

Route Map Case Study – Swindon Public Health Team

Context and approach



After attending the Health Equity Toolkit launch, Lewis Bird was impressed that the Newham Health Equity Programme was sharing practical tools and examples, rather than only thinking about equity as an intellectual task.

As someone who is interested in finding solutions to the structural problems that impact health in Swindon, Lewis saw the Route Map as a practical way to 'do' equity, rather than to only discuss it.



The Health Equity Route Map



The health equity route maps are designed to help those who provide commission or work in health and care services across Newham to **turn intentions and commitment to health equity into reality.**

They provide a guide to taking steps to support services and contain a complementary maturity matrix for each 'level' which scaffolds and benchmarks the processes of discovery and change. Together they support partners in the Newham Health and care system to ask and answer the questions: **'How do we get to Good on Health Equity' and 'Are we there yet?'**

Domains

Each route map has six domains. The domains overlap across the different levels, especially domains for the organisation level route map and service/department/team level route-map. Key differences relate to different expectations around influencing, providing support for and delivery of health equity actions and ambitions

1. Organisational readiness and structure
2. Workforce
3. Understanding the health inequalities of the communities you serve and underserve
4. Supporting service areas with delivering interventions and activities to address inequities identified
5. Working with communities
6. Making your organisational accountable and responsible

Using the Route Map



The end goal would be to embed ideas of equity in all areas of the council, but the Public Health team decided to get their own house in order first by holding a workshop in April 2025.

Teams from across the directorate were mixed up and asked to fill out a maturity matrix in tables.

They answered questions like 'are we fundamentally meeting these equity asks?', and 'How are we going to get better?'. The results of this informed a maturity matrix, which is going to be translated directly into an equity action plan for the Public Health Directorate.

Maturity Matrix

Average ratings for each domain (0=Not Meeting, 1=Fundamental, 2=Intermediate, 3=Advanced)

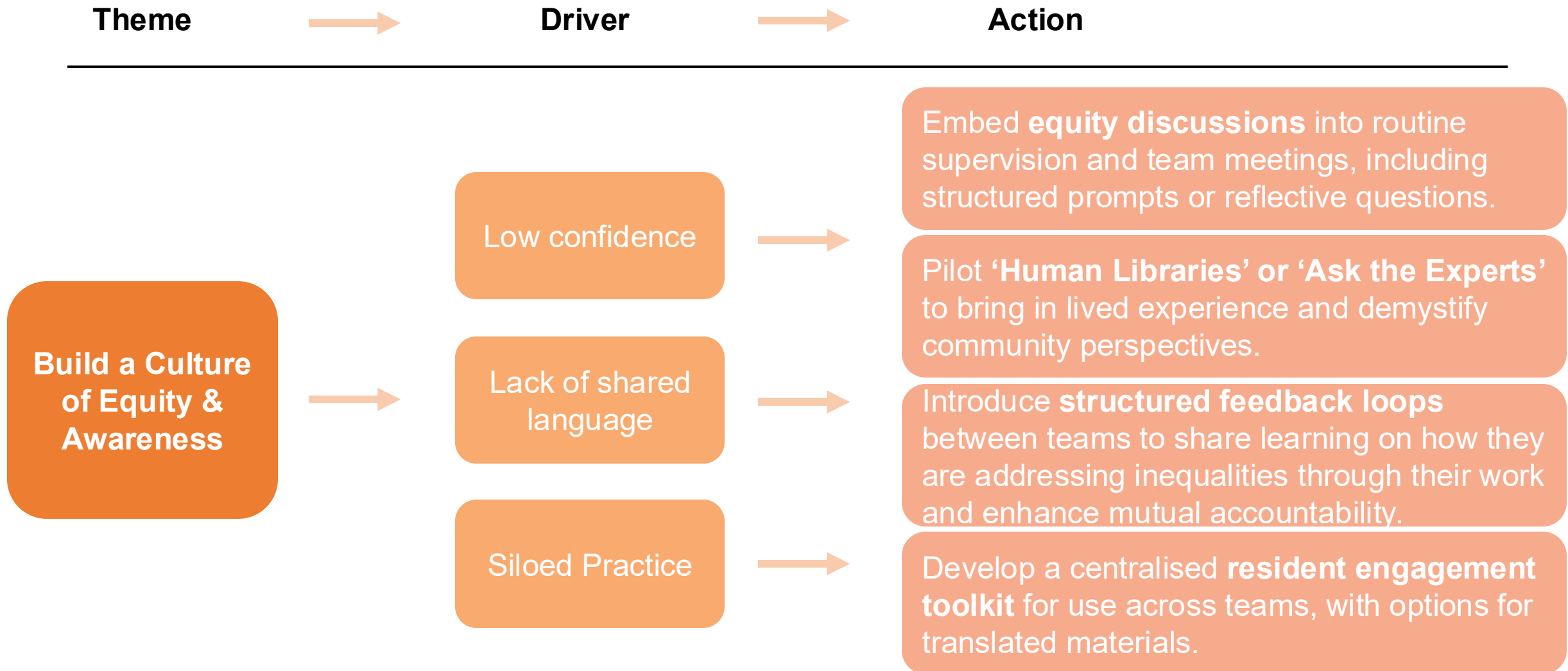
Area	Average Score
Create a Culture of Equity: Starting the Conversation	1.4
Learning and Commitment	1.4
Workforce: Representativeness	1.67
Workforce: Skills to Engage Communities	1.33
Understanding Equity: Quantitative Data	1.0
Understanding Equity: Qualitative Data	1.33
Analysing the Data	1.0
Interventions and Activities	2.0
Working with People & Communities	1.0
Reporting & Scrutiny	1.33

Using the Maturity Matrix

The maturity matrix and results from the workshop were used to quantify the drivers of low equity scores.

Theme	Drivers
Build a Culture of Equity & Awareness	Low confidence, lack of shared language, siloed practice.
Workforce Capability and Representation	Lack of diversity, missed opportunities for learning.
Use and Collection of Equity Data	Data is patchy, rarely analysed for equity.
Community Co-Production and Voice	No system for hearing underrepresented voices consistently.
Embed Equity into Governance and Reporting	Limited accountability, no equity KPIs.

Using the Drivers



The How: Enablers and Challenges

Enabling the Work

- Ability to have honest conversations.
- Being direct: asking 'how are we going to move forward?'
- Having an existing, practical tool to model you change from.
- Framing this work as **possible** and asking 'what is it within your power to reduce discrimination. This is the practical way to reduce discrimination?'

Addressing the Challenges

- Can be difficult getting other parts of a local authority to buy in – you have to prove it works within the public health team first.
- Local knowledge required – the Newham tools need to be unfolded and refolded into a Swindon context.

The How: Process

As a Public Health team, we wanted to establish a baseline for how we are approaching the topic of health equity. We talk a lot about the topic in our day to day work, but are we living and breathing it, is it business as usual not a bolt on activity? The maturity matrix helped us establish where we believe to be across the directorate, what's driving our position, what are doing well/not so well and how can we do things differently to improve our situation.

As a first piece of work, we utilised the DILLN framework to compare our Health Coach Service participant demographics against Swindon's population. It revealed a disparity for our South Asian communities that is now leading us to want to understand what is leading to this variation. The next stage is to take our learning to the Swindon Health Inequalities Group, which is a new forum for working across the system on this topic. We're going to be encouraging and supporting other organisations to adopt these frameworks in the hope they bring back insights and actions to assure the group we as a town are working towards more equitable outcomes for residents.

Lewis Bird - Public Health Principal at Swindon Borough Council

Learnings and what next

The plan is to phase the delivery of these actions over the next 12 months.

Since these sessions, Lewis has noted that the conversation has started. People have had honest conversations about there being more they can do, and this is spreading through the directorate.

Swindon and Newham will keep in contact about the process and colleagues at Swindon council see the potential of this tool to 'go on tour', with a group that can show how it worked in their contexts.

Newham are part of a North East London Learning Community – having these case studies of the way people have used the Route Map helps to share the learning more

Using the Health Equity Route Map



We're happy for organisations to use and share our Health Equity Toolkits – however please credit the London Borough of Newham when using this and let us know if you're happy to produce a case study.

If you have any questions and want some support – please get in touch with the Newham Health Equity Programme team:
health.equity@newham.gov.uk

Pack author - Jade Scott-Worthington and Jack Burnett

Health Equity Route Map Prepared by Lucy Furby (L.Furby@nhs.net) + Adeola Agbebiyi (Adeola.Agbebiyi@newham.gov)