

# Swindon Equality Coalition

Welcome to our first Swindon Equality Coalition newsletter. You will find an update of what we have been doing over the last year, as well as some of our current plans.

Most important - we want to hear from you. Please do drop us a line anytime to talk about issues around equality that are important to you.

You can email [equality@vas-swindon.org](mailto:equality@vas-swindon.org), or message us via our [Facebook group](#) or Twitter @SNequality

We are looking forward to building the network and working together to make Swindon a beacon for equality of access and opportunity for all.

## Important

Please email us if you would like to be added to the mail list for updates about the Coalition and how you can be involved:  
[equality@vas-swindon.org](mailto:equality@vas-swindon.org)

With best wishes

*Pp Michelle Howard*

Chair



## Equality in Swindon

Remote working and online meetings are not everyone's cup of tea, but our newly formed core group has been meeting regularly over the past year.

Amongst other things, the core group has:

- Written guidelines for organisations that want to engage with different groups in our community - [read them here](#).
- Started talking to police and commissioners about rising levels of hate and what we can do.
- Set up new pages on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).
- Supported work to create a new equality forum for young people in Swindon (see news, below).
- Raised questions with the local health service about accessible breast screening units, as well as the language they use in forms and leaflets.
- Worked with Great Western Hospital to make sure their prayer room welcomes everyone.
- Provided feedback to the council on its Diversity Impact Assessments (see feature, below).

## Swindon Youth

To work alongside the coalition, we have set up a group of local organisations that work with young people around the town - our aim is to create a space for young people from all around Swindon to connect, share, learn and develop.



We want to have a fun and inspiring forum that helps young people talk about equality issues that affect them. As part of the planning process, we held the Speak Out Swindon survey for young people - over 100 people shared their views, which will go into the detailed project planning.

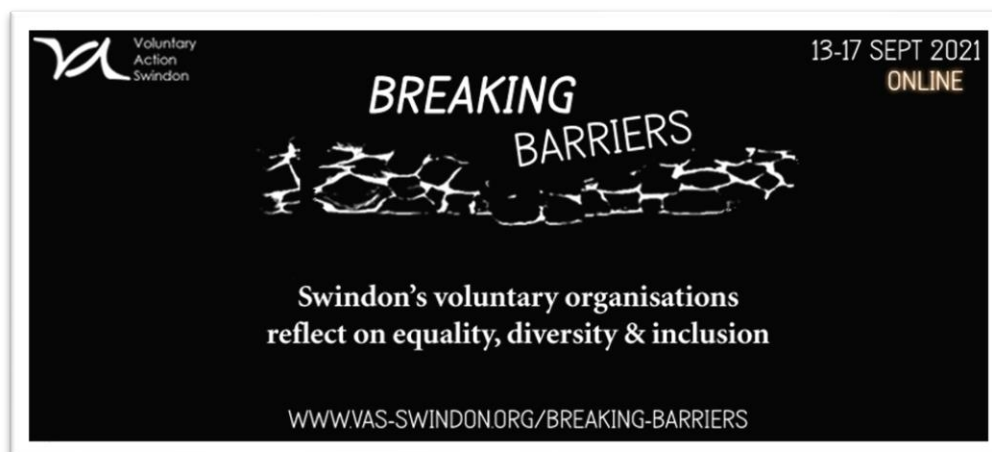
Our next step is to get the details sorted - and do some fundraising to pay for the new forum.

## Hidden barriers

When we think of accessibility, it is often the physical barriers we see. But many are invisible. The coalition core group was contacted by people who were being excluded as a result of payment methods.

There are many people who don't have credit or debit cards - this might be due to age, income, ability or other factors. Cash payment is their only option - so when a service goes cashless, some people are left out in the cold.

The SEC core group has been looking into this issue - and we still wants to hear from anyone who has had problems because of this. Please get in touch.



## Breaking Barriers

With the aim of helping Swindon's voluntary organisations become even better at promoting equality and inclusion, we are organising the first ever *Breaking Barriers* event - a series of online presentations and discussions where we come together and share our EDI journeys and learn from each other.

We are looking for open and honest discussion of the challenges we face - and how we are each trying to move forward. Would your organisation like to be involved? Either to present or simply to listen, please let us know and we will send more details.

## Diversity Impact Assessments

The council says that [these assessments](#) help to make Swindon a fair and equal place to live. DIAs aim to make sure that the council considers how any changes or developments will impact on Swindon's diverse population, particularly with reference to people with protected characteristics (as defined by the Equality Act 2010).

Our role at the SEC is to train and support community reviewers - our team of reviewers will look at any DIA the council sends our way, and can provide feedback to help improve the assessment. Let us know if you would like to find out more!

## Get in touch

[equality@vas-swindon.org](mailto:equality@vas-swindon.org)

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