



**WATFORD  
BOROUGH  
COUNCIL**

# Equality Impact Analysis

<b>Title of policy, function or service</b>	Watford's Environmental Strategy: addressing the climate and ecological emergency 2023-2030  Associated delivery plan 2023-2025
<b>Lead officer</b>	Susheel Rao, Sustainability Officer
<b>Person completing the EIA</b>	Susheel Rao, Sustainability Officer
<b>Type of policy, function or service:</b>	Existing (reviewed) <input type="checkbox"/>  New/Proposed x <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Version &amp; Date</b>	Version 2  21/2/23

## **1. Background**

The council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and an ecological emergency in 2021. It has committed to achieve net zero carbon for the council by 2030 and do all in its power to achieve net zero for the borough also by 2030.

In 2020 the council approved the Sustainability Strategy Part 1, which runs until March 2023. Watford's Environmental Strategy: addressing the climate and ecological emergency will run from 2023 to 2030. Alongside this, there will be a deliver plan which is reviewed annually and updated every 2 years. The proposed delivery plan will run from April 2023 to Mar 2025.

Watford's Environmental Strategy has been developed with liaison between both internal and external parties. A consultation exercise was held between 7<sup>th</sup> November 2022 and 9<sup>th</sup> December 2022. This included face to face focus groups, virtual meetings and an online consultation questionnaire. As part of the focus group meetings, we contacted organisations working with people from arrange of different interest groups, including those with protected characteristics, from disability, to religion to race. We were able to meet with Watford deaf club, and the blind society, as well as West Herts College and Westfield Academy.

The impacts of climate change, mitigation and adaptation solutions can have a greater impact on more vulnerable people, either within Watford or globally. Climate justice is an internationally recognised issue, which we all need to address. The strategy is seeking to mitigate the impacts of climate change, through reducing the carbon equivalent impacts both within the council and across the borough, seeking to help those who are experiencing fuel poverty, ensuring we have adequate natural habitat areas, providing benefit for nature, and also for those without access to their own private gardens, and reducing the resources we use, such as making it easier and more acceptable to reuse and repair things.

The strategy sets out the council's targets to be achieved by 2030, while the delivery plan sets out the actions to be taken in the next two years.

## **2. Focus of the Equality Impact Analysis**

This EIA, therefore, considers the potential equality related impacts, both positive and negative of Watford's Environmental Strategy and Delivery Plan on the people in the groups or with the characteristics protected in the Equalities Act 2010.

These are:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender Reassignment
4. Pregnancy and maternity
5. Race
6. Religion or belief
7. Sex (gender)

8. Sexual Orientation
9. Marriage and Civil Partnership.

### **3. Engagement and consultation**

To ensure we provided opportunity for the greatest amount of people to provide their feedback on the Environmental Strategy, we took the following approach:

- Consultation on CommonPlace, with copies of the strategy, both in full and in chapters posted online;
- In person or virtual focus groups or meetings;
- Snap Survey
- Social media posts
- Having people at the Green Market and also in the council's Customer Service Centre to ask people's views.

We promoted the consultation through:

- 16 digital posters on the Watford High Street;
- Feature article in About Watford Winter edition 2022;
- Social media campaign;
- Articles in WBC's email newsletter for residents;
- Article in Elected Mayor's email newsletter
- Article in the Economic Development newsletter
- Direct emails and sharing requests to 19 organisations and our sustainability mailing list of 700 people;
- 12 focus groups.

We had face to face meetings where we engaged with 238 people, these included:

- Watford Blind Centre (12)
- Watford Deaf Association (10)
- Sustainability Managers (15)
- Sustainability Forum (35)
- Great Big Green Week attendees (35)
- Facebook Live (15)
- Water Quality Forum (42)
- Session with W3R Friends of the Earth (10)
- Meeting with Watford BID (2)
- Lunch & Learn with staff (18)
- West Herts College (25)
- Westfield school: (13)
- Watford Football Club: (2)
- Face-face interviews at CSC (4)

Through this process, we engaged with people of different ethnicity, gender, and age, as well as with people who had a recognised disability.

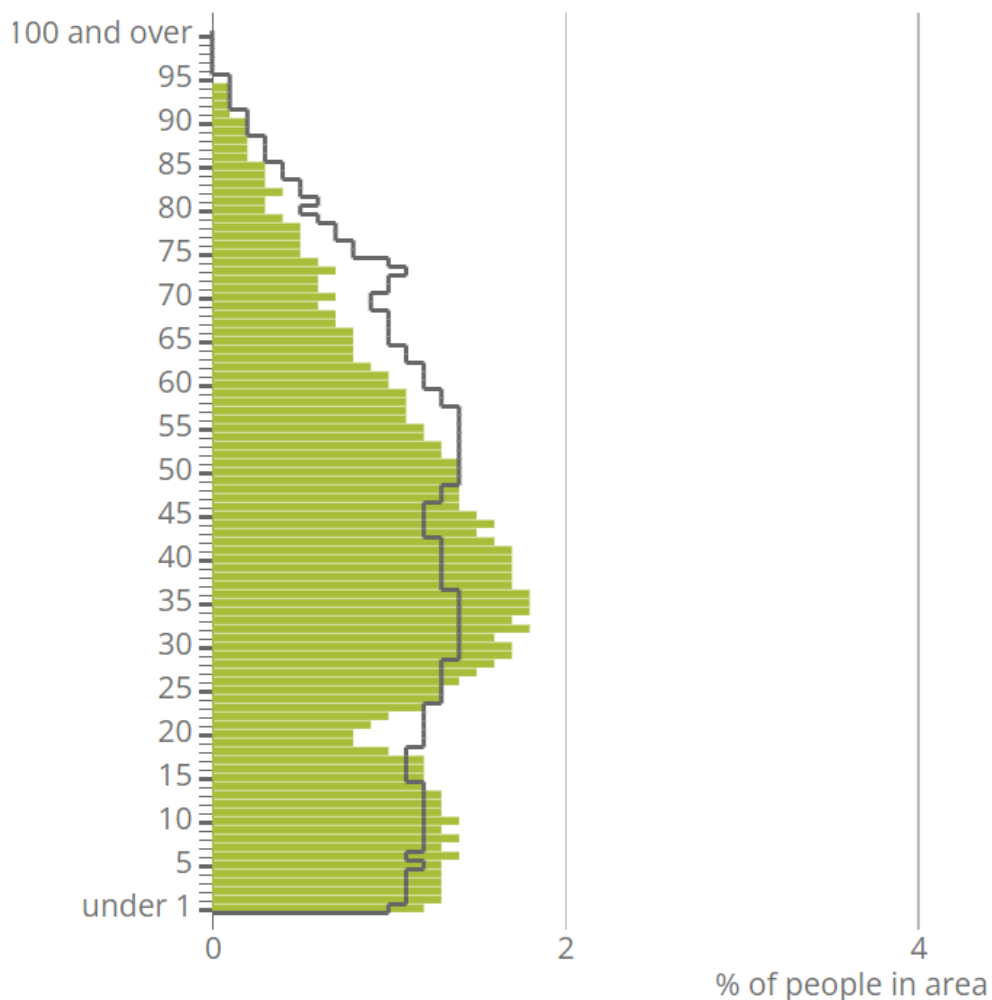
## 4. What we know about the Watford population

### Population (including age)

Watford is a town with a growing population. The census data 2021 indicates that Watford has a population of 102,300, an increase of 13.3% since the previous census in 2011. This is higher than the overall increase for England (6.6%), where the population grew by nearly 3.5 million to 56,489,800.

Watford's population is currently projected to increase to 110,300 by 2035, a rise from 2016 of 14.2%. This growth will be a challenge for Watford, given our tight borough boundaries and is recognised within the Council Plan, shaping a number of our commitments and areas for action in the Delivery Plan.

The chart below shows Watford's age ranges between 0 – 100 and over in percentage of the population (green) compared with the England / Wales percentages (black line).



Overall, this comparison shows that Watford is a relatively young town. This is particularly the case in the 0 to 19 age range. Similarly the 30 to 49 cohort accounts for a significantly higher proportion of the Watford population than nationally.

The median age in Watford is 36 compared with 40 for England.

This means that we are a town which is popular with families and, whilst we are a town for all, we recognise that our plans need to reflect our large number of young people and families. In terms of voluntary and community sector organisations, this means there are likely to be demands for help across all age profiles but those supporting families and younger children may face higher than average demand.

### Population density

The population density for Watford is circa 4,770 people per square kilometre. This makes it the most densely populated district area in Hertfordshire and in the country (434 per square kilometre). This is a reflection that we are an urban district, with many characteristics of a metropolitan borough. In comparison with many metropolitan boroughs, particularly those in and around the outskirts of London, our density is relatively low.

### Ward level populations (mid-year 2018)

The ONS publishes experimental data on ward level populations. The last release date was for mid-year 2018. This showed Central ward had the highest population (9,447) and Tudor the lowest (6,825). Further analysis shows that Nascot ward had a significantly higher number of elderly residents than other wards in Watford, whilst Central a significantly higher number of under 20s. The age profile of Nascot ward was recently highlighted by the COVID-19 crisis, when it experienced the highest death rate of any ward in Watford.

Ward	Mid-year 2018
Callowland	7,928
Central	9,447
Holywell	8,610
Leggatts	7,757
Meriden	7,972
Nascot	8,815

Ward	Mid-year 2018
Oxhey	6,847
Park	8,698
Stanborough	7,403
Tudor	6,825
Vicarage	8,854
Woodside	7,611

*ONS experimental data (Ward Level Mid-Year Population Estimates (experimental), Mid-2018)*

### Households

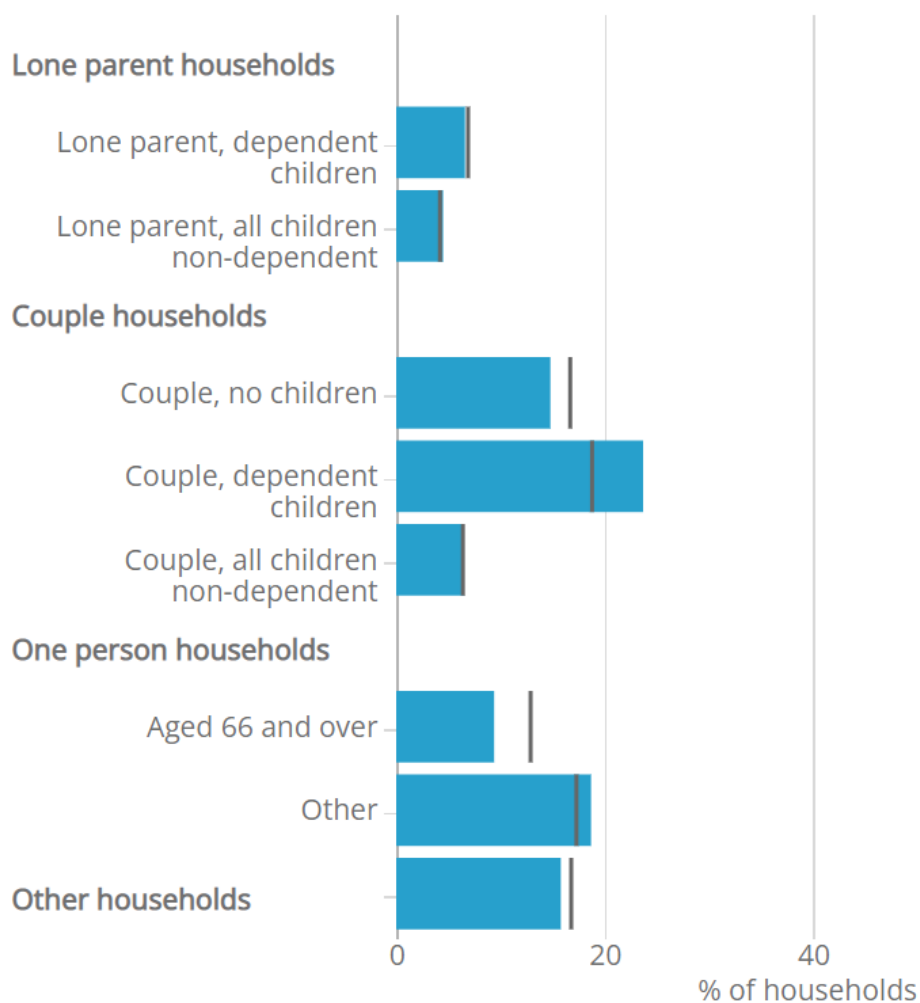
Number of households

The ONS data, based on the census, says that there were 39,628 households in Watford at the time of the Census. The average household size in Watford is currently 2.57. This is slightly higher than the national average of 2.45 and is in line with the Census 2021 household composition data below.

### Household Composition

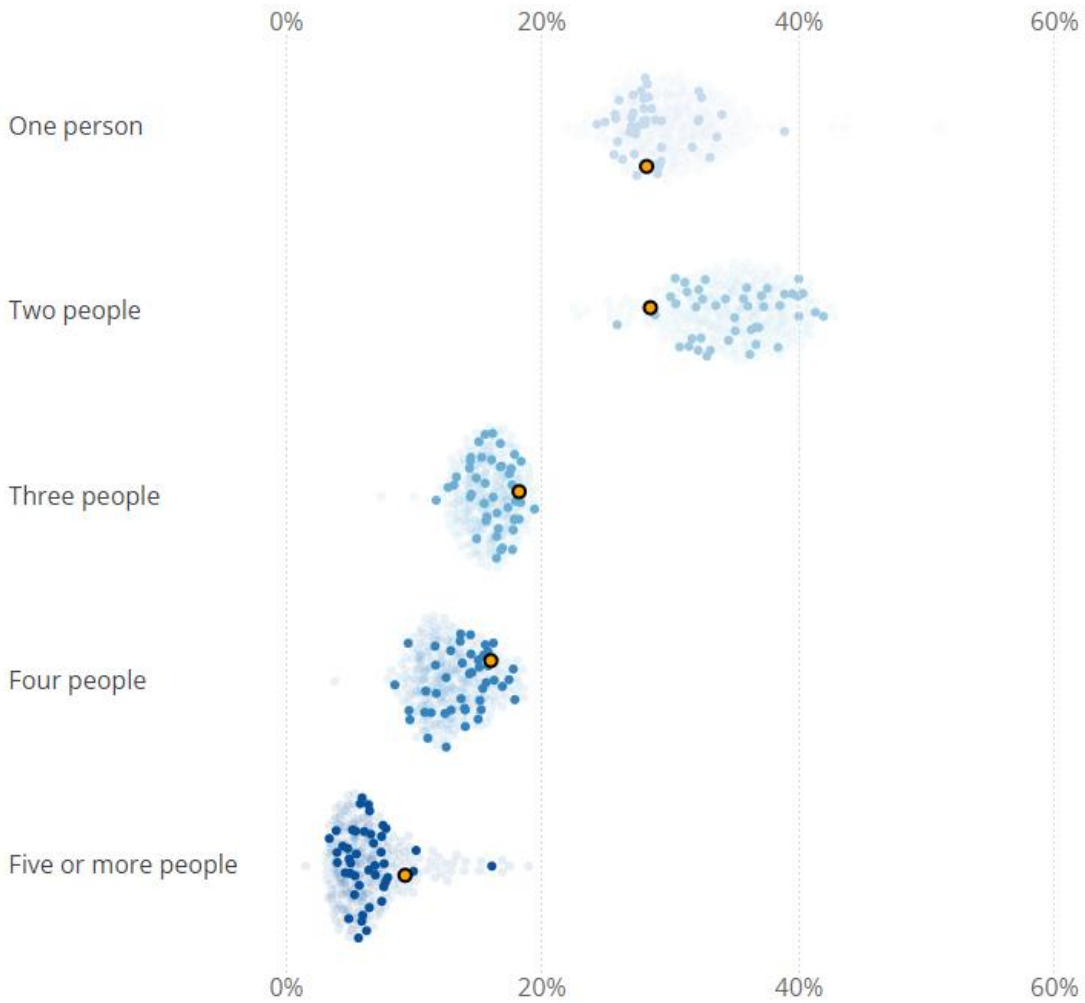
The chart below sets out the composition of Watford households in the Census 2021, with Watford's percentage shown in the blue bars compared to the England and Wales percentages shown by the vertical black bar. Watford has a higher percentage of both households with couples with no children and households with dependent children than England and Wales. As a town with a

relatively young population it has fewer one person households with residents aged 66 and over.



The second chart on household composition shows that Watford has higher than England and Wales average for larger sized households – 3 or more people. Again this reflects that Watford is a ‘family town’ with different generations living together in one household.

Local authorities within the same region are highlighted



**Language spoken at home:**

Below is the data collected in Census 2021 with regard to household language. This is another indication that Watford benefits from groups and organisations set up to support those who may have arrived in the town more recently.

	Number	Percentage
All adults in household have English as a main language	30443	76.8%
At least one but not all adults in household have English as a main language	3486	8.8%
No adults in household, but at least one person aged 3 to 15 years, has English as a main language	1438	3.6%
No people in household have English in England as a main language	4261	10.8%

## Main Language

The Census asked people their main language, with over 90 choices. Whilst English was significantly the most chosen language with nearly 80,000 residents citing English as their main language, there are a substantial number of residents with other main languages. The top ten after English are below (see Appendix 1 for the full list of languages).

Language	Number
Other European language (EU): Romanian	3,361
Other European language (EU): Polish	1,659
South Asian language: Urdu	1,486
South Asian language: Tamil	1,193
Portuguese	1,140
South Asian language: Gujarati	954
South Asian language: Malayalam	643
Other European language (EU): Italian	551
Other European language (EU): Hungarian	489
Other European language (EU): Bulgarian	435

## Disability/Health

The health and disability data from Census 2021 is not available until later in January 2023.

The 2020/21 NHS Health Profile's summary conclusion is that the health of people in Watford is 'varied' compared with the England average. About 12% (2,256) of children live in relatively low income families and about 10% live in absolute low income families.

## Sexual orientation and gender reassignment

Watford has no specific data on the transgender community within the borough or for the sexual orientation of its community. The information on sexual orientation is due to be released later in January 2023

## Ethnicity

Watford has a very diverse population, more so than the rest of Hertfordshire; it is one of the strengths of our town and what makes us such a vibrant and diverse place to be. This diversity is an opportunity for our voluntary and community sector in terms of how they respond to the various needs of the Watford community and how they reach out to engage and include people in what they do.



	WATFORD 2011	WATFORD 2021
		<b>102,245 TOTAL</b>
<b>White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British</b>	61.9% (55,875)	46.0% (46,820)
<b>White Irish</b>	2.3% (2,063)	2.1% (2,149)
<b>White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller</b>	0.1% (61)	0.1% (80)
<b>White: Roma</b>	Not a category in 2011	0.3% (343)
<b>White: Other White</b>	7.7% (6,947)	12.6% (12,836)
<b>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean</b>	1.1% (990)	1.3% (1,300)
<b>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African</b>	0.5% (412)	0.7% (692)
<b>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian</b>	1.0% (939)	1.4% (1,408)
<b>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: Other Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups</b>	0.8% (763)	1.4% (1,444)
<b>Asian/Asian British/ Asian Welsh: Indian</b>	5.5% (4,923)	9.7% (9,954)
<b>Asian/Asian British/Asian Welsh: Pakistani</b>	6.7% (6,082)	8.0% (8,197)
<b>Asian/Asian British/Asian Welsh: Bangladeshi</b>	0.4% (362)	0.5% (493)

<b>Asian/Asian British/Asian Welsh: Chinese</b>	0.9%	1.0%
	(822)	(1,024)
<b>Asian/Asian British/Asian Welsh: Other Asian</b>	4.4%	5.3%
	(3,981)	(5,369)
<b>Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: African</b>	3.5%	3.9%
	(3,142)	(3,954)
<b>Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Caribbean</b>	1.7%	1.7%
	(1,558)	(1,733)
<b>Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Other Black</b>	0.6%	0.8%
	(529)	(801)
<b>Other ethnic group: Arab</b>	0.3%	0.7%
	(294)	(763)
<b>Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group</b>	0.6%	2.8%
	(558)	(2,885)

### Religion or belief

Religious groups in Watford, 202q census:

- Christian - 45,447 people or 44.6%
- Buddhist - 1,021 people or 0.85%
- Hindu - 8,398 people or 8.2%
- Jewish - 944 people or 0.93%
- Muslim - 13,262 people or 11.0%
- Sikh - 664 people or 0.6%
- Other - 859 people or 0.71%
- No religion – 25,340 people or 24.8%

6,311 people did not answer this question

## Gender

The 2021 census did not allow for any option other than female or male.

FEMALE	50.8%
MALE	49.2%

## Marriage and Civil Partnership

For census 2021, this has been updated to reflect the revised Civil Partnership Act that came into force in 2019.

Category	Number of Watford households
Does not apply <i>not eligible for a legal partnership</i>	21,282
Never married and never registered a civil partnership	30,974
Married: Opposite sex	38,023
Married: Same sex	192
In a registered civil partnership: Opposite sex	85
In a registered civil partnership: Same sex	60
Separated, but still married	1,744
Separated, but still in a registered civil partnership	7
Divorced	6,074
Formerly in a civil partnership now legally dissolved	18
Widowed	3,782
Surviving partner from civil partnership	5

## 5. How will the council ensure equality is promoted through Watford's Environmental Strategy

Under the Equality Act 2010, three areas need to be considered when analysing the equality impact of Watford's Environmental Strategy:

1. **eliminate** discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
2. **advance** equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it
3. **foster** good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not

### A. Positive impacts

Implementing the strategy should have a long term benefit to all the Watford community, especially the more vulnerable and those on low income as it will help to:

- Mitigate against energy and resource cost rises;  
We know in particular that high energy prices impact older people, children, people with disabilities, those with mental and physical health problems and conditions and pregnant women.
- Reduce pollution and congestion;
- Provide access to nature as well as green space;  
We know green space is valued across the community but particularly by families with children and those without access to private gardens.
- Prepare the borough for changes resulting for climate change.  
We know older people are more likely to be vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as heat waves, water shortages and extreme weather events, due to a combination of age, health issues and greater social isolation. Therefore, any actions that mitigate climate change will have a positive impact on older people.

People with disabilities and long-term health conditions may be more likely to be vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as heat waves and extreme weather events, due to a combination of health issues and lower average incomes. Therefore, any actions that mitigate climate change will have a positive impact on people with disabilities.

Some religious groups may find it more difficult to carry out some religious practices as a result of either longer term climatic change or extreme weather events. For example, water shortages may impact on washing after prayers for Muslim residents, and any shortages of particular food items caused by global impacts of climate change on agriculture may lead to shortages of foods required to meet special dietary requirements for some religious groups. Therefore, any actions that mitigate climate change will have a positive impact on people

from some of our religious groups.

- There are a number of actions which bring the community together within the delivery plan that will foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not. These include Great Big Green Week, volunteering events through the River Colne Project, providing opportunity / support on food growing, as well as working with businesses and local people to take action on climate change.

## **B. Negative impacts**

The potential negative impacts relate to costs of implementing changes, whether for individuals, within the council or within the borough.

Other negative impacts relate to perceptions that some things are now off limits, without an alternative solution, e.g. 'I am being told not to drive my car, but there are no bus routes, I can't walk where I want to go and I don't feel safe cycling'.

Some minority ethnic residents may experience language barriers, which may make it more difficult to access information provided by the council about climate change, including reducing health risks related to climate change. Rather than routinely making information available in community languages, the council provides translated materials on request, although our website has functionality to translate into most languages. However, we can consider translating advice on responding to climate change risks into community languages for groups where there are a large number of non-English speakers.

## **6. Overall conclusion**

Overall, Watford's Environmental Strategy should have a positive impact across all the protected characteristics, although short term there may be some negative impacts or perceived negative impacts, especially as we will all need to make changes in how we do things. Climate change and ecological destruction across the globe will affect all of us, and is starting to already. It is likely to affect those who are disadvantaged more, whether in the UK or globally. Therefore taking action to limit, mitigate and adapt to this will have a positive impact, both short and long term. Throughout the implementation, the council will monitor the impacts across the community to understand if there is any differential impact for those with protected characteristics.

## Summary of potential positive impacts and ways in which they can be ensured

Positive Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to ensure the positive impact
Reduced money spent on energy, water and other resources.	Age, disability, ethnicity, belief, gender	Work with fuel poor to facilitate better energy efficiency in homes; Work with partners to promote ways to safely reduce energy, water and other resource bills, with low cost measures. E.g. water saving devices, draught proofing, etc.
Improved air quality and reduced pollution and congestion	Potentially all, but specifically Age, disability, ethnicity, belief, gender	Ensure that TTIW actions recognise the implications to certain groups, such as those with disabilities
Improved access to nature	Potentially all, but specifically Age, disability, ethnicity, belief, gender	Ensure that when managing for nature, there are still areas which are also accessible for people, such that they can experience nature positively within Watford.
Ensure we are prepared for changes in weather patterns due to increase in average global temperature, e.g. due to flooding, extreme heat, drought and cost of heating homes	Potentially all, but specifically Age, disability, ethnicity, belief, gender	Ensure that where individual homes or work places cannot be adapted there are accessible alternatives Look at how urban heat island effect can be mitigated in dense urban areas.

## Summary of potential negative impacts and ways in which they can be removed or mitigated

Negative Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to mitigate the negative impact
Cost of implementing measures	Potentially all, but specifically Age, disability, ethnicity, belief, gender	Look for grant funding for cash poor and fuel poor households to implement measures.
Actions seen as anti car, and so those who need a car discriminated against.	disability	<p>Ensure that dialogue on moving away from cars and towards active travel reflects diverse population;</p> <p>Ensure that active travel options are safe for the wide range of users, and minimise conflict between different users;</p> <p>Ensure alternatives to the car outside active travel are also discussed, such as public transport, but also use of cars through a car club.</p>

**This EIA has been approved by:**

..... **Date** .....