

‘All of Us’ in Bracknell Forest

Equalities Monitoring Annual Summary Report 2024-25

December 2025



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Appendices: service level reports

- A. Adult social care equalities monitoring report
- B. Children's social care equalities monitoring report
- C. Community safety equalities monitoring report
- D. Customer services equalities monitoring report
- E. Early help equalities monitoring report
- F. Education and learning equalities monitoring report
- G. Housing equalities monitoring report
- H. Leisure services equalities monitoring report
- I. Library services equalities monitoring report
- J. Place equalities monitoring report
- K. Welfare services equalities monitoring report

The reports on each of these services are also available [on the council's website](#).

Introduction

Equality is a priority for the council and is a cross-cutting principle underpinning the delivery of our Council Plan. Across the plan, and through the design of our services and work with partners, we are committed to supporting those most in need of help and tackling inequalities.

Our vision for the borough is where we put residents first, working together to grow sustainable, resilient, and inclusive communities. The Bracknell Forest Council Plan 2023-27 sets out our ambitions, goals and priorities to achieve this, both for and working with residents, businesses, and partners. These are:



Engaged and healthy communities

To help create opportunities where people can succeed, be happy and feel safe.



Thriving and connected economy

The local economy includes many different aspects, such as businesses, jobs, skills, accommodation and services.



Green and sustainable environment

Our environment includes everything around us: our parks, our cycleways and our road networks.

In delivering these priorities, we want to ensure that our services are inclusive and accessible for all, and we are committed to working with our residents to achieve this. We strive to create an inclusive borough for all and to tackle inequalities where they exist. This commitment underpins everything we do and goes beyond our legal responsibilities.

The public sector equality duty

The public sector equality duty (PSED) is a key lever for ensuring that public sector organisations, like Bracknell Forest Council embed equality across all its policies and services. In carrying out its functions, the council is required to give due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited in 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, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding

The PSED also requires the council to:

1. publish annual 'equality information' to demonstrate our compliance
2. set one or more 'equality objective' at least every four years
3. publish annually gender pay gap information

It's important that the council considers how its decisions advance equality, inclusion and diversity by removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people because of their protected characteristics.

Protected characteristics

There are nine 'protected characteristics' (detailed below) covered by the Equalities Act – for marriage and civil partnerships, the council is only required to ensure it eliminates discrimination, harassment, and victimisation on these grounds.



In addition, the council also considers how our services, policies, and practices could impact other groups who may face additional barriers; for example, people with caring responsibilities, those who are care-experienced, people facing financial hardship, and members of the military and veteran community.

This report summarises how the council has advanced equalities and inclusivity and demonstrated how we have met our commitments set out in equality legislation over the period from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

Bracknell Forest Council Equality Scheme

The equality scheme sets out our commitment to advancing equity and inclusion across Bracknell Forest. The scheme describes how equity, diversity and inclusion are essential to the way we operate as a community leader, a service provider and an employer and is integral to everything we do.

The equality scheme provides a framework for our equality objectives over a four-year period, it sets out clearly the priorities whether it is in how we work with residents, in the services we provide or through the retention and recruitment of our workforce.

The equality scheme is linked to our service planning process to ensure that the implementation of the equality objectives is integrated, wherever possible, into the mainstream delivery and monitoring of services across the council. The council has four equality objectives, three of which are outward-looking (focussed on residents and service users) and one that is inward-looking (focussed on our workforce). These are:

Inclusive in
all we do

Accessible
for all

Accountable
and fair

Diverse and
inclusive
workforce

This report details the progress made in delivering the final year of Bracknell Forest Council's 2021-2025 four equality objectives, detailed below.

The council's equality objectives for 2021-2025 have now been updated to include a set of refreshed equality objectives over the period 2025-29. These can be found at [All of Us Equality Scheme 2025 to 2029](#).

Monitor our progress

We recognise that equality and diversity is not a parallel process or something to think about once a year. It is a fundamental part of improving services for everyone.

Each equality objective is underpinned by annual priority actions that take the council towards the achievement of the 3-year strategy. Equality actions identified within the equalities scheme are incorporated within directorate delivery plans and monitored quarterly (detailed at Annex A).

The progress made in delivering our equality objectives is monitored quarterly by the council's equalities group, regularly reported to our corporate management team and published yearly on the council's website.



Equality, diversity and inclusion highlights 2024-25

This report does not seek to capture everything undertaken in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion. Instead, it highlights some of the key achievements across customer facing teams over 2024-2025 in meeting our equalities responsibilities.

Individual service reports and the Workforce Annual Report 2024-25 should be read alongside this report and are available [on the council's website](#).

Inclusive in all we do

We will continue to make our services more inclusive and culturally competent in a borough where everyone is made to feel included and valued.

- **Access and inclusion across services**

Customer services made it easier for residents to access support via multiple channels including telephone, online, in person, and via social media, with translation services and volunteers supporting non-English speakers. All teams embed cultural competence and inclusive practice in service delivery.

- **Children's social care, early help, education, and youth services**

Families from diverse backgrounds, including Afghan, Hong Kong, Nepali, and Romanian communities, received targeted support. Joint youth justice panels ensured fair decision-making and disproportionality monitoring. Youth services offered inclusive activities such as LGBTQIA+ groups, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) youth clubs and participation in Bracknell's Pride and the first Bracknell Games, an inclusive event aimed at primary aged school children who ordinarily would not be chosen to participate in school sports based events.

- **Adult social care, Public Health, and welfare services**

Mental health and carers' support groups were expanded. Public Health worked with marginalised communities to co-design culturally sensitive health programmes. Welfare services continued to provide accessible advice and support, including translation services and home visits.

- **Housing services**

In line with our commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant, current and former members of the armed forces are recognised and prioritised accordingly in the new policy. The policy recognised armed forces members and their families, with a band B automatically provided for those who have been medically discharged as one example. Other examples include the removal of the local connection criteria for armed forces personnel and their families.

- **Libraries and education services**

Adult and community learning delivered programmes in ESOL (English as a second or other language), English, maths, and employability. Libraries ran inclusive events and promoted cultural awareness through celebrations such as Holocaust Memorial Day, Black History Month, Diwali and Pride, and provided accessible digital services and home delivery.

- **Leisure, parks, and community spaces**

Inclusive play equipment was installed, disability-friendly leisure sessions delivered, and AccessAble guides were developed to improve accessibility in venues across Bracknell Forest.

- **Communities**

The council continued to progress towards the armed forces employer recognition Gold Award and celebrated key cultural and equality dates internally and publicly such as religious festivals, health awareness days and weeks, and national UK saint's days. Borough-wide events such as the annual Pride and Culture and Community Day were also celebrated.

Accessible for all

We ensure that we provide information, engage and communicate in ways that are easy to understand for all.

- **Adult social care, health and welfare services**

Autism drop-in services, dementia support in multiple formats and languages, translation support and telecare services enabled residents to access the help they need. Welfare services provided appointments, home visits, and translation support for housing benefit, council tax support, and local welfare schemes.

- **Children's social care, early help and education services**

Early identification of speech and language needs in schools, digital engagement tools (Mind of My Own), and multilingual family information service resources improved accessibility for children, families and SEND residents.

- **Housing services**

A new housing allocation policy launched in May 2025, making the policy fairer and easier to understand. Housing services provided multiple communication channels, including in-person, home visits, outreach, phone, email, and digital options, with translation support.

- **Libraries and learning services**

Library buildings are accessible and offer home library delivery, loanable tablets, free Wi-Fi, audio books, and DVDs. Bracknell Library provides free SIM cards to residents without internet access.

- **Community and leisure services**

Community maps, digital kiosks, and accessible transport enabled participation in inclusive activities, events, and summer programmes.

- **Communities**

Alternative formats for documents, induction loops at Time Square, and the disability access advisory panel's action plan have contributed to improved borough-wide accessibility.

Accountable and fair

We will treat all people fairly without favouritism or discrimination while recognising some people will need additional support.

- **Adult social care and health services**

Adult social care collaborated with GPs, probation, and voluntary groups to ensure equitable access for vulnerable populations. Dementia forums and quality assurance panels engaged service users and carers to improve service delivery.

- **Children's social care, early help, and education services**

Children and young people with SEND participated in a BOOM (Because Our Opinion Matters) event. Inclusive and bespoke parenting programmes were delivered to parents and carers across the borough. Early help provided financial support, transport, interpreter services, and tailored SEND programmes. Education welfare services supported Electively Home Educated children with access to health, careers guidance and other key resources.

- **Youth justice and community safety**

Disproportionality audits promoted fairness in youth justice for children looked after, girls and other groups. The young carers service delivered accessible support under the 2024 all-age carers strategy.

- **Housing and welfare services**

The new housing allocation policy prioritises fairness, clarity, and high housing need. Disabled Facilities Grants supported residents with home adaptations to increase independence. Welfare services ensured equitable support for residents applying for benefits or local welfare schemes.

- **Leisure services**

Foster carers received free access to Coral Reef and Bracknell Leisure Centre to ensure fair and inclusive participation.

Diverse and Inclusive workforce

We are committed to developing an inclusive and people-focussed culture where diversity is valued and celebrated. Our values of being inclusive, ambitious and always learning ensures that everyone is treated fairly and with dignity and respect. The progress made includes:

- **Training and professional development**

Staff completed e-learning and mandatory training in equality, diversity and inclusion, racial equality, unconscious bias, and specialist areas such as learning disability & autism. Senior social care leaders attended cultural humility and anti-racist practice workshops. Apprenticeships and development programmes targeted underrepresented groups.

- **Staff networks and forums**

Council-wide groups, including neurodiversity and disability, staff allies/Pause for Menopause, and equality allies, provide safe spaces for staff to share experiences, raise concerns, and learn from each other. The disability and neurodiversity staff forum meet monthly with HR and learning and organisational development staff.

- **Fair recruitment and workforce practices**

Recruitment follows anonymised processes removing personal characteristics such as age and ethnicity to ensure fairness. Transport and highways adopted a best-practice recruitment process. Suppliers must demonstrate inclusion principles in service delivery. A zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, harassment, and victimisation is enforced in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Conclusion

This report, and the associated service area reports, show that significant progress has been made against delivering the equality objectives, and in our compliance to paying due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duties, over 2024 to 2025. We continue to ensure that these are embedded in all council functions and are part of the decision-making process.

However, we are not complacent and acknowledge that more remains to be done. We recognise we have some big challenges ahead and that we need to continue to learn and embed equality into everything that we do for our residents, visitors, businesses and workforce.

Where gaps have been identified in individual service monitoring reports, appropriate actions will be taken to address them and strengthen our performance against the general equality duty, with a focus on achieving specific outcomes.

The progress made in achieving council performance measures relating to equalities is summarised in Annex A.



Annex A

Council performance measures relating to equalities.

Indicators as of 31 March 2025	Latest result	Target / forecast	RAG Status
1.1.3.KR percentage of children with EHCP (5-16yrs) with school placement in borough	73.6%	75.0%	Green
1.4.2.PI children and young people's visits to Everyone Active leisure facilities	134,992	95,213	Green
1.4.3.PI older people's visits to Everyone Active leisure facilities	27,063	21,788	Green
1.4.4.PI visits by customers with a disability to Everyone Active leisure facilities	7,379	3,368	Green
1.4.5.PI active communities or health and wellbeing visits to Everyone Active leisure facilities	9,995	3,500	Green
1.5.1.KR visits to Bracknell Forest libraries (excl. home library) - year to date	381,344	250,000	Green
4.5.1.CI percentage of women in the top 5 per cent of staff earners	62.5%	55.0%	Green
4.5.2.CI percentage of Black and minority ethnic (BME) in the top 5 per cent of staff earners	17.8%	15.0%	Green
4.5.3.CI percentage of disabled staff in the top 5% of staff earners	9.8%	9.0%	Green
4.5.5.CI percentage of employees from a Black and minority ethnic (BME) background	12.1%	11.8%	Green
4.5.6.CI gender pay gap	14.9%	10.0%	Green

Actions as of 31 March 2025	Status	Due Date	Percentage Complete
ORG.1.03 rebrand and relaunch printed residents' magazine, including print, delivery and e-newsletter	Completed	31/03/2025	100%
ORG.1.10 development of overview and scrutiny to provide effective challenge and reviews	Green	31/03/2025	90%
ORG.1.13 establish corporate complaints policy and system to promote compliance and support improvement	Completed	31/03/2025	100%
ORG.4.01 launch new corporate comms strategy, deliver year one priorities including stakeholder engagement	Amber	31/03/2025	85%
ORG.4.02 procure external interpretation and translation company to support accessible comms with all	Amber	31/03/2025	40%
ORG.4.03 develop communities strategy and work with residents for resilient and cohesive communities	Green	31/03/2025	50%
ORG.4.07 lead public engagement on local transport plan and supplementary planning documents	Amber	31/03/2025	85%
COM.1.01 finalise the new Bracknell Forest youth strategy and develop action plan	Completed	30/06/2024	100%
COM.1.06 delivery of a new all-age integrated autism strategy	Green	31/03/2025	80%
COM.1.09 co-produce new learning and achievement strategy to improve outcomes for all pupils	Completed	31/03/2025	100%
COM.3.03 co-produce adult social care annual report to engage with residents on future	Completed	31/12/2024	100%
COM.4.05 deliver and increase participation in Bikeability training, including for young cyclists	Completed	31/03/2025	100%

Actions as of 31 March 2025	Status	Due Date	Percentage Complete
COM.5.01 support mobilisation and opening of Bucklers Park, Crowthorne and Binfield Community Centre	Completed	31/03/2025	100%
COM.5.02 co-produce community events to support cohesion, engagement, diversity and inclusion	Completed	30/09/2024	100%
COM.5.03 launch and deliver Y1 thriving communities for community and organisational development	Green	31/03/2025	80%
COM.5.04 develop new 'all of us' equality scheme for 2025-29 (public sector equality duty)	Completed	31/03/2025	100%
COM.5.06 support the community association's that manage the council's community centres	Completed	31/03/2025	100%
COM.5.07 deliver Berkshire Civilian-Military Partnership action plan with partners	Completed	31/03/2025	100%
COM.5.08 develop and deliver the Bracknell Forest Civilian-Military Partnership 2024-25 action plan	Completed	31/03/2025	100%
COM.6.04 ensure resource available to prevent and relieve rough sleeping in the borough	Completed	31/03/2025	100%
ENV.1.02 community and VCFS engagement to raise awareness and support carbon reduction and climate change	Completed	31/03/2025	100%
ENV.1.03 to support the creation of a community climate emergency strategy	Green	31/12/2024	45%
ECN.1.01 ICT expertise for Open Learning centre (OLC) community learning team for new management information system (MIS)	Completed	31/03/2025	100%

If you need this information in a different format, accessible PDF, large print, easy read, audio recording or braille or wish to discuss the strategy with us please contact:
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call: **01344 352000**

