

Equality Impact Analysis for East Herts Statement of Community Involvement

Created by Maria Hennessy April 2025

<p>Title of EqIA (policy/change it relates to)</p>	<p>Statement of Community Involvement</p>	<p>Date</p>	<p>April 2025</p>
<p>Team/Department</p>	<p>Planning Policy</p>		
<p>Focus of EqIA</p> <p>What are the aims of the new initiative? Who implements it? Define the user group impacted? How will they be impacted?</p>	<p>The Council is legally required to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) every 5 years. This sets out how the Council will involve the community in the planning process. The previous SCI was adopted in 2019 with a later 2020 Addendum in light of Covid-19 restrictions. The latest SCI has been prepared taking account of changes to legislation and the increased use of digital technology in planning.</p> <p>The aim of the SCI is to ensure that, as far as possible, all parts of the community have the opportunity to get involved in preparing planning documents and processing planning applications. In addition to setting out the Council’s publicity and consultation procedures, the SCI also outlines what we expect applicants to do before they submit a planning application. When the Council consults on planning policy documents and planning applications it must comply with the SCI.</p> <p>The SCI will impact on a range of user groups. Generally it will have a positive impact on all people who live and work in East Herts because it encourages engagement with stakeholders and the wider community at various opportunities in the planning process. By providing clarity about when and how to get involved and the varied methods for notifying, consulting and responding, it is beneficial for various sections of the community as defined in the Equality Act 2010. Specific reference is made to promoting accessible and inclusive consultation procedures so no group should be disadvantaged. There is also an aim to increase the involvement of ‘hard to reach groups’ on the basis of age, race and disability.</p> <p>The SCI provides the framework for consultation that the Council’s District Plan must comply with. By ensuring that all groups within the community are given the opportunity to participate in the planning process, this gives a greater chance for issues impacting different groups to be incorporated into the decision-making process, which in turn will create more inclusive decisions.</p>		

2. Review of information, equality analysis and potential actions

Please fill in when appropriate to the change. If it does not, please put N/A

Protected characteristics groups from the Equality Act 2010	What do you know? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean? Impacts (actual and potential, positive and negative. Clearly state each)	What can you do? All potential actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
Age	<p>Age profile of the district (Census 2021):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 years and under - 5.5% • 5 to 9 years - 5.9% • 10 to 15 years - 7.8% • 16 to 19 years - 4.2% • 20 to 24 years - 4.6% • 25 to 34 years - 12.3% • 35 to 49 years - 20.5% • 50 to 64 years - 20.9% • 65 to 74 years - 9.7% • 75 to 84 years - 6.0% • 85 years and over - 2.6% <p>Between the Census years of 2011 and 2021 the average age in East Herts has increased. The median age of residents in East Herts rose from 40 to 42. The share of residents aged between 50-64 rose by 1.9% and the number of residents aged between 35 and 49 years decreased by 8.5%.</p>	<p>Typically planning has less representation in consultations from younger and older people. These groups can be categorised as hard to reach groups for planning purposes.</p>	<p>The SCI seeks to ensure an inclusive approach to planning engagement regardless of background or personal circumstance, which is a positive impact.</p> <p>However, the SCI identifies in particular that younger people and elderly people can be hard to reach groups and are less likely to engage in the planning process. The SCI aims to consult in a way that ensures hard to reach groups are involved in consultations from an early stage.</p>	<p>To foster good relations, the SCI aims to improve engagement by involving representatives of a cross-section of stakeholders, ensuring that different needs and views of different sections or groups of the community are considered.</p> <p>Specific techniques that may attract younger people include promoting electronic methods of consultation and social media and where appropriate encouraging the use of community events/displays, producing summaries to make information easier to understand, visiting local schools and colleges and using digital technology to convey complex planning issues in a visual format.</p> <p>In relation to the elderly population the ability for the population group to access consultations through digital means may be reduced. In this circumstance it may therefore be appropriate to promote the</p>

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				<p>consultation through more physical means such as posters, community noticeboards, and letters, whilst allowing hardcopy responses. In addition, in-person events at various locations around the district could help improve accessibility to this age range.</p> <p>In both age groups it may also be appropriate to engage with known groups or organisations that work with the relevant age groups, for example youth groups and Age UK.</p> <p>This process will have a positive impact by increasing awareness of planning opportunities and enhancing opportunities to be involved and respond to planning consultations.</p>
Disability	Percentage of population with a disability in the district (Census 2021): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled under the Equality Act: Day-to-day activities limited a lot - 	It is considered that those with disabilities can be harder to reach or are seldom heard in planning consultations. For planning purposes these are known as	The SCI seeks to ensure an inclusive approach to planning engagement regardless of background or personal circumstance, which is a positive impact.	To foster good relations the SCI aims to improve engagement by involving a cross-section of stakeholders, ensuring that different needs and views of different sections or groups of the community are considered.

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	<p>4.9%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled under the Equality Act: Day-to-day activities limited a little - 8.8% • Not disabled under the Equality Act: Has long term physical or mental health condition but day-to-day activities are not limited - 7.5% • Not disabled under the Equality Act: No long term physical or mental health conditions - 78.9% <p>The number of people identifying themselves as not having a disability has increased between 2011 and 2021 from 85.3% to 86.1% of the population.</p>	<p>‘hard to reach groups’, meaning that this group can be harder to reach and therefore less representation is received in consultations.</p>	<p>However, people with disabilities are identified in the SCI as a ‘hard to reach’ group. The SCI aims to consult in a way that ensures hard to reach groups are involved in consultation from an early stage.</p>	<p>The SCI sets out a number of methods that could assist people with disabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written information will be made available on request in accessible formats. • Summaries of long documents will be produced when relevant to ensure information is easily accessible. • The aim to improve engagement by promoting electronic methods of consultation and social media may help some people with disabilities access and respond to consultation materials. • Events will be at accessible locations. • Where appropriate events may be held online to allow individuals to take part who may not be able to attend in-person events.

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Gender reassignment	Gender identity, by percentage of population (Census 2021): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender identity the same as sex registered at birth - 115,220 persons - 95.1% • Gender identity different from sex registered at birth but no specific identity given – 105 persons - 0.1% • Trans woman – 66 persons - 0.1% • Trans man – 54 persons - 0.0% • Non-binary – 53 persons - 0.0% • All other gender identities – 26 persons- 0.0% • Not answered - 5,628 persons - 4.6% 	No feedback has been provided.	<p>The SCI seeks to ensure an inclusive approach to planning engagement regardless of background or personal circumstance, which is a positive impact.</p> <p>However, no specific gender reassignment impact has been identified.</p>	<p>To foster good relations the SCI aims to improve engagement by involving representatives of a cross section of stakeholders, ensuring that different needs and views of different sections or groups of the community are considered.</p> <p>A range of consultation principles and techniques are proposed to ensure consultation is inclusive so all sectors of the community should benefit. In addition the SCI sets out clear processes for dealing with discriminatory comments, which is a positive approach to addressing discrimination.</p>
Pregnancy and maternity	No reliable data currently.	No feedback has been provided.	The SCI seeks to ensure an inclusive approach to planning engagement regardless of background or personal circumstance,	To foster good relations the SCI aims to improve engagement by involving representatives of a cross-section of stakeholders, ensuring that different needs and

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			which is a positive impact. However, no specific pregnancy and maternity impact has been identified.	views of different sections or groups of the community are considered. A range of consultation principles and techniques are proposed to ensure consultation is inclusive so all sectors of the community should benefit. In addition, the SCI sets out clear processes for dealing with discriminatory comments, which is a positive approach to addressing discrimination.
Race	Ethnic Group, by percentage of population (Census 2021): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh - 2.7% • Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African - 1.3% • Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups - 2.8% • White - 92.3% • Other ethnic group - 0.9% In comparison to the 2011	It is considered that minority ethnic groups can be harder to reach or are seldom heard in planning consultations. For planning purposes these are known as 'hard to reach groups', meaning that this group can be harder to reach and therefore less representation is received in consultations.	The SCI seeks to ensure an inclusive approach to planning engagement regardless of background or personal circumstance, which is a positive impact. However, people from ethnic minorities are identified in the SCI as a 'hard to reach' group. The SCI aims to consult in a way that ensures hard to reach groups are involved in consultations from an early stage to feed into the	To foster good relations the SCI aims to improve engagement by involving representatives of a cross-section of stakeholders, ensuring that different needs and views of different sections or groups of the community are considered. A range of consultation principles and methods are proposed to ensure consultation is inclusive so all sectors of the community should benefit. In addition, the SCI sets out clear processes for dealing with discriminatory

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	Census the amount of individuals identifying themselves as ‘Asia, Asian British or Asian Welsh’, ‘Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African’, ‘Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups’ and ‘Other ethnic groups’ all increased between the Census years. The number of individuals identifying themselves as ‘White’ decreased from 95.5% of the population in 2011 to 92.3% in 2021.		planning process. In some instances English may not be a first language of those with different ethnic backgrounds and taking part in planning consultations may be difficult to understand.	comments, which is a positive approach to addressing discrimination. The SCI includes principles such as making consultations accessible to different groups. Examples of how this can help those who do not have English as a first language is through the use of digital technology which can help translate documents, as well as using plain English, making documents easier to understand. The SCI also promotes targeted consultation where relevant to help engage specifically with particular groups, for example Gypsy and Travellers.
Religion or belief	Religion, by percentage of population (Census 2021): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No religion - 41.8% • Christian - 49.1% • Buddhist - 0.4% • Hindu - 0.6% • Jewish - 0.4% 	No feedback has been provided.	The SCI seeks to ensure an inclusive approach to planning engagement regardless of background or personal circumstance, which is a positive impact. However, no specific religion or belief impact has	To foster good relations the SCI aims to improve engagement by involving representatives of a cross-section of stakeholders, ensuring that different needs and views of different sections or groups of the community are considered.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muslim - 1.2% • Sikh - 0.1% • Other religion - 0.4% • Not answered - 6.0% <p>Since the 2011 Census the number of residents reporting having 'no religion' increased by 14.1%, while the number of residents who described themselves as 'Christian' decreased from 62.7% to 49.1% of the population.</p>		been identified.	<p>A range of consultation principles are proposed to ensure consultation is inclusive so all sectors of the community should benefit. In particular, where different consultation techniques may benefit those with specific religions or beliefs, could be in relation to specific religious events or practices that could coincide with consultation events. Therefore, some in person events may be impractical for individuals, and the use of digital technology and online resources makes planning accessible at different times of the day for all. In addition, varying times and locations of events can help to minimise the impact of this.</p> <p>In addition, the SCI sets out clear processes for dealing with discriminatory comments, which is a positive approach to addressing discrimination.</p>
Sex/Gender	Sex, by percentage of population (Census 2021): Female – 51%	No feedback has been provided.	The SCI seeks to ensure an inclusive approach to planning engagement regardless of background or	To foster good relations the SCI aims to improve engagement by involving representatives of a cross-section of stakeholders,

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	Male – 49%		personal circumstance, which is a positive impact. However, no specific sex/gender impact has been identified.	ensuring that different needs and views of different sections or groups of the community are considered. A range of consultation principles and methods are proposed to ensure consultation is inclusive so all sectors of the community should benefit. In addition, the SCI sets out clear processes for dealing with discriminatory comments, which is a positive approach to addressing discrimination.
Sexual orientation	Sexual orientation, by percentage of population aged 16 and over (Census 2021): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Straight or Heterosexual - 110,717 persons - 91.4% • Gay or Lesbian - 1,431 persons - 1.2% • Bisexual - 1,087 persons - 0.9% • Pansexual – 105 persons- 0.1% • Asexual - 46 persons- 	No feedback has been provided.	The SCI seeks to ensure an inclusive approach to planning engagement regardless of background or personal circumstance, which is a positive impact. However, no specific sexual orientation impact has been identified.	To foster good relations the SCI aims to improve engagement by involving representatives of a cross-section of stakeholders, ensuring that different needs and views of different sections or groups of the community are considered. A range of consultation principles and techniques are proposed to ensure consultation is inclusive so all sectors of the community should benefit. In addition the SCI sets out clear processes for

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	0.0% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queer – 20 persons- 0.0% • All other sexual orientations – 115 persons- 0.1% • Not answered - 7,634 - 6.3% 			dealing with discriminatory comments, which is a positive approach to addressing discrimination.
Marriage and civil partnership	Legal partnership status, by percentage of population aged 16 and over (Census 2021): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never married and never registered a civil partnership - 33.9% • Married or in a registered civil partnership - 49.9% • Married - 49.7% • In a registered civil partnership - 0.2% • Separated, but still legally married or still legally in a civil partnership - 1.9% • Divorced or civil partnership dissolved - 8.7% • Widowed or surviving 	No feedback has been provided.	The SCI seeks to ensure an inclusive approach to planning engagement regardless of background or personal circumstance, which is a positive impact. However, no specific marriage and civil partnership impact has been identified.	To foster good relations the SCI aims to improve engagement by involving representatives of a cross-section of stakeholders, ensuring that different needs and views of different sections or groups of the community are considered. A range of consultation principles and methods are proposed to ensure consultation is inclusive so all sectors of the community should benefit. In addition, the SCI sets out clear processes for dealing with discriminatory comments, which is a positive approach to addressing discrimination.

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	civil partnership partner - 5.7%			

Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations

It is not considered that the SCI will give rise to the actual or likely adverse impacts to the groups identified as being potentially affected. The role of the SCI is to clearly set out how consultation in planning matters will be undertaken, the approach to this document is for consultation to be open and inclusive, as far as possible. This will have positive impacts to all groups listed in the Equalities Act 2010, ensuring that a range of views are provided and considered in planning decisions, resulting in more positive outcomes for communities.

3. List detailed data and/or community feedback which informed your EqIA (If applicable)

Title (of data, research or engagement)	Date	Gaps in data	Actions to fill these gaps: who else do you need to engage with? (add these to the Action Plan below, with a timeframe)
Census Data	2021	Not applicable	Not applicable

4. Prioritised Action Plan (If applicable)

Impact identified and group(s) affected	Action planned	Expected outcome	Measure of success	Timeframe
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NB: These actions must now be transferred to service or business plans and monitored to ensure they achieve the outcomes identified.

NOT APPLICABLE				

EqIA sign-off: (for the EQIA to be final an email must sent from the relevant people agreeing it or this section must be signed)

Directorate Management Team rep or Head of Service: Sara Saunders, Head of Planning

Date: 28/04/2025

Author of Equality Impact Analysis: Maria Hennessy, Principal Planning Officer

Date: 24/04/2025