

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

Good Relations Action Plan

2025-2030



Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission	3
3	Equality Scheme Commitments	4
4	What do we mean by Good Relations?.....	4
5	The Good Relations Action Plan 2025-2030 – Development and Public Consultation	5
6	Reviewing the Good Relations Action Plan 2025-2030.....	6

Annex A Good Relations Action Plan 2025 – 2030

Accessibility Statement

Any requests to receive this document in an alternative language or format should be sent to equality@niassembly.gov.uk

1. **Introduction**

- 1.1 This document sets out the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission's ("the Assembly Commission") commitment to Good Relations and provides the Good Relations Action Plan for the 2025 to 2030 period.
- 1.2 The Good Relations Action Plan 2025-2030 contains a number of actions about how the Assembly Commission will meet its obligations under Section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act, 1998 as described in the [Assembly Commission's Equality Scheme](#). The Good Relations Action Plan 2025-2030 also supports and contributes to the Assembly Commission's [Corporate Strategy 2023- 2028](#).
- 1.3 A public consultation exercise was undertaken from 11 November 2024 to 17 February 2025. All consultee responses were analysed and a 'Public Consultation Outcomes Report' [here](#) as produced in March 2025 which detailed the Assembly Commission's response to consultee comments.
- 1.4 The Good Relations Action Plan 2025-2030 was approved by the Assembly Commission's Senior Management Team (SMT) in May 2025, and by the Assembly Commission in June 2025.

2. **The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission**

- 2.1 The Assembly Commission is the corporate body of the Northern Ireland Assembly. It consists of a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) from each of the five main parties, plus the Speaker of the House who acts as Chairperson, and its role is to oversee the organisation and to provide services, structures and property in order for the Assembly to function.
- 2.2 The Northern Ireland Assembly employs staff to support its work. The organisation consists of five directorates; Corporate Services, Legal, Governance and Research Services, Parliamentary Services and a Corporate Support Unit.

3. Equality Scheme Commitments

- 3.1 Under Section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Assembly Commission has a statutory duty to ‘have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group’.
- 3.2 The Assembly Commission’s Equality Scheme is both a statement of its arrangements for fulfilling the Section 75 statutory duties and a plan for their implementation.
- 3.3 This Good Relations Action Plan 2025-30 sets out how the Assembly Commission proposes to fulfil the Good Relations duty and its Equality Scheme commitments in relation to its functions.

4. What do we mean by Good Relations?

- 4.1 Section 75 of the 1998 Act requires all public authorities designated for the purposes of the Act, including the Assembly Commission, to comply with two statutory duties. The first duty requires public authorities in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between the nine ‘equality categories’¹.
- 4.2 The second duty, requires that public authorities in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different: -
- religious belief;
 - political opinion; or
 - racial group.
- 4.3 Whilst Section 75 of the 1998 Act does not define ‘good relations’, on 10 December 2009, the Assembly Commission approved it’s Good Relations commitment and stated:

¹ [Northern Ireland Act 1998](#)

“The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission is committed to the promotion of good relations between persons of differing religious belief, political opinion or racial group and is committed to challenging sectarianism and racism.”² This commitment was made in the context of the Assembly Commission further stating that it will aim to ensure that the entire community can have full and fair access to, and participate in, the operations of the Northern Ireland Assembly.

5. The Good Relations Action Plan 2025-2030 – Development and Public Consultation

- 5.1 In phase one of developing the draft Good Relations Action Plan 2025-2030, desk top research was undertaken by the Assembly Commission’s Equality Unit. Heads of Business from across the Assembly Commission’s Directorates, who were responsible for the delivery of the Good Relations Action Plan 2022-2025, were also asked to complete a number of surveys in relation to the 2022-2025 action plan’s operation, implementation and impact. Further questions were asked in relation to the identification of new sources of equality and good relations data. This data was analysed and informed development of the Good Relations Action Plan 2025-2030.
- 5.2 Phase two of the consultation involved seeking internal feedback from staff via the staff Trade Union, NIPSA, and as part of this phase, a survey was also issued to members of [The Executive Office \(TEO\) sponsored Race Equality sub-group](#), who are a representative panel for minority ethnic communities that supports implementation of the TEO Racial Equality Strategy. All responses were analysed and helped to further inform the Good Relations Action Plan 2025-2030.
- 5.3 Phase 3 was a 12-week public consultation on the Good Relations Action Plan 2025-2030 which was undertaken from 11 November 2024 to 17 February 2025. The public consultation used a range of methods including

² [Assembly Commission Minutes of Proceedings 10 December 2009](#)

face to face meetings, emails to consultees, press advertisements, a web-based survey, emails to staff and Twitter and Facebook posts.

- 5.4 All consultee responses were analysed and a 'Public Consultation Outcomes Report' was produced in March 2025 which also detailed the Assembly Commission's response to consultee comments. As noted above, the Good Relations Action Plan 2025-2030 was approved by the Assembly Commission's SMT in April 2025, and by the Assembly Commission in June 2025.

6. Reviewing the Good Relations Action Plan 2025-2030

- 6.1 Progress on the implementation of the Good Relations Action Plan 2025-2030 will be monitored on a six-monthly basis and reported to SMT. Six-monthly monitoring progress updates will be published on the Assembly website. As the Good Relations Action Plan 2025-2030 is a 'living' document, opportunities to amend the plan, should this be necessary, will be available during each six-monthly monitoring cycle.
- 6.2 Each year progress made on the implementation of the Good Relations Action Plan 2025-2030 will be included in the [Assembly Commission's Annual Equality Progress Report](#), which will be submitted to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and published on the Assembly website.
- 6.3 The actions contained within the Good Relations Action Plan 2025-2030 align with the Corporate Strategy and Corporate Plan. This ensures that equality and good relations continue to be addressed at a strategic level and are integrated throughout the organisation.

The Assembly Commission wish to thank everyone who helped in the development of the Good Relations Action Plan 2025-2030.

Good Relations Action Plan 2025 – 2030

Aim 1: Staff Training - Our staff will be a motivated, resilient and expert team

Corporate Strategy 2023-2028 High Level Objective: Promote a learning environment to support staff in their careers				
Action	Aims and Objectives	Measurable Outputs	Timescale	Lead Business Area
1. We will deliver training to all staff to ensure they understand requirements relating to Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and how it relates to their role.	We will ensure all staff receive mandatory training on Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.	Staff understand requirements related to Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and how it relates to their role.	Every 3 years.	Equality Unit and Learning and Development.
2. Training and support is provided to policy authors in relation to the requirements of equality and good relations policy screening.	Support and advice are provided by the Equality and Good Relations Unit to policy authors on an ongoing basis, as requested.	We will ensure Assembly Commission policies are screened as per the Assembly Commission's Equality Scheme and Equality Commission guidance.	Over the lifetime of the action plan.	Equality Unit and Learning and Development.

Corporate Strategy 2023-2028 High Level Objective: Promote a learning environment to support staff in their careers				
Action	Aims and Objectives	Measurable Outputs	Timescale	Lead Business Area
	Guidance and information on policy screening for staff is provided on the Assembly Commission's intranet.	Guidance and information is available on the Assembly Commission's intranet.		
	Quarterly Screening Reports are published on the Assembly website.	Screening reports are collected and published each quarter on the Assembly website.		
3. Welcome training is provided to the Visitor Experience Team.	We will ensure the Visitor Experience Team receives 'World Host' training.	The Visitor Experience Team will be trained in 'World Host' training which relates to the delivery of excellent customer service.	World Host training to be completed by the Visitor Experience Team in their first year of employment.	Public Engagement.

Aim 2: Participation, dialogue and engagement -The public will understand and value the role of the Assembly and be engaged in its work

Corporate Strategy 2023-2028 High Level Objectives:				
1. Develop and implement a public engagement strategy 2. Create more opportunities to engage with Committees				
Action	Aims and Objectives	Measurable Outputs	Timescale	Lead Business Area
4. Establish a minority ethnic stakeholder group.	Work with partners to establish an ethnic minority stakeholder group.	Ethnic Minority Stakeholder Group Formed.	2026.	Public Engagement.
	Provide support and resources to the stakeholder group.	Evaluation of the effectiveness of the stakeholder group.		
5. Hold a Minority Ethnic Parliament as part of a series of citizen parliaments.	To ensure those who identify as being part of an Ethnic Minority Community have an opportunity to have their voices heard.	Positive feedback from attendees.	2026.	Public Engagement.
	Provide support and resources to the Minority Ethnic Parliament.	Seek representation from different ethnic backgrounds, ages, genders and socio-economic status.		
6. Create Information Packs for minority	To create an Information Pack for	An information pack will be co-designed with	2029. To be carried out in consultation with	Public Engagement.

Corporate Strategy 2023-2028 High Level Objectives:

1. Develop and implement a public engagement strategy
2. Create more opportunities to engage with Committees

Action	Aims and Objectives	Measurable Outputs	Timescale	Lead Business Area
ethnic residents, illustrating how the Assembly and Committees work to encourage engagement.	minority ethnic residents, illustrating how the Assembly and Assembly Committees work and how to engage.	minority ethnic groups to increase understanding of the work of the Assembly and Assembly Committees and how to participate.	Minority Ethnic Stakeholder group.	
7. Host events in support of Good Relations.	We will host events to help build relationships with communities and create effective opportunities for engagement.	Events will be held on an annual basis.	Ongoing over the lifetime of the action plan.	Public Engagement.

Aim 3: Accessibility and Communication - The public will understand and value the role of the Assembly and be engaged in its work

Corporate Strategy 2023-2028 High Level Objectives:				
1. Make the work of the Assembly more accessible 2. Develop and implement a strategy for communicating the impact of the Assembly				
Action	Aims and Objectives	Measurable Outputs	Timescale	Lead Business Area
8. Continually improve accessibility of our website and digital offerings.	Establish, with relevant Business areas, which pages on the Assembly website should be made accessible in various languages. E.g. 'How to visit Parliament Buildings', 'How to book a tour', 'How to keep up with Assembly proceedings' etc.	Agree a priority list of website pages with relevant business areas and produce a set of recommendations based on findings, capability and capacity.	January 2026.	Communications Office with relevant business areas.
	Direct website users to how they can use automatic text translation tools with the caveat that the Assembly Commission cannot guarantee the accuracy of translation.	Investigate provision of text translation in non-English as part of the ongoing website redevelopment project and produce a report of findings and recommendations.	Scoping requirement 2025, possible delivery dependent on capability offering, January 2027.	
9. Monitor feedback from the visitor experience in	The Visitor Survey is mainstreamed across services which interface	A Visitor Survey to be developed and platformed on a mobile	2025-2026.	RaISe has responsibility for the

Corporate Strategy 2023-2028 High Level Objectives:				
1. Make the work of the Assembly more accessible 2. Develop and implement a strategy for communicating the impact of the Assembly				
Action	Aims and Objectives	Measurable Outputs	Timescale	Lead Business Area
Parliament Buildings with a focus on customer service, public facilities and accessibility to Assembly business.	with the public in order to collect data to inform access and service provision.	device(s) for completion by visitors to Parliament Buildings.		analysis of survey responses. Public Engagement forward any issues raised to relevant business area.
10. Develop and implement a strategy for communicating the impact of the Assembly to Northern Ireland society promoting the advantages of community harmony delivered by a functioning representative Assembly.	Northern Ireland Assembly Commission imagery will strive to reflect different ethnic identities. Legislation or committee hearings with particular focus on community relations will be highlighted in social media and promoted to relevant communities.	Outputs will be audited to reflect aims and objectives.	Over the lifetime of the action plan.	Communications Office.

Aim 4: Recruitment and workforce monitoring - Our systems and facilities will be modern, secure and efficient

Corporate Strategy 2023-2028 High Level Objective: Deliver the corporate systems review project				
Action	Aims and Objectives	Measurable Outputs	Timescale	Lead Business Area
11. We will continue to review and analyse applicant and employee Equality Monitoring data in relation to the Northern Ireland economically active population.	We will monitor recently added sub categories in our recruitment monitoring against economically active data, to understand the breakdown of job applicants and Assembly Commission staff by community background, ethnic group and country of birth.	In May of each year, report on monitoring data against 2021 Census data.	May each year.	HR Office.
		We will consider actions to address under representations identified.	Over the lifetime of the plan.	
		Three yearly Article 55 review completed.	Every 3 years.	

Monitoring and Reporting

Corporate Strategy 2023-2028 High Level Objective: Ensure decisions are taken at the appropriate level				
Action	Aims and Objectives	Measurable Outputs	Timescale	Lead Business Area
12. Report on progress to the Senior Management Team (SMT) every six months and the Assembly Commission every year.	Ensure that we deliver on the action plan targets.	Following consultation with business areas, six-monthly updates are prepared for SMT and annual updates for the Assembly Commission.	Every six months (June and December each year).	Equality Unit.
	Staff and the public are informed of progress.	Approved six-monthly updates are published on the Assembly website.		
13. A progress report is submitted yearly to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) via the Annual Equality Progress Report.	To inform the ECNI of action plan delivery and progress.	An annual equality progress report is prepared and submitted to the ECNI.	Annually (submission to the ECNI by 31 August each year).	Equality Unit.