

# Our approach to equality

## The Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Duty

To help us design, deliver, and operate an inclusive railway, we are embedding a range of equality, diversity and inclusion best practice measures into our assessments and decision making.

The Equality Act 2010 is the legal foundation for tackling disadvantage and improving equality of opportunity for people with the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The Public Sector Equality Duty is set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, and requires public authorities and bodies delivering public services and functions (including us at East West Railway Company) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act.

- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

## Equality Impact Assessment

We will prepare and submit an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) as part of our application for a Development Consent Order (DCO). An EqIA is a tool that will help us to understand and assess the likely effects of our proposals on people with the protected characteristics set out above.

The EqIA process plays an important role in informing our design development. By considering different people's needs we can deliver services that are appropriate and inclusive for everyone. This supports good decision making and helps us to comply with our Public Sector Equality Duty obligations. Our Accessibility and Inclusion factsheet also explains how we use a human-centred design approach when developing our plans and designs.

As part of the EqIA process, we will identify potential equality effects by assessing how the project may result in impacts on community resources, specific locations, or sections of the population. We will also identify potential positive and negative, temporary and permanent, and direct and indirect effects



on people with protected characteristics. This will enable us to understand whether any disadvantage as a result of our proposals is expected because of that person or group's protected characteristic.

The EqlA will be informed by several sources of information including relevant aspects of our environmental impact assessment, feedback received during consultations, existing baseline data, and input from stakeholders. Through the EqlA process we will develop measures to reduce any potential negative effects and maximise any positive effects of our proposals. Mitigation measures identified within the Environmental Statement relevant to equalities will also be considered as part of the EqlA process. In addition, we will develop a plan for ongoing monitoring of equality impacts.

The EqlA will be submitted alongside the outcomes of the environmental impact assessment process detailed in the Environmental Statement as part of our DCO application.

## Engaging with stakeholders and communities

To help us understand a range of views on equality issues, we are talking to community groups, national and local charities and organisations that represent people and groups with protected characteristics.

This engagement also provides opportunities for stakeholders, including equality groups and the wider community, to inform and influence our design and development of both our proposals and the EqlA.