



North East
Derbyshire
District Council

DRAFT

Equality Plan and Objectives

2023 - 2027



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Foreword

Welcome to North East Derbyshire District Council's Equality Plan for 2023 - 2027. We are committed to providing excellent services shaped by an understanding of the needs of different people and ensuring that how we deliver services promotes equality, inclusion and fairness, and challenges inequality and discrimination in all its forms. We are also committed to ensuring equality as an employer.

The plan supports the new Council Plan and links into its 'living well' and 'accessing good public services' objectives.

This plan builds on the work of previous

equality plans to embed equalities throughout our operations and in our decision-making and partnership working. It also sets out actions we will take to continue to deliver improved equality outcomes for everyone over the next four years.



Cllr Nigel Barker,
*Leader of the
Council*



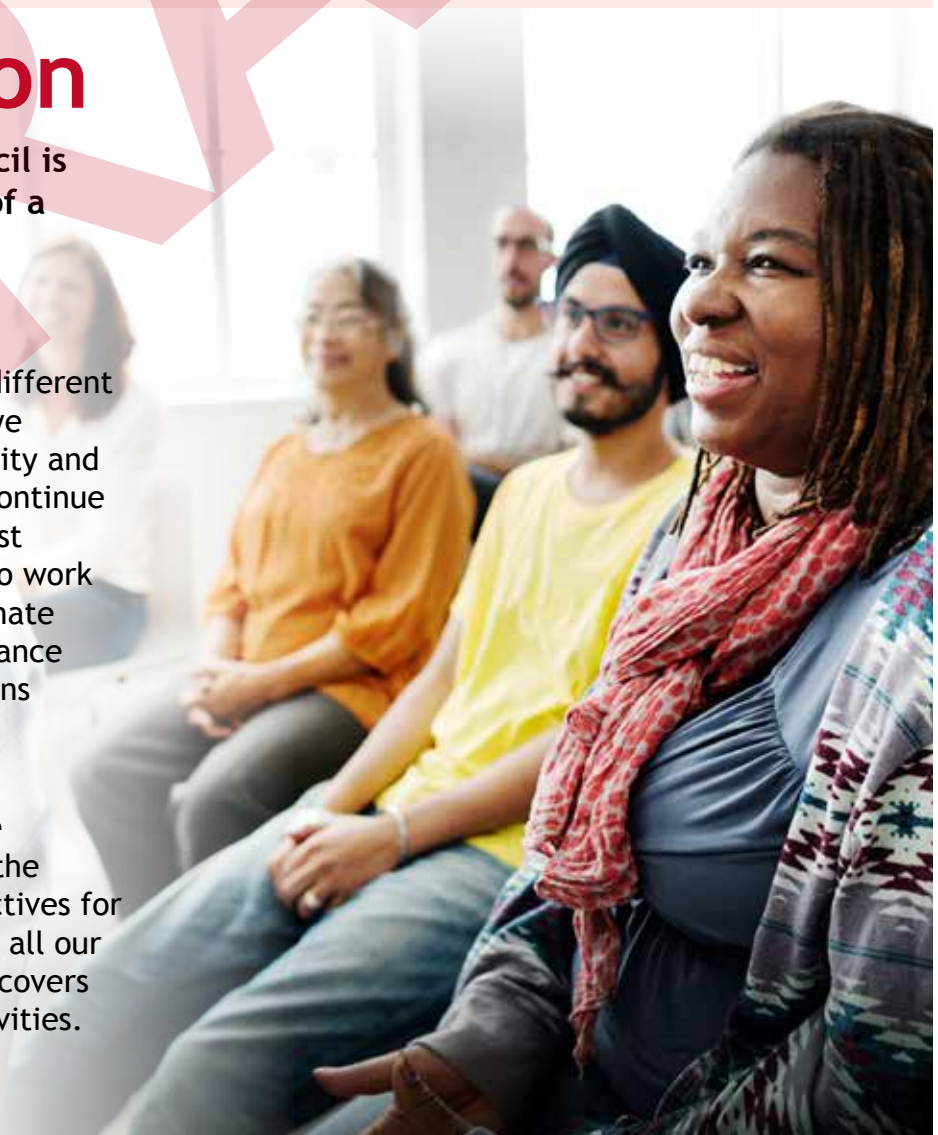
Lee Hickin,
*Managing Director
of NEDDC*

Introduction

North East Derbyshire Council is committed to the creation of a fairer district for everyone.

We are committed to providing excellent services shaped by an understanding of the needs of different people and ensuring that how we deliver services promotes equality and challenges inequality. We will continue to work to understand North East Derbyshire's communities and to work effectively to reduce and eliminate all forms of discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations between all groups in society.

This plan recognises our legal responsibilities as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and includes the council's specific equality objectives for this period. This plan applies to all our employees and Councillors and covers all aspects of the Council's activities.



Legal requirements

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) sets out the general equality duty which requires us in the exercise of our functions to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and 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 Equality Act 2010 covers the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership (only with regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The Equality and Human Rights Commission states 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.¹

In addition to the general equality duty, the Act’s specific sector duties require public bodies to publish relevant, proportionate information demonstrating their compliance with the Equality Duty; and to set themselves specific, measurable equality objectives (at least once every four years). This information is published on the equality page of our website.

The accessibility regulations (Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018) build on our existing obligations to people who have a disability under the Equality Act 2010. They require us to make our website more accessible by making it ‘perceivable, operable, understandable and robust’ and, publish and update an accessibility statement on our website.

¹The Equality and Human Rights Commission: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-equality-duty>

The Council's Approach

We have a range of measures and processes in place to help us meet our obligations under the Equality Act. These include:

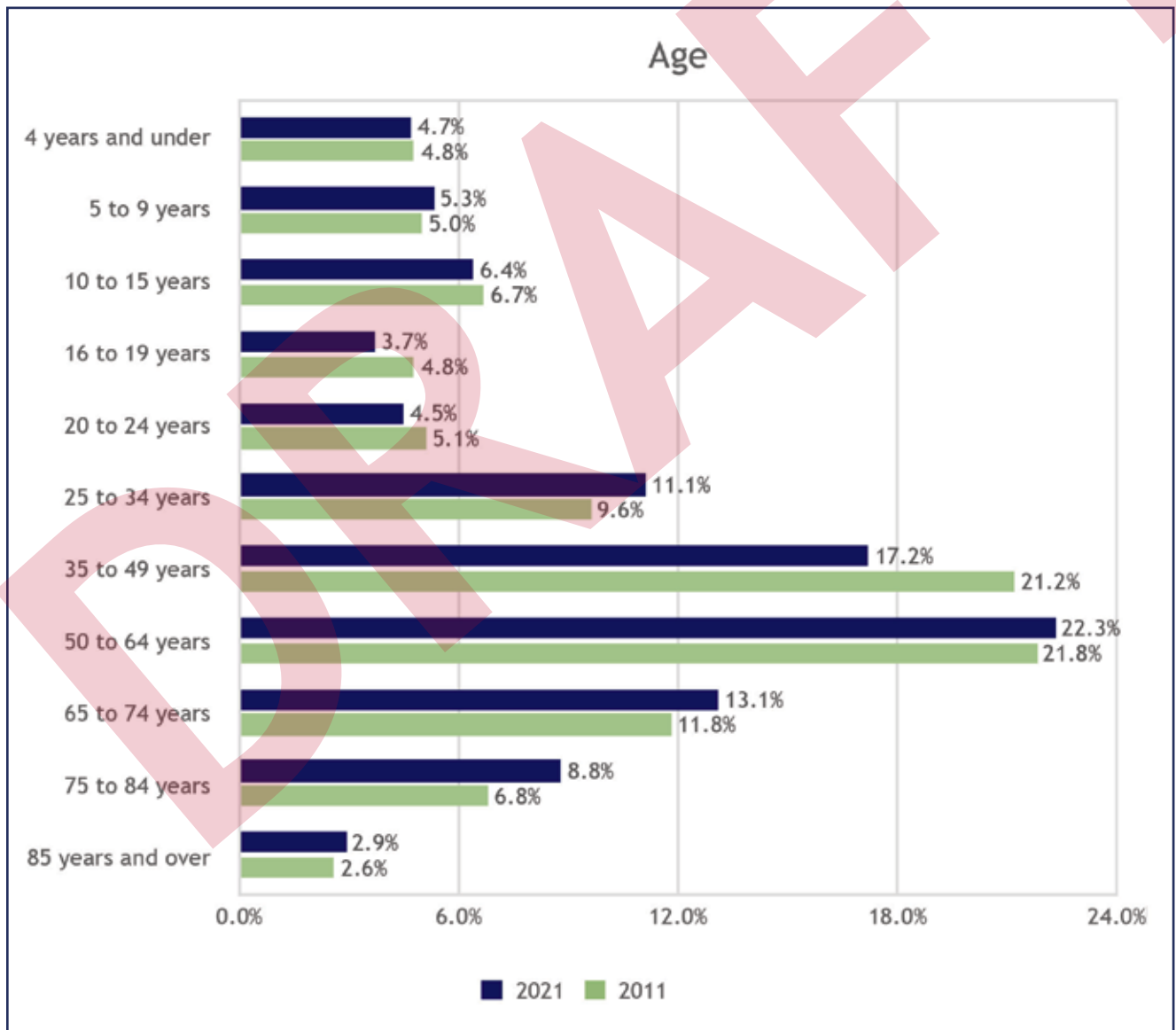
- Being committed to inclusive, accessible and transparent service delivery and information.
- Undertaking consultation and seeking resident, customer and tenant views on services, documents and development within the district.
- Having a Citizens' Panel of approximately 260 residents which we survey twice a year.
- Undertaking equality impact assessments (EIAs) on new policies and strategies concerning people - residents, customers and employees.
- Having a complaints, comments and compliments policy and procedure to enable customers and residents to raise complaints and make suggestions.
- Elected Members and their constituency/community advocate role.
- Providing regular equalities awareness training for staff and Members.
- Building on the work achieved to date under the British Sign Language (BSL) Charter.
- Increasing the range of communications channels including webchat, online forms and BSL sign video to provide customer choice and convenience
- Having an online hate incident reporting form to provide residents with another avenue to report incidents motivated by hate. Unfortunately some individuals are targeted because of their disability or ethnicity or other protected characteristic.
- Helping to reduce inequalities through the provision of community grants.
- Providing reasonable adjustments based on disability and support with interpreters where required.
- Using website testing tools and use of assisted technology to test Council websites and documents for compliance with accessibility regulations and standards.
- Reducing health inequalities through targeted physical exercise provision and wellbeing support.
- Building mutually beneficial relationships with organisations that support disabilities and help to reduce inequalities such as Hearing Help, visit: www.hearinghelpuk.uk and Hidden Disabilities, visit: www.hiddendisabilitiesstore.com.
- Maximising opportunities to reduce inequality when they arise, for example, incorporating Changing Places facilities into the redevelopment of our leisure facilities and putting together well thought through bids for government funding.
- Being a Disability Confident Employer and upholding the commitment to inclusive and accessible recruitment and supporting existing employees

A profile of North East Derbyshire District

Between the last two censuses (held in 2011 and 2021), the population of North East Derbyshire increased by 3.0%, from just over 99,000 in 2011 to around 102,000 in 2021.

The age profile

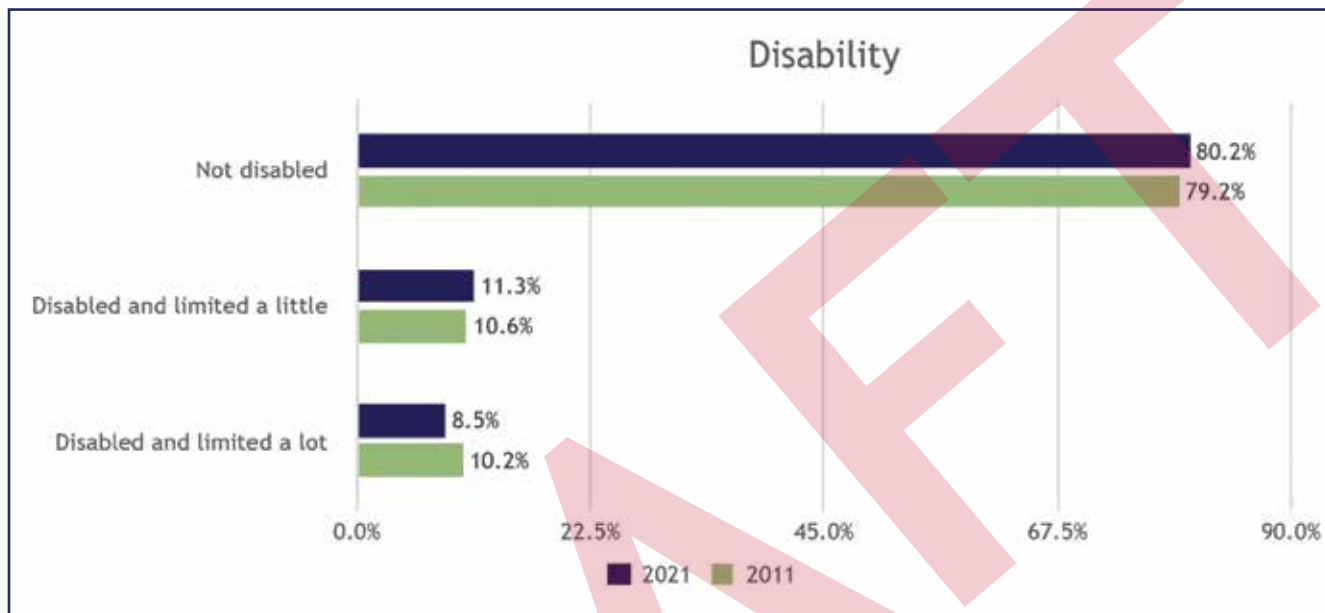
The number of people aged 75 to 84 years rose by around 2,300 (an increase of 34.6%), while the number of residents between 35 and 49 years fell by just over 3,400 (16.3% decrease).



Disability

In 2021, 8.5% of North East Derbyshire residents were identified as being disabled and limited a lot. This figure decreased from 10.2% in 2011. These are age-standardised proportions.

Census 2021 was undertaken during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This may have influenced how people perceived their health status and activity limitations, and therefore may have affected how people chose to respond.



Ethnic groups in North East Derbyshire

In 2021, 1.1% of North East Derbyshire residents identified their ethnic group within the “Mixed or Multiple” category, up from 0.8% in 2011. The 0.4 percentage-point change was the largest increase among high-level ethnic groups in this area.

In 2021, 97.4% of people in North East Derbyshire identified their ethnic group within the “White” category (compared with 98.0% in 2011), while 0.9% identified their ethnic group within the “Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh” category (compared with 0.8% the previous decade).

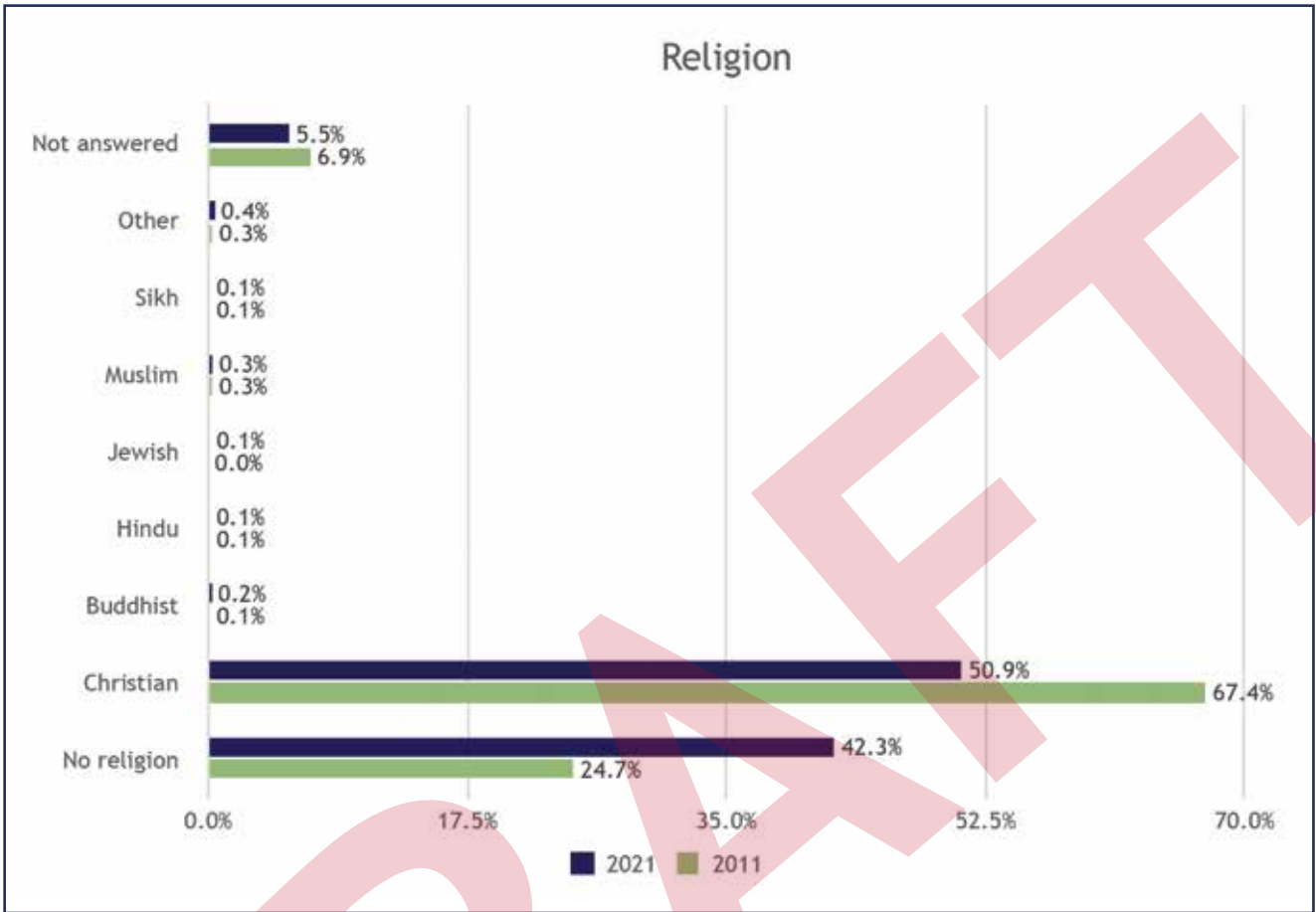


Religion and Faith

In 2021, 42.3% of North East Derbyshire residents reported having “No religion”, up from 24.7% in 2011. The rise of 17.6 percentage points was the largest increase of all broad religious groups in North East Derbyshire. Because the census question about religious affiliation is voluntary

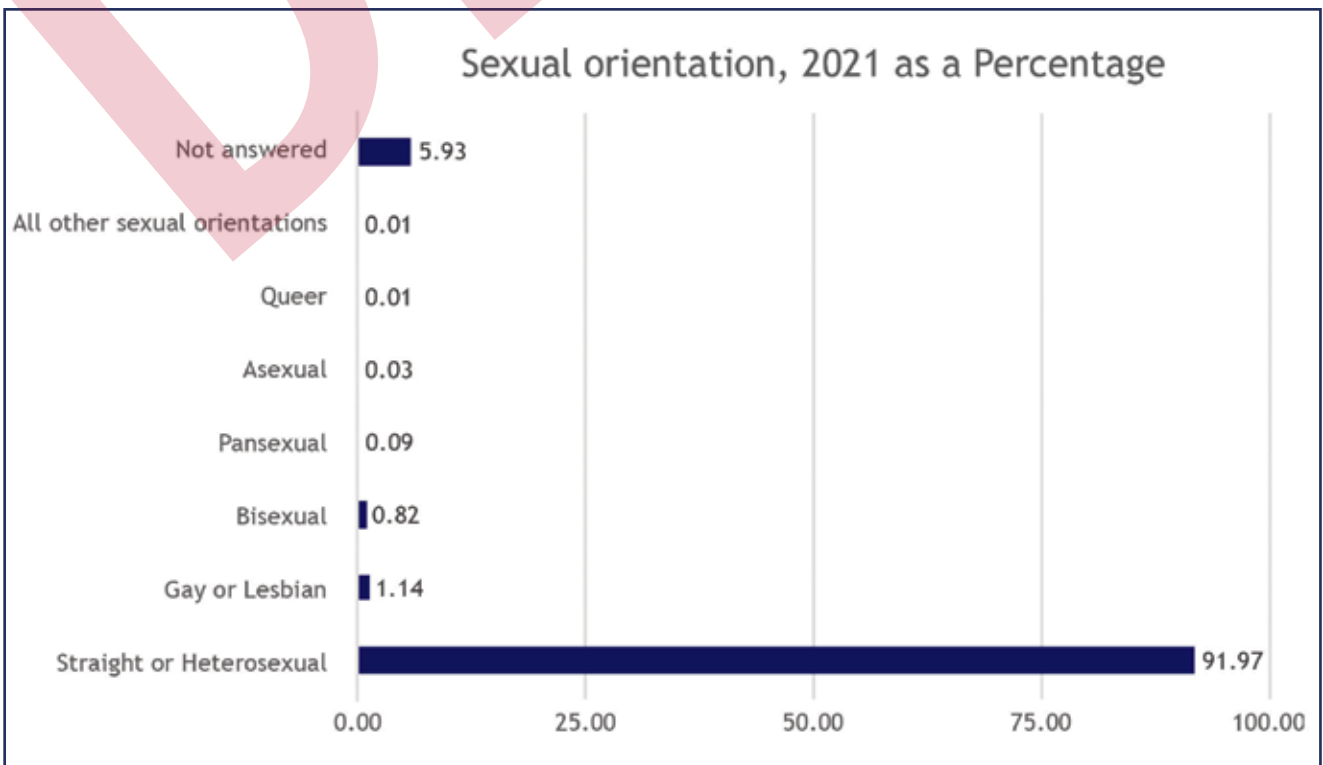
and has varying response rates, caution is needed when comparing figures between different areas or between censuses.

In 2021, 50.9% of people in North East Derbyshire described themselves as Christian (down from 67.4%), while 5.5% did not state their religion (down from 6.9% the decade before).



Sexual Orientation

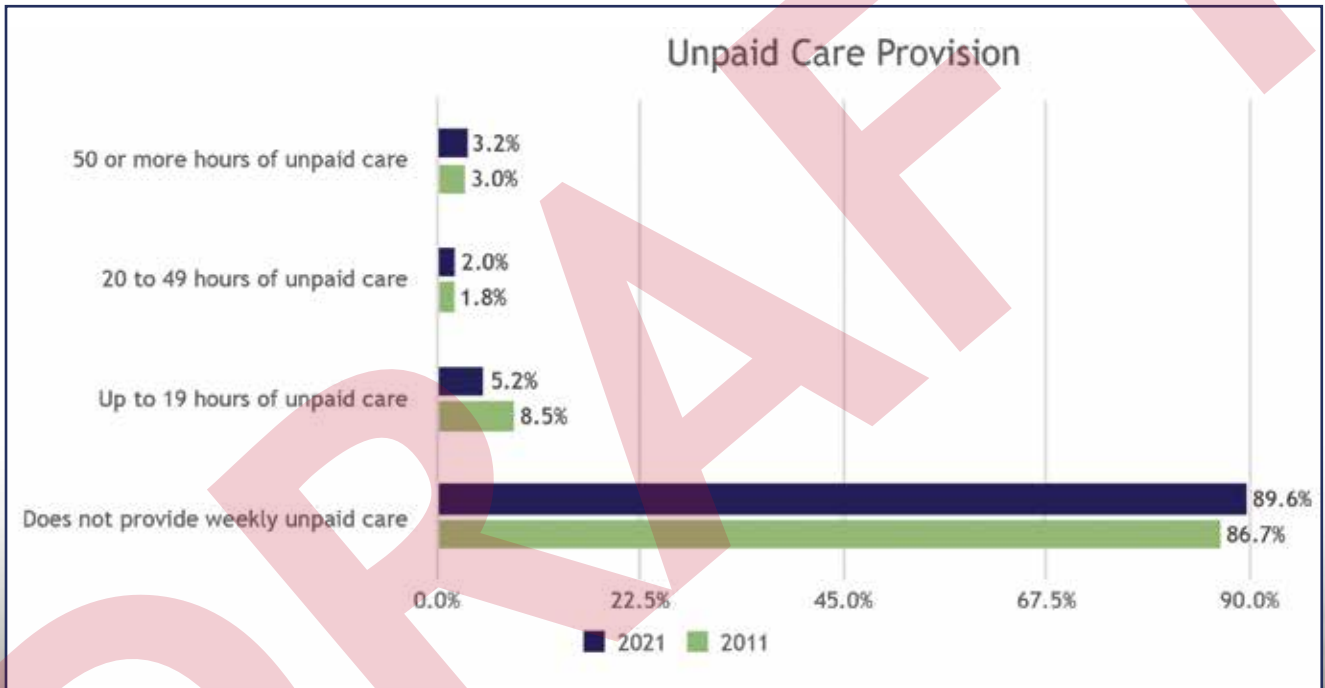
This is the first time sexual orientation has been asked in the census. It shows just under 92% identify as heterosexual.



Unpaid carers

North East Derbyshire saw the East Midlands' second-largest percentage-point fall in the proportion of people (aged five years and over) providing up to 19 hours of weekly unpaid care (from 8.5% in 2011 to 5.2% in 2021). These are age-standardised proportions.

Every local authority area across the East Midlands saw a fall in the proportion of people (aged five years and over) providing up to 19 hours of weekly unpaid care, as the regional proportion fell from 7.4% to 4.6%.



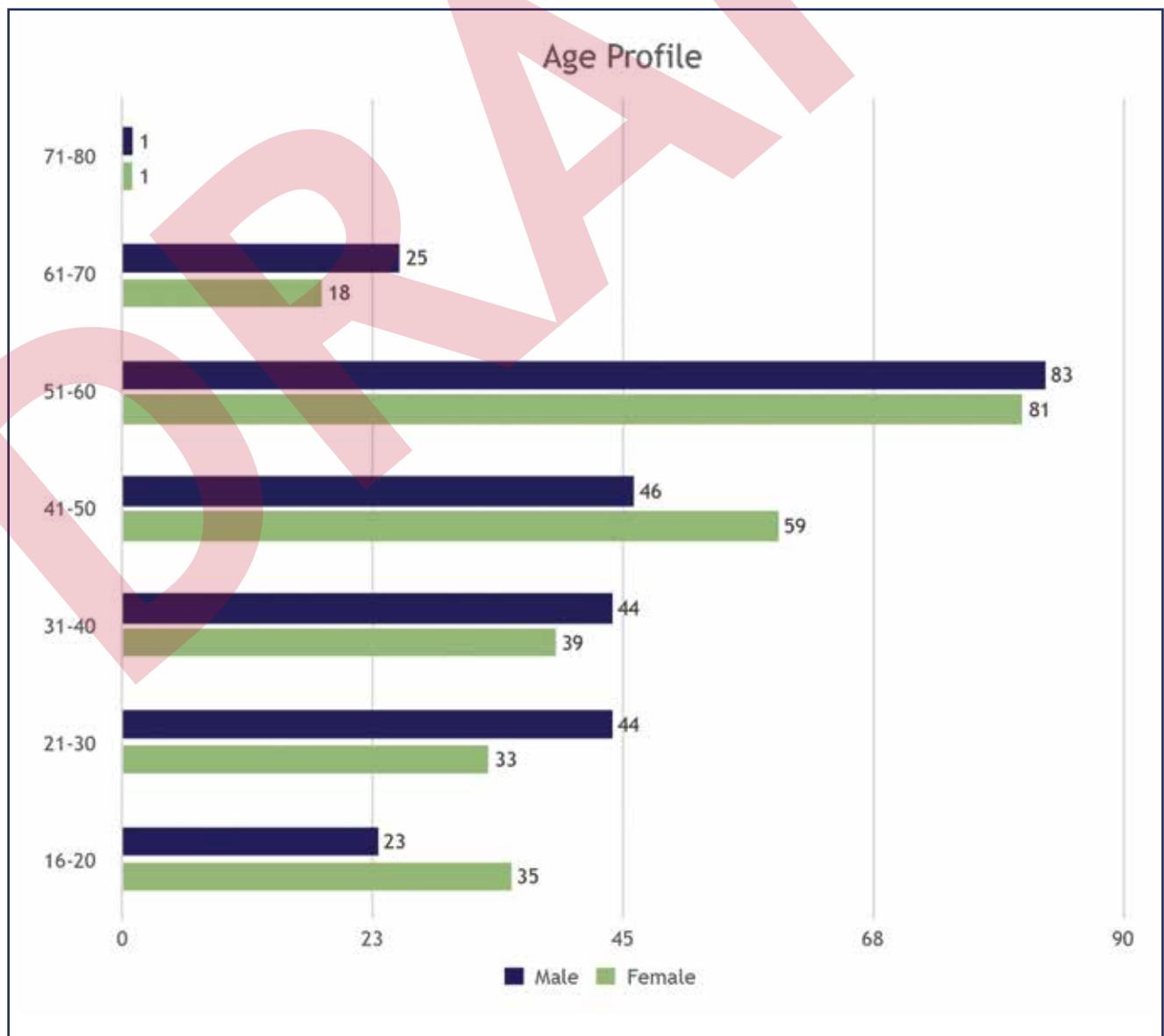
A profile of our Workforce

The Council employs 532 employees (as of 23/03/23), with equal representation between female and male employees at 266 each.

The graph below shows the number of female and male employees by age range. We have more female employees in the age ranges 16 to 20 and 41 to 50, and more male employees in the age ranges 21 to 30 and 61 to 70.

59% of the Council's workforce is aged over 41 years with 20% in the age range 41 to 50 and 31% in the age range 51 to 60.

The Council holds insufficient information on disability and ethnicity to report on those characteristics.



Our equality objectives

The Council's equality objectives have been developed to provide a framework that takes account of our equality journey so far and provides a clear direction for the next stage.

The equality objectives and proposed key actions have been subject to consultation. Responses to the consultation have been used to shape actions under each of the objectives as set out. The four equality objectives together with their key actions are set out here:

Objective 1: Improving customer and resident insight for service planning and delivery purposes

Our aim is to collect more equalities data and undertake more analysis by relevant protected characteristic to deepen our customer insight and improve services as required.

Actions - we will:

- Establish a more consistent approach to equalities data collection by mapping equalities monitoring data collected and evidence base in relevant service areas.
- Use consultation and engagement activity to collect more local information relating to residents with protected characteristics and analyse by characteristic where appropriate to do.
- Review Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) form and guidance.
- Increase the diversity of the Council's Citizens panel.

- Consider the benefits of running a Residents Survey (random sample) to gain perceptions and satisfaction with a larger and more representative sample of residents.
- Consider establishing an email subscribe service for equality and engagement to support information sharing and awareness.
- Explore the Moving Communities (Sport England) platform to understand the impact of leisure on our local communities.
- Analyse hate incident reports over last three years by protected characteristic.

Objective 2: Providing leadership and organisational commitment to actively promote equalities, inclusion and accessibility

This aim has two key elements. The first takes forward how we work across our services and with partners to provide leadership, promote equalities and take account of equality considerations in our decisions. The second is about celebrating diversity and marking events.

Actions - we will:

- Conduct equality assessment awareness training for Managers to support evidence-based decision-making.
- Review whether equality information provided to decisions-makers is sufficient to demonstrate due regard.
- Provide regular equality training for

Councillors to raise awareness and reflect our values.

- Establish an internal equalities group to consider best practice, share learning and to report to the senior management team as required.
- Review monitoring arrangements for website accessibility and compliance with the Accessibility Regulations and consider further improvements.
- Refresh the Equality & Diversity action plan every two years and publish an annual report.
- Proactively promote recognised dates that celebrate diversity and support inclusion through the Council's website and social media such as:
 - International Women's Day
 - Pride
 - National Day for Disabled People
 - Carers Week
 - Older People's Day
 - International Youth Day
 - Race Equality Week
 - International Men's Day
- Review published equalities data is consistent with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) reporting obligations.
- Consider publishing EIAs or summary version.
- Refresh the Council's Consultation Policy.

Objective 3: **Ensuring a diverse and engaged workforce**

Our aim is for all employees and Councillors to support equality through

their actions and behaviour to provide the best services that we can deliver to our communities. We recognise that our workforce is our most valuable asset and we are committed to supporting and promoting equalities in our workforce policies and processes and to engage positively with our employees. We also want to ensure that the Council is an employer of choice and open to all.

Actions - we will:

- Improve workforce equality data collection so that the Council has improved and reliable workforce information to inform workforce policies.
- Continue to review and refresh workforce policies, processes and practices to ensure they support equalities, diversity and inclusion.
- Maintain and enhance our regular equality training for staff to raise awareness and reflect our values.
- Continue to provide specialist training to support equality where required or identified e.g. dementia awareness, deaf awareness, mental health awareness.
- Consider how best to increase diversity in predominately single sex work teams to maximise recruitment potential and trial possible solutions e.g. job share, change in working hours.
- Further develop recruitment and employment equalities information and monitor to ensure our policies are working
- Further improve workforce planning to support workforce diversity and business continuity plans.
- Review our approach to employee engagement to ensure that it is accessible, inclusive and regular.
- Develop our workforce development

programme including the recently adopted Talent Pipeline strategy that takes account of different needs and also promotes equalities, diversity and inclusion as being at the heart of what we do.

- Build on our workforce Health and Wellbeing programme offer based on workforce feedback and national good practice.

Objective 4: Continuing to embed British Sign Language (BSL) Charter pledges

This aim builds on the positive work that the Council has done to date since committing to the BSL Charter in 2019 and

focuses on increasing engagement with the deaf community.

Actions - we will:

- Continue to raise awareness of council consultations as required and provide suitable materials to support engagement from the Deaf community.
- Consider opportunities for engagement with the Deaf community and build into engagement and communication plans.
- Build Deaf Awareness Training into future training plans.
- Review the need for further service videos in BSL (based on feedback from the Deaf community).
- Undertake an audit / call for evidence to review compliance with the BSL Charter pledges.

How we will manage our progress

Progress against the corporate equality objectives will be reviewed on a quarterly basis under the Council's performance monitoring arrangements with information being published annually on our website.

Actions arising from equality impact assessments and/or analysis of equality information from other work such as consultation or satisfaction surveys will be included as tasks within Service Plans and monitored as part of the Council's performance framework.



Responsibilities for equality

North East Derbyshire Council is committed to equalities and has a structure in place for the continued embedding and scrutiny of equalities, from departmental to Cabinet level. The Portfolio Holder for Council Services has the equalities portfolio, as does one Assistant Director.

Senior managers and managers

The Senior Management Team and all managers have a key role in creating a workplace environment where unlawful discrimination, harassment and bullying are not tolerated. All managers are responsible for ensuring that our equality commitments and the requirements of this plan are embedded within their teams and service delivery. All managers support the corporate equality objectives and identify and undertake service level equality actions.

Employees

Employees have a key role in promoting equality. Employees should understand the relevance and importance of equality to their roles, be committed to delivering excellent services shaped by the needs of different people, and report any equality issues to their managers or HR.

The Performance Team provides support for equality impact assessments, monitors and delivers some of the actions under the corporate equality objectives and equality actions from Service Plans and monitors and updates the Equality Plan. They also support the collection and publication of equality information.

Councillors

The support of Councillors in the development of a fairer North East Derbyshire and in the achievement of the corporate equality objectives is essential. Councillors have a vital community leadership role in relation to equality and in engaging with communities and acting as conduits for community information.

How we will cascade this information

The Equality Plan and objectives for 2023 - 2027 will be communicated to staff through team meetings, the intranet and equality awareness training.

Councillors will receive information about the Equality Plan and objectives as part of their induction programme in 2023 and subsequent Member Briefings. The Equality Plan and objectives will also be published on our website for members of the public to view.

Equalities Statement

North East Derbyshire District Council is committed to equalities as an employer and when delivering the services it provides to all sections of the community.

The Council believes that no person should be treated unfairly and is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination, advancing equality and fostering good relations between all groups in society.

Access for All statement

You can request this document or information in another format such as large print or language or contact us by:

- Phone: [01246 231111](tel:01246231111)
- Email: connectne@ne-derbyshire.gov.uk
- Text: [07800 00 24 25](tel:07800002425)
- BSL Video [Call](#): a FREE, three way video call with us and a BSL interpreter.
- Call with [Relay UK](#) via textphone or app on [0800 500 888](tel:0800500888). FREE phone service for anyone who has difficulty hearing or speaking.
- Visiting our [offices](#) at Wingerworth: 2013 Mill Lane, [S42 6NG](tel:01246231111).

