



Lichfield
District Council

Our equality statement

How we delivered equality, diversity and inclusion in 2023

This statement is available to download at:
www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/equalitystatement

If you would like this document in large print, another format or colour, please call 01543 308129 or email edi@lichfielddc.gov.uk

Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Our equality duty and objectives	4
3. Delivering equality in our services during 2023.....	5
4. Our service equality priorities in 2023.....	15
5. Our service equality priorities for 2024	19
6. Delivering equality in employment during 2023	20
7. Workforce data	21
8. Equality in employment improvements in 2023.....	24
9. Our employment equality priorities for 2024.....	25
10. How we monitor progress and identify equality issues	25

Appendix

Our district profile.....	26
---------------------------	----

1. Introduction

Our equality statement shows how we are meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), under The Equality Act 2010.

It helps our customers, staff, the Equality & Human Rights Commission, regulators and other interested parties assess our performance and our compliance with equality legislation. It also shows how we are meeting the equality objectives we have set.

We continue to want ‘inclusion and belonging’ to be the watchword phrase articulated by anyone working for Lichfield District Council when talking about what it is like to be an officer here.

We believe valuing diversity and welcoming the different perspectives others can provide to discussions and problem solving, will make us a better council.

Having respect for everyone is a core value of the council and we work together across teams, services and organisational boundaries to deliver effective services.

In 2022, we launched a new operating model for the way we deliver our services across our district. This model has enabled us to become more resident-centric, commercially minded and data and performance driven.

We continue to build a more inclusive organisation that represents our district and values our staff for who they are and what they contribute to our council and communities.

As part of this, we strive to deliver equality across the nine protected characteristics and demonstrate how equality considerations are embedded in our decision-making processes, and how they can influence both our service delivery and employment practices.

2. Our equality duty and objectives

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a public sector equality duty to have due regard of the need to:

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

Our equality objectives help us to focus attention on the priority equality issues for us, to deliver improvements in policy making, service delivery and employment, including resource.

Our objectives are:

- To scrutinise and improve access to our services ensuring we treat people fairly, provide our customers with equal opportunity, and that we gain business benefits from our services being accessible to the maximum number of people.
- To ensure our workforce profile reflects best practice in recruitment and, in consultation with our staff, continue to develop a culture that is both inclusive and open.
- To further promote the use of equality impact assessments so they become fully embedded in our planning and decision-making process.

3. Delivering equality in our services during 2023

We deliver a range of services, which we adapt and review to meet local needs and opportunities and to take account of our funding situation. We also offer a range of services that particularly support individuals with protected characteristics. Our teams carried out a range of activities to support our equalities objectives in 2023 detailed in this section.

3.1 Active Lichfield District - our leisure centres

In 2023 the management of our two leisure centres transferred from a private provider to the council's wholly owned trading company. With the support of several key partners, we have provided a range of activities to support our equalities objectives. These included:

- Older adults – aerobics, pilates, relaxation classes, walking netball, walking football, chair yoga, cricket, exercise sessions and silver circuits.
- Children and young people – coaching courses and sessions in swimming, football, gymnastics, tennis, multi-games and dance.
- Adults and young people with physical and learning difficulties - coaching sessions.
- Mothers and toddlers – swimming sessions, new soft play facility and football coaching.
- Children and young people (aged 5 - 16 years) – free holiday activity and food sessions for pupils who receive benefit related free school meals.
- Health referral scheme – to support residents with health conditions to become active.
- Dementia friendly activities.
- We offer free Leisure Activity Passports (LAP) to people with disabilities, carers, people aged 60+ and those on means tested benefits. LAPs provide up to 30% savings on leisure activities across the district.

Our team also provided specific targeted intervention programmes which included:

- Getin2it diversionary programme to reduce anti-social behaviour among young people aged from 7 to 19 years.
- Health & wellbeing programme including pickleball, women's wellbeing yoga, gentle fit, parent and toddler yoga and Tai Chi.
- Developed an Active Lichfield referral pathway working with social prescribers tackling health inequalities.
- Disability multi-sports sessions for young people aged 5 to 18.
- Parks activities including physical activity, physical literacy and wellbeing programmes.
- Physical activity sessions for young carers.

- [US Girls programme](#) to increase female participation in sport, supporting and providing awareness to women and girls in the community, aged from 8-25 years.
- [Let's Get Physical](#) programme to target inactivity in 8–11-year-olds.
- [Hello Velo](#) event included adapted bikes for people with disabilities.

During 2024 our team will:

- [Expand the Active Lichfield referral pathway](#) to work with other community organisations to tackle health inequalities.
- [Introduce a health and wellbeing outreach programme](#) to older people in independent living and care homes.
- [Launch Play Streets](#), a resident-led short road closure, creating a safe space for children to play freely together on their doorstep.

Find out more at www.activelichfielddistrict.co.uk

3.2 Building control

We continued to enforce building regulations where we are the regulator, to ensure the built environment is accessible and can be used by the whole community, particularly people with a physical disability. Find out more at www.centralbc.org.uk

3.3 Car parking and pedestrianisation

We provide disabled car parking spaces in most of our council-owned car parks. The Friary multi-storey, Bird Street and Lombard Street car parks are the most accessible due to the number of disabled spaces and their close proximity to the city centre.

Parking in Lichfield City district council-owned car parks is free to blue badge holders, even if parked in a non-disabled space, provided their badge is displayed. We also provide a Changing Spaces public toilet in our Friary car park in Lichfield City and Swan Road toilets which is close to Bird Street car park. In partnership with Staffordshire County Council, we began trialing pedestrianisation within Lichfield City centre. Our aim is to create a safe, prosperous, and vibrant city centre, whilst balancing the needs of all city centre users.

We consulted with stakeholders throughout 2023 to continuously assess the trial's impact. This included introducing an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) that has enabled us to trial various arrangements and get feedback from city users to help revise and tailor the scheme.

Find out more at www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/pedestrianisation

3.4 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 (s106) agreements

We work with developers to secure contributions towards community improvements and infrastructure and engage all sectors of the community in determining how to best use these funds.

These contributions help to reduce the impact of developments on local areas and create better quality environments in and around new developments. Projects funded range from improving roads and building new community facilities, through to creating open spaces and improving local schools.

In 2023, we continued to secure and allocate contributions toward appropriate projects. Examples of projects that have positively impacted on communities and specific groups of people include funding for community halls and spaces to accommodate community activities, provision of open spaces, enhancing medical facilities, supporting a range of arts projects, and contributing towards new school provision.

We also funded a range of local infrastructure and initiatives which aim to positively impact our communities including:

- A climbing wall, soft play and a new play area at Burntwood Leisure Centre.
- Adventure golf, obstacle course and padel tennis courts at Beacon Park.
- Play equipment at Chase Terrace Park.
- Variable traffic signage in Lichfield City Centre.

Looking to the future we will continue to work with developers to secure these contributions and engage all stakeholders and sectors of the community when we determine how best to use these funds.

Find out more at www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/howdevelopmentshelp.

3.5 Community funding

We distributed grants ranging from £6,000 and £50,000 to the local voluntary and community sector groups to deliver outcomes that support groups of residents within the local community. In 2023 this included:

- **MHA Communities (the Lichfield and District Live at Home Scheme)** – support for their members including dementia day care, developing digital skills, shopping support, care checks and telephone befriending.
- **Liberty Jamboree** – provide new and exciting opportunities for young people and adults with learning and physical barriers in and around Staffordshire.
- **Royal National Institute for Deaf People** – awareness raising and support to improve the wellbeing of older people with hearing loss.
- **Spark** – wellbeing activities for young people and older people, including wellbeing walks for men and support sessions for dads and male carers.
- **Friends2Friends** – offering more opportunities for people with learning disabilities to develop skills and friendship groups.
- **Pathway** – supporting those who have experienced economic abuse and helping them address the issues that this presents.
- **CRUSE** – bereavement care for residents across the district.
- **Support Staffordshire** – support for the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector.
- **South-East Staffordshire Citizens Advice Bureau** – providing debt, financial and wider advice to residents across the district.
- **Phoenix Counselling Service** - a low-cost counselling service for adults living in Burntwood, Lichfield and the surrounding areas who are unable to afford private counselling.
- **Lichfield Arts** - an independent registered charity based in the centre of Lichfield which is mainly run and supported by volunteers.

We have supported The Hub @ St. Mary's in their Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan, using funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). The funding has supported projects aiming to reduce incidences of hate crime in Lichfield, support young people, particularly those with mental health issues, support young families, support black and brown business owners and artists, support refugees in Lichfield, and celebrate diversity and promote racial and religious harmony across the city.

Also, as part of the UKSPF, we have launched the US Girls programme which is designed to increase and sustain young women's participation in sport and physical activity, tailoring the delivery specifically for disadvantaged and vulnerable young women and girls within the district who are from low socio-economic backgrounds.

Find out more at www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/communityfunding

3.6 Customer services

We continued to ensure that our customer services were welcoming and accessible to all in the following ways:

- Our reception is open during the week between 9am and 5pm for general enquiries.
- Customers with in-depth enquiries or those who need additional support can book face-to-face appointments with our trained advisors.
- We offer wellbeing and cost of living drop-in sessions across the district so we are more accessible for anyone who cannot travel to us or has concerns using the telephone or going online.
- Our reception area offers level flooring and entry to the building is via a pavement ramp through double width doors or up steps. We are enhancing our buildings further in 2024 to ensure that meetings rooms and public spaces within the building are more accessible.
- Our reception area has a portable hearing loop and our reception desk is wheelchair user friendly.
- We have a gender-neutral accessible toilet for visitors, also offering free sanitary products.
- We offer British Sign Language translation through the Sign Live app, allowing customers who are deaf or have hearing loss to use BSL to communicate with us easily over the phone and face to face. Find out more at www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/signlive
- Introduced a live chat option available on the website which allows customers to interact online increasing the options available for customers to engage with the council. Visit www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/livechat
- We introduced an electronic Sign In app for visitors with appointments, and our reception team are available to assist.
- We encourage the use of our online services, however, for anyone unable to self-serve online, we offer telephone and face-to-face appointments.
- Our customer services team regularly receives safeguarding and equality training.
- We can offer translation services to customers on request.

Find out more at www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/contact

3.7 Digital services

We continued to ensure our website is welcoming and accessible in the following ways:

- Use of descriptive headers and images so a screen reader can pick them up.
- Clear font colour contrast.
- Descriptive links for easy access on a screen reader.
- Clear and consistent navigation and use of plain English.
- Access to digital forms has been simplified into a single form making it easy to find the right one and they are all accessible and easy to complete. Visit www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/oneform
- Worked with a broad range of customers to test and enhance new developments.
- Introduced AccessAble guides on our website which provide detailed accessibility guides to local council facilities including leisure centres, public toilets, car parks and more. Find out more at www.accessable.co.uk
- Utilised testing software to ensure our web pages remain accessible, compliant, and easy to read.

3.8 Disabled facilities grants (DFGs)

In 2023 the management of disabled facilities grants transferred from a private provider to the council's wholly owned trading company. During the year, grants were approved for 115 disabled adaptations and 65 residents received their disabled adaptation.

These adaptations allow residents to live safely and more independently within their own homes, relieving pressures on carers and hospital admissions.

3.9 Governance, democracy and elections

We continued to develop the Lichfield District Youth Council to engage, consult and empower local young people, hosting regular meetings and workshops.

Our committee reports are required to indicate whether an equality impact assessment has been completed, assessed and logged by our equalities officer.

With the introduction of voter ID and new accessibility rules, we consulted with different groups so they could provide us with feedback to assist with our plans. This included people from our Muslim community and members from local disability groups. We purchased more tactile voting aides, bigger ballot paper magnifiers, finger grips for polling pens/pencils, provided A3 sample ballot papers, an easy read voting guide, a Makaton voting guide and reviewed physical access to polling stations.

3.10 Housing and homelessness

We increased our tenancy sustainment staffing support. This vital support helps households to stay in their accommodation and maximise their income, ensuring they are claiming all benefits they are entitled to. It also provides advice and guidance in relation to a wide range of other supporting measures, including mental health support, shopping and nutrition, tackling loneliness and more.

We updated our housing allocation scheme to offer more support for overcrowded households and pregnant residents. Find out more at www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/housingallocations

We provided 24-hour response to homeless individuals in the city and worked with partners to provide a range of wrap around support, including accommodation, drug and alcohol support and access to health services.

We continued to support up to six previously rough sleepers through our housing pathway scheme.

We began a project to introduce trauma informed practice across our housing and homelessness service and worked with partners through our new annual housing and homeless conference and forum to boost partnership working for the benefit of our residents and customers.

3.11 Local plan

We continued to ensure our local planning process was accessible to all and supportive of the needs of our growing district in the following ways:

- We withdrew our draft emerging local plan from examination and began work on a new local plan which we believe will better meet the needs of the district in future.
- Our adopted local plan includes policies to support the delivery of housing, including affordable housing and housing to meet differing needs, as well as sites to serve the requirements of the gypsy and traveller community and policies to help all our residents live healthy and safe lives.
- We liaise with interest groups and representative bodies to ensure our policies protect and safeguard our important centres, allowing access to services and facilities.
- We prepare executive summaries to help people understand detailed documents and we make all documents available in alternative formats when requested.

Find out more at www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/localplan

3.12 Parks and open spaces

We continued to ensure our parks and open spaces are welcoming, safe and accessible to all in the following ways:

- We installed autism communication boards in Beacon Park and Burntwood parks.
- We provided lanyards to families with vulnerable adults in case help was needed at an event.
- We installed accessible footpaths in Beacon Park golf course and at Stowe Fields.
- Parks staff attended a Dementia UK Masterclass, improving awareness in the parks and at events.
- The toilets in Beacon Park have disabled facilities with a portable hoist on site. There are also disabled facilities in the football changing rooms.
- In 2024 we will be installing dropped tactile kerbs at Stowe Pool.

3.13 Planning

We introduced new florescent yellow site notices, that are more visually accessible and weatherproof, with the ambition to make it easier for residents to see where new developments may take place and give their views.

We launched a new plain English planning enquiry form that provides easy-to-understand answers to all common planning related queries 24/7 and provides our customer services team with better information to help customers face to face and on the telephone.

We launched a new planning enquiries dashboard that ensures customer queries are dealt with in a timely and transparent way and a log of calls is retained.

3.14 Public toilets

We provide seven public toilets across Lichfield and Burntwood in car parks and parks.

All facilities either have separate cubicles suitable for disabled people or a gender neutral disabled cubical suitable for everyone.

We provide a Changing Places toilet in our Friary Car Park in Lichfield City and this year we refurbished our Bird Street/Swan Road toilet facility to also include a second Changing Places facility.

3.15 Procurement

We published our modern slavery and human trafficking statement which recognises that slavery and human trafficking remain a hidden blight on our society, and we have a responsibility to be alert to the risks and to strive to ensure that our supply chains are free from slavery and human trafficking. Find out more at www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/modernslavery

We reviewed and updated our supplier code of conduct, which now includes an expectation that suppliers abide by ethical standards, the Nolan Principles, the Equality Act, and demonstrate their commitment to sustainability, environmental commitments, and their social responsibility. Find out more at www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/suppliercode

3.15 Regulation and enforcement services

We continued our regulation and enforcement work to ensure local facilities are safe, well managed and accessible. This included:

- Licensing taxis and ensuring they assist passengers with disabilities and are welcoming to assistance dogs.
- Regulating the use of pavements by businesses for tables and chairs to ensure that sufficient space remains for users with wheelchairs and pushchairs.
- Inspect private rented dwellings, scoring risk hazard and working with landlords to bring properties up to the Decent Homes standard.
- Supporting people with mental health conditions to improve their living conditions, including hoarding and residents living amongst vermin or filth.
- Providing information in multiple languages to advise people that enforcement action is being taken and supporting them to seek legal advice.
- Introduced smart warrant cards which have QR codes so when an officer approaches someone vulnerable, or if they are challenged as to their identity, they can invite the person to scan a QR code on the card which links to a hidden page on our website listing all the officers, their photos, and warrant card numbers.

3.16 Revenues, benefits and corporate debt recovery

We continued our work to support residents in relation to council tax payments and debt relief.

We launched a new council tax support scheme that provides 100% support to residents on the lowest incomes and provides an extra £50 disregard for residents who claim a disability benefit. We supported the introduction of the new scheme with a discretionary policy to support those facing exceptional financial hardship. Find out more at www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/counciltaxsupport

We ran a social media campaign to encourage those who are struggling to pay their council tax or those struggling with debt to contact us.

We introduced a new online form for business rates relief to make it easier for all businesses in our district to apply for a reduction.

We worked with our customer services team to host wellbeing and cost of living drop-in sessions across the district.

3.17 Shopmobility

Our shop mobility service provides low-cost scooter rental for residents and visitors who have permanent or temporary disabilities to help them access Lichfield city centre shops, businesses and attractions. Find out more at www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/shopmobility

3.18 Waste and recycling

We continued to ensure our waste and recycling service is accessible to all in the following ways:

- Provided 1,021 assisted bin collections each week for people who have difficulties getting their bins to the roadside.
- Provided 1,150 free additional domestic waste bins to families where extra waste is generated – for example due to a medical condition, children in nappies, or families of six or more.
- Supplied bin collection calendars in braille and large print.

4. Our service equality priorities in 2023

In our 2023 equalities statement we identified service equality priorities which are detailed below. This section sets out what we said we would do and what we did.

We said	We did
Our procurement team will continue to review our policies and procedures to ensure they consider our equality duty.	Our supplier code of conduct was reviewed and updated. Suppliers are required to consider the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 in their supply of goods or services to customers and service users.
We will continue to maximise take up of discretionary housing payments (DHP) to support vulnerable people and helping to prevent homelessness.	For 2023/24 we received £73,830 funding from the Department for Works and Pensions, 100% of this was spent helping 99 customers. The funding aims to prevent homelessness by clearing rent arrears for families who have been severely impacted by the increases in cost of living and who could face eviction without additional support. We continue to raise awareness of the fund through our housing team, front line staff, local Job Centre, private landlords and other registered providers in the hope of reaching those who are most in need of our support.
We will review the way we monitor the protected characteristics of our service users and those who complete our customer surveys.	We did not progress this during the year and will be building this into digital and customer access strategy which is due to launch in 2024.

We said	We did
<p>When services are reviewed, changed, or developed, we will carry out equality impact assessments to ensure the full impact of changes is understood before final decisions are made</p>	<p>We completed equality impact assessments for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the leader events • Lichfield city centre trial pedestrianisation • VCSE funding prospectus and application • Birmingham Road multi-storey car park demolition and associated works • Housing assistance policy 2023 – 2028 • Local council tax support scheme • Introduction of Elections Act 2022 • Updated pay policy statement
<p>We will update our equality impact assessment questionnaires to ensure more information is captured to explain our decisions.</p>	<p>We made changes to our equality impact assessment questionnaire to make it easier to complete and encourage authors to provide more detail. We plan to update this again during 2024.</p>
<p>We will ensure new projects, services and strategies, implemented because of our local plan or through community infrastructure levy projects, will be subject to equality impact assessments.</p>	<p>We withdrew our draft emerging local plan from examination and began work on a new local plan which we believe will better meet the needs of the district in future. We will liaise with interest groups and representative bodies to ensure our policies protect and safeguard our important centres, allowing access to services and facilities. We will prepare executive summaries to help people understand detailed documents and we make all documents available in alternative formats when requested.</p>
<p>We will continue to work to ensure all elected members have completed recent training in equalities as well as safeguarding and child sexual exploitation.</p>	<p>We welcomed a new set of councillors following the local elections in May 2023 and programmed in a range of mandatory training sessions including equalities, safeguarding and child sexual exploitation, which will continue throughout their four-year term in office.</p>

We said	We did
<p>We will continue to embed equalities and our corporate value of having respect for everyone.</p>	<p>We continued with our monthly All Hands call with staff that encourage staff to own and deliver the council's values in their day-to-day work. We delivered a cohesive programme of activities around equalities, including presentations on Autism, different religions including Islam, being a Jehovah's Witness and Sikhism, and a presentation from Stonewall on gender identity in the workplace. We also celebrated PRIDE, International Women's Day and Diwali, with the aim of understanding, celebrating and encouraging a positive approach to differences in the workplace.</p>
<p>We will continue to ensure equality and accessibility are key outcomes from our digitisation programme in ensuring the delivery of consistent customer journeys and easy to use online services.</p>	<p>We worked with local people to test and enhance new website developments to ensure they are easy to use and accessible. We will continue to do this, and customer testing will be at the heart of our digital and customer access strategy which is due to launch in 2024.</p>
<p>We will reprocur our website software and accessibility will be at the heart of the procurement.</p>	<p>We worked with residents, staff and elected members to create a set of design principles for our new website which is due to launch in mid-2024. The design principles had accessibility at their heart. Find out more at www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/designprinciples.</p>
<p>We will establish a community focus group to discuss different topics which will include equality, diversity and inclusion issues locally, including digital and assistive technologies.</p>	<p>We did not progress the development of a community focus group, and instead worked closely with local people to test and enhance new website developments to ensure they are easy to use and accessible. We will continue to do this, and customer testing will be at the heart of our digital and customer access strategy which is due to launch in 2024.</p>

We said	We did
<p>We will support more technologies and initiatives that provide a more welcoming environment to customers visiting us, including Sign Live and the Sunflower scheme.</p>	<p>We launched British Sign Language translation through the Sign Live app, allowing customers who are deaf or have hearing loss to use BSL to communicate with us easily over the phone and face to face. Find out more at www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/signlive. We did not manage to launch Sunflower lanyards as the national website has been down for much of the year, but we will continue to pursue this.</p>
<p>We will continue to support the Lichfield District Youth Council who meet regularly.</p>	<p>We continued to develop the Lichfield District Youth Council to engage, consult and empower local young people, hosting regular meetings and workshops.</p>

5. Our service equality priorities for 2024

We will undertake the following actions in 2024:

- We will continue to maximise take-up of **discretionary housing payments** (DHP) to support vulnerable people and helping to prevent homelessness.
- We will review the way we **monitor protected characteristics** of our service users as part of our digital and customer access strategy.
- When services are reviewed, changed, or developed, we will carry out **equality impact assessments** to ensure the full impact of changes is understood before final decisions are made. We will continue to enhance our equality impact assessment questionnaires to ensure more information is captured to explain our decisions.
- We will ensure new projects, services and strategies, implemented because of our **local plan and through community infrastructure levy projects**, will be subject to equality impact assessments.
- We will continue to work to ensure all elected members have completed **training in equalities, safeguarding and child sexual exploitation**.
- We will continue to **embed equalities** and our corporate value of having respect for everyone.
- We will deliver a new and more **accessible website**. We will continue to ensure equality and accessibility are key outcomes from our **digitisation programme** in ensuring the delivery of consistent customer journeys and easy to use online services.
- Customer testing will be at the heart of our **digital and customer access strategy** which is due to launch in 2024.
- We will support more **accessible technologies and initiatives** that provide a more welcoming environment to customers visiting us, including Sign Live.
- We will continue to support the **Lichfield District Youth Council** who meet regularly.

Further actions will be identified during 2024 as part of the council's work to create an **equalities action plan** which will be launched in 2024. Progress against the action plan will be reported regularly to the council's leadership team. The equalities action plan and annual updates will also be presented to the council's Cabinet.

6. Delivering equality in employment during 2023

We aim to provide an inclusive, respectful, and discrimination-free work environment for all our employees and councillors. We want all our employees and councillors to feel respected and appreciated. We have three core values that our staff and councillors work towards:

- **Put customers first.** We are passionate about our customer service. We always listen and work with our customers to meet their needs. We take responsibility for things we can change and improve and encourage our customers to do the same.
- **Improve and innovate.** We challenge each other to look for ways to do things better. We listen to feedback and learn from it so we can improve. We welcome change and move forward with confidence.
- **Have respect for everyone.** We listen to everyone and understand each other's views and pressures. We appreciate each other and trust our colleagues to do a good job to the best of their ability.

We want to have a workforce that celebrates equality, diversity, and inclusivity as part of everyone's work life balance. Our **belonging and wellbeing strategy** promotes and encourages more staff engagement in the belonging and wellbeing agenda. Our **belonging and wellbeing group** meets regularly with representatives from all services. We continued to encourage our staff to create inclusion networks, and have **networks for the LGBTQ+ community, carers, menopause and young professionals**.

We remain **committed to promoting and encouraging an inclusive culture** where people can openly and constructively express their feelings without fear of retribution and criticism. In support of this we maintain policies on whistleblowing and the prevention of bullying and harassment, to ensure employees can raise concerns in confidence without fear of recrimination.

When organisational changes are proposed, our management team consults with employees, both as individuals and collectively through employee representatives with support from the human resources team.

We have a modern and accessible office space. We have two accessible electric height adjustable desks and carpets with contrasting colours for walkways and desk areas. We continue to meet the needs of employees with a disability including purchasing speech recognition software, upright computer mice, trackball devices, specialist keyboards, specialist chairs that support people with chronic back, neck or leg issues, and specialist seat pads for drivers with conditions, such as sciatica or sacro iliac damage.

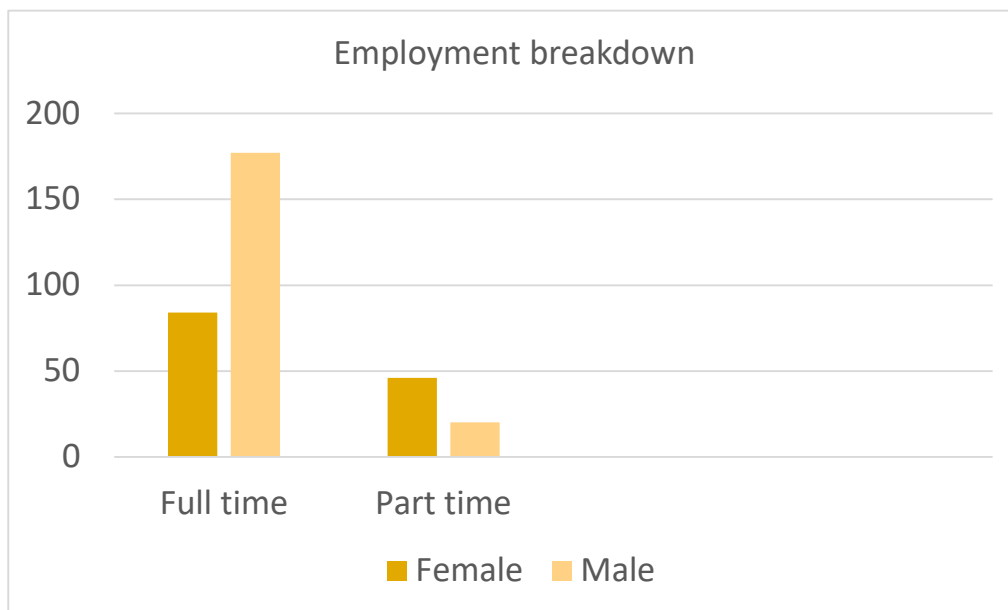
7. Workforce data

We regularly collect information relating to our employees and this helps us monitor and adapt to changes in our workforce profile and needs.

The data on staff numbers and age was taken from our people and payroll systems in December 2023¹. Data on other characteristics has been taken from our workforce equality, diversity and inclusion staff survey undertaken in April 2023. Employees were given the options of not responding or choosing to prefer not to say.

Staff numbers

We employ 313 people, 130 are female (42% compared to 51% of residents in the district) and 183 are male (58% compared to 49% of residents in the district). 251 (80%) work full time and 62 (20%) work part time.



¹ The data in this section reflects the staff working for Lichfield District Council and does not reflect staff working for the council's wholly owned subsidiary LWTMS. Our next equality statement will feature similar information covering LWMTS staff.

Age

The age ranges of our workforce are shown below, with a comparison to district residents.

Age ranges	Workforce	Residents
16-24	7%	9%
25-34	16%	12%
35-49	28%	18%
50-64	48%	21%

Gender

The national census asked questions of gender diversity in two separate ways. Firstly, it asked whether someone is male or female, and secondly, whether an individual's gender identity is the same or different to what was registered at their birth.

Within the wider community, 49% of census respondents answered they were male and 51% answered they were female. 0.3% of people responded that they do not identify with the gender they were assigned at birth.

The workforce survey provided more options for gender identity. The results show there are more women, non-binary and transgender people (50%) working for the council than men (48%). A similar pattern is present in the council's leadership team.

The survey also asked the question of gender assigned at birth in a different way to the census. This highlighted that there is greater gender diversity amongst those working for the council than those living in the wider community, with 2% of respondents not identifying with the gender they were assigned at birth.

Sexual orientation

Around 2% of people living in the wider community are not heterosexual. This includes around 1% of people who are gay or lesbian. Sexuality is more diverse within the council's workforce, with 4% of those surveyed being gay or lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, queer or other.

Ethnicity

The census data showed 95% of people living in the wider community are white British/English and 5% are from other ethnic groups. The second largest number of residents in the wider community are Asian, which includes Indian, Pakistani, and Chinese.

The workforce survey shows that 94% of people working for the council are white British/English and 6% are from other ethnic groups. This includes 1% of the workforce who identify as Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller.

Disability

According to the census, 17% of people living in the wider community are disabled under the Equalities Act and, of these, 14% are aged between 15 - 64 years. A further 8% have a long-term physical or mental health condition, but their day-to-day activities are not limited.

According to the workforce survey, 15% of our employees have a disability, illness, or health condition. It is worth bearing in mind that whilst the census surveyed all ages, the workforce survey only reflects people in employment.

Religion

The census showed that 57% of the wider community identify as Christian, 3% follow a religion that is not a Christian denomination, and 40% follow no religion.

The religious population in workforce is representative of the wider community, with Christianity being the most prevalent religion (51%). 41% of people identify as not following any religion, meaning that around 8% follow a religion that is not a Christian denomination. Other religions such as Paganism were selected.

8. Equality in employment improvements in 2023

In our 2023 Equality Statement we identified employment equality priorities which are detailed below. This section sets out what we said we would do and what we did:

We said	We did
We will assess key workforce policies and procedures.	We continued to assess new workforce policies and procedures to ensure they are accessible and easy to understand. We launched a new recruitment toolkit, an OKR toolkit, and a new quick guide to working hours.
We will continue to collect, analyse, and publish key workforce data which will feed into our workforce development plans, it will also assist how we develop and attract the workforce of the future.	Workforce data was collected as part of our first workforce equality, diversity and inclusion staff survey in April 2023 and is published as part of this document.
We will continue to increase the number of staff that successfully complete equality awareness training	81% of staff who have online access completed equality and diversity training. 62% of staff with online access completed safeguarding training.
We will further encourage staff members to create inclusion groups.	We have networks for the LGBTQ+ community, carers, menopause and young professionals and will continue to encourage the creation of more groups and provide support for existing groups.
We will update and review our internal equality and diversity documents and information	We developed a new intranet section on equality, diversity and our values, where training, our inclusivity calendar, our staff values, and our quality impact assessment library is published.
Provide an inclusive calendar for employees, this will give insight to various observance/events days and dates throughout the year.	This was completed and published internally.

9. Our employment equality priorities for 2024

We will undertake the following actions in 2024:

- We will continue to assess key workforce policies and procedures to ensure they are accessible and easy to understand.
- We will continue to collect, analyse, and publish key workforce data which will feed into our workforce development plans and support how we develop and attract the workforce of the future.
- We will continue to increase the number of staff that successfully complete equality awareness and safeguarding training.
- We will host in person equality and diversity training for all members of staff.
- We will continue to encourage staff to create inclusion groups and support existing groups to thrive.
- We will update and review our internal equality and diversity documents and information.
- We will produce an updated inclusive calendar for employees that provides insight to various observance and events days and dates throughout the year.
- We will incorporate LWMTs staff data in our workforce data profile.
- We will continue to encourage greater diversity across our workforce, with a particular focus on our operational team and joint waste team (which services both Lichfield District and Tamworth Borough councils), and where we are keen to continue our work to create a more diverse employee profile that welcomes and offers opportunities for all.

10. How we monitor progress and identify equality issues

We will achieve this in the following ways:

- The actions and priorities identified in this equality statement will be monitored throughout 2024 as part of a new **equalities action plan** that will be monitored by the council's leadership team. Updates will also be presented to the council's Cabinet.
- A full progress update will be reported in the council's next [equality statement in 2025](#).
- We are monitored by the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the government's Equalities Office to ensure equality issues are addressed.

This statement is available to download at:
www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/equalitystatement

Appendix 1

Our district profile

Understanding who lives in our district helps us to understand the needs of our local communities and gives us information to help us make our services accessible.

In 2021 the total population of Lichfield District was 106,883, in 2022 estimates show that this had risen by a further 1% to 108,352.

We have considered the profile of our district in line with the nine protected characteristics using the Census 2021 and Office for National Statistics (NOMIS) data to provide most of the information.

The definition for each protected characteristic is sourced from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC).

Age A person belonging to a particular age (for example 32-year-olds) or range of ages (for example 18-to 30-year-olds).

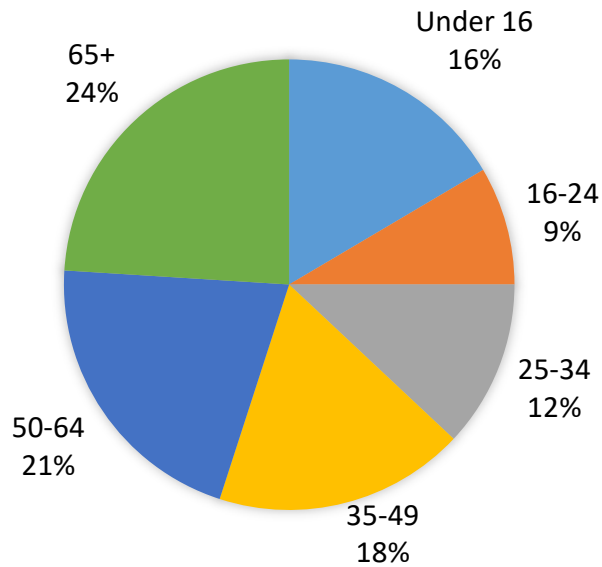
Since 2001, the largest population growth has taken place in the number of residents aged 65 years or over, and we expect this to continue in future years.

In 2001, 15.5% of residents (14,437) were aged 65+ years. By 2022 this had increased to 24% (26,080).

All usual ² residents (2022)	Number of residents	%
4 years and under	5,241	4.5
5 to 9 years	5,747	5
10 to 15 years	7,215	7
16 to 19 years	4,221	4
20 to 24 years	4,941	4.5
25 to 34 years	12,555	12
35 to 49 years	19,123	18
50 to 64 years	23,229	21
65 to 74 years	12,696	12
75 to 84 years	10,219	9
85 years and over	3,165	3

² A usual resident is anyone who on Census Day, 21 March 2021, was in the district and had stayed or intended to stay in the district for a period of 12 months or more or had a permanent district address and was outside the district and intended to be outside the district for less than 12 months.

Age range of residents



Disability A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

In 2011, 18% of people living in the district (18,265 residents) had a limiting long-term illness. The 2021 census results showed this percentage remained largely the same 17.8% (18,944 residents).

Long term health or disability (2021)	Number of residents	%
Disabled under the Equality Act: Day-to-day activities limited a lot	7,598	7.1
Disabled under the Equality Act: Day-to-day activities limited a little	11,346	10.7
Not disabled under the Equality Act: Has long term physical or mental health condition but day-to-day activities are not limited	8,252	7.8
Not disabled under the Equality Act: No long term physical or mental health conditions	79,240	74.4

Gender reassignment Where a person undergoes or proposes to undergo, a process for the purpose of reassigning their sex.

There are no statistics available for gender reassignment within the district. The following dataset is a breakdown of gender identity within the district in 2021.

Gender identity all usual residents aged 16 and over	Number of residents	%
Gender identity the same as sex registered at birth	84,639	95.5
Gender identity different from sex registered at birth, but no specific identity given	101	0.1
Trans woman	43	0.0
Trans man	45	0.1
Non-binary	20	0.0
All other gender identities	13	0.0
Not answered	3,734	4.2

Marital and civil partnership Marriage is a union between a man and a woman or between a same-sex couple. Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples (except when permitted by the Equality Act 2010).

Within Lichfield District, 51.2% (45,374) of (usual) residents were married or in a registered civil partnership.

Legal partnership status all usual residents aged 16 or over	2021	%
Never married and never registered a civil partnership	27,113	30.6
Married	45,271	51.1
In a registered civil partnership	103	0.1
Separated, but still legally married or still legally in a civil partnership	1,692	1.9
Divorced or civil partnership dissolved	7,996	9.0
Widowed or surviving civil partnership partner	6,421	7.2

Pregnancy and maternity Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context.

In 2022, there were 932 babies born to mothers that normally reside within the district. This shows a decrease from 2021 when there were 977 births.

Race Refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins. A racial group can be made up of more than one distinct racial group, such as Black and British.

In 2021 most residents living in the district were white, however more residents from Asian, Black, Caribbean, African, mixed or multiple ethnic groups now reside in the district when compared to 2011.

Ethnicity	2021	%	Ethnicity	2011	%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	2,496	2.3	Asian or Asian British	1,623	1.7
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	601	0.6	Black or Black British	481	0.5
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	1,987	1.9	Mixed	1,034	1.1
White	100,917	94.8	White British	95,263	94.6
White Irish/other	Not individually collected		White Irish/other	2,136	2.1
Other ethnic groups	435	0.4	Other ethnic groups	117	0.1

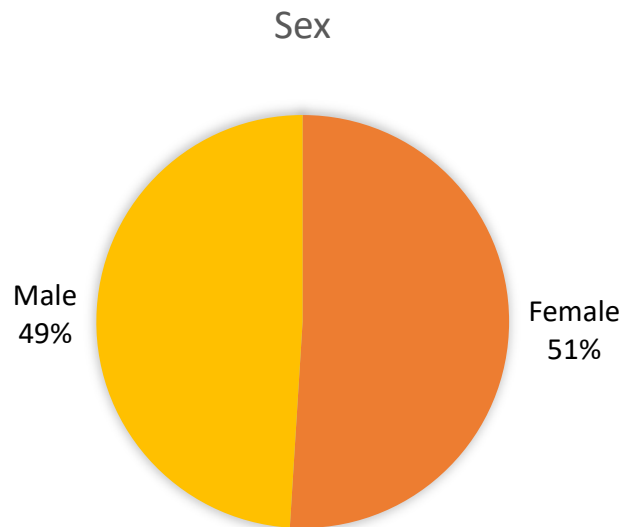
Religion and belief Religion refers to any religion, including a lack of religion. Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief.

In 2021 most residents living in the district were Christian (54.2%) with the next largest group of residents being of no religion (38.1%). Since 2011, there has been a growth in the percentage of Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh residents living in the district.

Religion	2021	%	2011	%
Buddhist	245	0.2	196	0.2
Christian	57,683	54.2	69,276	69
Hindu	460	0.4	303	0.3
Jewish	61	0.1	69	0.07
Muslim	722	0.7	448	0.44
No religion	40,563	38.1	23,113	23
Other religion	443	0.4	307	0.3
Sikh	923	0.9	540	0.5
Unanswered	5,336	5.0	6,402	6.0

Sex A man or a woman.

The number of men (male) and women (female) living in the district is almost equal. Updated 2022 figures show that the split was 51% (54,898) female and 49% (53,454) male (NOMIS).



Sexual orientation Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

Sexual orientation all usual residents aged 16 and over	2021	%
Straight or heterosexual	81,990	92.5
Gay or lesbian	1,020	1.2
Bisexual	713	0.8
Pansexual	94	0.1
Asexual	32	0.0
Queer	1	0.0
All other sexual orientations	7	0.0
Not answered	4,738	5.3