



**BOROUGH OF
BROXBOURNE**

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EQUALITY & INCLUSION STRATEGY 2023-27

FINAL

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1 BACKGROUND

1.1 The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) consolidated nine pieces of legislation and over 100 pieces of secondary legislation covering issues of inequality in society, including the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, and Race Relations Act 1976. The Act brought together the various pieces of legislation with the aim of making the law easier to understand and apply, and also introduced new duties.

The Public Sector Equality Duty places both general and specific duties on public bodies, such as the Council. The general duty requires all public bodies to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Act further explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The nine 'protected characteristics' covered by the Act are:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender reassignment;
- Marriage and civil partnership;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality;
- Religion or belief – this includes lack of belief;
- Sex;
- Sexual orientation.

The Council must publish information at least annually to show that it has consciously thought about the three aims of the duty in its decision making process. In addition, the Council is required to publish one or more equality objectives and review them at least once every four years. The objectives published must be specific and measurable. This information is made available on the Council's website, www.broxbourne.gov.uk.

Through publishing an Equality Scheme, the Council aims to embed equalities into the business planning, performance management, service delivery and employment

policies of the Council, and to use its influence to promote good community relations for those who live, work or visit the Borough.

2 EQUALITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY

This builds on previous equality schemes and is presented in the same format. An action plan supplements the scheme and translates the commitments in the scheme into activities and targets.

The Council has integrated equality issues into the development, implementation, evaluation and review of policies and service delivery. Over the next four years there will be more focus on three areas, assisted by new IT capabilities and partnership working with community groups. The areas of focus are the following;

- a) Monitoring service performance and usage;
- b) Engaging with residents and local community groups;
- c) Updating HR policies and practices.

The Council will continue to use equality impact assessments, but will develop a stronger understanding of residents' needs and wishes through monitoring service usage and satisfaction rates, and engaging with residents and local community groups.

2.1 Policy statement

The Council has adopted the following equalities policy statement:

The Council is committed to equal opportunities, and aims to prevent unlawful and unjustified discrimination against employees and service users on the grounds of:

- age;
- disability;
- employment status;
- current or previous service in the UK armed forces
- ethnic or national origins, race or colour;
- sex
- gender identity and reassignment;
- marital or civil partnership status;
- religious beliefs or lack of belief;
- responsibility for children or dependants;
- sexual orientation;
- low income
- digital exclusion;
- trade union activities;
- unrelated criminal convictions;
- pregnancy and maternity.

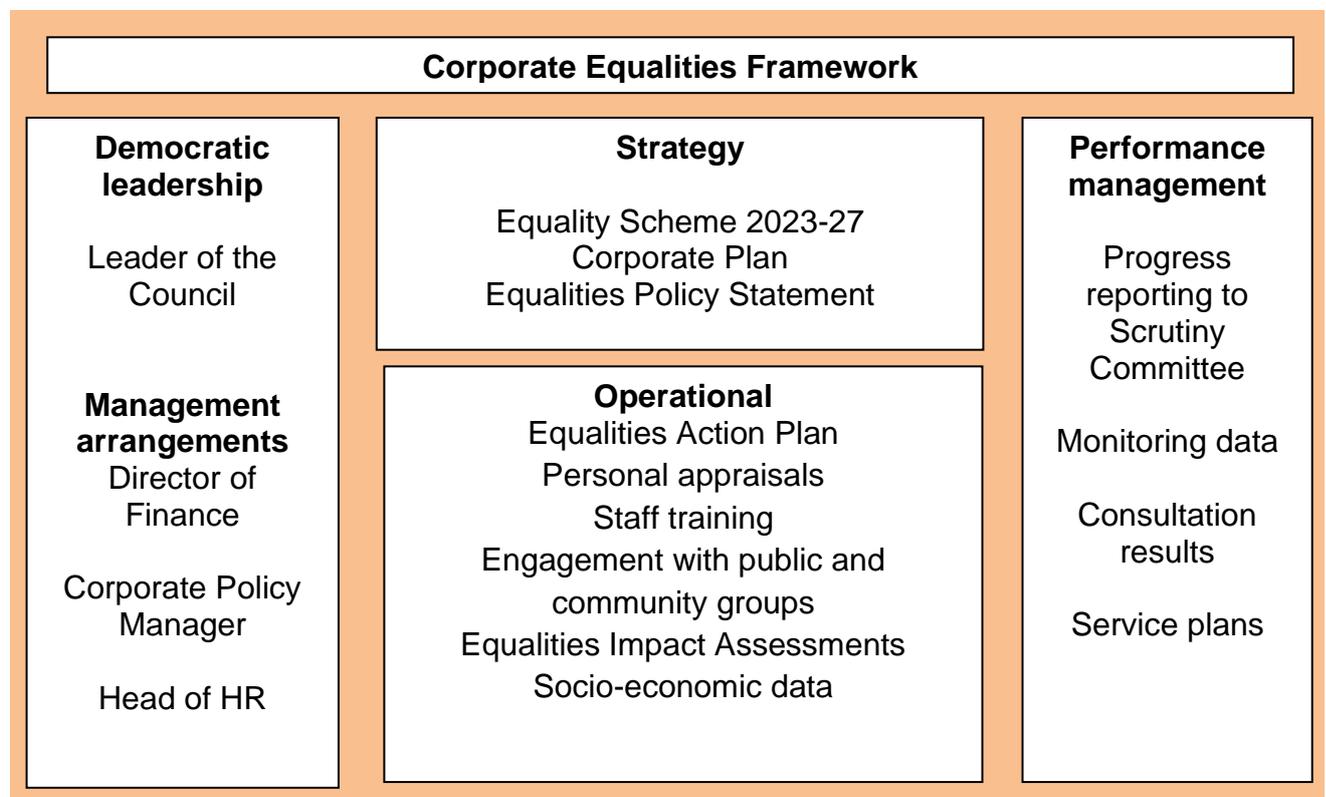
Veteran status, digital exclusion, trade union activities and unrelated criminal convictions are not categories required by equalities legislation but have been added by the Council.

2.2 General commitments

The Council will:

- Fulfil statutory equality duties in leading the Borough of Broxbourne, so all residents are protected and supported to live in cohesive communities, to access services and reach their full potential, without facing discrimination;
- Provide services fairly to all sectors of the community, engaging with residents , service users and community groups to increase accountability and to identify how to meet local needs;
- Monitor service usage, complaints and other data to identify where improvements are needed;
- Assess equalities implications of service and policy proposals and ensure these have a positive impact on equality of opportunity;
- Recruit, employ, and pay people fairly.

3 EQUALITIES FRAMEWORK



4 RESPONSIBILITIES

Within the Cabinet, the Leader holds the equality portfolio. The officer holding corporate responsibility for equalities issues is the Director of Finance. The Head of Human Resources is responsible for achieving equality of opportunity for people seeking or holding employment with the Council. Corporate implementation of the Council's equalities policies is coordinated by the Corporate Policy Manager, but every member of staff has responsibility for promoting equality and respecting diversity.

The Council is committed to challenging discrimination wherever it takes place in the Borough and using its position of influence to set an example. The Council will work with partners to improve equality of opportunities and good community relations. This is promoted particularly through partnership working, engagement with residents and community groups, grant funding, and fair procurement of goods and services.

5 EQUALITIES VISION

The Council aspires to create cohesive communities in the Borough, and respect and appreciation for diversity. The Council is determined that everyone have equal opportunities in accessing services or obtaining employment with the Council. If any direct or indirect barriers are obstructing achievement of this goal, the Council will seek to remove or minimise them.

6 EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

The Council has identified six equality objectives:

OBJECTIVE	REASONS
1. Ensure services meet the changing needs of all service users.	The Council is committed to providing fair access to services that meet the needs of a varied population.
2. Review and monitor services to ensure a high standard of service.	By monitoring who is using Council services and what their experience is like the Council can improve service usage and quality.
3. Engage effectively with local residents.	All local people should have the opportunity to influence local decision making and many do. As some residents are less likely to respond than others, the Council will focus on diversifying the methods used to communicate with residents, and will engage with community groups when appropriate.
4. Ensure the Council's workforce is committed to equality.	It is vital that staff are properly trained and supported to deliver the Council's services fairly to all sectors of the local population.
5. Promote community cohesion and equality through partnership working,	The Council will further equality and good relations between communities by sharing its equality objectives when working with partners, suppliers,

OBJECTIVE	REASONS
procurement activity and when commissioning services.	contractors and their agents and by ensuring they help deliver these to the community.

OBJECTIVE	REASONS
6. Help address economic inequalities in partnership with other organisations.	By working in partnership with others the Council can reduce economic inequalities which have a negative impact on residents.

The Equalities Action Plan sets time-limited tasks related to these equalities objectives. However, most implementation of equalities objectives is mainstreamed into Council policymaking, service design and delivery, and human resources policies, by continually using the procedures described below.

7 PROCEDURES

7.1 Equality impact assessments

The purpose of equality impact assessments is identify how a policy, service or function affects people with protected characteristics differently from the rest of the local population, and then to take action to eliminate or mitigate any potential disadvantage. The Council uses Equality Impact Assessments to assist in implementation of the Public Sector Equality Duty when formulating or changing policy and taking major decisions, and reports the results to Cabinet and Council as applicable. Preparation of equality impact assessments is guided by a summary of local demographic data and national research findings.

The toolkit for equality impact assessments is currently under review. It is likely to include more emphasis on consulting local residents, and on local service monitoring data, as appropriate.

7.2 Monitoring

The Council will use monitoring to measure if the Council is offering equality of opportunity and fair treatment to all, for example to:

- Measure who is using council services and identify groups who are under or over represented;
- Identify who is applying for work with the Council and the make-up of the Council's current workforce, to take action to encourage a wider range of applicants;
- Highlight differing levels of satisfaction with service delivery between groups, for further investigation;
- Assess who is represented in consultation responses so gaps in the data can be plugged;
- Set targets and monitor progress.

Differences will be investigated to identify if there is any cause for concern; where there is, action will be taken to improve.

The Council has agreed corporate monitoring categories to ensure there is consistency in how information is gathered and held. These include categories for sex, and age when requesting monitoring information. Questions regarding ethnic origin, disability, faith or sexual orientation will be asked where relevant and appropriate.

Use of the same categories by partner organisations, contractors and voluntary and community organisations is strongly encouraged to enable meaningful comparisons to be drawn. Where relevant and practical, voluntary organisations receiving funding from the Council for are required to provide monitoring information about residents benefitting from the funding. The Council is mindful of the resource implications for local voluntary and community organisations, as well as the Council, and will help organisations to make this practical.

The Council will continue to monitor the number of people it employs by race, sex, age and disability status, but only reports on gender differences in pay. The workforce is small and it is not possible to draw statistically valid conclusions about trends from year to year, but reports are produced when the data can be relevant, for example, to assist succession planning. With the new HR IT system facilitating further analysis, consideration will be given to producing rolling 3-year equalities data averages to facilitate consideration of trends in employment.

The Council improves employment prospects for disadvantaged groups by encouraging applications from all parts of the community, providing apprenticeships, and by supporting existing employees to fulfil their potential.

The Council monitors incidents of harassment or discrimination in relation to its services or functions. This enables appropriate action to be taken or advice to be given. There is a simple reporting system in operation and both the public and staff are encouraged to use this if necessary.

The Council welcomes all comments and complaints. The existing Council procedures will be used to investigate and respond to complaints (external) and grievances (internal) made in relation to this Scheme. Consideration will be given to expanding analysis of complaints to cover equality data for complainants where this is practical, to identify if there are identifiable trends in complaints.

7.3 Consultation and engagement

The Council's Communications section, in partnership with services, is responsible for ensuring consultation is appropriate and high quality. The Council places great importance on consultation and engaging with individuals, organisations and partner agencies for corporate decision-making. Consultation is a continuous process, not a one-off activity, and the Council will compare results received over time and identify if results vary between different groups within the Borough's population, to inform its work. The Council has set up a Citizens' Panel of residents to consult, but the number of members of the Panel is not yet sufficient to draw conclusions based on the demographic details of the respondents.

The Council will consult with relevant parties as part of equality impact assessments where appropriate prior to the introduction of new policies and services. Through consultation the Council will seek to gain a better understanding of how all sections of the community view Council policies and services. This information can then be used to help shape and develop services to meet public expectations.

The methods used will depend on the needs of specific groups and on the service or policy being reviewed. Attention will be given to seeking the views of people in traditionally hard to reach groups. The Council recognises the need to communicate in different ways with people in these groups:

- People with sensory and learning disabilities;
- People whose first language is not English;
- People who are digitally excluded;
- Young people aged 16-25.

Over the next four years there will be increased focus on consultation and engagement with local community groups, and more efforts will be made to consult with residents about service delivery, particularly for non-statutory services such as Leisure.

7.4 Training

The Council will provide training and briefings to staff and Members on equality and diversity issues. These include:

- Ensuring information on the Council's approach to equalities is included as part of the induction of new employees;
- Ensuring all staff attend equality and diversity training and are kept up to date with any legislative changes and emerging equality issues;
- Offering all managers diversity training, including advice on carrying out equality impact assessments; action planning to improve service delivery and performance monitoring;
- Requiring all managers responsible for recruitment to receive relevant training on equalities;
- Providing Councillors with learning and development opportunities for equalities;
- Involving local voluntary and community organisations where appropriate in the planning, design and delivery of learning and development opportunities.

7.5 Procurement

The Council aims to promote good practice by contractors working for the Council. Officers will consider equalities throughout the procurement process, so far as this is compatible with statutory regulations.

All contract opportunities above the value of £10,000 are advertised on a free web portal advertised throughout Hertfordshire and signposted on the Council's website. At the supplier pre-qualification stage for major contracts, the Council may use the opportunity to check that contractors are aware of their obligations under equalities

legislation and have a good track record, where this is deemed relevant. Contractors that cannot meet this requirement will present a risk and may be excluded if the risk is a serious one. It is a requirement of Contract Standing Orders that every written contract incorporate a requirement that the contractor shall adopt and pursue an equal opportunities policy in compliance with statutory obligations.

7.6 Communicating progress

The Council will publish the results of assessments, consultations and monitoring of adverse impact. Information will be available on the Council's website, and through the Freedom of Information Act Publication Scheme. Relevant material will be circulated to interested partners and residents for information and consultation.

The Council will publish an annual report of monitoring data, consultation data and results of EIAs along with the Council's progress against the Equality Scheme and the Equality Action Plan. This progress is subject to inspection by the Council's Scrutiny Committee.

The Council intends to keep all residents updated with local decisions made after consultations via social media or the Broxbourne News.

8 FEEDBACK

Broxbourne Borough Council welcomes comments or views on any aspect of this Corporate Equality Scheme. Please use the online form at: <https://www.broxbourne.gov.uk/contact-us> or telephone: 01992 785555.

Any complaints about the way the Council is meeting the duties under the Equality Act 2010, or other equality complaints will be dealt with through the standard corporate complaints procedure available at: www.broxbourne.gov.uk.

9 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF BROXBOURNE

All data in this demographic profile come from the March 2021 Census unless otherwise indicated. Figures are rounded up to the nearest 100. More comprehensive data are available at the Herts Insight website: [Census 2021 Profile - Districts | Broxbourne | Report Builder for ArcGIS \(esriuk.com\)](#).

The 2021 Census indicated that in March 2021, the habitually residential population of Broxbourne was 99,003.

9.1 Households

Broxbourne had 39,849 households in March 2021. The number of people per household varied as follows:

	1 person in household	2 people in household	3 people in household	4 people in household	5 or more people in household
Number	10,971	12,262	7,220	6,461	2,935
% of total	27.5%	30.8%	18.1%	16.2%	7.4%

Number and percentage of households in Broxbourne Borough by type

One person household: aged 66 and over	One person household: Other	Couple family household: No Children	Couple family household: Dependent Children	Couple family household: No dependent children	Lone parent household: Dependent children	Lone parent household: No dependent children	Other household type
5,069	5,902	5,208	8,369	3,489	3,326	2,115	6,371
12.7%	14.8%	13.1%	21.0%	8.8%	8.3%	5.3%	16.0%

9.2 Sex

In 2021 51.6% of the Broxbourne population were female, approximately 51,100 residents, and 47,900 were male, approximately 48.4%.

9,700 women were aged 65 or over compared to 7,600 men.

9.3 Age

The median age of a usual Broxbourne resident in 2021 was 40, the same as England and Wales.

As at 21 March 2021:

6,000 Broxbourne residents were aged 0-4;
18,000 residents were aged from 5 to 19;
58,000 residents were 20-64 years old;
14,700 residents were aged 65 to 84
2,400 residents were aged 85 and older.

9.4 Disability

To identify disability, the 2021 Census asked "Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?". If the respondent answered yes, a further question "Do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?" was presented.

14,255 residents (14.4%) had a long-term physical or mental health condition that impeded their ability to carry out day-to-day activities to some extent, i.e. they meet the legal definition of disabled under the terms of the Equality Act 2010. Of these residents, 6,003 were significantly impeded, about 6.1% of all residents of the Borough.

A further 5,565 residents had a long-term physical or mental health condition but it did not reduce their ability to carry out day-to-day activities.

9.5 Ethnicity and national origin

Broxbourne respondents to the 2021 Census described their ethnicity according to five main categories:

Ethnic group	Percentage	Number
Asian or Asian British	3.7%	3,657
Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	6.7%	6,588
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	4%	3,930
White	81.1%	80,301
Other ethnic group	4.6%	4,531

In more detail, they recorded their ethnicity as follows:

Ethnic sub-category	Percentage	Number
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi		316
Asian or Asian British: Chinese		420
Asian or Asian British: Indian		1,391
Asian or Asian British: Pakistani		322
Asian or Asian British: Other Asian		1,208
Black: African		3,802
Black: Caribbean		1,966
Black: Other Black		820
Mixed: White and Asian		749
Mixed: White and Black African		451
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean		1,309
Mixed: Other		1,421
White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British		67,891
White: Irish		1,310
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller		155
White: Roma		183
White: Other White		10,762
Other ethnic group: Arab		204
Other: Any other ethnic group		4,327

A very large majority of those who classed themselves as Other, when asked to provide more detail, identified themselves by the name of a country only. From the list of countries they cited, it appears that they did not wish to describe their ethnicity, rather than that their ethnicity was not represented in the list of options. The last figure in each table should therefore be regarded as unreliable.

The proportion of Borough residents born outside the UK increased from 11.8% of all residents in 2011 to 17.9% in 2021. Of all Broxbourne residents:

11.6% were born elsewhere in Europe, including Ireland and Turkey,
2.9% were born in Africa;
2% were born in Asia, including the Middle East.
1.2% were born in the Americas, including the Caribbean and South America
0.2% were born in Oceania.

71% of residents born outside the UK had come to this country before 2010. A further 15% came from 2010 to 2015. 14% arrived from 2016 onwards.

The places of birth outside the UK that were most represented in the population are Turkey, Poland, Italy and Romania.

The percentage of residents who had only a non-UK passport is much lower. It increased from 7.5% in 2011 to 10.8% in 2021. More Broxbourne residents held an EU passport for Italy or Poland than were born in those countries. However, there were only 487 Turkish passport holders compared to 2,025 residents who were born in Turkey.

9.6 Fluency in English

The 2021 Census asked whether people's main language was English and if not, which other language was. It also asked how fluent people are in English. Results are only given for residents aged 3 years and over.

90.9% of Borough residents aged 3 and over had English as their main language.

4,493 residents had an EU language such as Italian or Polish as their main language.
1,649 spoke Turkish as their main language.

For the 8,643 residents aged over three who did not speak English as their main language, 1,796 either could not speak English at all or could not speak it very well.

9.7 Religion and belief

In the 2021 Census:

53% of usual Broxbourne residents identified as Christian.
33% stated they had no religion.
5.9% chose not to answer the question.
4.3% were Muslim (4,249 residents).
1.2% were Hindu (1,150 residents).

There were 479 Buddhists (0,5%), 365 Jews (0,4%) and 150 Sikhs (0.2%).

1.6% had another religion (1,601 residents).

9.8 Sexual orientation

The 2021 Census was the first to include a question on sexual orientation, for residents aged over 16.

91.4% of Broxbourne residents stated they were heterosexual
6.9% did not answer the question
0.9% (707 people) identified as gay or lesbian
0.6% (510 people) identified as bisexual.
0.2% (178 people) identified as having another sexual orientation.

9.9 Gender identity

The 2021 Census was the first to include a question on gender identity, for residents aged over 16.

94% of Broxbourne residents stated they retained the gender identity they were registered at birth
5.6% did not answer the question
0.2 % (163 people) were either a transman or a transwoman
0.2% (117 people) had a different gender identity than that registered at birth but did not state what it was
21 people identified as non-binary and 12 people had another gender identity not stated in the question.

9.10 Deprivation

The Census 2021 identified four indicators of deprivation for households;

Education: A household is classified as deprived if no one has at least a Level 2 education (equivalent to GCSEs) and no one aged 16 to 18 years is a full-time student.

Employment: A household is classified as deprived if any member, not a full-time student, is either unemployed or disabled.

Health: A household is classified as deprived if any member is disabled.

Housing: A household is classified as deprived if the household's accommodation is either overcrowded, in a shared dwelling, or has no central heating.

53.5% of households in Broxbourne were deprived according to at least one of these four indicators. The national figure for England is 51.6%, indicating a higher than average level of deprivation in the Borough.

35.1% of Broxbourne households were deprived according to one of the indicators;
14.6% were deprived according to two indicators;
3.5% were deprived according to three indicators;

0.3% were deprived according to all four indicators.

The Census data has not yet been analysed by ONS to indicate which of the deprivation indicators apply to residents in Broxbourne. The information will be added to this profile when it becomes available.

Broxbourne and Goffs Oak have the lowest proportion of households that are deprived; 41% and 43% respectively. Waltham Cross has the highest level of deprivation; 63% of households are deprived according at least one of the four indicators.

For more serious deprivation, i.e. deprivation according to two or more of the four indicators, rather than just one, Waltham Cross is again the most severely deprived with 26% of households meeting this criterion, whereas for Cheshunt Churchgate and Bury Green it was 23% and for Rosedale, 21%.

9.11 Veterans

Among the 79,347 residents aged 16 and over, a total of 1,782 (2.25%) have served in either the regular or reserve armed forces of the UK for at least one day. This comprises:

1,271, or 1.6% of the adult population who have served only in the regular armed forces

440, or 0.55% of the adult population have served only in the reserves;

71, or 0.09% of the adult population have served in both the regular armed forces and the reserves.

This is slightly below the average for Hertfordshire, which is 2.70%, and well below the average for England, which is 3.78%.

The number of veterans is fairly evenly spread throughout the Borough, but there are slightly higher concentrations in Hoddesdon North, Goffs Oak and Broxbourne.