



**WATFORD
BOROUGH
COUNCIL**

Equality Impact Analysis

Title of policy, function or service	Community Asset Strategy and Community Lettings Policy
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Person completing the EIA	John Kuasek
Type of policy, function or service:	Existing (reviewed) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New/Proposed <input type="checkbox"/>
Version & Date	Version 1.0

1. Background

Currently there is no approved Community Asset Strategy or Community Lettings Policy.

The creation of a Strategy is considered essential to ensure that lettings or redevelopment of community facilities are made on a fair and equitable basis.

The outcomes have identified clear and transparent detail on:

1. The assets in scope.
2. The expected deliverables and governance required to measure outcomes.
3. The approach to engagement with the voluntary sector and with the wider community impacted by the Strategy.

Watford Borough Council is committed to supporting a vibrant, flourishing and engaged community sector which can collaborate to deliver sustainable, high quality and value for money services that benefit those who live, work in and visit Watford.

2. Focus of the Equality Impact Analysis

This EIA, therefore, considers the potential equality related impacts, both positive and negative of the Strategy and Lettings Policy 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. 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.

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.

Households

Number of households

The ONS data, based on the census, says that there were 39,628 households in Watford. 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.

Household Composition

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.

Watford has higher than England and Wales average for larger sized households – 3 or more people. reflecting that Watford is a ‘family town’ with different generations living together in one household.

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 top ten after English are below.

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 the year.

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 current data on the transgender community within the borough or for the sexual orientation of its community.

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.

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 <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

4. How will the council ensure equality is promoted through the Community Asset Strategy

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

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

Potential positive effects

The Community Asset Strategy, in setting out the framework to manage the use of council property will have positive impact on those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

The potential positive effects of the Strategy could deliver significant benefit to residents and the voluntary sector throughout the borough and the positive impacts are.

- **Principle 1: Community Cohesion.**
- **Principle 2: Enabling opportunities to be generated.**
- **Principle 3: Community capacity and Impact.**
- **Principle 4: Environmental Sustainability.**

B. Negative impacts

Potential negative effects

Potential negative effects could arise if:

1. No mitigating steps are taken should an increase in demand for services arise.
2. Full utilisation of the assets is not achieved.
3. Care is not taken of disproportional impact on those protected by law.

5. Overall conclusion

The main conclusion is that no significant impact is anticipated on any of the protected groups by implementation of the Strategy. This will continue to provide access to detailed and expert services with a range of community, socioeconomic and cultural benefits to all residents.

