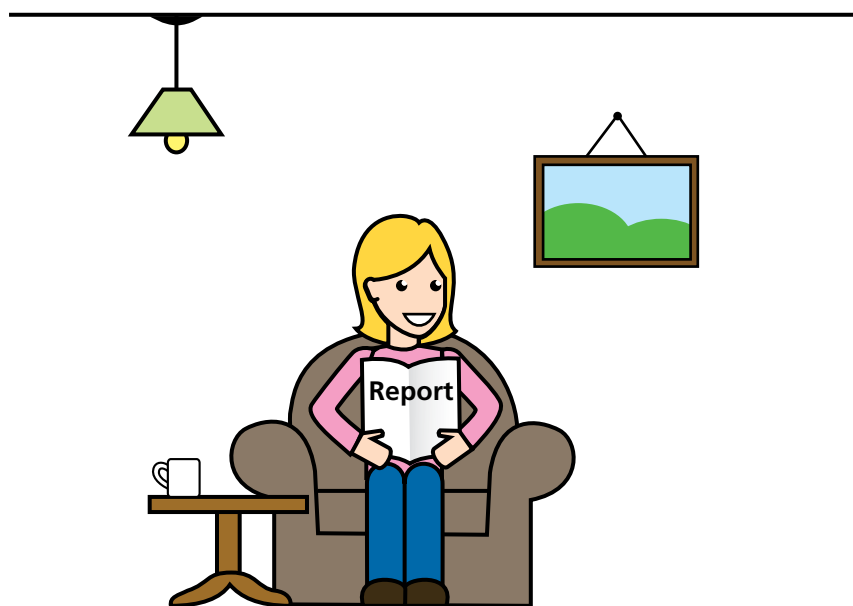


# How we make our equality schemes and reports

On 1 December 2006 we issued our booklet called Disability and Gender Equality Schemes and Race Equality Scheme Progress Report.



The booklet shows how we make our equality schemes. It also says we want equality to be part of our plans and reports. This way equality will be part of our day-to-day work.

We are looking at equality again in 2008. This is because

- The law says race equality schemes must be looked at again by May 2008.
- We want to take account of things people said about our first schemes.
- We want to move to a single equality scheme.

# Making things better for our customers

Our top managers have been looking at our future **business plans**.

## Business plans

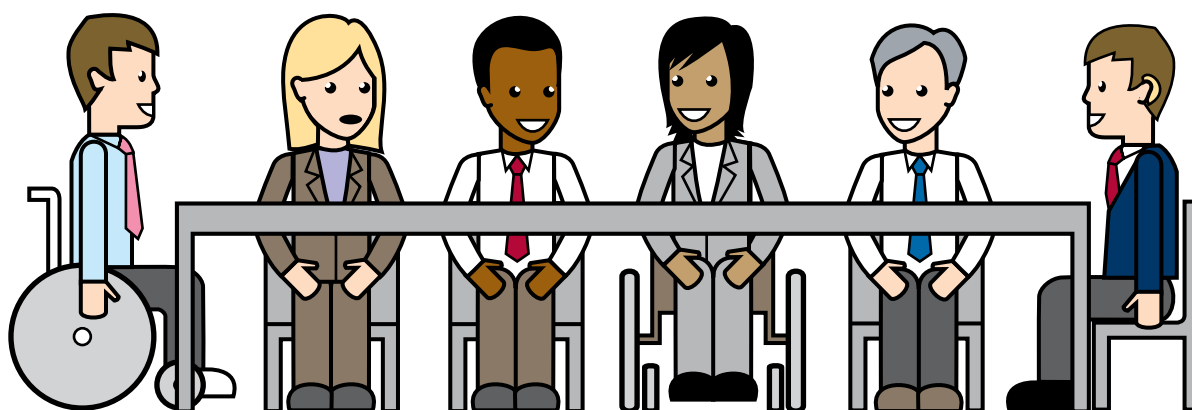
These show how we plan to do the things we want during the next year.

As a result, we are making changes that put our customers first. And many of the changes were our customers' ideas. For example, looking at the different needs of our customers.

The new plan is called Work, Welfare, Well-being, Well delivered.

And we are involving disabled people. We have set up a group made up of

- disabled customers
- representatives of disabled people
- our workers who have worked with disabled customers
- people from **Equality 2025**.



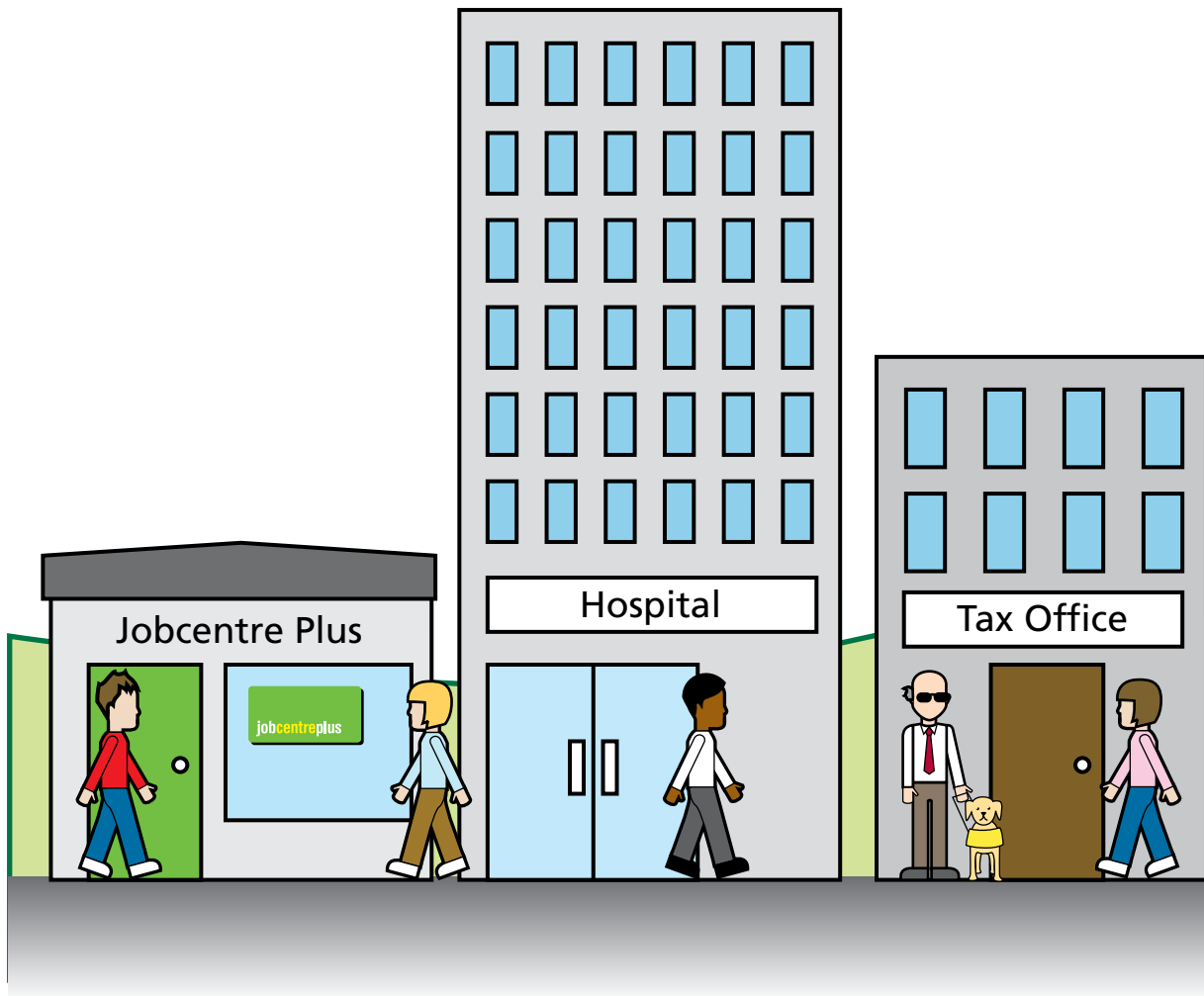
The group is looking at how we do things now and how we can do things better.

We are also working on a project called 'Tell us once'. The aim is that, by 2011, customers will be able to tell us once about births, deaths and changes in address. This information will then be passed to all the government services they use.

### Customer Insight Team

Last year we promised to set up a Customer Insight Team. This has been done now. The team's job is to find out about what our customers need and how we can make things better for them.

For example, the team is looking at disabled people who have to deal with more than one **government department**.



The team is especially looking at

- customers with a disabled child
- disabled customers moving from education to work
- customers who become disabled after they are grown up
- customers who become disabled when they are old.

The team's work involves a lot of talking to disabled customers.



## Involving customers

In 2006 we changed the way we make our equality schemes. The change was that we started **involving** our customers about what should be in the equality schemes.

### Involving

Being involved is not the same as being asked. Involving disabled people means that they play a bigger part in planning, not just being asked about work done by other people.

And customers told us that a lot of good work to involve customers is being done at our local offices. But they also said the good things need to be done in **all** our work.

We want this to happen too. But we need to make sure that doing this does not spoil what is being done locally.

So in 2007 we looked at how we are already involving customers in our work. Then we made a new plan. It includes the best of what is being done in our local offices as well as involving disability groups.

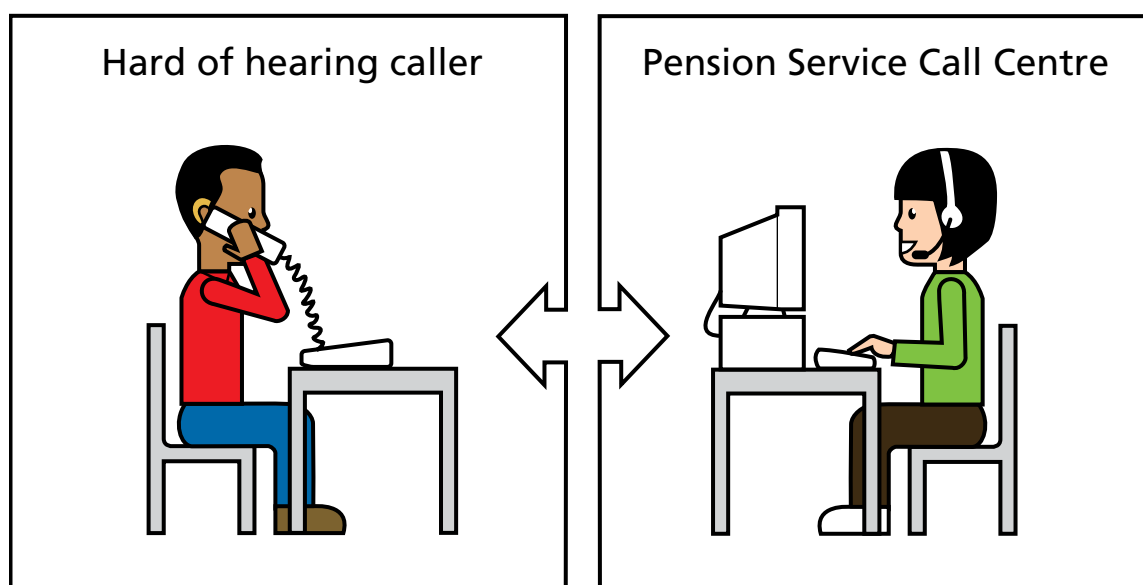
This means that customers and disability groups are now **involved** in

- our work with other **government departments**
- our work in the different parts of our Department
- our work in our local offices.

Here are some examples of the good work we are doing.

### The Pension Service

The Pension Service has 12 offices dealing with people's claims. Out of these, 11 have been given awards for their service to people who cannot hear very well. The last one should get an award very soon too.



### Disability and Carers Service

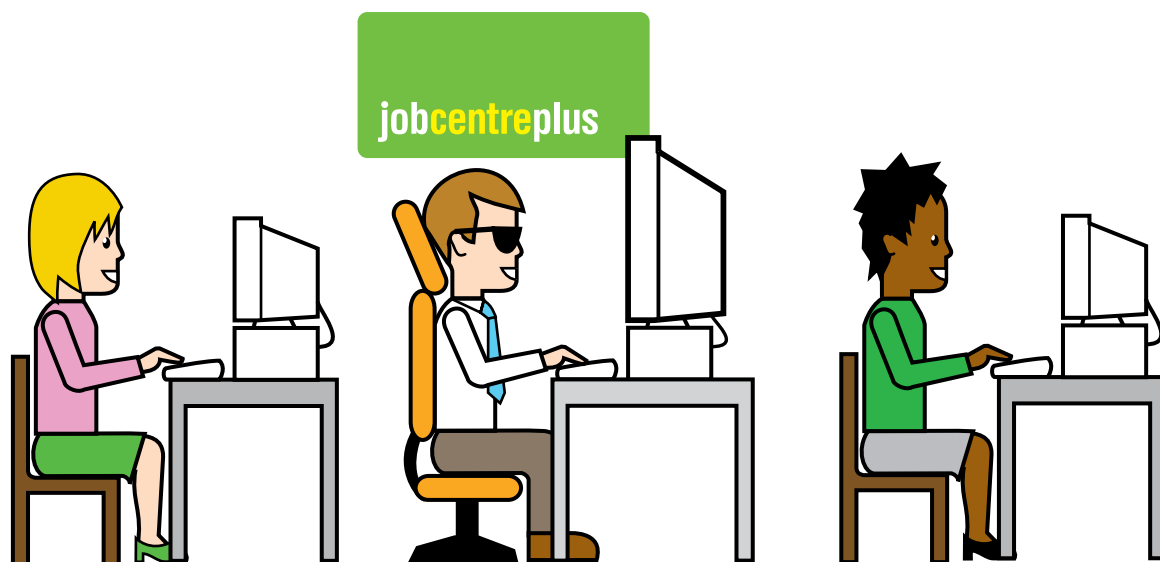
The Disability and Carers Service asks its customers to tell them what they think about its services. It uses this information to make its equality scheme better.

### Our computer systems

We use computers in most things we do. As part of our equality plans, we want to make it easier for disabled people to use them.

So during 2007 we looked at all our computer systems. We are now working out which need to be made better first.

Jobcentre Plus has already looked at the computers its customers use and made changes to make them easier for disabled people.



## **Thanks to all our customers**

We want to thank our customers and customer groups for helping us during this year.

What they told us is making our services better.

# The people who work for us

## We want all kinds of people to work for us

During 2007 we have worked hard to make sure we employ lots of different kinds of people from all kinds of backgrounds.

In June our top bosses had a big meeting with 500 of our workers. It was called Spreading the Word. The meeting was held to

- tell people that **diversity** and equality are important
- tell people about the best ways of treating people fairly.

A lot of top people from the Department and from other groups talked to the meeting. And we gave out our first **diversity** awards at the meeting.



But the **diversity** of our top bosses needs to be better. We have a target to make this better by March 2008.

And we have targets to employ more of other groups of people too.

We are doing well with some of the targets, but we know there is more to do.

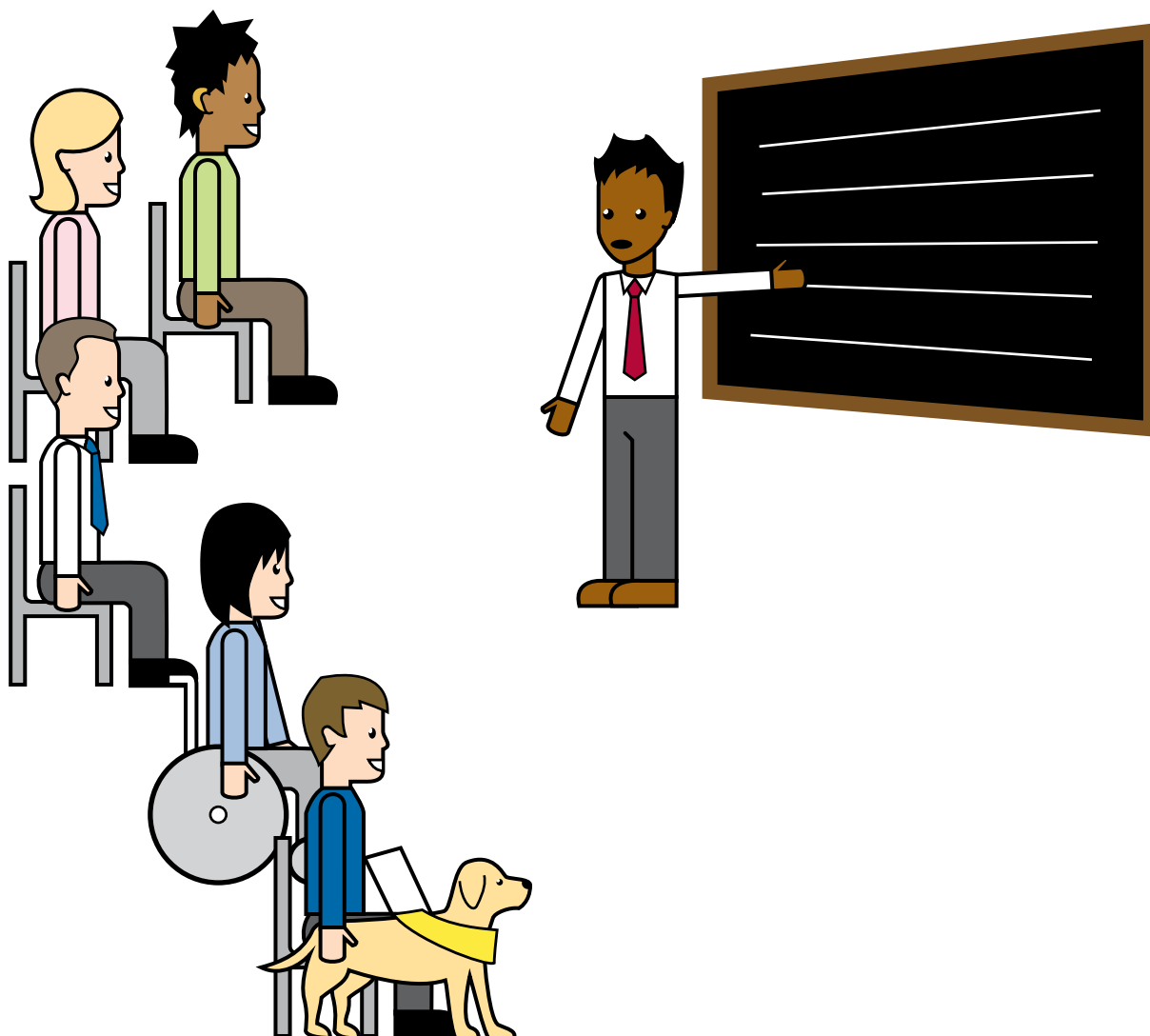
## Helping our workers move on to higher jobs

In September 2007 we started a small project for **ethnic minority** and disabled workers.

### **Ethnic minority**

This means people who are part of a group that comes, or came in the past, from another country. They may have a different skin colour to other people in their area.

There are 11 **ethnic minority** workers and 12 disabled workers taking part in the project. They are getting special training for 12 months. This will help to give them the skills to be able to apply for higher jobs in the Department.



We will check if the project is a success. If it is, this training may be used in all parts of the department.

## Getting more workers from different backgrounds to work for us

We are looking at how to get more people from different backgrounds to work for us. And we want more of them in our top jobs.

We already know that when women, disabled people and people from **ethnic minorities** apply for jobs with us, they often do very well. But not enough apply.

But we have done things to make this better

- We have written a booklet for our workers about the best ways to get different kinds of people to apply for jobs.
- We have put adverts in minority magazines telling people we want them to think about jobs with us.
- We are training our top people about the best ways to get different kinds of people to apply for jobs.



And we are leading the way as the first **government department** to make a **Local Employment Partnership** with Jobcentre Plus.

## Local Employment Partnership

This is part of the government's plans to work with big organisations. The partnerships help people like lone parents (these are single people with 1 or more children) or disabled people get a chance at working for these big organisations.

## Involving our workers

Our workers continue to be involved with the things we think are most important to people who work for us.

Every year we ask our workers to tell us what they think might be a problem for us. We call this our annual staff survey.

Our 6 staff networks have taken on more people and are doing much more important work than before. Our 6 staff networks are

- race
- disability
- gender
- age
- sexual orientation – this is about people being **heterosexual, lesbian or gay**
- the balance between work and home life.

## Heterosexual, lesbian or gay

- **Heterosexual** means someone who finds people of the opposite sex attractive. For example, women who are attracted to men.
- **Lesbian** means a women who is sexually attracted to another woman. Sometimes they are also called homosexual.
- **Gay** means a man who is sexually attracted to other men. Sometimes they are also called homosexual.



For example, the Disability and Carers Service has someone whose job includes helping workers who have had problems at work because they are different.

## Training our workers to help our customers

Our customers and workers agree that we need more training on **diversity**. We have been doing a lot of work on this during the last year.

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