DISABILITY ACTION PLAN April 2024-March 2029

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Requests for alternative formats can be made to Warrenpoint Harbour Authority using the following contact information:

Name: Kieran Grant

Title: Finance Director/Equality Officer

Warrenpoint Port

Warrenpoint Harbour Authority

Town Dock Office

Warrenpoint

Newry

BT34 3JR

Tel: 028 41773381

Email: kgrant@warrenpointharbour.co.uk

Website www. warrenpoint.com

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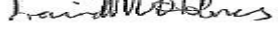
Foreword

We are pleased to present the Warrenpoint Harbour Authority (WHA) Disability Action Plan 2024-2029. The Plan outlines the actions we plan to undertake over the next five years. The updated disability Action Plan is part of our overall equality and good relations programme of activities in WHA.

This updated Disability Action Plan is an integral part of our overall approach to promoting equality of opportunity as a responsible employer and to our enhanced strategy on becoming a good corporate citizen through our “On Board” initiative.

Our starting point in developing the Disability Action Plan (DAP) 2024-2029 was to revisit what we said we would do in the previous Plan, to research good practice adopted by other organisations. We also consulted local and regional organisations representing those with a disability. The consultation responses received made a valuable contribution to the plan and we thank those who contributed.

Over the next five years we intend to enhance what we have achieved through the outgoing DAP. We recognise that we must build on the work we have initiated to promote positive attitudes and to encourage participation in public life for people with disabilities and we intend to do this in a way that makes a difference.

Chief Executive  Chair

David Holmes Dr Gerard O Hare

1.0 Introduction

Under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), WHA is required when carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need to:

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and

- encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

(i.e. 'the disability duties').

Under Section 49B of the DDA 1995, WHA is required to submit to the Equality Commission a **Disability Action Plan** showing how it proposes to fulfil these duties in relation to its functions.

As the Chairman and Chief Executive of WHA we are committed to effectively implementing the two disability duties as set out under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 and disability action plan.

We will put in place whatever resources are necessary to do so including people, time, and financial support.

Where it is right to do so, we will include actions from this plan in the corporate plans we develop for the Authority. We will also make sure we inform our staff of what is in our plan and will provide staff training to help them understand what they need to do in relation to the disability duties and implementation of the plan.

We will put everything in place in the organisation to make sure we implement good practice in relation to the Disability Duties. This includes making one person responsible overall for making sure we do what we say we are going to do in our Disability Action Plan.

We confirm our commitment to submitting an Annual Progress Report to the Equality Commission on the implementation of this plan as well as carrying out a five yearly review of this plan.

We will consult with disabled people on the implementation and review of the Disability Action Plan.

The Board has overall responsibility for the Action Plan however the day-to-day implementation and the delivery of the actions is the responsibility of Kieran Grant Finance Director. If you have questions, you can contact him at:

Email: kgrant@warrenpointharbour.co.uk

Address:
Warrenpoint Port
Warrenpoint Harbour Authority
Town Dock Office
Warrenpoint
Newry
BT34 3JR

Telephone number: 028 41773381

A copy of this plan and the Annual Progress Review is forwarded to the Equality Commission, our five-year review of this plan will be made available on our website.

Please note that this document is available on request in alternative formats including:

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- DAISY

2.0 Our Commitment

The Board and Senior Management team provide leadership and commitment to the implementation of the Disability Action Plan through setting policy and approval of resources. It is recognised that monitoring the implementation of the commitments in the disability action plan is an important aspect of our governance role in WHA. Ownership of the Disability Action Plan at a senior level occurs through review of implementation of the actions by the Board and Senior Management Team.

Overall responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the Disability Action plan rests with the Chief Executive and monitoring and reporting on the scheme rests with the Finance Director. A dedicated Human Resources post is now in place to implement the Disability Action Plan. A proactive approach is taken to developing employment policies and health and well-being interventions that reflect good practice for people with disabilities. Moreover, our outreach activities with the local community have grown considerably in the last five years and we provide wide ranging support to organisations representing people with disabilities.

Where feasible, the Senior Management Team integrate objectives and targets relating to the disability duties into the corporate and annual reporting plans and monitor progress in implementing actions. Management ensures the effective communication of the plan to staff. Training and guidance are provided to staff on the disability duties and the implementation of the plan through Human Resources.

Over the last five years we have provided training for 6 mental health champions. A wide range of interventions have been resourced to address

the mental health of the workforce such as: annual health checks, mental health advice and providing access to employee assistance programmes.

Through the corporate citizen initiative WHA has worked with local community groups and provided financial support and staff volunteers, accommodated visits to the Port for young people with disabilities and dedicated a placement opportunity for a young person with disability.

WHA is committed to continuing to adopt good practice in the development of employment policy and practice and in its corporate citizenship activities.

The Board and Senior Management Team remain committed to adopting a best practice approach to equality matters. This will continue to be a feature of the way the organisation does business. The investment in health and well-being of the workforce will continue to be supported and this will have positive impacts for those with a disability. WHA will also continue to collaborate with our external partners to raise awareness of the needs of people with disabilities.

3.0 Our Role and Functions

Warrenpoint Harbour Authority is the second largest Port in Northern Ireland and handles 12% of Northern Ireland's Port activity. Exports represent 45% of the Port's activity and 55% imports. The key commodities for the Port include timber, steel, animal feed, cement CO2 and RDF. The Port offers the full range of shipping services with well-established shipping agents and experienced Stevedores working directly from the Port's facilities. The Port's customer Seatruck offers a twice day roll on off ferry service to Heysham and offers a regular (lolo) container service. In 2022 the Port saw the return if a cruise ships with three vessel visits during the summer months.

The port also provides short-term warehousing and quayside storage facilities for a range of commodities.

As the Port is not owned by Government, it operates autonomously, with a degree of public accountability and a strong public interest ethos. The Port is required to operate in a commercial manner and is an independent statutory body governed by its own legislation.

Most of the policies and major strategic decisions taken by Warrenpoint Harbour are commercial in nature and/or relate to the legislative imperatives in terms of Health and Safety and/or environmental issues.

The areas where the Port can effect change in terms of the equality duties are as follows: employment and internal policies; the physical environment of the Port; the potential to promote equality and better relations in the general area of the Port with the local community and stakeholders.

Our Mission is as follows:

“Fulfilling customer expectation and effectively managing assets to enjoy profitable targeted business growth in a safe and sustainable way for our current and future stakeholders”.

Our Values

Safety First- We adhere to the highest health and safety standards to deliver a safe environment for customers and colleagues.

Complete Integrity- We are honest, open, and ethical in all our activities and interactions.

Our Team- we work as one team, flexible and willing to learn for the benefit of all.

Total Respect – We treat everyone as we would like to be treated ourselves.

You can access further information about what we do on our website:

www.warrenpoint.com

4.0 Public Life Positions

The Public life positions that the Authority is primarily involved in are:

- Board of Warrenpoint Harbour Authority
- Warrenpoint Harbour Authority – on board forums
- Port Users Association (agents, fishing vessels, recreational vessels)
- Port Health and Safety Committee the Authority also appoints its Executives to get involved in external organisations,

for example:

- Carlingford Lough Commission
- Warrenpoint Chamber of Commerce
- Newry Chamber of Commerce
- Foyle, Carlingford, and Irish Lights Commission

The Board is made up of the Chair four Non-Executive Directors appointed by the Minister for the Department for Infrastructure. Three of the Board members are Council Members from Newry Mourne and Down Council and there are two Executive Directors. The Board are committed to the highest standards of Corporate Governance.

The Board has overall responsibility for the strategic direction and oversight of the organisation. The senior management is responsible for the day-to-day management of the organisation.

Areas where WHA can influence participation by disabled people in public life include partnership working with Charities and School Employer Connections; participation by employees in the community and sporting initiatives; and through ongoing involvement with the organisations listed above and the local community.

6.0 Previous Measures

Outlined below are some of the key measures which WHA has taken to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life.

- Development of Mental Health initiatives and investment in training mental health first aiders
- Training for managers on Mental Health
- Proving health checks for all staff and making reasonable adjustments where required.
- Training on Section 75 including Disability Awareness for all new appointees.
- Screening HR polices including consideration of how the polices can contribute to the achievement of the two duties.
- Providing a placement opportunity for a young person with a disability.
- Sponsoring a wide range of local disabled charities through the community support fund.
- Developing and working from home policy to address the need for hybrid working post COVID and enhance access to roles for people with disabilities and for those with caring responsibilities.
- Organising visits to the Port for young people with disabilities
- Creating a digital platform for stakeholders that includes access for those with disabilities.

7.0 How We Will Monitor These Plans

Every year we will prepare a progress report and send it to the Equality Commission explaining what we have done, and if it applies, what we haven't done.

We will review these plans every year and make changes if they are needed. If the proposed changes are significant, we will consult with equality groupings to capture their views and act on those views if appropriate.

8.0 Distribution of this Plan

This plan will be forwarded to the Equality Commission made available on the Port website.

We will send our plans to all organisations and individuals on our consultation list when they are finalised.

The plan will also be made available to all staff and Board members.

www.warrenpoint.com

Action Plan Measures to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life 2024-2029.

TRAINING: Mandatory Action		
Measures	**Timescale**	**Performance Indicators/target**
We will join the Employers Forum for Disability and avail of the disability training. Guidance will be provided to Managers on Hidden Disability: Age related issues hearing, sight, mobility.	By March 2025	Staff training courses delivered and evaluated.
We will work with NOW group to obtain JAM Card Training for all Port control staff and staff with Mental health first-aid training	By March 2025	Laise with Now group to get on line training completed for staff and marketing material distributed throughout port
We will develop and deliver a module in the disability awareness training to include Autism awareness in line with Commitment three of the NI Autism Strategy	By March 2025	Autism module embedded in disability training programme
MENTAL HEALTH		
We will develop a better understanding of Mental Health to support Staff. This will include a “Mental Health Workshop” to include	By March 2026	Development and delivery of the seminar Evaluation of staff Review of role of Mental Health First Aiders.

awareness, prevention and finding support. This will be supported through the trained Mental health first aiders.		
Measure	**Timescale**	**Performance Indicators/target**
HEALTH AND WELL-BEING		
Ensure effective Health and Wellbeing policies including Menopause and Domestic Abuse. Given that over 80% of women experience menopause symptoms and some experience symptoms to a level that can be classed as a disability.,	March 2026	Menopause policy implemented. Policy will be reviewed by March 2026
Domestic abuse and disability are closely linked: Disabled individuals are more likely to experience domestic abuse. They may be less able to protect themselves, making them more vulnerable. The risk of abuse is increased as they often rely on the perpetrator for their care.	Ongoing March 2026	Continue our support for Women's Aid. Develop a Domestic Abuse policy. Policy reviewed by March 2026

Disabled people experience domestic abuse for longer periods and more severe and frequent abuse than non-disabled people.		
COMMUNICATION:		
We acknowledge Disabled people have a right to receive communication in the media they understand. We will ensure a communication support service for meeting customer communication needs as and when required through consultation with the relevant “On Board Forums”.	Ongoing Ongoing	Staff, and customers where appropriate have access to communication support including sign language, Braille and large print information. Numbers of requests recorded. Monitoring and evaluation of feedback received through consultation with stakeholders on the Forums.
Targeted promotion of employment opportunities for people with disabilities in Warrenpoint Port through ongoing meetings with representative groups	Number of applicants with a disability receive an interview Human Resources	Increase in number of applicants with disability through our relationship with the Clanyre Group and NOW group.

Promote and raise awareness of careers in the marine industry among young disabled young people.	At least one initiative annually	Actively target schools for disabled young people to participate in the school visits initiative. One placement per year for disabled person.