  - Customer Engagement
  - Procurement
  - Homelessness
  - Housing
  - Sustainability
  - Communications
  - Digital Transformation
  - Resident Engagement
  - Domestic Abuse
  - Climate and Sustainability





“If St Albans was more inclusive, we would be more independent, go out more and help other people.”

The Daylight Club



# How do we make sure we are doing what we say?

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## **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Partnership Group.**

This group oversees the delivery of the strategy. The group includes:

- Community Partners including Communities 1st and Citizen Advice St Albans.
- Representatives from St Albans District Access Forum (SADAF) and Faith and Culture Enterprise (FACE).
- Staff and Community Diversity Champions – these are residents and those working or studying in the District who help make St Albans City and District a fairer, more diverse and inclusive place.
- District and Parish Councillors.
- School and college representatives.
- Local businesses representative.

## **Equality impact assessments**

For Council services, we carry out a check called an Equality Impact Assessment whenever we plan a new service or project or if we write a new policy. If these checks show what we are planning might make the service worse for people with protected characteristics we will look at what we need to change.

## **Training**

We provide training for our staff and councillors in equality, diversity and inclusion-related matters. We invite community groups that work with us, and our contractors, to join the training. We also have regular awareness sessions on different topics throughout the year.

## **Staff and community diversity champions**

We invite staff and members of the community to join our scheme and involve them in delivering our action plan and supporting colleagues.

## **Monitoring and performance**

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Partnership Group oversees the delivery of the strategy and reports back to the Housing and Inclusion Committee.

The Strategy, Policy and Transformation Directorate leads on the strategy implementation overall and specific targets are added to the team's action plans so that everyone knows what they are expected to do.

We publish information on our website to update everyone on progress made.



We will also use the LGA's Diverse by Design guide to help us check whether we are making a difference ([www.local.gov.uk/diverse-design-15-key-elements](http://www.local.gov.uk/diverse-design-15-key-elements)).

## Putting words into actions

The Equality Diversity and Inclusion Partnership looks at the overall commitments made in the strategy and identifies priorities for each year. The Partnership will then hold focus groups with residents, partners and staff to find out more about how they can collectively approach the priorities and make changes. An annual Action Plan will be produced. The Partnership will continue to analyse the extensive feedback received from St Albans City and District Council residents, community members and staff to make sure that voices are heard and wherever possible changes can be made to improve equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging for all.

“Inclusivity fosters an environment where everyone feels valued, respected, and heard, regardless of their background or identity. I would feel a greater sense of belonging and pride in my community.”

Resident





*If St Albans was more inclusive, I would enjoy meeting and socialising with a more diverse group of people. This would enrich my life.*



*I want a safer, fairer, more decent and kinder place for all communities and those seeking sanctuary as refugees.*





“

*We would like a campaign in the local area to help tackle homophobia, biphobia and transphobia and a service for confidential reporting of intolerance.*



“

*Feeling truly welcome and represented would encourage me to engage more actively with the community and contribute to making it an even better place to live.*



# Alternative Formats

If you require this document in an alternative language or style, please contact us on 01727 819340 or email [equality@stalbands.gov.uk](mailto:equality@stalbands.gov.uk)

## English

This document is called the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. It is about what St Albans City and District Council will do to make sure that the services we offer are accessible and everyone living, working and studying in the District is treated fairly. If you would like this document in a different language or style please let us know.

## Arabic

عونتل او ؤاواسملا ؤي جي تارتسلا ققي ثوللا هذو يمس ت  
قني دم سل جم هل عفي س امب رملا قلعتي .لومشل او  
اهمدقي يتلا تامدخلا نا نم دكاتلل زئابلا تناس عطاق مو  
لماع ي قطنملا يف سرديو لمعوي شيعي نم لك ناو ؤحاتم  
ققي ثوللا قذو علع لوصحلا يف بغرت تنك اذا .لداع لكشب  
كلذب انرابخا ي جري ف ،فلتخم بولساب وا ؤغلب

## Bengali

এই নথিটি সমতা, বৈচিত্র্য এবং অন্তর্ভুক্ততা  
কৌশল (ইকুয়ালিটি, ডাইভারসিটি এন্ড  
ইনক্লুশন স্ট্র্যাটেজি) নামে পরিচিতি। এটি সিনেট  
অফিসিয়ালস সার্ভিস ও জেলা কাউন্সিল এ আমরা  
যদি পরামর্শগত সারবরাহ করি তা সকলের জন্য  
যাতে সহজলভ্য হয় এবং জেলা জুড়ে  
বসবাসকারী, কর্মরত ও অধ্যয়নরত  
প্রত্যেককে যাদের ন্যায়সংগতভাবে আচরণ  
করা হয় তা নিয়ে আলোচনা করে। আপনি যদি  
এই নথিটি অন্য কোনো ভাষায় বা ভিন্ন রূপে  
চান, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদের জানান।

## Cantonese

此文件稱為「平等、多元與共融策略」。聖奧爾本  
斯市及地區議會將會實行相關政策，確保我們提供  
的服務方便易用，同時每位在此地區生活、工作和  
學習的人士都可獲得公平待遇。如果您想以其他語  
言或格式取得此文件，請隨時通知我們。

## Farsi

مېظنبرك ليا .دراد كاله فتنكش نه غنلة !يرباري ؤتارتسلا دلس ليا  
آه داد دماخ كاجلا زلابفا تلس مةظلك نه رمش وارش مة «تسا ورا»  
ي سرتسد فبا ه كيمد ي مئارا اك مة «ي تاكذ مة» دنش فصاحل اليكظا  
نه دله «ي را» !دله «ي قذلز مةظلك رد مة» ي دارلا مكم اب نه تسا

مې دلس ليا ديمانيك رها .دنشه ي راتر مېا [صلك دله] ي فصيحه  
ديمد غ افلا اك مې !ظف !دشاب ي رقيد «بسه اي لاي

## Hindi

इस दस्तावेज को समानता, विविधता और समावेश  
रणनीति कहा जाता है। यह इस बारे में है कि सेंट  
एलबंस सिटी और डिसिटरिकिट काउंसिल यह  
सुनिश्चित करने के लिए क्या करेगी कि हम जो सेवाएँ  
प्रदान करते हैं वे सुलभ हों और ज़िले में रहने, काम  
करने और पढ़ने वाले सभी लोगों के साथ उचित  
व्यवहार किया जाए। यदि आप इस दस्तावेज को किसी  
अन्य भाषा या शैली में चाहते हैं तो कृपया हमें बताएं।

## Polish

Niniejszy dokument to Strategia Równości,  
Różnorodności i Włączenia. Odnosi się on do  
postępowania Rady Miasta i Dzielnicy St  
Albans, które zapewni dostępność  
oferowanych przez nas usług oraz  
spóławiedliwych traktowanie wszystkich osób  
mieszkających, pracujących i uczących się w  
naszej dzielnicy. Prosimy o kontakt w celu  
otrzymania niniejszego dokumentu w innym  
języku lub w innej formie.

## Romanian

Acest document se numeste Strategia de  
Egalitate, Diversitate si Incluziune. Prezinta ce  
actiuni vor intreprinde Primaria Locala si  
Consiliul Judetean St Albans pentru a se  
asigura ca serviciile pe care le oferim sunt  
accesibile, si ca toti cei care traiesc, lucreaza  
si studiaza in acest Judet, sunt tratati corect.  
Daca doriti acest document intr-o alta limba  
sau stil, va rugam sa ne anuntati.

## Ukrainian

Цей документ називається Стратегія  
рівності, різноманітності та інклюзивності.  
В документі йдеться про те, що саме рада  
міста та району Сент-Олбанс зробить, щоб  
забезпечити доступність послуг, які вони  
пропонують, і справедливе ставлення до  
всіх, хто живе, працює та навчається в  
цьому районі. Якщо вам потрібен цей  
документ іншою мовою чи стилем, будь  
ласка, повідомте нам.

## Urdu

هه لى اى قسرنهائى! ؤفان «ا وک زى واتسد سا  
روا عون ت ،تاواسم .ىلغى جى ؤى رفس لهنف «س»ى ا  
سا هى مة .ايگ اى دمان اک ىلمع تمکح ىک تىلومش  
شکرتس رو اى ثس زنبلا ثنى س مک مة ىم ىراب  
ايک ىئل ىک مئانپ ىنىقى وک تاب سا لسنوک  
لباق مو ىم ىتريک شىپ تامدخ وچ مة مک ىم ىرىک  
روا مئىرک مک ، ىلاو مئىر ىم علض روا ىم ىئاسر  
هتاس ىک صخش ره ىلاو مئىرک لصاح مىلعت  
وک زى واتسد سا پآ رگا .مہ اتاح اىک کولس مئانفصنم  
مارب وت ىم ىم ىتہاچ ىم زادن اى نابز فلتخم ىسک  
ىم ىئاتب ىم ىنابرم



**St Albans**  
City & District Council



St Albans District  
Equality, Diversity and  
Inclusion Partnership