



**20 March 2015**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Ards traders welcome disabled customers**

The first traders in Newtownards to sign up to the new 'Every Customer Counts: promoting accessible service' project have received official window stickers for their businesses.

'Every Customer Counts' is a joint project by the Equality Commission in partnership with Ards Borough Council and Newtownards Chamber of Trade. It is an opportunity for local businesses to do something practical to make life better for disabled people and to improve their businesses at the same time.

Frank Fleming from the Equality Commission and Mayor of Ards, Cllr Philip Smyth, acknowledged and thanked traders for their commitment to making services accessible to disabled people and gave them the official window sticker to communicate their commitment to customers.

The picture shows Frank Fleming, left, Equality Commission, and Cllr Phillip Smith, Mayor of Ards, right, with Heather Lavery, Sheldon Galleries; Kellie Jordon, Roamer Holistic Health & Beauty; Clive O'Neil, Clive's Country Corner; Valerie Marshall, Ards Crafts; Rob Malcolm, Sharon Malcolm Hairdressing; Trevor Burns, Belvoir Lettings; Judith Hammond, Ards Visitor Information Centre and Leigh Nelson, Specsavers and Chair of Newtownards Chamber of Trade, who have all registered commitment to the scheme.

During March, leaflets will be delivered to businesses in Newtownards outlining the three simple steps of the Every Customer Counts process. There will also be free Disability and Customer Service training, delivered in partnership with Disability Action on 24 March and a drop-in information clinic on 26 March, which is for anyone interested in hearing more about the initiative and other ways that the Commission works to support small businesses. Details of these events will be posted on the Commission's website [www.equalityni.org/EveryCustomerCounts](http://www.equalityni.org/EveryCustomerCounts) or you can phone 028 90 500 638 for further details.