



**WATFORD
BOROUGH
COUNCIL**

Equality Impact Analysis

Title of policy, function or service	Public Space Protection Order(s) for renewal and variation
Lead officer	Kerrie Marks
Person completing the EIA	Kerrie Marks
Type of policy, function or service:	Existing (reviewed) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x New/Proposed <input type="checkbox"/>
Version & Date	Version 0.2 06/11/2023

1. Background

The current Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) for Albert Road South road closure and the town centre “no drinking zone” are due to expire in December 2023, and the council is now considering whether to renew both PSPOs, for a further three years, until December 2026.

A Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) is made under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. It can be made where the council is of the opinion that the activities carried on in a public place have, or are likely to have, a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality or it is likely that activities will be carried on in a public place in that area and that they will have such an effect.

The effect of the activities is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature, such as to make them unreasonable and justifying any restrictions or requirements imposed by the PSPO.

Watford currently has two PSPOs in place. One permits the closure of Albert Road South to non-commercial traffic on Friday, Saturday and Monday evenings from 21:00 hrs to 04:40hrs the following morning. The other allows for a Police Officer, PCSO or accredited officer to remove alcohol from anyone deemed drinking in public in the town centre, if it is considered they pose a threat to public order.

A PSPO can only be made for a maximum duration of up to three years, after which it may be extended if certain criteria under section 60 of the 2014 Act are met. This includes that an extension is necessary to prevent activity recurring, or there has been an increase in frequency or seriousness of the activity after the original PSPO would have expired.

Orders can also be varied under the 2014 Act, by altering the area to which it applies, or changing the requirements of the Order.

The council’s Community Protection team and Hertfordshire Constabulary support the need for extending both PSPOs for a further three years, with a variation to each.

2. Focus of the Equality Impact Analysis

This EIA, therefore, considers the potential equality related impacts, both positive and negative of the PSPO’s renewal and variation 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

The proposal for renewal and variation of both PSPO's will be noted at Corporate Management Board.

Following comment from Corporate Management Board, a three week public consultation will be conducted, with the local Chief Officer of Police, the Police and Crime Commissioner, owners or occupiers of land within the affected area where reasonably practicable, and appropriate community representatives. The feedback from the consultation and final proposal will then go to Watford Borough Council's Cabinet for approval

4. What we know about the Watford population

Population (including age)

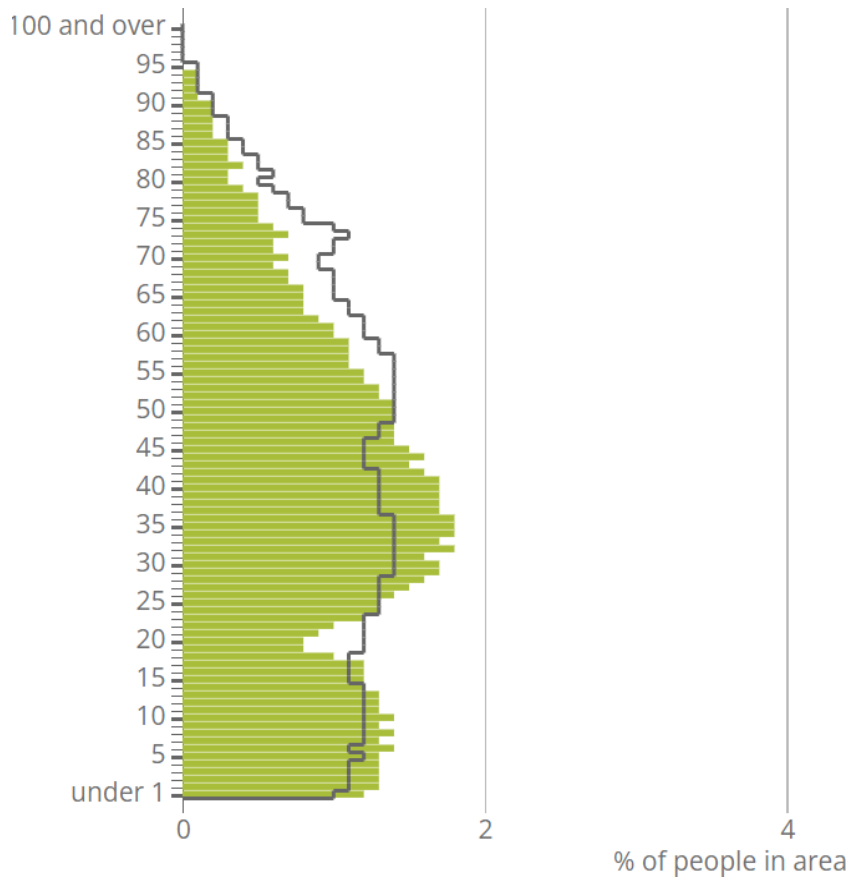
Watford is a town with a growing population. The census data 2021 indicates that Watford has a population of 102,200, an increase of 13.3% since the previous census in 2011. This is higher than the overall increase for England (6.6%), where the population grew by nearly 3.5 million to 56,489,800.

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 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 overall service provision throughout the borough 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.

Households

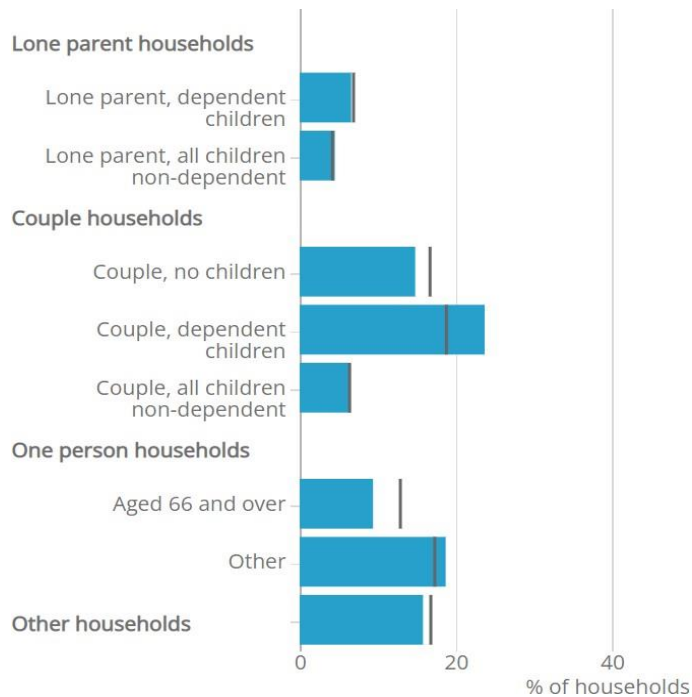
Number of households

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 following chart on household composition shows that Watford has higher than England and Wales average for larger sized households – 3 or more people. This reinforces that character of Watford as a ‘family town’ with different generations living together in one household.

Language spoken at home:

Below is the data collected in Census 2021 regarding 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

Watford has a lower percentage of residents with a disability (15%) than England overall (17.7%). A higher percentage of people in Watford also declared they were in good health (48.2%) compared to England overall (47.5%).

Sexual orientation and gender reassignment

Census 2021 included questions on sexual orientation and gender identity for the first time. 2.7% of those who selected to answer the sexual orientation question identified as LGB+ orientation (“Gay or Lesbian”, “Bisexual” or “Other sexual orientation”). 0.31% of those who selected to answer the gender identity question answered ‘no’ to whether their gender identity is the same as their sex registered at birth.

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 residents, employees, partners and businesses in terms of how the council engages with, listens to and gains participation from people of all ethnicities within Watford.

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

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

Religion or belief

Religious groups in Watford, 2021 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 not eligible for a legal partnership	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

Mosaic Profile

Mosaic is a classification system which segments our population into 15 groups and 66 types. This mosaic profile helps us to understand the lifestyle and demographics of Watford's population.

WHAT IT TELLS US ABOUT WATFORD?

Rental hubs 22% of our community

Educated young people privately renting in urban neighbourhoods 7% nationally

Urban cohesion 19% of our community

Residents of settled urban communities with a strong sense of identity 5% nationally

Domestic success 16% of our community

Thriving families who are busy bringing up children and following careers 7% nationally

5. How will the council ensure equality is promoted through renewal and variation of the PSPO(S)?

Under the Equality Act 2010, three areas need to be considered when analysing the equality impact of the order:

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

Protected Characteristic	Potential Impact and mitigation
--------------------------	---------------------------------

Age	<p>Watford Borough Council acknowledges there is no specific age of individuals engaging in street drinking, although the expectation would be that children and young people would not be perpetrators of issues relating to street drinking – albeit we acknowledge that underage drinking does arise. Whilst a PSPO cannot be used against young people (under 18), the Police can utilise alternative powers in relation to underage drinking. The treatment and process of applying a PSPO is solely focused on the restricted activities.</p> <p>Police, PCSO or accredited officers are trained to be able to identify and assess situations they may encounter and to identify any present risk in order that they may ensure that they react appropriately in any situation. For example, calling an ambulance for an intoxicated individual in need of medical treatment.</p>
Disability	<p>Watford Borough Council would expect the police / authorised officers to be aware of the needs of anyone with disabilities that they deal with when applying a PSPO. Where people identify they have a disability, it would be expected this is taken into account and appropriate measures taken or guidance sought. This should be part of any training given to those working within the context of a PSPO.</p> <p>Signs are erected around the area designated by the PSPO to ensure that people entering the area are advised that they are in a PSPO designated area. Wording on the face of the signs is dictated by the terms of the legislation. The police, PCSO or accredited officers recognise the need for clarity when dealing with people who may be infringing the terms of the PSPO. In requesting that an individual give up or dispose of alcohol they are trained, as with all legislation, to ensure that individuals understand how they have fallen foul of the legislation. It is recognised that there may be individuals who for a variety of reasons may not be able to read or fully understand the wording on the sign.</p>
Gender Reassignment	<p>The council would expect police, PCSOs or accredited officers to be aware of gender related issues. This includes not making any assumptions about people’s gender and being respectful of people’s preferred pronouns when engaging with them.</p> <p>Watford Borough Council does not expect police, PCSO or accredited officer’s officer’s actions to be influenced by gender reassignment; the treatment and process of applying a PSPO is solely focused on restricted activities and will be the same for all.</p>
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<p>Watford Borough Council does not expect police, PCSO or accredited officer’s actions to be influenced by marital or civil partnership status; the treatment and process of applying a PSPO is solely focused on the restricted activities and will be the same</p>

	for all.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Watford Borough Council does not expect police, PCSO or accredited officer's actions to be influenced by pregnancy or maternity status; the treatment and process of applying a PSPO is solely focused on the restricted activities and will be the same for all.
Race	<p>Watford is a very diverse town with over 50% of residents not from a English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British background.</p> <p>This means that police, PCSO or accredited officers need to be aware that they may well be dealing with people where English is not a first language or where people have different cultural understanding of the law and engaging with law enforcement. In some cases, providing translation might be appropriate to help people understand the restrictions and the impact of their behaviours.</p>
Religion & Belief	As a diverse town, there are also people with a range of religions and faiths. Alcohol consumption can be part of people's faiths and so police, PCSO or accredited officers should have this awareness and understanding
Sex	The council would expect police, PCSOs or accredited officers to be aware of issues related to people's sex. This includes not making any assumptions about people's sex and being respectful of people's preferred pronouns when engaging with them. This policy applies to people of all sexes and there is no anticipated impact, either positive or negative.
Sexual Orientation	This policy applies to people of all sexual orientations and there is no anticipated impact, either positive or negative.

A. Positive impacts

Watford Borough Council, Council Plan 2022-2026 acknowledges the significance of creating a distinctive and successful town centre, providing space and time for residents, businesses, and the community to enjoy and experience all it has to offer, while maintaining a commitment to inclusivity and respect, preventing any disturbance or harm to others.

A Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) serves as a valuable tool, established under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act of 2014. Its primary purpose is to safeguard the peaceful and law-abiding majority, enabling them to utilize public spaces without fear of encountering anti-social behaviour. The proposed PSPOs are aimed at ensuring that Watford Borough Council and Hertfordshire Constabulary can effectively address anti-social behaviour issues, thereby allowing open spaces to fulfil their intended purpose. PSPOs are crafted with the specific goal of addressing

and mitigating nuisances or problems in each area that negatively impact the local community's quality of life. These conditions are uniformly applied to all individuals, guaranteeing that public spaces remain safe and free from anti-social behaviour.

The renewal and variation of both PSPOs is anticipated to yield positive outcomes for all segments of the population, ensuring a harmonious balance between the broader community's needs and those using the space in an anti-social manner. The legitimate objectives of the PSPOs are to promote the freedom of people to enjoy public spaces without disruption from anti-social conduct. This, in turn, contributes to the overall health and well-being of Watford residents and visitors.

Renewal of the PSPO(s) is underpinned by the council's commitment to delivering its Council Plan 2022-26 and recognises the importance of understanding and responding to the town's diverse community and residents.

B. Negative impacts

The negative impacts identified through the Equality Impact Assessment relate to what might be specific needs or requirements of those with a protected characteristic. These include people with disabilities, gender reassignment, sex and race. If these are not taken into account in the implementation of this policy, then there is the risk of negative impacts as set out above. However, the policy in itself applies to all the community and across all protected characteristics so, provided, people are treated and dealt with according to their needs the negative impacts will be mitigated.

The proposed PSPOs set out a range of powers available to the police/authorised officers and how these will be legally applied. Its use will be determined by the behaviour occurring and is not directed at any protected group.

The police/authorised officers who will enforce the PSPOs will continue to consider the needs of the individuals and their circumstances to make an informed and balanced decision as to the appropriateness of action to take. Officers will continue to receive training on equality and diversity.

6. Overall conclusion

The renewal of the PSPOs will impact on the lives of people who live, work and visit Watford. The proposed restrictions will impact positively on the community, including those with a protected characteristic, particularly where people are affected by the anti-social behavior that the order is designed to address. This action is proportionate and necessary.

This EIA has been approved by:

Date: (version 2) 15 November 2023

Kathryn Robson Director of Performance