

“All of Us” in Bracknell Forest

Equalities Monitoring Annual Report 2018-19



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Appendices: Service Level Reports

- A. Adult Social Care Equalities Monitoring Report
- B. Children's Social Care Equalities Monitoring Report
- C. Community Safety Equalities Monitoring Report
- D. Customer Services Equalities Monitoring Report
- E. Education Equalities Monitoring Report
- F. Housing Services and Benefits Equalities Monitoring Report
- G. Leisure Services Equalities Monitoring Report
- H. Library Services Equalities Monitoring Report
- I. Public Health Equalities Monitoring Report
- J. Out of Hours Monitoring Report

Full reports on each of these services are also available using the following link:
<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/equality-and-diversity/monitoring-equality>

1 Introduction

Bracknell Forest is a place where diversity and cultural heritage are recognised as a strength. The council is committed to ensuring that no one is left behind, isolated or disadvantaged and to ensuring that Bracknell Forest is a borough of opportunity for everyone. The council will continue to work with and encourage vibrant local groups. We will work closely with partners to support and engage our different communities and organisations to ensure everyone feels connected and able to contribute.

The aim of equalities monitoring is to indicate the extent to which the council provides a fair service to all residents.

The Equality Act 2010's [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) outlines the specific duties that the council is required to meet to demonstrate its compliance with its equality duties. The council must publish equality information annually and publish equality objectives every four years.

The [Equality Act 2010](#) places a legal duty on Bracknell Forest Council to have due regard in all its activities to:

- Eliminating unfair discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advancing equality of opportunity
- Fostering good relationships between people

The duty applies across the nine 'protected characteristics' covered by the Act - with regard to marriage and civil partnerships, the council is only required to ensure it eliminates discrimination, harassment and victimisation on these grounds.



2 Bracknell Forest Council Equality Scheme 2017-20

The [Bracknell Forest Equality Scheme](#) 2017-20 sets out what the council intends to achieve in terms of advancing equality and diversity and includes the council's equality objectives. The equality scheme is linked to the service planning process to ensure that the implementation of the equality objectives will be integrated, wherever possible into the mainstream delivery and monitoring of services across the council.

Bracknell Forest is a thriving, welcoming and inclusive community. As our community grows and changes, Bracknell Forest Council is committed to ensuring no one is left behind, isolated or disadvantaged. We take great pride in our support for vulnerable groups and individuals: we want to make sure Bracknell Forest is a borough of opportunity for everyone.

At Bracknell Forest Council, we believe:

- reducing inequalities benefits everyone in the borough
- strengthening communities make for a better borough
- understanding and promoting diversity improves people's lives

This report and the individual service reports should be read alongside the Equalities Monitoring - Workforce Annual Report 2018-19 which summarises the council's employment information.

To assess whether Bracknell Forest Council's services are fulfilling the three equality duties, information on access, outcomes/ performance and satisfaction has been analysed for these [service areas](#).

3 Equality highlights 2018-19

Further details of our equality scheme objectives can be found in the Equality Scheme Action plan attached. Highlights have been included relating to key strategic themes in the [Council Plan](#).

3.1 Value for money

Everyone Active (who now run the Council's leisure venues) are required to collate equality monitoring data. This year's data source included the user satisfaction survey results from Bracknell Leisure Centre and Downshire Golf Complex. 2,355 respondents took part in this year's surveys.

Key highlights include:

- An "excellent" rating consistent across all categories.
- A slight shift in in the level of female user satisfaction compared to last year, 18% voting good (12% lower than last year). However, there was a 6% improvement in female users who felt the overall service was very poor.
- Customers rate their highest level of satisfaction as "excellent" across nearly all ethnic groups, with the Asian and Black groups achieving notable improvements in comparison to last year. There has also been an improvement in the "very poor" responses across all groups since last year.
- most people who considered themselves to have a disability or a long-term condition rated their satisfaction as either "excellent" or "good" which represented a continued year on year improvement.

In our libraries Open+ technology has been successfully implemented at 5 libraries - Binfield, Sandhurst, Harmans Water, Whitegrove and Ascot Heath. Further implementation will be carried out in the next year.

Discussions have taken place with the Nepalese community in Sandhurst, the Indian Community Association in Bracknell and with Polish and Russian library users, resulting in stock in other languages. Feedback has informed the service's updated Resource Management Policy 2018. Older people and people with disabilities who have difficulty physically visiting a library can sign up for the Home Library Service and visually impaired users can borrow up to 6 spoken word items at a time, free of charge.

Members who are registered hearing impaired can borrow up to 2 subtitled DVDs per week, free of charge. Adults and children with special needs can borrow up to 6 spoken word items at a time, free of charge.

3.2 People have life skills and education opportunities they need to thrive

Work has been done with schools to identify young people at risk of disengaging in education, employment or training and ensuring appropriate interventions are put in place.

At the end of March 2019, a total of 1.2% of 16 and 17-year olds were NEET and the activity for 2.1% of the same group was unknown. This meant that the 96.7% of 16 and 17-year olds were in a positive destination of either education, employment or training.

A figure of 1.9% of 16-17-year olds who are NEET at September 2019 represents our lowest ever proportion. Elevate continues to track the activity and support the cohort with their participation in education, employment and/or training. The focus is now on supporting the not known cohort to confirm their participation details ahead of the Annual Activity Survey in January 2020.

3.3 People live active and healthy lifestyles

The Fit for All programme which is subsidised by Public Health has continued in 2019. There are currently 8 classes running across Bracknell Forest at a low-cost per session, with the first session free of charge in order to increase uptake and reduce barriers to trying out the class. Each class is followed by a 30-minute social, facilitated by the instructor, which encourages participants to engage and socialise with each other in a safe environment. In order to increase inclusivity in 2019, a new seated exercise class was launched which was aimed at those individuals who are wheelchair bound, or otherwise have mobility issues.

Children and young people's health and wellbeing is being enhanced in collaboration with council colleagues, East Berkshire CCG and young people themselves.

The Kooth service is well established and well used by those young people who prefer to talk about their emotional wellbeing anonymously but safely in an online environment. 15 young people have been successfully recruited as Young Health Champions and they are currently undergoing their training. Young Health Champions from Bracknell Forest are acting as Young Commissioners supporting with the evaluation and moderation. The Kooth contract has been extended to 31st

March 2020. The CCG is currently in the early stages of procurement for the new service.

The Bracknell Forest Council community map, hosted on the Public Health portal, remains an invaluable method for all residents in Bracknell Forest to research and identify community support groups to enable them to meet individuals with similar beliefs, circumstances and life experience. The map currently contains over 450 groups and activities which cater for individuals with protected characteristics. Specific examples of this include Berkshire Gay link, Berkshire Stags Visually Impaired Cricket Club, Pregnancy Yoga, Red Diamond, Ascot Area Alzheimer's and Mental Health Carers' Support Group. When adding a new community group to the map, a member of the Public Health Team discusses the group details with the leader and ensures that the group is open to all individuals. If there are 'select' criteria (e.g. only for mum's) this information is advertised on the community map to ensure that all individuals are aware.

3.4 Strong, safe, supportive and self-reliant communities

Work continues to address issues around community cohesion including the potential impact of Brexit. Hate crime levels are monitored and remain low with no increase in hate crime despite a recent upward trend nationally following recent terrorist attacks and ongoing Brexit exit/transition. Regular updates are received from Thames Valley Police at the Council's Community Cohesion partnership meetings.

The Council's contract with Disabled Go was renewed in 2018 for three years, with The Lexicon agreeing to contribute 50% of the funding. Surveying of new premises in Bracknell Town Centre took place in January/February 2018. The updated guides are now available on a new updated [AccessAble](#) website as the company has rebranded. The new guides and AccessAble app were promoted in April and December 2019 and additional venues surveyed in June 2019 and January 2020 as part of the ongoing contract.

Four interactive community kiosks were installed throughout the borough in early 2019, and data estimates that these have been used over 1,000 times since installation. They have been placed at 9 different locations in 2019, with a further 8 planned for 2020. The aim of the community kiosks is to enable those individuals which do not have internet access at home, or who are not confident using the internet, to access the information out in the community. The kiosks were specifically designed to be used by those with long-term disabilities or health conditions, such as being wheelchair bound, visually impaired or with learning difficulties. To ensure this was the case, the kiosks were designed following a user-feedback forum to gain suggestions and comments around how best to meet the needs of these target groups.



One of the community kiosks in Shop mobility

4 Conclusion

Monitoring of the action plan shows that the council is making good progress in meeting its equality objectives. Seven out of 34 objectives had been completed by 31st March 2019 whilst 21 were progressing well. The remaining 6 objectives were progressing at a slower rate and as of 30th September 2019 these are now on target for completion.

Bracknell Forest Council is committed to providing excellent customer service and providing fair and appropriate access to services that are tailored to meet the individual needs of the residents and diverse communities living in Bracknell Forest.

This report and the associated service area reports show that Bracknell Forest Council is making good progress in meeting the three Public Sector duties in the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, victimisation and harassment, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people.

The 'All of Us' Equality Scheme developed in 2017 was due to be updated and replaced in April 2020. However, following the development of a new Council Plan which is due to come into effect in January 2020, it was agreed to extend the life of this scheme until March 2021. A new Equality Scheme will be developed for 2021-24 and will be published in due course.

5 Council Performance Indicators Relating to Equalities

Note: Where indicators are quarterly the Q4 figure has been used

People Directorate

Ind Ref	Short Description	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
L360	Adults with learning disabilities in employment (Quarterly)	16.9%	15.3%	13.8% ¹	10.1%
NI155	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) (Quarterly)	37	73	97 ²	147
L030	Number of lifelines installed (Quarterly)	833	1176	1050	1032
NI181	Time taken to process Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events (Quarterly) ²	4.0	3.2	4.0	
L382	HBNC1 - Time taken in days to process housing benefit (New Claims)				15
L383	HBCC1 - Time taken in days to process housing benefit (changes in circumstances)				4
L161	Number of looked after children (Quarterly)	98	115	138	158
L287	Number of children in need supported under S17 of the Children Act (as at 31/03 in any given year)		645	743	742
L289	Average caseload per children's social worker (as at 31/03 in any given year)		18.0	17.2	18.2
L290	Rate of referral to children's social care		151.1	155.7	200.9
NI062	Stability of placements of looked after children - number of placements	17.3%	9.6%	13.8%	19.6%
NI063	Stability of placements of looked after children - length of placement	63.0%	45.5%	56.0%	64.5%
L368	Achievement gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers at KS2				20.0%
L369	Attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers at KS4				11.0%
L370	Progress gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers at KS4				-0.4
NI 117	16 to 18-year olds who are not in education, training or employment (NEET)	4.0%	3.9%	3.2%	1.2%
L374	L374 % 16-17 yr olds whose current activity is not known				6.5%

¹Very small swings in data have an exaggerated effect on this indicator and the numbers of people with learning disabilities are relatively low in absolute terms.

²This indicator has been replaced by L382/383.

Note: Education Data is collected at the end of each academic year and therefore refers to the academic year i.e. September 2017 – July 2018.

Delivery & Central Directorates

Ind Ref	Short Description	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
BV156	Percentage of buildings open to the public which are suitable for and accessible to disabled people (Annually) ¹	94.7%	94.7%	94.7%	100.0%
L066	Top five percent earners - women (Annually)	50.0%	49.6%	53.2%	49.77%
L067	Top five percent earners - minority ethnic communities (Annually) ²	4.84%	8.4%	9.9%	12.9%
L068	Top five percent earners - with disability (Annually) ²	3.2%	6.7%	6.8%	7.6%
L070	Percentage of employees with a disability (Annually)	1.9%	2.2%	2.4%	2.3%
L071	Percentage of black and ethnic minority employees (Annually)	5.8%	6.1%	7.3%	7.5%
L072	Gender pay gap (Annually)	18.1%	16.3%	16.2%	18.3
NI001	Percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area (Triennially – Residents Survey)	-	96%	-	-
NI023	Perceptions that people in the area are not treating one another with respect and consideration (Triennially – Residents Survey)	-	12%	-	-

¹ Car parks have been included in this calculation from 2013/14

² Introduction of Employee Self Service has meant employees can update their own records and this has led to an increase in actual numbers