



Equality Strategy

2020 – 2024



Cabinet Lead Member foreword

I am pleased to introduce Leicestershire County Council's new Equality Strategy for the period 2020-24. This strategy describes how we aim to continue our work to make Leicestershire a place where equality is at the forefront of council services as well as the opportunities and experiences of everybody in our communities.

Through this Strategy, we want to make equality more visible so that, whether working for us or with us or as a person using our services, people are treated fairly and with respect and dignity at all times. We want to give everybody the opportunity to contribute to, and share in, a good quality of life for all.

We believe that people are happier when they can be themselves without fear of any form of discrimination, prejudice or inequality. Our corporate values, including trust and respect, help us to develop an inclusive and diverse workforce that reflects the communities we serve. Our processes recognise not only the protected groups under equalities legislation but other groups potentially affected by or who are subjected to unfairness or hostility.

We believe that advancing equality is a win-win situation with challenges, but also great opportunities. This Strategy has been produced against continuing pressures on local authority finances as well as other, and significant, external uncertainties. At the same time, we have developed equality objectives that contribute to the council's wider strategic outcomes, particularly those of wellbeing and opportunity, keeping people safe and promoting great communities where everyone can thrive and be supported in ways that meet their needs.

Despite the challenges that we face collectively and as individuals, we believe that our Equality Strategy and the actions that will be developed under it to meet our equality objectives will have real benefits for Leicestershire people. It is a work of shared values and vision created through listening to citizens, service users, communities, partners, stakeholders and staff. I am grateful to everyone who has helped us to shape this Strategy and who we will continue to work with in realising it.

Together, let's make equalities everyone's business.

Cllr Louise Richardson

Cabinet Lead Member for Equalities and Communities

Section 1 - Introduction

1.1 Background

This is the fourth Equality Strategy to be published by Leicestershire County Council since the coming into force of the Equality Act 2010. In that time, we have sought to show how we meet the general and specific requirements of the legislation in everything we do so that equality is fully embedded within our organisational culture and reflected in our principles and values. This document carries on our commitment to make Leicestershire a fairer place in which to live, work and feel safe.

While ensuring that our people are aware and equipped to provide inclusive services as well as in the corporate functions that support them, we aim to ensure that all people can truly see equality in the experience they receive. This document sets out our vision for equality for people who we serve and staff, our goals over the duration of the Strategy, how we will monitor performance and the processes we will use to set specific, measurable objectives and actions, and the council's overall accountability for equalities outcomes.

In particular, we will work towards a stronger, evidence-based approach to tackling inequalities through relevant research, data and forms of engagement. The aims and objectives set out in this Strategy have been developed and will continue to be developed in this way so that the highest levels of risk to protected and vulnerable people and groups can be identified as early as possible in how we design, commission and implement our services and provide leadership for Leicestershire.

The benefits of being treated fairly

Fairness and equality are not just rooted in our legal responsibilities but are a moral obligation for everyone who works for us across a wide range of services – whether delivering front line social care, environment, education, health, transport and waste services or community and heritage facilities – to meet the needs of a diverse population across the County.

Equitable treatment reduces barriers of access and opportunity that people with protected characteristics experience either as individuals or as groups that are less likely to enjoy positive outcomes due to discrimination, prejudice or other reasons such as socio-economic, health or educational factors.

Organisations benefit from employees with a breadth of talent and experience that equips them to work with people from all backgrounds and circumstances and, through access to a supportive environment, practices and culture within the workplace, will be happier and more productive.

We all benefit from shared values of respect, an understanding of how other people live, and a sense of belonging within an organisation, community or family. We all have the right, and deserve the chance, to achieve our potential while being truly ourselves.

Collectively, our equality, diversity and human rights activities as well as what we do to bring communities together create strong and tangible benefits for everyone in Leicestershire.

What the law says about equalities

As a public body, the council must comply with the **Equality Act 2010** which gives protection to individuals and groups identifying with the nine protected characteristics in the Act. In effect, everyone shares some of these characteristics and so are protected from any form of unfairness.

The Act requires the council to have “due regard” to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct under the Act, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This is known as the Public Sector Equality Duty and it supports good decision-making by the council by requiring us to consider how different people will be affected by our functions, policies and services.

In particular, the duty means we aim to remove or minimise any disadvantage that people may experience due to their protected characteristic. This includes taking action where the needs of people with certain protected characteristics are different from other people’s needs, and encouraging them to take a greater part in public life and activities where this is disproportionately low.

The Equality Act provisions not only cover who and how we provide our services to but also our staff. We have responsibilities as an employer to ensure that people with protected characteristics are not discriminated against when seeking employment with us, while working for us or when taking part in work-related activities. It also applies to our suppliers or anyone working on behalf of the council.

As well as the Equality Act 2010, the council is subject to the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 which sets out a framework for the basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person from birth to death. The rights defined in this Act and international law are:

- Right to life
- Freedom from torture and inhuman or degrading treatment
- Freedom from slavery and forced labour
- Right to liberty and security
- Right to a fair trial
- No punishment without law (under which peoples' rights can be restricted if they break the law)
- Respect for private and family life, home and correspondence
- Freedom of thought, belief and religion
- Freedom of expression
- Freedom of assembly and association
- Right to marry and start a family
- Protection from discrimination in respect of these rights and freedoms
- Right to peaceful enjoyment of property
- Right to education
- Right to participate in free elections

The council is committed to ensuring that we consider every opportunity to promote or protect any relevant human rights in our policies, practices, functions and procedures both as an employer and a provider of services. This includes making people aware of their human rights so they can use the law to redress any potential or actual breaches affecting them while also exercising the responsibility to respect the human rights of others.

How the council meets its statutory duties

To show how we meet the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010, we must also publish relevant and proportionate equalities information, and set ourselves specific, measurable equality objectives at least every four years. Our broad goals for 2020-24 are set out in section 2 of this Strategy which, together with annual action plans that are developed for each year of the Strategy and will include our specific objectives, are published on the council's website.

Other equalities information that we publish includes an annual workforce equalities profile, gender pay gap reports by each reporting period, completed Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment reports (the process we use to identify any specific impacts of changes to our services that may affect protected characteristic individuals or groups), and how we support or promote services for particular protected characteristic communities. This information is published on the [council's equalities webpages](#).

Our commitment to being an inclusive organisation that people want to work for and enjoy is demonstrated in our accreditation as a Disability Confident Level 2 employer and also our participation as a Diversity Champion in the annual Stonewall Workplace Equality Index where we have maintained a Top 100 ranking since 2009.

To support our statutory responsibilities and related objectives, we work with other public sector bodies including district / borough councils, Police, Fire & Rescue Services and NHS partners through the Leicester Shire Equalities Forum to share knowledge of equalities issues, develop best practice and identify measures that can be implemented across the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland region.

How equalities fits into the council's wider vision

The council's Equality Strategy sits alongside other corporate strategies and processes to ensure that equality objectives for our residents and staff are considered across the entire council. The council has taken an innovative approach by agreeing a single set of five outcomes that we want to see for everybody in Leicestershire as set out in the [Strategic Plan 2018-22](#).

These are:

- **A strong economy** – giving people and businesses the opportunity to fulfil their potential in a growing and resilient economy
- **Wellbeing and opportunity** – supporting people so they have more control over their health and wellbeing
- **Keeping people safe** – so that everybody can be safe from harm
- **Great communities** – enabling people to take pride in their local area and help other members to create vibrant places in which to live and work
- **Affordable and quality homes** – giving our residents a choice of good quality and affordable homes

Aligning our Public Sector Equality Duty responsibilities with these outcomes helps us to put equalities at the heart of our work in ways that directly benefit Leicestershire people through better decision-making by us and working with our partner organisations.

The council's Strategic Plan is underpinned by a set of **principles** that will shape our approach and define how we work as an organisation to achieve the vision – one of these is our sense of **responsibility** which includes our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

These principles are reflected in the goals we have set for the Equality Strategy and particularly the need to make **informed** decisions to gain **good value** by targeting resources where there is evidence of inequality. We have **high expectations** for a representative workforce that is willing to try new things and

learn from best practice and innovation to close the outcome gaps between people who have protected characteristics and people who do not. We will be open with our partners, communities and residents by providing accessible, clear information and inclusive ways to get involved so that we **collaborate** with others to celebrate success and to develop solutions where there is room for improvement.

As an employer, we also expect our staff to uphold the council's four organisational values of Positivity, Trust and Respect, Flexibility, and Openness and Transparency. Having these values alongside supporting policies, procedures and a code of conduct give us a strong foundation for how we take responsibility for what we do and how we engage with each other and our service users. You can find more information about working for the council in our [Employment Deal](#).

Celebrating success

Enabling all our people to be who they are is at the heart of this Strategy. If we forget the people behind an equalities issue, we will fail to meet their needs in the best and most inclusive way. But we also believe in recognising and celebrating all the good work that is helping to build and maintain strong relationships between people of different backgrounds, skills and experiences within our workplaces and communities.

We want to show how equality matters and the difference it makes to people that they are welcomed in, and can actively contribute to, our wider society. Improving our knowledge of communities, groups and networks and publicising local initiatives and activities promotes community cohesion by sending a strong message that equality works for everyone.

The current context

While our fundamental approach to equalities remains unchanged, in line with our Public Sector Equality Duty responsibilities, we know that we cannot stand still in a changing world. True commitment to fair and equitable treatment for everybody means constantly seeking to improve what we do already as well as ensuring that the council can respond to new challenges, either directly or by working closely with others.

Some of the issues expected to arise during the period covered by this Strategy are complex and not restricted solely to Leicestershire. The council will remain vigilant to all risks of discriminatory and adverse treatment not just to protected characteristic groups but also to all our residents from such issues. This includes working with key partners to provide reassurance and resilience so that Leicestershire people feel and are kept safe and informed.

At the same time, improving the breadth and quality of information that we use to make decisions provides the council with a significant opportunity over the life of this Strategy to better understand the impacts of those decisions, not just on

equalities grounds, but also more widely. Making better use of relevant national indicators on housing, educational, employment and health and wellbeing as well as local data will enable us to take a more proactive approach to analysing this data. By doing so, our understanding of actual or potential inequalities and what we can do to manage their impacts will be significantly strengthened.

We also want to improve our processes to capture impacts where they occur cumulatively or persistently across one or more protected characteristic group or groups. This approach will also enable us to identify where other vulnerable groups or people are experiencing more deeply rooted inequality of opportunity such as in our rural communities where physical access to services, amenities and / or places that provide them can be challenging.

Making people more aware of equalities issues, rights, responsibilities and risks is also part of our renewed focus in this Strategy. Accessibility of information, not just in the sense of providing the formats that people need, but also good quality and clear information about the council and its services, will be a priority. In this way, we aim to improve engagement with the council through better communication to and with people including those from seldom heard groups.

We also want to ensure that all our staff are fully aware of the responsibilities they have, in their day to day roles in services and with colleagues at work, for advancing the council's equality and diversity objectives. We will continue to provide staff with a range of mandatory and bespoke equality, diversity and human rights training as well as seeking how this can be more widely taken up throughout the council including by elected members.

Improving the representation of staff from particular protected characteristic groups at management levels within the council will also remain as a priority. Developing specific actions on progression in conjunction with the support networks we provide for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Other identities (LGBT+), Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) and Disabled staff will be developed through our annual action plans.

We also seek to support other staff networks, such as our Virtual Carers' Group, in appropriate ways.

Section 2 - Our approach to Equality, Diversity, Community Cohesion & Human Rights

2.1 Our strategic Vision

The County Council has developed its “Strategic Plan 2018-22: Working together for the benefit of everyone” by focussing on the things that will make life better for people in Leicestershire. We have developed a “shared vision” across the council of the things we want all the people we serve to experience in their daily lives.

The council is here to make a positive difference to the lives of Leicestershire people. This vision captures what the council wants for Leicestershire and what type of organisation it strives to be over the next 20 years.

We want Leicestershire’s economic prosperity to support resilient and clean growth that creates the best life chances for all. Leicestershire is a place where people are well and safe, living in a healthy environment as part of great communities where people enjoy life and work together enhance their local area. There is a good supply of quality, sustainable homes that provide maximum independence and are affordable to own and run.

2.2 Leicestershire County Council’s Equality Strategy aims and objectives for 2020-24

The council’s aims and objectives for equalities over the next four years are:

Aims

Leicestershire County Council has high levels of leadership and works to continually improve its performance in advancing equality of opportunity and celebrating diversity and inclusion through its operations.

This includes how the council fulfils its functions; decision making, allocating resources, developing and delivering services, as an employer.

Leicestershire is a place where there is equality of opportunity and good relations with and within its communities

This requires a good understanding of the communities we serve and how people experience life differently to provide strong leadership and inclusive and responsive services that advances equality and communities where everyone has a good quality of life.

Objectives

The council will:

- Improve our understanding of the people we serve to make informed, evidence-based decisions which deliver the best outcomes for all
- Foster good relations with and within our communities, inform and involve our citizens to increase participation across all groups, addressing barriers to participation of under-represented groups
- Deliver inclusive and responsive services to improve equality of outcomes and satisfaction amongst the people we serve
- Show leadership for equality, work with others and celebrate and promote success
- Develop a skilled and committed workforce that reflects our communities

Section 3 – Delivering the outcomes

3.1 How will we deliver and monitor the change?

For each year of the council's Equality Strategy 2020-24, we will publish an action plan that will be informed by up-to-date equalities data and other relevant evidence and insight.

The Strategy and action plans will be regularly monitored by the corporate Equalities Board. This group brings together representatives from each of the council's operational departments (Adults & Communities, Children & Family Services, Environment & Transport, Public Health), supporting departments (Corporate Resources, Chief Executive's) and colleagues from human resources, training, policy and equality, and staff network groups.

Further responsibility for delivering the objectives of the Strategy is devolved where appropriate to individual equalities groups and management teams within departments.

An end-of-year progress report against the Action Plans will be provided to the council's Corporate Management Team, Scrutiny Commission and Cabinet. Equalities information will also be included in the Annual Performance Report presented to the County Council.

Service user input on equalities proposals and decisions, including those identified through Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessments, is provided through the Leicestershire Equalities Challenge Group which includes representation of people with protected characteristics and other community groups. More information is available on the [LECG webpage](#).

Section 4 - Knowing and reflecting our communities

Leicestershire's population

To support us in making informed decisions when performing the council's functions, it is important that we understand the people we service and their experiences.

The population can be broken down by equality group to provide us with a better understanding of the people within our communities – a summary is presented below and with further detail at Annex 1.¹

The total population of Leicestershire in 2017 was 690,212², an increase of 1.1% since 2016 with an equal gender split between men and women.

Compared with England, the population of Leicestershire is older, with higher proportions of the population aged 40-65 and 65 and over. The population is projected to grow between 2016 and 2041 with the largest increases in the 65+ age range. Net migration (both international and within the UK) is projected to be a much larger driver of population change compared to natural change.

Leicestershire is an ethnically and culturally diverse county, benefiting greatly from close links with Leicester, one of the most culturally diverse cities in the UK. According to the 2011 Census, the majority of the county population (91%) belong to White ethnic groups, (including White Irish). This equates to almost 600,000 people. The next largest ethnic group in Leicestershire is Asian (6.3%) followed by the Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Group (1.7%) and BAME groups (0.6%). The largest religious group in the county is Christian (60.3%), followed by Hindus (2.8%), Muslims (1.4%) and Sikhs (1.2%). Just over a quarter of the population stated they had no religion (27.1%) while 6.5% did not state a religion

In 2011, 16.2% of the county population considered themselves to have a condition that limited their day to day activities, higher than the rates for the East Midlands and England.

The 2011 Rural Urban Classification showed that while the county is rural in terms of area, the population is concentrated within urban areas. Overall, 70% of the population of Leicestershire live in areas classed as Urban City and Town, while 18% live in area classed as Rural Town and Fringe and the remaining 13% live in areas classed as Rural Village and Dispersed.

¹ Source: Demography Report of the [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2018 - 2021](#)).

² Source: Mid-2017 Subnational Population Estimates, ONS, 2018

According to the 2015 Indices of Deprivation Leicestershire is not deprived overall; the county is ranked 136th out of 152 upper tier authorities in England for Multiple Deprivation, where 1st is the most deprived. However, pockets of significant deprivation exist; four neighbourhoods in the county fall within the most deprived decile in England. Just over 12,500 people in Leicestershire live in neighbourhoods falling in the two most deprived deciles nationally (out of a total population of over 680,000).

Leicestershire County Council's Workforce

Each year the council produces information in relation to the make-up of its workforce. Whilst being a legal requirement, this information is also useful for workforce planning.

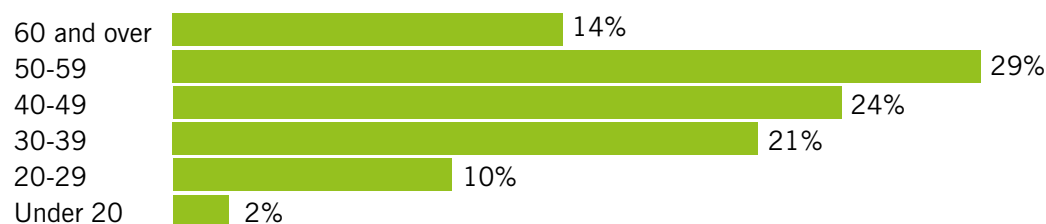
The information below reflects the make-up of our workforce as of June 2019, which excludes our employees in schools. This is shown by each protected characteristic group and provides us with a better understanding of the people who work within our organisation.

As at the end of June 2019, excluding Schools and Casuals, the council had a total workforce of **6,196 employees**

Age

The breakdown of our workforce in terms of age group is shown in Chart 1.

Chart 1 – Age Breakdown of Workforce, June 2019



Disability

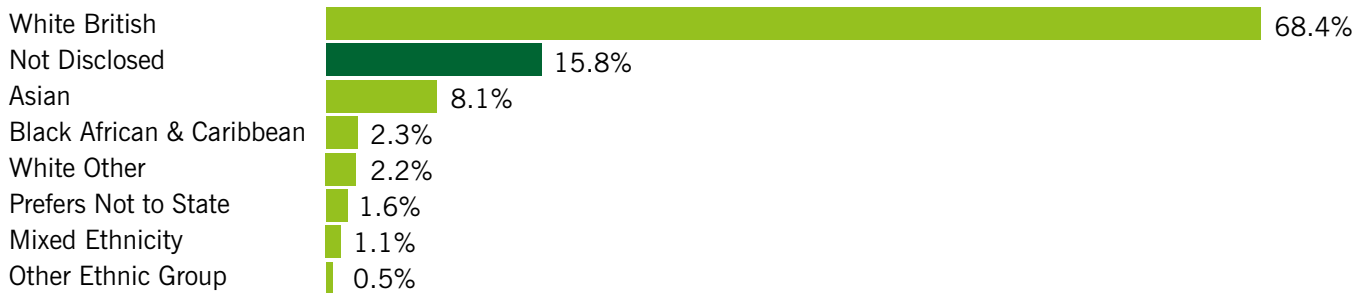
In June 2019, **81.2%** of staff had declared whether they had a disability or not. The most recent workforce representation analysis (June 2019) showed that **4.6%** of staff had declared themselves as disabled. The percentage of disabled employees at Grade 13 or above is **3.9%**.

We intend to continue our campaign to further increase the percentage of employees disclosing whether they have a disability or not.

Race

In June 2019, 84.2% of staff had declared their ethnicity. Analysis showed that 14.3% of employees are from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds. A breakdown by broad ethnic group is shown in the Chart 2. The percentage of BAME employees at Grade 13 or above in June 2019 was **11.9%**.

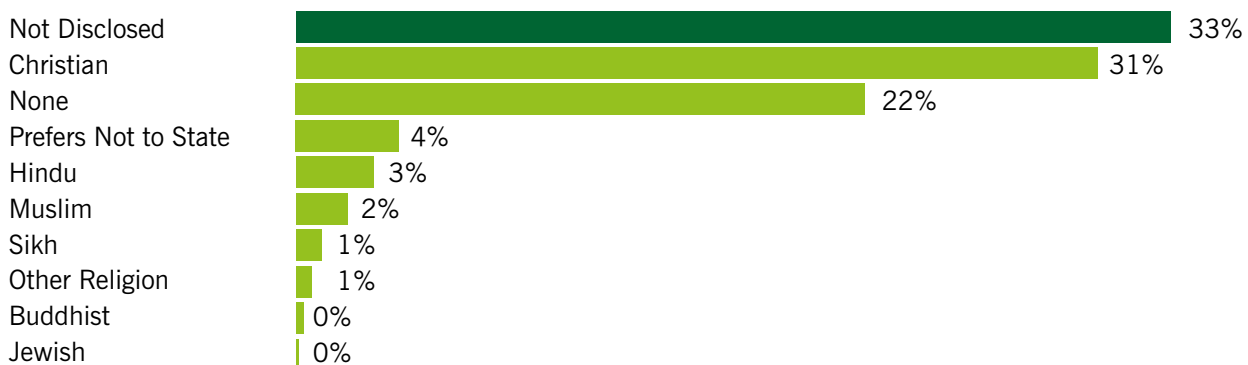
Chart 2 – Breakdown of Workforce by Ethnic Group, June 2019



Religion and Belief

In June 2019, 65.0% of employees had declared their religion. The information that we hold in relation to the religion and belief status of our employees is set out in Chart 3.

Chart 3 – Workforce Religion & Belief Status, June 2019



Sex

Of our employees that are non- school based our workforce equates to **74.0%** female and **26.0%** male. The percentage of female employees at Grade 13 or above is **62.3%**.

Sexual Orientation

Within the workforce monitoring exercise **56.1%** of staff declared their sexual orientation. **2.0%** of employees declared their sexual orientation as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB).

We intend to continue our campaign to further increase the percentage of employees disclosing their sexual orientation.

Explanation of Terms

Equality

Equality means providing everyone with the same opportunities to make the most of their abilities and lives and is expressed in terms of equal access and treatment that meets the needs of the individual. It does not mean treating everyone exactly the same as, to be equitable, some people need to be given more support to achieve the same outcomes.

Diversity

Diversity is about recognising and valuing differences in their broadest sense. This means understanding how people's differences and similarities can be mobilised for the benefit of the individual, an organisation and society as a whole. One example of the council's approach to diversity is to recognise the social model of disability and apply it to overcome the barriers that disabled people face in their lives and employment.

Human Rights

Human rights are the basic rights and freedoms that should be available to every person in the world. Human rights are based on core principles such as dignity, fairness, equality, respect and autonomy. They are relevant to day-to-day life and protect people's freedom to control their own lives, effectively take part in decisions made by public authorities which impact upon their rights, and get fair and equal level of public services.

Community Cohesion

A cohesive community can be described as one in which strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds and circumstances. Effective and lasting community cohesion involves a common vision, values and a sense of belonging for all communities, where the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated, respected and positively valued.

Protected characteristics

The nine protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010 are:

- Age
- Disability – where this has a substantial and long-term effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities
- Gender
- Gender reassignment – the legal term for anyone considering, undergoing or having completed a process to change the gender identity they were assigned at birth although the accepted umbrella term is trans
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Race
- Religion or belief – this includes non-belief
- Pregnancy and maternity – from the start of pregnancy to 26 weeks after birth
- Sexual orientation

The protection under the Act extends to any form of discrimination (whether direct, indirect or perceived) harassment or victimisation occurring on the basis of either having or being associated with a protected characteristic.

Annex 1 - The people of Leicestershire

The following information reflects the most recent data known to the council although it is acknowledged that, in a number of categories, this is heavily or wholly reliant on 2011 Census data.

Age

The age of our population is important when planning services so we can meet the needs of our community.

17.9% of the population of Leicestershire are children (0-15 years), 61.7% of the population are working age (16-64 years) and 20.4% of the population are older people (65+ years)³.

The population of Leicestershire is growing, and it is predicted to reach 787,500 people by 2041, an increase of over 107,100 from 2016⁴.

However, the population is not growing uniformly for all age groups. We have an ageing population which will have implications for service provision.

Between 2016 and 2041, the total population is predicted to grow by 16%.

- The population growth in people aged 85 years and over is predicted to be 127%, from 17,700 to 40,100 people.
- The population aged 65-84 is predicted to grow by 44%, from 118,700 to 170,600 people.
- The younger population, aged 0-24 years, is predicted to grow by 9% from 198,700 to 215,700 people.
- However, the adult population aged 25-64 years is predicted to grow by 5% from 345,300 people to 361,100 people⁵.

Disability

16.2% of the population of Leicestershire self-report a long-term illness or disability which limits their day to day activities⁶. Given the projected ageing population, it is reasonable to assume this could significantly increase in the coming years.

³ Mid-2018 population estimates, Office for National Statistics

⁴ 2016-based subnational population projections (2019), Office for National Statistics Population Projections Unit

⁵ 2016-based subnational population projections (2019), Office for National Statistics Population Projections Unit

⁶ 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics

Nationally, it is estimated that one in four people will experience a mental health problem each year⁷. In Leicestershire this would equate to 174,567 out of 698,268 residents⁸. Mental health issues can either be short- or long-term, the most common being generalised anxiety disorder and depression⁹.

There are currently 3,524 people who are registered blind or partially sighted residing in Leicestershire and of these 1,956 are aged 80+. 934 people have dual sight and hearing loss¹⁰. We are currently in the process of determining how many people residing in Leicestershire are registered with hearing loss. It is estimated that there are more people with a sight and hearing loss within Leicestershire who have not yet registered.

During 2017/18, there were 1,405 people aged 18-64 with a learning disability who received a service¹¹. Of those receiving a service in September 2019, 82% were living in settled accommodation, while 11.5% were in employment. The number of people aged 65 or over with a learning disability who received a service during 2017/18 was much lower at 145.

There are 4,222 children with an Education and Health Care Plan in Leicestershire. 31% of these children are supported in mainstream schools, with an additional 9% of children supported in units attached to these schools¹².

Gender Identity

There are no accurate statistics available regarding the profile of people whose gender identity is different from the gender assigned to them when they were born, either within Leicestershire or the UK as a whole. Gender identity has not previously been incorporated into the Census or other official statistics but, along with sexual orientation, will be voluntary questions in the 2021 Census enabling data about trans and non-binary people to be officially recorded. We will monitor this emerging data to inform future service delivery.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Within Leicestershire, 275,502 people (51.7%) are married and 996 people (0.2%) are in a registered same-sex civil partnership. There is a relatively equal balance of people who are married or in a registered same-sex civil partnership across all districts and boroughs within Leicestershire¹³.

7 Mind www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/statistics-and-facts-about-mental-health/how-common-are-mental-health-problems/ [Accessed 22/03/16]

8 Based on Mid-2018 population estimates, Office for National Statistics

9 Mind www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/statistics-and-facts-about-mental-health/how-common-are-mental-health-problems/ [Accessed 22/03/16]

10 Vista, Number of people Registered Blind or Partially Sighted in Leicestershire [as of 22/03/16]

11 SALT return 2014/15, table LTS001a

12 SEN2 Collection, Department for Education, January 2019

13 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics

Race

91.4% of the population of Leicestershire identify themselves as 'White' and 8.6% of the population are from Black and Minority Ethnic groups, making Leicestershire an ethnically and culturally diverse county¹⁴.

This compares to 54% of the population in Leicester who identify as Black and Minority Ethnic. 17.7% of the population in Oadby and Wigston are Indian Asian, which has risen from 11.4% in 2001 and compares to only 1% in Hinckley and Bosworth, North West Leicestershire and Melton¹⁵.

Approximately 3.8% of people in Leicestershire do not have English as their main language¹⁶.

Religion & Belief (including no religion or belief)

Within Leicestershire, there are a number of religions and beliefs followed by local people, which include Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Pagan and Sikh faiths.

In the 2011 Census, 60.3% of Leicestershire residents stated that they are Christian, 2.8% are Hindu, 1.4% are Muslim, 1.2% are Sikh and 0.7% identified as other religions. 27.1% of Leicestershire residents stated that they had no religion¹⁷.

Sex (Gender)

There is an equal gender split between men and women in Leicestershire with 321,416 males and 329,073 females. However, between 2001 and 2011, there were almost twice as many females as males for those aged 0-4¹⁸. This is the only age gap where the difference between the sexes is as high. We will continue to monitor this emerging data to further inform future service delivery.

Sexual Orientation

There are no accurate statistics available regarding the profile of the lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) population within Leicestershire. Sexual orientation will be incorporated into the Census from 2021 but it has previously been widely acknowledged that approximately 6-10% of any population will be LGB. In Leicestershire, this would equate to between 41,896 and 69,827 people¹⁹. Having said this, based on data from the Annual Population Survey 2017, the Office for National Statistics estimate that 2.0 % of the UK population identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB)²⁰. In 2014, the Integrated Household Survey found that 1.6% of adults in the UK identified their sexual identity as lesbian, gay or bisexual²¹. In Leicestershire, this would equate to approximately 11,172 people²².

¹⁴ 2011 census, Office for National Statistics

¹⁵ 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics

¹⁶ Office for National Statistics, [from Nomis on 21 March 2016]

¹⁷ 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics

¹⁸ 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics

¹⁹ Based on Mid-2018 population estimates, Office for National Statistics

²⁰ Sexual identity, Office for National Statistics, 2017.

www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality

²¹ 2014 Integrated Household Survey, Office for National Statistics

²² Based on Mid-2018 population estimates, Office for National Statistics

Carers

The 2011 Census found that, in Leicestershire, 10.9% of the population provide unpaid care. This is slightly higher than the national average of 10% and is perhaps reflective of Leicestershire's ageing population. However, we recognise that care is provided for a variety of reasons, not just for older people, and that support is required for carers of all ages²³. The council's Community Insight Survey of 1,600 residents annually suggests that, in the 12 months to June 2019, 16% of respondents provided informal care to someone other than children aged under 16.

Given the projected population growth between 2016 and 2041 in people aged 85 years and over, which is predicted to be 127%²⁴, it is reasonable to assume that the percentage of people providing unpaid care is likely to rise over the coming years.

Gypsy and Traveller Community

In 2012/13, a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA) Refresh was undertaken across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Using baseline data from the 2007 GTAA, caravan count data and information provided by a number of local authorities, the estimation of the number of Gypsies and Travellers across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland in 2012 was 588 families²⁵. There are also a number of Gypsy and Traveller families who pass through Leicestershire.

Asylum Seekers and Refugees

There are no accurate statistics available regarding asylum seekers and recent refugees within Leicestershire or the UK as a whole. It is not incorporated into the Census or other official statistics.

Deprivation

Leicestershire experiences relatively low levels of social-economic deprivation overall. North West Leicestershire is the most deprived district in the county based upon the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 (rank of average score). It is ranked 214 out of 354 local authorities in England (where 1 is the most deprived), while Harborough is the least deprived, ranked 313. Even so, pockets of significant deprivation exist, with some neighbourhoods in Loughborough and Coalville amongst the most deprived neighbourhoods in England. These areas experience deprivation across a number of themes, such as income, employment, health and crime.²⁶

²³ 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics

²⁴ 2012-based subnational population projections (2014), Office for National Statistics Population Projections Unit

²⁵ Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment Refresh February 2013, DeMontfort University, Leicester

²⁶ English Indices of Deprivation 2015, Department for Communities and Local Government, 2015