

## What is Equality & Diversity

The goal of Equality and Diversity work is summed up in the following definition:

**“An equal society protects and promotes equal, real freedom and substantive opportunity to live in the ways people value and would choose, so that everyone can flourish.**

**An equal society recognises people’s different needs, situations and goals, and removes the barriers that limit what people can do and can be.”**

The Equalities Review’s Final Report, Fairness and Freedom:  
Communities and Local Government publications, February 2007

This definition recognises (taken again from national documents):

- That **Equality** (the first part) does not mean sameness, nor should an equal society try to force everyone into the same mould. On the contrary, the pursuit of equality is about empowering people to live their dreams, to be themselves and to be different, if they wish. That the outcomes produced by public services are equitable for everyone even if the activity is different.
- That **Accessibility** (the second part) is required for participation. This requires: that different needs, situations and identities are understood. To ensure people have equal access to public services.

The definition captures four important aspects of the approach, which is reflected in the framework:

- **Opportunity:** whether everyone really has the same substantive freedom to flourish;
- **Choice:** what degree of choice and control an individual has in achieving the valued activity; and
- **Prevention:** combating discrimination (or some other barrier or process) that causes or contributes to a particular inequality
- **Celebration:** understanding that the diversity of the people of Milton Keynes contributes positive to the well-being, life and prosperity of the borough.