

# **Chesterfield Borough Council**

## **Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2024 – 25**

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**☎ 01246 936793**

**✉ [policyteam@chesterfield.gov.uk](mailto:policyteam@chesterfield.gov.uk)**



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## Introduction from Cllr. Judy Staton, Cabinet Member for Governance



*Welcome to Chesterfield Borough Council's Equalities Annual Report for 2024/25. The report provides a comprehensive overview of the many ways in which, over the last year, Chesterfield Borough Council has worked to promote equality and celebrate diversity. We have continued to do so despite continuing budget constraints and in the face of increasing challenge to these values. This year I want to particularly highlight our many partnerships with other organisations and the benefits that these bring in terms of supporting and complementing each other's work, making best use of resources and sharing good practice. Examples include University of Derby, Chesterfield College, NHS and Destination Chesterfield.*

*The Equality and Diversity Forum continues to thrive and to play an important role in promoting and celebrating diversity and inclusion. Their stand-out event for me this year was the speech given by the founder and chair of Deaf-initely Women. Theresa Waldron, who has a deaf-blind condition, is an inspiration to women, to all those with disabilities and to anyone who has ever been told they must aim lower!*

*We are proud of the way that we design our services in order to minimise barriers to their use and to make them accessible to all. CBC also continue to offer services specifically designed for vulnerable residents and those with protected characteristics, for example Careline, Independent Living Schemes and exercise referral programmes. We believe that taking everyone's needs into account is not only a matter of fairness but something that benefits the whole community. This report is a testament to the considerable efforts that staff have made during the year to this end and a showcase of what has been achieved.*

## 1.0 Introduction

Welcome to Chesterfield Borough Council's Equalities Annual Report for 2024/25. This report highlights some of the work we have been doing over the last year to promote and celebrate equality and diversity within our services and out in the wider community. It also looks to the future and includes our planned activities and focus areas for the next year, including the agreed actions for the next three years within our Equality and Diversity Strategy 2023/27.

Equalities legislation and good practice require public bodies to publish annual equalities reports. The report, which has been developed in consultation with the Equality and Diversity Forum, includes improvements and achievements over the last year, including:

- The continued success of the Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum; acting as a critical friend to the council, hosting guest speakers at meetings to provide education and raise awareness of equality and diversity issues and hosting four events during the year as per the Council Plan.
- Increased focus on partnership working with a range of organisations to maximise the positive impacts we can achieve in our local communities.
- A summary of the equality impact assessments undertaken during 2024/25 around Council policies, strategies and plans.
- Progress updates on Equality and Diversity issues throughout the year.

The report also helps the Council to show some of the steps being taken to meet the Equality Act 2010 and associated Public Sector Equality Duty.

## 2.0 Equality and Diversity Strategy

The Equality and Diversity Policy and Strategy provide a framework for the Council to continue to ensure that the services we provide are fair and meet the needs of the local community, and that we discharge and progress our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. Our new strategy for 2023 – 2027 was approved at full council meeting on 15th May 2023.

### 2.1 Action Plan Progress

In addition to reporting on our progress in implementing the strategy and action plan through these annual reports, progress is also monitored via the corporate performance management framework. The Equality and Diversity Forum also have a role in scrutinising our performance in delivering the strategy.

The table below details progress during 2024/25 for the activities which contribute to the action plan.

<b>Objective 1: Ensuring a fair approach to the Council's decision making, and that service changes address the needs of our communities in an equitable way, taking account of the needs of people with protected characteristics.</b>	
<b>Fair decision making</b>	<b>Update</b>
<p>1. Continuing to embed the Council's commitment to equalities in its service planning, design and delivery by delivering a robust Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process capturing challenges and opportunities at the very beginning, ensuring barriers are considered and mitigated where possible. and upholding the importance of this during financially challenging times.</p> <p><i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>Equality considerations are a mandatory section of the Council's reports used in all decision making. Preliminary EIAs and full EIAs are a tool to help ensure that any policies, practices and decisions are fair and they are not inadvertently discriminating against any protected group.</p> <p>EIAs are published alongside the reports via ModGov, with the Policy and Partnerships team providing guidance and expertise to ensure equalities issues are fully considered when the Council makes decisions.</p>
<p>2. Providing employees and members with training and development opportunities so that they have the skills, abilities and confidence to recognise and respond appropriately and sensitively to diversity and discrimination, both within the workplace and when delivering services. Delivering ongoing equality and diversity refresher training as</p>	<p>Working with the Equality and Diversity Forum, the Policy and Partnerships team have provided equality and diversity awareness training which is available for staff and members to attend (for example Deaf Equality Awareness training).</p> <p>Induction and refresher training for staff continues to be provided online via Aspire learning.</p>



<p>required with services and a range of additional awareness raising modules on locally relevant themes. <i>(Lead service: Learning and Development / Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	
<p>3. Encouraging involvement from all communities in the shaping, development, delivery and monitoring of local services, continuing to monitor use and satisfaction with our services to identify access/accessibility issues / satisfaction with our services from different groups. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>The Policy and Partnerships team continue to work closely with the Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum which acts as a critical friend for CBC (e.g. choosing locally relevant themes for training, providing feedback on the proposed Long Term Plan for Neighbourhoods project)</p> <p>Regular engagement and consultation activity supported by the Policy and Partnerships team throughout the year helps the shaping of local services (e.g. annual Leisure survey). Documentation for the website is now being accessibility checked before being published.</p> <p>Our corporate equalities monitoring approach ensures that we are able to look for trends in access and satisfaction with our services from people who share protected characteristics and identify any potential issues.</p>
<p>4. Empowering local communities and organisations by publishing equality and diversity information and outcomes so that they feel they can understand the reasons for Council decisions and challenge them if they feel it necessary. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>Regulatory Public Sector Equality Duty data is published on line and can be found here: <a href="https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/living-here/people-and-families/equality-and-diversity/equality-and-diversity-data.aspx">https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/living-here/people-and-families/equality-and-diversity/equality-and-diversity-data.aspx</a></p> <p>The data is updated each year. In addition it was reviewed in January 2025 to ensure it continues to be accessible.</p>
<p><b>Understanding, listening to, and working with our communities</b></p>	
<p>5. Reviewing the output from the 2021 Census to gain up to date and consistent demographic information for CBC and the wider community, enabling us to consider the protected groups in all we do and to support the Equality Impact Assessment process.</p>	<p>The 2021 Census data is now available within the State of the Borough report on the council website: <a href="https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/living-here/neighbourhoods/state-of-the-borough/">https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/living-here/neighbourhoods/state-of-the-borough/</a> Services can use the information within the report when considering their service provision.</p>





<i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i>	Information available includes population by age, household size, ethnicity and country of birth and also takes into account the changes to the ward boundaries made in 2023 where appropriate.
6. Maintain the State of the Borough report in line with latest available information, including Census 2021 data when this becomes available. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i>	The State of Borough for 2024 is now available on the CBC website. This includes the latest data from the 2021 Census.
7. Ensuring that translation and interpretation made available by Chesterfield Borough Council meets the needs of local communities by reviewing and revising our current arrangements. Once Census 2021 data is received, it will be analysed and translation / interpretation available will be adjusted accordingly. In addition, procedures are now in place to respond to the translation needs of refugees and asylum seekers, this may mean that additional languages need translation services moving forward. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i>	Procedures are in place to support translation needs. Census data has been analysed and any translation / interpretation available adjusted accordingly.
8. Continue to listen to residents and service users through consultations and feedback to improve the evidence base that informs service delivery. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i>	<p>Regular engagement and consultation activity supported by the Policy and Partnerships team throughout the year helps the shaping of local services (e.g. annual Leisure survey). Documentation for the website is now being accessibility checked before being published.</p> <p>Our community engagement standards demonstrate our commitment to inclusive engagement, and our corporate equalities monitoring approach ensures that we are able to look for trends in access and satisfaction with our services from people who share protected characteristics and identify any potential issues.</p>
9. Continue further investigations regarding Climate Change and local risks for vulnerable groups.	The Climate Change Delivery Plan 2025/26, Priority 10 – Adapt a plan for a changing climate, focusses on the importance of



*(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)*

adapting to extreme weather events including an increase in intense rainfall and more frequent heatwaves – likely to disproportionately affect vulnerable groups. Working with relevant internal and external partners including the Met Office the council will continue to support residents, communities and businesses to prepare for future events.

The Chesterfield Climate Change Forum will continue to meet on a quarterly basis to discuss relevant climate related themes and opportunities for residents, communities and the voluntary sector to build understanding of climate issues and take ownership of local activities.

The Community Grants Fund 2025/26 will have additional funding for climate focussed projects (a minimum £20,000) which will follow the same funding application and guidance as previous years with climate being a key theme. Support to apply for funding (tranche 6) is available from community development workers and climate change officers.

During 2025/26 we will continue to raise awareness of climate issues and activities through the Climate Action Now campaign and a detailed climate change communications plan reaching both staff and residents including the introduction of a green rewards programme, and a range of climate change training and workshops.

All council decisions are subject to a climate change impact assessment (CCIA) to ensure council policies, strategies and activities account for a changing climate.

And the climate change team are working with partners to look at the feasibility of a climate vulnerability index, which will help to identify



	residents and communities most at risk to climate change and support local protocols and arrangements already in place – for example warm and cold spaces and provision for rough sleepers.
10. Progress an action plan from the LGBT+ project report findings, working closely with key service managers to improve the service experiences for our LGBT+ community. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i>	This year Derbyshire LGBT+ have provided us with some valuable suggestions regarding our leisure services provision helping us to improve experiences for our users.
11. Maintain and update the Equality and Diversity Corporate Monitoring Form in line with current standards and guidelines. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i>	The Corporate Monitoring Form now reflects the wording used in the 2021 Census when asking respondents about their gender and sex.

**Objective 2: Supporting equitable access to high quality services that recognise the needs of different customers**

<b>Supporting access to services</b>	<b>Update</b>
12. Supporting and facilitating the Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum and its subgroups (Cultural Access Group and Dementia Friendly Chesterfield) to act as a critical friend, improving and championing access to the Council's services for all. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i>	The Equality and Diversity Forum have met regularly and have worked together with Chesterfield Borough Council and acted as a critical friend when discussing current issues and projects and agreeing relevant topics for discussion at meetings and training events. The forum has worked with the Policy and Partnerships Team to plan activities for the year to meet the Council Plan objective. Examples are detailed within this report.
13. Making sure that our communities are able to access our bespoke health and wellbeing offer in our Theatres, (for example by facilitating the Cultural Access Group), parks and leisure centres, (for example, by providing targeted activities such as autism friendly swim sessions and accessible exercise equipment) , encouraging groups who share protected characteristics to use our parks for events, maintaining our	Our Health and Wellbeing Officer continues to support the provision of this service; the cultural access group continues to work effectively and targeted swimming sessions are being run. More details are provided within the services updates in this report. Our Green Flag status for five parks has been retained. In addition, the King George V Park in Staveley now has Green Flag status too.



Green Flag status for 5 parks, and promoting positive mental health and wellbeing especially in targeted and hard to reach sectors of the community. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i>	
14. Concessions policy – ensuring a consistent approach to how we charge for discretionary services while retaining the flexibility needed to achieve the Council’s social and legal obligations. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i>	The Concessions policy continues to be used when charging decisions are being made. The policy has been formally reviewed in 2024.
<b>Sharing and presenting information in appropriate and accessible formats</b>	
15. Review the corporate accessibility statement to ensure that it is reflective of and accessible to our local communities. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i>	The accessibility statement has been reviewed and amendments have been made to ensure it is relevant.
16. Developing the council’s website, intranet and microsites to make them accessible to all our internal and external customers. This will include improving the quality and usability of our online information, to comply with EU Web Accessibility Directive, and to improve the user experience for customers with additional needs (such as visual, reading or motor impairments). We will also include subtitles on all videos published online, such as on YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and on the council website including self service areas. <i>(Lead service: ICT, Communications)</i>	<p>The council subscribes to a quality and accessibility service which provides weekly spot checks of the website content against standards in the <a href="#">Web Content and Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2)</a>.</p> <p>Work is ongoing to improve the accessibility of the council website, and quarterly reviews of the full site will be carried out to make sure that it remains accessible to our customers.</p> <p>We add subtitles to all our videos using the functionality in YouTube; subtitles are carried forward wherever the video is displayed such as on Facebook, Twitter, or embedded in web pages on the council website.</p>

<b>Objective 3: Encourage mutual understanding and respect between our communities.</b>	
<b>Raising awareness</b>	<b>Update</b>
17. Raising awareness and understanding across communities of local equality issues and celebrating our diversity through the delivery of a minimum of four events	The Equality and Diversity Forum have successfully delivered four events during 2024/25; Deaf Equality Awareness Training, Carers Drop-in Event, Holocaust Memorial Day and International Women’s Day. The forum



<p>each year through Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum on a range of locally relevant equality themes.</p> <p><i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>also supported the 'A moment in our shoes' event, organised by the NHS.</p>
<p><b>Developing joint partnership approaches and activity including the use of intelligence to tackle inequalities, promote equalities and good community relations that have a positive impact and help to support vulnerable people</b></p>	
<p><b>18.</b> To engage and be a key partner in the Derbyshire Resettlement, Cohesion and Integration Board to ensure a robust response is in place to address Hate Crime including prevention, and the provision of specialist support and provide strategic direction to the effective resettlement of Refugees the provision of support for Asylum Seekers and Integration projects to minimise any community tensions that may arise.</p> <p><i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership, Housing,)</i></p>	<p>We have continued to be a key partner in the Derbyshire Resettlement, Cohesion and Integration Board where key issues are discussed and approached at a county-wide strategic level. This is further supported by our engagement at regular Asylum Dispersal regional meetings.</p>
<p><b>19.</b> Continue to work with Derbyshire Safeguarding Boards to ensure the safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults, contributing to care leaver offer provisions and modern slavery / human trafficking response.</p> <p><i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>We continue to work with the Safeguarding Boards, and at the District and Borough Safeguarding Leads meetings to coordinate approaches and share learning, including the development of a shared safeguarding policy across the county.</p> <p>Training has also been shared and accessed as a result of the county wide partnership activity including Safeguarding refresher training for housing link officers which has been well attended.</p>
<p><b>20.</b> Delivering community safety priorities through the Community Safety Partnership using this forum to help tackle issues facing our communities through creating a common vision and sense of belonging developing strong, positive relationships between</p>	<p>The Policy and Partnerships team have worked extensively with the Community Safety Partnership to ensure that equality and diversity is at the forefront of their strategies, policies, procedures, and practices.</p> <p>The Community Safety Partnership continues to deliver and commission a range of activities</p>



<p>people from different backgrounds and ensuring joint community engagement and tension monitoring plans are in place where appropriate. <i>(Lead service: Housing)</i></p>	<p>including diversionary activities in the local community, aligned with the Health and Wellbeing Partnership's own programme.</p>
<p><b>21.</b> Continue to work with partners to tackle homelessness – dealing with over 900 cases per year. <i>(Lead service: Housing)</i></p>	<p>Homelessness continue to work through our Countywide Derbyshire Homelessness Strategy with our partners together. This strategy has multiple ambitions actions that we hope to achieve. We still hold forums and strategy events where we invite our partners to work with us as we hope for and try to engage, third sector and public sector statutory agencies in adopting system wide approach to preventing and relieving homelessness.</p>
<p><b>22.</b> Health and Wellbeing Partnership activities, including financial inclusion activities, fuel poverty, supporting mental health and social connectedness. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>The Council plays a key role in the coordination and facilitation of the Chesterfield Health and Wellbeing Partnership, at a Derbyshire Board, Chesterfield Partnership and Sub-Group level. This has included delivery and commissioning of a wide range of activities in the local community to support financial inclusion, mental wellbeing, and healthy communities focussing on strengthening the building blocks to good health and working closely with other Partnerships such as the Place Partnership.</p> <p>This year, the Health and Wellbeing Partnership activities have been complemented by the range of UKSPF funded projects including community development which the Council has led on, and we are pleased to be continuing these projects into 2025/26.</p>





Objective 4: To strive to maintain a modern and diverse workforce that is reflective of the local community and feels valued and treated fairly	
Employee wellbeing	Update
<p><b>23.</b> Responding effectively to the gender pay gap reporting requirements including action planning. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership, HR)</i></p>	<p>The most recent gender pay gap report can be found here: <a href="https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/living-here/people-and-families/equality-and-diversity/gender-pay-gap.aspx">https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/living-here/people-and-families/equality-and-diversity/gender-pay-gap.aspx</a></p>
<p><b>24.</b> Seek employee feedback through the annual employee survey and develop and deliver annual action plans to address issues and trends identified. <i>(Lead service: HR and Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>We are currently developing a new approach to employee engagement including surveys in order to maximise engagement opportunities.</p>
<p><b>25.</b> Providing Leadership and Organisational commitment to actively promote equalities at all levels, ensuring that there is confidence in working together to deliver the best possible services for residents. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership, HR)</i></p>	<p>Senior political and officer leadership actively engaged in equality, diversity and inclusion work and act as champion within the Council and the community.</p>
<p><b>26.</b> Progressing with our Ways of Working post-Covid, ensuring that we are innovative and agile, that our workforce policies are accessible and inclusive and that we have refreshed values and behaviours to underpin what we do. <i>(Lead service: HR)</i></p>	<p>Continue to look at ways to support and enhance our communications to employees and line managers, ensuring that we have a 2-way communication process to give and receive information.</p> <p>Review of our process and systems is taking place to ensure that managers and employees have the tools they need to support, and delivery people lead processes.</p> <p>Programme of policy and procedures review developed to ensure that policies and processes in place remain current, in line with legislation and enable line managers to support, develop and manage their team members.</p>
<p><b>27.</b> Developing our workforce development programme that takes</p>	<p>As part of our recruitment process, all posts are looked at and considered whether they are</p>



<p>account of different needs and also promotes equalities, diversity and inclusion as being at the heart of what we do. <i>(Lead service: HR)</i></p>	<p>able to be done via Apprenticeship, for 2024/25 we have 26 Apprentices.</p> <p>During Q4 of 2024/25 a programme of HR bitesize sessions for line managers have been developed and the programme will run throughout 2025/26. The programme looks at supporting and providing managers with the knowledge and skills to implement our policies and procedures, through courses such as Reasonable Adjustments, Equality &amp; Diversity, Managing Attendance and raising awareness in the workplace – neurodiversity.</p>
<b>Recruitment</b>	
<p><b>28.</b> Maintain the Council's Investors in People Gold Award status. <i>(Lead service: HR)</i></p>	<p>The Gold standard has been maintained and reflects the culture of trust, collaboration, and strong values that we have all created here at Chesterfield Borough Council.</p>
<p><b>29.</b> Transform the recruitment web portal to attract a diverse range of candidates, using best practice from other councils. <i>(Lead service: HR)</i></p>	<p>The web portal has been reviewed and updated firstly to make sure it was in an accessible format for applicants and secondly to refine all of the documents held on the site. HR have worked alongside the Communications and Marketing team to update all of the materials using a variety of methods and the process has been made more straightforward as CVs are now accepted for many roles advertised by the Council.</p>
<p><b>30.</b> Maximise opportunities for engagement with businesses and schools, promoting careers and apprenticeships in local government. <i>(Lead service: HR, Policy and Partnership, Economic Growth)</i></p>	<p>During 2023/2024 a refreshed Skills Action Plan was approved. The action plan provides a framework for activities that support the overall aim of Chesterfield's Growth Strategy (2023-27). More details regarding progress is within this report.</p>
<p><b>Objective 5: To make sure that local people who share protected characteristics are able to access opportunities in employment and growth.</b></p>	
<b>Inclusive approach to growth</b>	
<p><b>31.</b> Providing the Young Person's Market, where stalls are available</p>	<p>The Young Persons' Market is a national initiative run across England. We are committed to encouraging and supporting</p>





<p>free of charge for anyone aged between 5 and 25 years old. <i>(Lead service: Town Centre Management)</i></p>	<p>Young People to experience market life through offering the opportunity to trade on the market, we will be holding 2 Young People's Markets across this financial year, the dates are tbc once we have a clearer picture of the national dates so we can work in conjunction with this initiative.</p>
<p><b>32. Social Investment</b> Community and Wellbeing activity supported by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund including digital skills and work readiness activity. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>The Council has been leading on a range of projects under the Chesterfield UKSPF Programme. This includes community development, community grants fund and capacity building in the voluntary sector.</p> <p>The community development activity has focussed on key areas of Poolsbrook, Duckmanton and Old Whittington, working closely with local communities to build stronger and more resilient communities. To date, and since the project started in 23/24 a total of 219 organisations have engaged with the community development activities receiving non-financial support.</p> <p>During 23/24 and 24/25 around £311,877 has been awarded to local community groups through the community grants fund which combines both UKSPF and CIL Neighbourhoods funding to local community groups. As a result of these projects, 76 projects have been provided and 498 volunteer opportunities have been supported in Chesterfield.</p> <p>The capacity building training programme has been launched, with Links and DVA local delivering capacity training to other local community groups including, volunteer recruitment, risk assessing activities, governance and funding, and marketing and communications. A total of 80 people have attended training sessions during 23/24.</p>
<p><b>33. Social Value</b> Developing our Social Value Policy and incorporating outcomes and</p>	<p>New Procurement Regulations came into force in February 2025, and arrangements are being updated to reflect this. The Procurement team</p>



<p>measures to promote equality in the local community. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>currently ask for added value in Tender activity evaluation criteria.</p> <p>Supplier codes of conduct are being developed and a local needs assessment is being considered to inform the development of a social value priorities for Chesterfield Borough. This is reflected in the climate change delivery plan for 2024/25.</p>
<p><b>34.</b> Development and delivery of the Council's Growth Strategy, particularly the 'inclusive growth' theme. <i>(Lead service: Economic Growth)</i></p>	<p>The Growth Strategy for 2023 – 2027 provides a framework for actions over the period 2023 to 2027 that will deliver our priority of making Chesterfield a thriving borough and contribute towards the priority of improving the quality of life for local people. The development of the strategy has been under-pinned by a detailed assessment of the local economy. It builds on the success of the last decade which has seen the creation of more than 2000 new jobs in the local economy and more than 500 new businesses operating in the area, along with significant regeneration and investment across the borough.</p>
<b>Apprenticeships</b>	
<p><b>35.</b> Help to develop the careers of over 90 apprentices across the Council by ensuring that we provide opportunities for people to develop qualifications, vocational skills and increase employability. <i>(Lead service: HR)</i></p>	<p>We continue to support apprenticeships across the council. As part of our recruitment process, all posts are looked at and considered whether they are able to be done via Apprenticeship, for 2024/25 we have 26 Apprentices.</p>
<p><b>36.</b> Promote and support an uplift in apprenticeships across the Borough. <i>(Lead service: Economic Growth)</i></p>	<p>The first Apprenticeship Technical Education event of the new academic year was delivered at Staveley Miners Welfare Football Club on 23rd October. The event was attended by 126 individuals and supported by 9 employers. A further event was held in February in Hasland. These events are 'community careers engagement' events delivered alongside activity in schools with the aim of raising awareness of skills required and careers available locally with parents and carers. The events are supported by employers (and their</p>



	apprentices) from across the Health & Care, Construction and Manufacturing sectors. More events will follow to further promote apprenticeships across the Borough.
<b>37.</b> Work in partnership with Chesterfield College and Derby University to explore opportunities for joint working (e.g. catering placements, trade staff supporting tutors and assessors) <i>(Lead service: HR, Economic Growth)</i>	<p>Chesterfield Borough Council and the University of Derby continue to work in partnership and recognise shared ambitions between the two organisations.</p> <p>CBC are utilising the University's vacancy portal and student employment agency where appropriate to do so.</p> <p>We continue to work closely with Chesterfield College to provide experiences of work for students.</p>

**Objective 6: Supporting independence at home for our tenants, local residents and vulnerable people.**

<b>38.</b> Support independence at home for vulnerable people through our Careline and Housing Services and delivering Disabled Facilities Grants. <i>(Lead service: Customer Services)</i>	<p>Careline have continued to provide an essential falls response and call monitoring service for our customers. During 2024-25 2,249 people were supported via Careline teams.</p> <p>Over the past year, Careline has maintained a 24/7, year-round alarm monitoring and response service, ensuring peace of mind and swift assistance for falls and requests for help. The service has handled a total of 97,858 alarm calls and call telephone calls, responding to 3,686 callouts.</p> <p>Careline's partnership with the NHS and East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) and Adult Care at Derbyshire County Council highlights the strategic significance of our service in providing local care and interventions. Our EMAS collaboration is working to effectively alleviate pressures on service through our falls response capabilities.</p> <p>Careline staff, who are trained and monitored in line the TSA Quality Standards Framework (QSF) attend customers in need of assistance taking basic medical observations of patients</p>
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	<p>that can then be triaged by EMAS via a Local Access Point team.</p> <p>The service has now completed its roll out of dispersed digital equipment across the borough, ahead of the national deadline, ensuring all customers are equipped with the latest technology-enabled care (TEC) equipment. Our sheltered schemes project to move to digital is currently underway.</p>
<p><b>39.</b> Maintain independent living through the ongoing investment in the quality of council homes including adaptation as required to support vulnerable people. <i>(Lead service: Housing)</i></p>	<p>During 2024/25 our two dedicated officers continued to work with tenants in our six independent living schemes. The officers provide quality housing management and support services to meet the needs of customers living in our independent living schemes, making a positive contribution to the safety, social and physical environment of the area managed.</p> <p>Following feedback from tenants, a handbook was launched for tenants living in our Independent Living Schemes to support access to useful information about their new home.</p> <p>During 2025, Brocklehurst Court in Brampton is being upgraded into a more sustainable and energy-efficient building through a major decarbonisation project. Each flat will have a modern Heat Interface Unit installed which will give residents greater control over their heating and hot water – improving both comfort, and energy efficiency.</p> <p>During 2024/25 171 major adaptations and 253 minor adaptations to council homes were completed at a cost of £923,145. Major installations included level access showers and ramps and minor adaptations included smaller works such as grab rails and stair rails.</p>
<p><b>40.</b> Look for opportunities to secure Government and external funding to deliver improvements to properties within the private sector to enable</p>	<p>We utilise various funding streams both Government and external to improve properties in the private sector. The funding is largely targeted at vulnerable people to ensure</p>



<p>vulnerable residents to live as safely and independently as possible. <i>(Lead service: Housing)</i></p>	<p>they can live more safely and independently. The funding includes Better Care Fund for adaptations including heating improvements as well as essential home repairs. Delivery arrangements are changing for 2025/2026 with design work being brought in-house with transition arrangements with DCC for one year. Foundations Independent Living Trust funding provides for gas safety checks with minor repairs for vulnerable homeowners and Green Homes Grant funding for energy efficiency measures to reduce bills and carbon emissions.</p>
<p><b>41.</b> Continue to support independence at home for vulnerable people by inspecting private rented properties, dealing with landlord where there are reports of disrepair and signposting to other agencies when required. <i>(Lead service: Housing)</i></p>	<p>Housing standards are enforced in the Borough under the Housing Act 2004 and utilisation of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, which offers a risk -based approach to the assessment of Houses. This enables the team to target properties that present the greatest health and safety risk to the most vulnerable occupiers/ tenants.</p> <p>The team are responsible for the licencing of houses in multiple occupation and implement/enforce standards in relation to fire-safety/ facilities/ amenities /space provision within the HMO licencing regime to ensure that all and the more vulnerable tenants are safe and comfortable whilst living within shared accommodation.</p> <p>The team also investigates matters concerning illegal eviction/harassment under the Protection from eviction Act 1977 and will continue to pursue prosecution procedures against landlords who wilfully harass or illegally evict their tenants.</p> <p>We work with internal departments such as Homeless and allocation teams/benefits/ planning and Environmental Health. External organisations include the fire service /police/ Derbyshire CC safeguarding/social services. which enable us to help signpost vulnerable</p>



	<p>tenants to receive further help and advice when and if required.</p> <p>The private sector housing enforcement team are also preparing for the implementation of the upcoming introduction of the new Renters Rights Bill (RRB) the RRB is the biggest change in Housing legislation for 20 years – The bill is focused on protecting tenants and enable them to live in a safe and secure environment – The RRB is robust and will deliver improved quality of life for residents. The Bill places a duty on the Council to enforce the contents of the Bill</p>
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### 3.0 Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum

The Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum has continued to reach wide audiences, with meetings and activities continuing both online and in person. The Forum has continued to work together to share ideas and best practice, be a 'critical friend', and raise awareness in the community of equality and diversity. One of the most important contributions of the Forum is the successful engagement with the wider community, and at the beginning of this year, the Forum held a workshop looking at demographics and locally relevant topics to develop a plan of activities and events for the year. This resulted in a year of excellent educational and awareness raising activities led by the Forum.

A message from Sarah Roy, Chair of Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum:



I am very pleased to be able to carry on as chair of the Equality and Diversity Forum again this year. What a year it has been! We are very proud that we have once again managed to build upon our achievements in past years and bring more events, meetings and activities that highlight our commitment to promoting equality and diversity throughout the Borough. I would like to thank all of our forum members, old and new, for their continued support throughout the last year.

We started off the year with speakers attending a selection of forum meetings to tell us about the work of the Sight Loss Council, the Long Term Plan for our town and following this, the Access to Work Mental Health Support Service. In September we were able to commission Deafinitely Women, a small women-led charity to provide Deaf Equality training for forum members and the public. This training proved very popular and was filled quickly and so we hope to be able to work with them again in the future. Feedback for the training was excellent, with participants learning more about how to support and encourage D/deaf colleagues and friends as well as learning a bit of BSL.

In November, we worked in partnership with other organisations to host a carers event at the Grace Chapel in Chesterfield which was attended by various community, social care and health groups. The event had the aim of providing a free drop-in service for carers to meet others and get much needed support, advice and signposting to services. Chesterfield residents who care for a family member, friend or neighbour with a long-term illness or disability were encouraged to attend. Partners supporting the event included Age UK, Alzheimer's Society, Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centres and many more.





Also in November, we welcomed Joanne Gordon from the Chesterfield and North Derbyshire Tinnitus Support Group to speak to the forum about how this hearing impairment affects people and what can be done to support sufferers. Joanne talked about how tinnitus can affect sleep, concentration, mental health, work and relationships and she highlighted some of the services and equipment that was available to help as well as informing us about groundbreaking research that was taking place to find a successful treatment.

Our annual Holocaust Memorial Day event was a little different this year and we opted for “Peace Rocks”! We worked with schools and youth groups to help young people learn about the holocaust, prejudice and peace in an age-appropriate way. Young people from across the town placed their specially created Peace Rocks all around the Borough to mark Holocaust Memorial Day. Each rock was painted with a meaningful message or picture inspired by themes of peace and remembrance. Anyone finding one of these rocks was encouraged to take a photo and share it on social media and then re-place the rock in a new location for someone else to find.

Finally, our International Women’s Day event took place on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March at West Studios. Our inspiring guest speaker was Teresa Waldron who has a wealth of experience in the voluntary and charity sector in Derbyshire and is the founder of Deaf-initely Women. Teresa previously worked for Derbyshire Law Centre as a coordinator and advice worker. Teresa has a deafblind condition but doesn’t let that stop her achieving great things and taking on new challenges.

If you would like further details of our meetings or activities, we welcome new members so please get in touch. In the coming year, we will continue to carry on the work of the Forum to promote equality and celebrate diversity throughout Chesterfield Borough.

### **3.1 Equality and Diversity Forum meetings and engagement**

A key aim of the Forum is to raise awareness of equalities and issues affecting local people. The Forum has over 200 members that receive regular information about the meetings, events and equalities news. Some of the participants represent a community group, or statutory organisation, while others are there as individuals from the community with an interest in promotion of equality and diversity.

During 2024/25 there were high levels of engagement at the meetings with a variety of issues being considered including: Sight Loss, Tinnitus Support, Access to Work, Long Term Plan for Town and Workpays. During March, the Forum had an initial workshop looking at local data to plan equality and diversity events, training and activities for 2025-2026.

### **3.2 Equality and Diversity Forum events and activities**

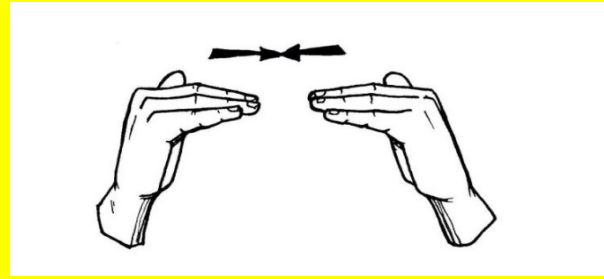
In addition to the meetings, the Equality and Diversity Forum have continued to organise, host and support a number of events throughout the year on a range of equality themes that





are relevant to the community, and drawing in additional funding to maximise the impact we can all make in the community and to pool our limited resources.

We would like to thank all those who have given up their time to support and help plan the following events that have taken place over the past year. Events during 2024/25 included:



### Deaf Equalities Training

During National Inclusion Week in September 2024, the forum welcomed Liz Brown, BSL Tutor for Deaf-initely Women. Liz gave some training surrounding deaf equalities and covered the following topics:

- Understanding the barriers Deaf people face.
- Learning about the Equality Act 2010 and our responsibilities.
- Insights into the British Sign Language Act 2022 and its impact on the Deaf community.
- Communication support and technology options

Feedback regarding the event was excellent. Comments included:

The training was thought provoking, especially the participation exercises.

I enjoyed the training. It was interesting to watch the tutor and the interpreter communicate, and at such speed! The number of attendees was just right, and the refreshments provided were great.

It covered the main points well for understanding of deaf equality and inclusion.

Well presented, trainer engaged with everyone.

## Carers Event



On the 12<sup>th</sup> of November 2024, carers in Chesterfield were invited to the carers drop in event at Grace Chapel.

Hosted by the Equality and Diversity Forum alongside various support groups, the aim of the event was to provide information and signposting on matters such as benefit entitlement and support.

Chesterfield residents who care for a family member, friend or neighbour with a long-term illness or disability were encouraged to come along and see what support is available.

Partners attending the event, included Age UK, Derbyshire Dementia Information and Advice Service, BrightLife, Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre,

Healthwatch Derbyshire and many more, and were on hand throughout the day.





### Holocaust Memorial Day 2025 'Peace Rocks'

The Holocaust Memorial Day activities continue to be very well supported by our local community.

During January 2025 the Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum worked closely with local schools, youth groups and Ashgate Hospice to commemorate the day. Each participant painted a stone with a picture or message which was meaningful to them, based on what they have learnt about the Holocaust, prejudice or peace.

The 'Peace Rocks' were then placed in the local community for others to find. On the reverse of each stone was a link to the council's webpage. Upon finding a 'Peace Rock', members of the local community could visit the website in order to learn more about Holocaust Memorial Day and also sign the online Book of Remembrance.

Anyone who found a 'Peace Rock' in their local area could share their photo by posting it on Facebook and tagging Chesterfield Borough Council before placing it again in a new location for somebody else to find.

The Holocaust Memorial Day Book of Remembrance was also available for members of the public to sign in the reception area of Chesterfield Town Hall.







International Women's Day 2025



This year the Equality and Diversity Forum's International Women's Day event was put together in partnership with Chesterfield College and Chesterfield Museum.

Representatives from the Museum visited the College earlier in the year to talk to the students about some of the shoes held in the Museum collection and the stories about the women behind the shoes. From this the 'If the Shoe Fits' project was started. Students spent over 30 hours producing their own pair of shoes which have links to personal histories and also to those stories looked at in the first workshop. These were placed on display for a few weeks during February and March in West Studios.

The Extraordinary Women exhibition was also on display at West Studios. It looked at the lives of pioneering women who have played a significant role in the history of Chesterfield including Mary Swanwick, Violet Markham and Florence Robinson.

The Derbyshire LGBT+ section included stories of women who made a huge contribution to society, who were celebrated in this year's LGBT+ history month, Octavia Hill and Annie Kenny.





On Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March we welcomed Teresa Waldron, CEO of Deafinitely to West Studios for an inspirational talk. Teresa has been awarded the Outstanding Female Disability Champion Award 2024 at the Women's Awards East Midlands. The award celebrates Teresa's dedication and her tireless work to ensure inclusivity and support for all deaf, deafblind, and hard-of-hearing women and her determination and leadership in making a lasting impact on deaf people's lives.



Everyone who attended the exhibition and event were invited to add to the 'Inclusive Hands' artwork provided by the Equality and Diversity Forum. Participants were asked to complete the sentence 'I am....' with some inspirational words about themselves or other women they know.



#### **4.0 Promoting equality and diversity through our services.**

Throughout the year, a range of activities and developments take place within the Council's services which contribute towards our commitment to embrace diversity and treat everyone fairly.

#### **4.1 Sport and leisure**

The service provides a wide range of activities that are well received by a diverse customer base. We endeavour to make our services accessible in all areas of our programme and have listed a few of these below:

Since the refurbishment of our fitness facilities, we have seen our membership soar to unmatched levels when compared to previous years. We have worked to provide a range of kit to ensure that inclusivity is met.

The exercise referral programme continues to service hundreds of clients from across the borough, ensuring that everyone, including those that are vulnerable can access physical activity in a safe and supportive environment.

The swimming lesson programme has gone from strength to strength, offering all levels of swimming tuition to thousands of adults and children from across the borough and surrounding areas. Since the temporary closure of Sharley Park (Clay Cross), we have supported the community in housing over 500 places across the two leisure centres to ensure that individuals have the opportunity to learn this life skill.

Attendance of our gymnastics sessions are strong. We have increased provision to allow more beginners to embark on their journey in learning fundamental movement skill. Conversely, our trampoline session provision is under review as this has become quite niche in our setting and more so since the rise of trampoline parks for recreational sessions.

Other specific activities, e.g. The Light-hearted group, which accommodates people who have recovered from coronary illness has been successful through enabling access to physical activity. In addition, a mixed activity group has been established allowing individuals to attend a wide range of supervised activities at QPSC, with both Queens Park Sports Centre and the Healthy Living Centre running Dancing with Dementia sessions.

Enabling programmes such as the 50+ sessions continue to be delivered, providing a range of physical activity options and opportunities for our aging population. We continue to support those people to improve their quality of life and ultimately life longer lives.

The Outswimming Cancer sessions have supported numerous people and is still in a very strong position in terms of attendance. We have been fortunate in that we can fund an instructor to run these sessions. The initiative continues to provide swimming sessions, free of charge, for people living with and beyond cancer in Chesterfield or the surrounding areas. We have supported around 50 people over the course of two years from the swim sessions provided, with an age range from 20s to 85. It has supported people with a range of different cancer types including bowel, lung, breast, neck, throat and prostate cancer.

More recently, leisure has been working with a new partner Qualitas. Queen's Park Sports Centre have introduced Special Educational Needs Sessions, ran by the group and have been supporting in gaining Holiday Activity Funding to run holiday camps throughout the year to offer places to those from more deprived backgrounds. This is one of many projects that are in the pipeline for the coming months and years. It has also been identified that many children are having to travel outside of the borough for school swimming lesson provision. By working closely with Qualitas, we aim to change this so that our sites are more accessible for the local community.

CBC participates in the Walk Derbyshire initiative helping to make every day walking the norm for our residents, whether that be walking to the shops, school, work or walking for pleasure in the local community. This offers residents the chance to take safe, simple exercise outdoors and enjoy the benefits to both their physical and mental health. We have maintained our own "Walk With Us" group walks at Holmebrook Valley Park and in the community around Birdholme. Our largest group at Holmebrook Valley Park regularly hosts 20+ walkers who attend in all but the very worst of weathers!

We have continued to support local organisations and voluntary sector groups to help them build walking into their regular activities. We have offered 4 Walk leader training courses this year, trained 26 new walk leaders and updated the skills of 4 current leaders. New organisations supported this year include Stand To veterans' support, Chesterfield FC Community Trust's Thrive youth social prescribing team, Transition Chesterfield and the Macmillan Cancer Support Unit at Chesterfield Royal Hospital. We have also trained additional volunteers for Hasland Community Hub and upskilled their existing volunteer walk leaders. We helped the Macmillan Cancer Support Unit to launch a new walking group this year for anyone with a cancer diagnosis or recovering from treatment.

The CBC Community Lifestyles Officer continues an outreach program offering healthy lifestyle and physical activity advice and guidance to community and health-related groups, such as Community Respiratory Rehabilitation groups and local social clubs, such as Inkersall Ladies Club.





The CBC Community Lifestyles Officer is also supporting the Walk Derbyshire Active Neighbourhoods Pilot in our borough. The focus area for the pilot is Holme Hall and the aim is to use a localised community approach, to understand how walking can influence social and community connectivity and improve the health and wellbeing of residents. A Consortium of interested parties and local community organisations has come together and has undertaken innovative consultation and engagement activities with residents, including placing a “coffee cart” locally to encourage conversations. The Consortium commissioned a local creative artist to engage with residents and community groups through a range of events and activities, each of which included an element of walking in the local area. For example, the primary school were supported to hold creative activities based on their curriculum needs which culminated in an Arts Trail encouraging families to walk around the estate. An autumn/winter program was based on creating art to decorate Holme Hall community garden over Xmas and invite residents to walk to the garden and explore further.

In March a walking trail event was hosted by key community groups and organisations within the area - not only has this raised awareness of how each organisation can support residents, but it should also help foster a sense of community cohesion. Local organisations are keen to extend the pilot working together to include a wider range of activities and to ensure their sustainability - confirmation of continued funding is expected shortly.

The Cultural Venues Access Group continues to meet to improve access at the Council's Theatres. We continue to provide performances with audio description, signed performances and touch tour to improve accessibility for people with disabilities. We provide a varied programme of arts for health activities during the year including films for people with Dementia. The Access Group continues to be a key consultee on the extensive improvement works at the Stephenson Memorial Hall and has been actively involved in working with colleagues to ensure that the refurbishments make the venue as accessible as possible. Improvements include a lift providing access to all floors, accessible routes to the theatre stalls and Changing Places toilet.

## **4.2 Parks and open spaces**

Chesterfield's parks continue to provide excellent facilities for the community and visitors. We are proud to hold 7 Green Flags which recognise the best parks and green spaces across the country with one of the key considerations being accessibility. We continue to invest in our smaller local parks aiming to make them as accessible as possible.

Parks provide outlets to play sport (football, petanque, cricket, walking football, bowls and pickleball) and informal recreation. The majority of parks have maintained play areas, several of which have had recent makeovers and new facilities. 2024 saw the opening of 3 brand new play areas.

A growing number of people are holding events on our parks. For the annual walking festival, we offer easy circular walks for the less able, or as an introduction to walking with one being specifically 'accessible'. Chesterfield Pride is returning for their 10<sup>th</sup> year celebration event in Stand Road Park. We regularly engage with organisations such as Macintyre and Our Vision Our Future and these groups have attended sessions in the park such as outdoor yoga, bulb planting, orienteering and bird box building. An external partner delivers an inclusive 'Pedals in Queen's Park' which is attended by the Freedom Centre.

We aim to instil ownership and pride at a young age by engaging with infant and junior schools, along with many community groups holding bulb planting sessions at their local parks. This has helped contribute towards the 16,000 spring bulbs planted in 2024 by 300 children to make Chesterfield a brighter borough. We also engage with schools and other community organisations with our pledge to plant 1000 trees across the borough.

### 4.3 Chesterfield Pride 2024

Chesterfield Borough Council were proud to once again host Chesterfield Pride 2024 at Stand Road Park. The annual family-friendly event supports and celebrates members of the LGBTQ+ community. As well as live acts on two stages, there was entertainment for all the family along with stalls promoting local services available for the community.



## 4.4 Housing

### Inspection of Housing Service by the Regulator of Social Housing

Housing Services were inspected by the Regulator of Social Housing in September 2024 and we were given a C2 grade which is the second highest grade possible. The regulators report confirmed that we are committed to treating our tenants and prospective tenants with fairness and respect and that we have a general understanding about the diverse needs of our tenants.

In October, we also adopted two new policies that clarified the approach that Housing Service had taken historically and will further help us to ensure that everyone can access our services and information.

- The 'Housing Service Customer Vulnerability Policy' ensures that we have a clear, consistent policy to support vulnerable tenants.
- The 'Housing Service Reasonable Adjustments Policy' focuses on reasonable adjustments within the housing service to ensure that our customers with disabilities are not disadvantaged when accessing our services.

Both policies highlight how we will take action to deliver fair and equitable outcomes for our customers, focusing on achieving a high standard of customer care and adopting a human-centric approach to service delivery for all.

Throughout 2024/25, we have continued to provide a housing service that meets the diverse needs of our tenants with increased opportunities for engagement and support.

### Home tenancy visits

During 2024/25 our housing officers carried out 1,369 home tenancy visits and new tenancy visits. Our home tenancy visits provide an opportunity for tenants to discuss any issues with our housing officer in their homes. During the visit housing officers will:

- Check tenant and household details
- Check that the home is safe and identify any repairs
- Provide advice and support to help tenants to manage their tenancy
- Make onward referrals to other agencies and services if needed
- Provide an opportunity for tenants to share their views on services

Housing officers work to understand tenant's individual needs and provide personalised support including helping tenants to access benefits to improve their financial situation.

## **Collaborative working with the benefits team**

Between April 2024 and February 2025, the housing management team worked closely with Chesterfield Borough Council's benefits team which resulted in over £500k of additional benefits claimed for our customers.

## **Personal housing plans**

A personal housing plan is an assessment carried out after a customer applies to join our housing register. It helps us to better understand their needs, so we can help them to find the right home and provide additional support if they need it. This means that we can allocate the right priority banding for their housing application and provide the right support before and after they have moved into their new home.

For example, a customer might be applying for their first home and may need tenancy support or help to access benefits they are entitled to. We may refer them to other teams or signpost on to specialist agencies. During the visit, we can also answer any questions, advise about likely waiting times and discuss other housing options which might be available.

During 2024/25 our housing and health team completed 923 personal housing plans.

Both the home tenancy visits and the personal housing plans provide the housing service with the opportunity to find out more about each tenant's circumstances, understand any vulnerabilities and enable us to better understand individual's needs – reducing the number of tenancies that fail.

## **Tenancy support**

Between April 2024 and March 2025, the tenancy support team have supported 541 tenants. Our specialist team works with our most vulnerable tenants. This includes those who have:

- Physical and mental health needs.
- Learning difficulties and disabilities.
- Had to move away urgently because of an abusive situation.

The team provide support with:

- Claiming the correct benefits and accessing grants for things like furniture and carpets.
- Money and debt management.
- Accessing and signposting to other specialist agencies. For example, domestic Abuse, mental health, adult care.
- Aids and adaptations.
- Improving health and wellbeing.

## **Tenant engagement**

It has been a busy year for the tenant engagement team. The Housing Advisory Board was established to ensure that tenants have a voice and are represented at board level. The board brings together tenants, Elected Members and senior officers to drive performance improvements with a focus on tenant satisfaction, complaints and compliance.

The tenant Communication and Accessibility Group developed a suite of 'tenant standards for communication' to ensure information is accessible, in the right format for the customer and avoids jargon and abbreviations. The group have assessed against these standards whilst working on recent projects, including redesigning repairs missed visit cards and rent arrears letters.

The group continues to offer in-person, online and 1:1 engagement where required.

The Tenant Challenge Panel (TCP) have recently completed two scrutiny reviews focusing on standard repairs and the rent service. To support accessibility, reports are available in written and video format.

Other engagement activities have included a programme of van visits in the local community, community litter picks and information events for tenants.

## **Independent living schemes**

During 2024/25 our two dedicated officers continued to work with tenants in our six independent living schemes. The officers provide quality housing management and support services to meet the needs of customers living in our independent living schemes, making a positive contribution to the safety, social and physical environment of the area managed.

Following feedback from tenants, a handbook was launched for tenants living in our Independent Living Schemes to support access to useful information about their new home.

## **Investment and improvements to council homes**

During the past year we have continued to invest in new build properties, as well as making improvements to our housing stock including fitting new kitchens, bathrooms, boilers and improving energy efficiency. The Capital Programme also invests in adapting properties to ensure they meet tenant needs.

During 2024/25 171 major adaptations and 253 minor adaptations to council homes were completed at a cost of £923,145. Major installations included level access showers and ramps and minor adaptations included smaller works such as grab rails and stair rails.

## **Private Sector Housing team**

The Council's housing service also includes work on delivering adaptations increasing standards of private properties in the Borough.



In 2024/25 we approved 99 disabled facilities grants for home adaptations and spent £1,139,510 on disabled facilities grants and loans.

In addition to adaptations completed during the past year, our private sector housing team also:

- Lent £116,801 to vulnerable homeowners to carry out urgent repairs and maintenance to improve their home environment.
- Helped 82 households under our gas safe scheme to service and repair boilers.
- Continued to be part of the 'Healthy Home' programme with Derbyshire County Council, supporting households who are vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home, including those with a long-term health condition.

## Homelessness

The Homelessness Team continued their work to rehouse and support vulnerable people in the borough. Between April 2024 and March 2025, 573 homelessness cases were opened. Cost of living pressures, increasing number of evictions and limited options for alternative accommodation, have resulted in high demand for homelessness services.

To ensure that people at risk of homelessness have as many options as possible to alleviate and reduce their risk of homelessness the Council also:

- Fund a post at Derbyshire Law Centre to support homelessness prevention. We also give a contribution to the Court Desk at the DLC to give support to vulnerable customers to try and stop evictions which are in Court on the day.
- Support and fund the jointly commissioned 'Call B4 You Serve' service to help prevent homelessness in the private rented sector.
- Help to fund a homelessness hub provided by Pathways, a joint initiative provided by three local councils. The hub provides personalised packages of support for individuals including housing advice and health care.
- Fund a Housing First project for entrenched rough sleepers who have exhausted all their housing options, and who need support to relearn the life skills needed to manage a tenancy and support to keep them from returning to rough sleeping.

## Repairs and Maintenance

Every property we manage is someone's home and we have continued to focus on providing a tailored service to meet the needs of our tenants. Our repairs and maintenance teams continue to support tenants, including those with vulnerabilities to manage repairs and stay safe in their homes.

A new ICT system for repairs is due to be launched later this year which will improve accessibility for tenants by offering more choices for communication options.

## 5.0 Apprentice town and improving our economy

During 2023/2024 a refreshed Skills Action Plan was approved. The skills action plan provides a framework for activities that support the overall aim of Chesterfield's Growth Strategy (2023-27) which seeks to make '*Chesterfield a thriving borough, delivering environmentally sustainable growth*' and specifically delivers our aspiration '*To ensure local people have the right skills to support progression in the labour market and benefit from future employment opportunities.*'

This refreshed Skills Action Plan sets out a prioritised set of actions across 6 priority themes that have been arrived at following extensive evidence review, consultation input and discussion with a dedicated partnership Steering Group. The Skills Action Plan is designed to be a partnership plan that is overseen by the newly established Skills and Employment Partnership; hence the actions are a mix of direct delivery by Chesterfield Borough Council and delivery by and with partners.

The refreshed plan continues to recognise Chesterfield as an Apprentice Town under the priority theme of Young People, Ambitions and Connections to work. Apprentice Town remains widely supported but there is scope for re-focusing and re-energising it to better connect those looking for and those offering opportunities; and for provision to increase accessibility and widen routes into apprenticeships, especially for people with additional needs, lower qualifications or from less advantaged communities and at Level 2, where apprentice numbers have reduced.

As such, an evaluation of the Apprentice Town Initiative has been undertaken and completed in September 2024. The evaluation recognised a major reduction in apprenticeship starts locally and nationally following wider apprentice reforms in 2017 that saw a greater focus on the apprenticeship levy and focus on higher and degree level apprenticeships. As a result, been notable changes in the types of apprenticeships started over the same period, with an increasing number at higher levels (+110% for Level 4/5 starts) and fewer at Level 2 (-56%). Age profile has changed too, with fewer starts for those aged 19-24 (-27%), and especially those under 19 (-41%), but numbers remaining steady for age 25+.

The evaluation also found that the apprentices who were surveyed as part of the evaluation were resoundingly positive about their experience confirming apprenticeships as a pathway that provides meaningful work experience that supports progression without incurring student debts with more traditional education routes. It was also found that it was important for apprenticeship employers to be fully committed to the apprentice's development by providing exposure to meaningful and high-quality experiences of work.

The evaluation reported continuing challenges around consistent careers advice. Whilst it was evident from the evaluation that there is some significant nest practice from some



schools in respect of good apprenticeship advice provided to students and parents, it highlighted the opportunity for increasing promotion of apprenticeships in schools and sixth forms as well as increasing awareness of the benefits of apprenticeships with parents and carers. Equally, in a bid to increase the number of apprenticeship opportunities available locally, it was found that more should be done to widen awareness of the benefits of apprenticeships with more businesses, especially SMEs.

Importantly, the evaluation concluded that there are challenges around availability of inclusive routes into apprenticeships, for example for those with lower qualifications (notably in English and Maths) and those who are NEET or who require SEND support. This is exacerbated by the decline in apprenticeships at Level 2 and for young people (especially below age 19). Mechanisms such as pre-apprenticeship training/pathways, links to supported internships and the Youth Hub, and making pastoral support available, are likely to be required to open up opportunities, but some of these options would require significant resources. Emerging national policy, for example in aspects of the proposed Youth Guarantee Trailblazer around training and apprenticeship (including reinstatement of traineeship type activity) may provide opportunities, and it will be important to respond accordingly as this evolves.

The Evaluation made 10 recommendations which will inform future Apprentice Town activity. IN particular, the following recommendations were made in response to the conclusions highlighted above:

- Engagement across CBC and with the Skills and Employment Partnership to test how an anchor approach can be applied to apprenticeships as a way to improve access (including for people with lower qualifications and SEND), quality, and progression, and to support levy transfer to smaller employers.
- Capitalise on what is widely perceived as a strong brand. Encourage partners to use it more consistently, and widen 'on the ground' promotion, including via refreshed case studies and physical presence such as having an Apprentice Town stand at key events. In response to national and regional policy as it emerges, refresh the website and suite of marketing assets, including building the bank of case studies that make apprenticeships real for businesses and applicants.
- Seek routes for reaching a wider spread of businesses, especially SMEs and those not currently engaged via Destination Chesterfield or other networks that are already utilised. Make good use of case studies within this and consider how physical presence can add to online marketing.
- Prioritise work to engage with more schools/sixth forms and careers leads to encourage them to positively promote apprenticeships. This should include building parity of esteem with the 'university route', raising awareness of the full range and levels of apprenticeships, advertising vacancies, providing support with writing



applications, and communicating positive messages to parents. Utilise current and recent apprentices and case studies in promotion within schools.

- Review existing local policy and provision for Level 2 and below, then work with the Youth Hub and DEBP to raise awareness and promote pre-apprenticeships and supported internships to young people with lower qualifications or with SEND and/or ECHPs who want to move towards work or achieve an inclusive apprenticeship standard. Via the Skills and Employment Partnership, respond and align to emerging policy from government to guarantee training, an apprenticeship, or help to find work for all 18 to 21 year olds.
- Explore how work in Chesterfield can best align with and support regional (and national government) goals on apprenticeships and move forward collaboratively.

Inclusive Growth was the theme at the annual Skills and Employability Conference which took place at the Winding Wheel on the 13<sup>th</sup> of February 2025. The conference that was attended by 80 delegates from across the business and education community, featured youth voice ambassadors from the Connected Futures Project, a project that is which is developing and testing new approaches to breaking down barriers and improving access to apprenticeships and employment for young people with Learning Disabilities (LD) and/or Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC) and highlighting how employers can engage with the project.

Apprenticeships were featured in the interactive round table discussions, where Employer Apprenticeship Ambassadors Spec Savers hosted Roundtable discussions with businesses who were able to learn more about the benefits of apprenticeships and how to access funding to support them.

The Careers Made in Chesterfield Project (CMiC) that sits under the Young People, Ambitions and Connections to Work theme of the Skills Action plan, seeks to strengthen links between young people and employers and raise awareness of local apprenticeships, training and careers opportunities. During 2024/25 the Careers Made in Chesterfield Programme has seen 243 students from Parkside School, Whittington Green School and Springwell Community School engage in sector specific careers workshops; delivery of two Apprenticeship and Technical Educations (ATE) Careers Engagement Events at community-based settings where young people and their parents/carers learner more about apprenticeship, training and career opportunities available locally in the Property and Construction, Health and Care and Manufacturing and Engineering Sectors. 168 individuals have attended across the 2 events, seeing a 43% increase on 2023/24. A third event is scheduled to be delivered at Chesterfield Football Club in May 2024.

Also, under the Careers Made in Chesterfield action area has been the delivery of CHEW (Chesterfield Eat Well) Programme that has seen 30 students from Parkside School get

involved with Health Eating activities delivered by Hospitality and Catering Students from Chesterfield College. 88% of students engaging in the CHEW project were in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM)

Chesterfield Borough Council continue to work with Job Centre Plus to deliver recruitment events. A total of 12 events have been delivered in the last year, including an event focussed on BME residents, attracting 1,345 job seekers (across all events). The events have provided members of the public and job centre plus customers with direct access to employment and training opportunities. A total of 239 vacancies have been advertised at the events, supported by 175 employers and support organisation and resulting in 135 known job outcomes.

Ensuring that local people and businesses have the right skills to access current and future opportunities is a key objective underpinning the Skills Action plan and one that contributes to the Councils priority to make Chesterfield a thriving Borough. We are continuing to progress two key skills capital projects through the Staveley Town Deal, including DRIVe (Derbyshire Rail Industry Innovation Vehicle), a modern innovation centre encompassing research and development, training and commercial office and workshop space at Barrow Hill and a Construction Skills hub in Staveley that has seen the creation of an on-site construction training facility that will help students gain practical skills and experience with direct access to sector employers. The Construction Skills Hub has supported 42 learners in 2024/25, 4 of which are female.

Local labour clauses have continued to be agreed on 100% of eligible developments and from Q1-Q3 of 2024/25 so far 366 local jobs and 41 apprentices have been provided and over £9.5 Million of contracts awarded to local supply chain businesses as well as creating a number of other social value outputs including careers support, T-Levels, school visits, partnerships with FE colleges and work experience.

## 6.0 Equalities training for our staff

We offer the three mandatory equalities training modules in an online format, covering the Equality Act 2010, equality and diversity in Chesterfield's communities, and a guide to reasonable adjustments. Prevent training has also been added to the mandatory modules for all employees.

Feedback from employees shows that these modules have been effective, with an average of 99% of participating employees stating that the modules either met or exceeded their expectations. In addition, a number of comments were made by employees who completed the modules about how they would apply their learning including:

This information will be useful on a daily basis at work and also in my personal life as well

I will continue to apply the processes I have learnt in this module to my role.

Enjoyed the training, feel better in myself, having more knowledge for the future

Good reminder of reasonable adjustment responsibilities and good scenarios

I have a better understanding on how to communicate with people with disabilities and how to respect them as a person

Continue to adhere to standards and behaviours and challenge unacceptable behaviour

### **6.1 Mental Health First Aid**

We now have 22 qualified MHFAs across all areas of the council. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is an internationally recognised training course which teaches people how to spot the symptoms and signs of mental ill health and provide help on a first aid basis. In the same way as learning physical first aid, MHFA teaches people how to recognise crucial warning signs of mental ill health and feel confident to guide someone to appropriate support.

MHFA training encourages people to talk more freely about mental health, reduce stigma and create a more positive culture.

### **6.2 Mentoring programme**

We now have a fully trained coach/mentors within HR. CBC is also a member of the East Midlands Coaching and Mentoring Group. This means we can access outside mentors if required.

### **6.3 Violence and Aggression De-escalation Training**

Violence and Aggression De-escalation training is now offered to elected members. 13 members have attended this training over 3 different sessions.

### **6.4 Employee benefits scheme**

The Employee benefits scheme was relaunched during 2023, with the addition of 'Your Care' which tailors resources through quizzes and assessments to each individual. The employee benefits offer lots of money saving offers and support around cost of living etc.

### **6.5 Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)**

The new Employee Assistance scheme offers 24/7 access to trained counsellors and other health related blogs, podcasts and reading material.

### **6.6 Employee Appraisals (VIP)**

The new appraisal system, 'Valuing Individuals Performance' has included a move of the appraisal system from twice yearly to a quarterly cycle to encourage managers to have meaningful regular conversations with employees, enabling more regular objective reviews and space for building relationships outside of a very formal process

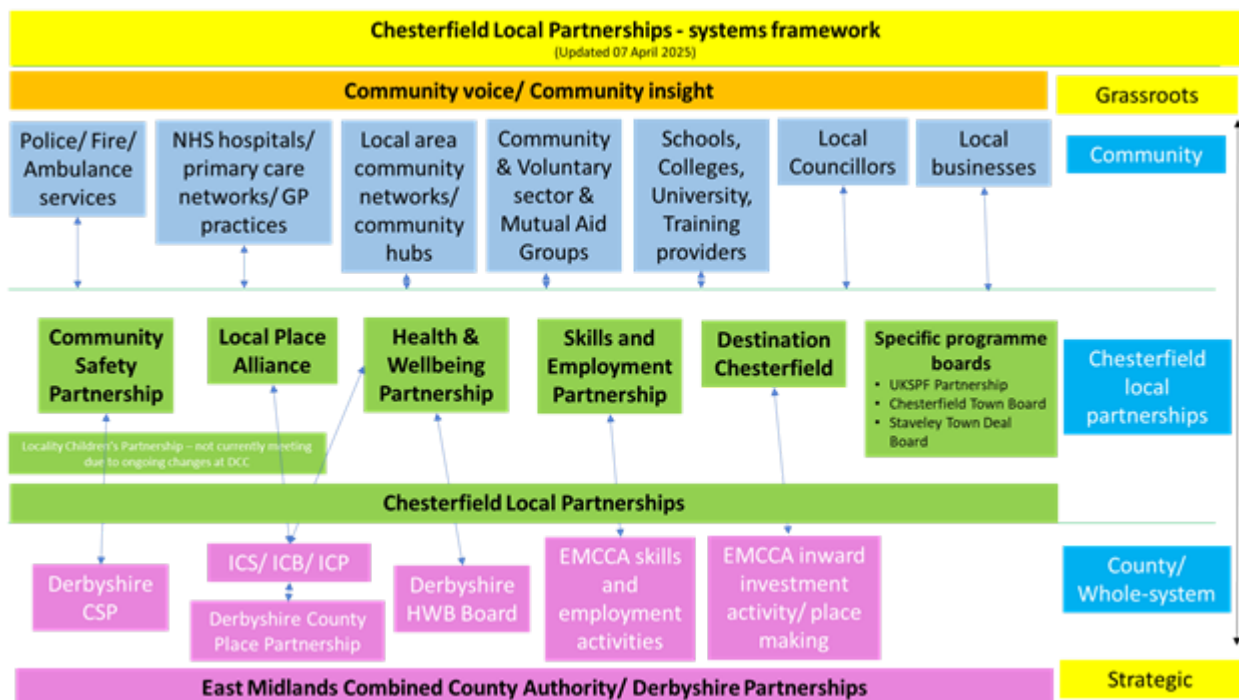
## 7.0 Working in partnership to promote equality and celebrate diversity.

The Council recognises the importance of working in partnership with a range of organisations to maximise the positive impacts we can achieve in our local communities. We continue to play a key role in our local partnerships, many of which have a real impact on our equalities work and the protected groups in our communities.

## 7.1 Chesterfield local partnerships framework

Across the borough we have created a range of partnerships to coordinate our efforts to maximise outcomes. The underpinning ambition of the Chesterfield local partnerships is to support the borough, through collaborative working, to continue to be a great place to live, work, visit and invest. Across the partnerships there is a strong focus on tackling inequalities and promoting inclusive growth by creating healthy, safe and strong communities.

Partnership working is critical to achieving improvements in health and wellbeing at a local level. Working together to identify priorities which are important to all partners and have relevance to their plans and strategies encourages ownership of the delivery plan. The current economic climate does mean that resources remain limited and will be for the foreseeable future. It is therefore imperative that effective multi-agency partnership working is prominent so that the impact of support and service provision can be maximised. This will help to ensure that duplication is reduced, and resources are utilised to their full potential.



## 7.2 Chesterfield local partnerships principles

A set of joint partnership principles were developed during the Covid19 pandemic and were adopted across the majority of the Chesterfield local partnerships (highlighted in green in the diagram above), and these are set out below.

A piece of work is currently being carried out to review these partnership principles and bring them up to date, reflecting learning since the pandemic and the current opportunities and challenges that communities are facing. This work is focussed on developing a narrative that will look to update the principles, aiming to strengthen our collaborative culture focussed on promoting place-based working to tackle health inequalities.

- Create strong communication channels and clear messages.
- Value joined up working across partners and agencies, from private, voluntary and community sectors through to statutory bodies.
- Recognise the voluntary and community sector as an equal partner and promote and adopt policies that support this approach.
- Be data and insight led in developing solutions; listen to people and communities, as well as using technical data.
- Focus on supporting the most vulnerable in our communities with solutions to tackle increases in material insecurity, mental health difficulties and social isolation.
- Shift resources to ensure that all partners can support our community resilience.
- Be brave enough to stick to our principles of equity and partnership even when outside forces make it difficult.
- Ensure that our governance is proportional to the issue, to avoid barriers to involvement.
- Commit to working as part of a system, working towards overall outcomes, not just organisational goals.
- Empower employees to work for the system (the greater good), rather than just for their organisation.
- Individuals should feel empowered to really listen to people, the people with lived experiences, in order to make changes and provide person-centred support.



### 7.3 UK Shared Prosperity Fund



During 2022/23, Chesterfield Borough Council was awarded £2.693 million from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. An investment plan was produced to use the funds over a three year period (running until the end of 2024/25) on a range of projects which will benefit local residents and businesses, and to help raise Chesterfield's profile as a visitor destination.

The council was selected as a lead authority to benefit from the national funding pot, after our ambitious three-year investment plan – setting out a range of initiatives to improve life for local people – was approved by Government in December 2022.

We have used the funding on a range of projects, to create a positive impact on our local communities as summarise below.

#### UKSPF programme and achievements in Chesterfield

- Improvements to local parks, greens spaces and outdoor sports facilities to provide residents with even better access to quality outdoor facilities across the borough. This has included the improvement of 18 sports facilities, 12 park facilities, and 3781 trees being planted across the Borough.
- Grants to help community and voluntary groups fund grassroots projects and to support volunteering opportunities and strengthen our local communities. This has resulted in 58 grants being awarded UKSPF funding, and an additional 23 groups being awarded CIL Neighbourhoods funding, totalling £312,000 of funding being distributed to local community groups and charities. As a result of this grant scheme, 498 volunteering opportunities were supported.
- Community development support in local areas including Duckmanton, Poolsbrook and Old Whittington to complement the community grants programme, resulting in 219 organisations engaging with the project and receiving advice and support.
- Funding to support entertainment in Chesterfield town centre and across the borough, including speciality markets, which has resulted in 10 events being delivered and a 20% increase in footfall.
- Investment in anti-social behaviour initiatives, which will help to tackle the root causes of nuisance behaviour, in line with the council's new anti-social behaviour strategy. This project resulted in 19 initiatives being supported and a 16.5% reduction in crime.
- Continuing support to help local businesses start and grow, and to boost opportunities for local people to learn new skills. This has included 520





businesses supported, 80 jobs being created, 68 potential entrepreneurs supported, and 43 grants awarded.

- Help for local businesses to reduce their carbon footprint, contributing towards the council's goal of creating a net zero borough by 2050.
- Investment in tourism and marketing campaigns to support Chesterfield's appeal as a destination for visitors.
- Investment in people and skills resulting in 194 people gaining qualifications or completing a course, 75 people accessing basic skills, and 80 people supported to access basic digital skills.

#### **7.4 Armed forces community**

Chesterfield Borough Council holds a Silver Award for its support to the Armed Forces. The council was given the award through the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) which encourages employers to implement human resources policies that support members of council staff who are also part of the Armed Forces community while inspiring others to do the same.

We have a number of policies, procedures and practices that aim to support members of the Armed Forces community employed by the council and also the wider Armed Forces community living in Chesterfield, these include:

- Changed leave policies to support staff to carry out their duties including up to ten days per year for reservist duties.
- Access to employee assistance and occupational health schemes to support employees' physical and mental health.
- A generous career break policy which can be used to support mobilisation.
- A clear support plan for members of the Armed Forces returning from mobilisation and a clear cross-council understanding of their rights.
- Chesterfield's Armed Forces cadet units are given pride of place at our key annual ceremonies including Armistice Day, Remembrance Sunday and the Mayor's annual parade.
- We are partners in the Veterans Hub (Chesterfield) led by the Department for Work and Pensions, which includes regular events at the Town Hall
- The council is a registered employer with both the Career Transition Partnership and Forces Families Jobs.

## 8.0 Health and Wellbeing Partnership activities

Chesterfield Health and Wellbeing Partnership continues to be an effective partnership using a place-based approach, actively working and commissioning activities in the local community to support and promote health and wellbeing. The themed sub-groups continued to focus on financial inclusion, mental health and physical activity, with geographical sub-groups focussing in particular in areas of deprivation in the borough.

During the last year, the partnership has been organising wider team meetings to bring together colleagues from a range of organisations to collectively share experiences, best practise, and identify opportunities for collaborative working.



The main partnership and the sub-groups also offer grant schemes which local community groups can apply to in order to support projects aligned with the partnership's priorities, e.g. mental health and isolation. This is in addition to but also compliments the UKSPF Community Grants Fund which was established at the end of the year.

## 9.0 Press Releases and Communications

Throughout 2024/25 the CBC Communications and Marketing Team have continued to promote equality and diversity events and news items via our social media platforms. Some examples (and links) are below:

[New skills programmes launched to help get people back into work and advance their careers](#) (25/03/24) – UKSPF funded which included work readiness and digital inclusion programme

[Local groups benefiting from £170,000 of grant funding](#) (21/05/24) – Tranche 3 of the Community Grants announcement



[New play areas open in time for Summer](#) (22/05/24) – opening of new play areas which were created in consultation with children from local schools.

[Chesterfield's new housing strategy approved](#) (09/07/24) A new three-year strategy – which outlines how Chesterfield Borough Council will ensure all local residents have access to a quality home that meets their needs – has been approved.



[Local businesses receive accreditation to boost night-time safety](#) (10/07/24) – launch of best bar none which aims to boost nighttime economy safety

[Connecting communities in Chesterfield with history and culture](#) (24/07/24) – announcement of Arts Council programme which took heritage and culture into communities (extraordinary women and activities in other disadvantaged areas)



[Careers inspiration for the future generation](#) (06/08/24) – Careers Made In Chesterfield first year PR, the programme helps students gain work experience with local companies, numerous schools included mostly in disadvantaged areas but also Ashgate Croft School and YES Youth Hub.





[Find your next job in Chesterfield](#) (03/09/24) – Announcing work and wellbeing event which aims to highlight job opportunities but also support networks for people to enter/re-enter the workforce. Third sector involvement at the event.

[£255,000 in grant funding awarded to community groups and local voluntary organisations](#) (16/09/24) – Tranche 4 of the community grants fund



[Residents invited to National Inclusion Week event](#) (16/09/24) – promotion of National Inclusion Week event

[Reducing anti-social behaviour across local communities](#) (01/10/24) – housing role in reducing ASB



[Apprenticeship events aim to help young people discover career pathways](#) (02/10/24) – Event to highlight local apprenticeship opportunities in disadvantaged communities

[Calling all carers in Chesterfield!](#) (16/10/24) – promotion of carers event run by the Equality and Diversity Forum that aimed to highlight support for caregivers



[Safe Space on hand to help partygoers and vulnerable people](#) (18/11/24) – launch of safe space to protect vulnerable people in night time economy (including alcohol and drugs, domestic violence, sexual assault, homelessness and mental health)

[Positive action planned to further enhance housing services](#) (22/01/25) – highlights the actions and initiatives that are being taken to improve services

[Council receives Regulator of Social Housing inspection result](#) (27/11/24) – Announces result and shows what we are doing well / areas for improvement.

[Celebrate extraordinary women and mark International Women's Day in Chesterfield](#) (30/01/25) – promotion of International Women's Day event



[Creating enhanced community facilities in Barrow Hill](#) (25/02/24) – work begins on TD funded project to enhance community facilities (and healthcare provision) in Barrow Hill.

[Connecting jobseekers with employers in Chesterfield](#) (20/03/25) - Announcing work and wellbeing event which aims to highlight job opportunities but also support networks for people to enter/re-enter the workforce. Third sector involvement at the event.

## **10.0 Equality impact assessments**

The Council is committed to demonstrating that all relevant equality issues have been considered before changes are made to policies, projects, services, functions and strategies, or when new ones are created. Chesterfield Borough Council does this through its robust Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process.

The EIA process enables us to look at our work in depth to see what impact it has on different equality groups, and to mitigate against any potentially negative impacts that are identified. The EIA form follows the Public Sector Equality Duty guidance which focusses on the need for due regard to certain equality considerations when making decisions.

During 2024/25 the Council undertook around 21 Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) for a variety of changes to policies, strategies and projects. These have taken into consideration: best practice, demographic information and employee and customer feedback and other engagement activities. The EIAs were published with the relevant reports to the Council's Cabinet. Through the EIA process, we have been able to address any negative impacts on sections of the community promote equality by identifying and acting on opportunities to implement positive impacts for groups where possible.

Examples of EIAs completed this year include Fees and Charges, Public Space Protection Order, Vehicle Tracker and the Housing Capital Programme.

## **11.0 Gender pay gap report 2024**

At Chesterfield Borough Council we value diversity and inclusion and believe that it strongly contributes to the quality of our services. We are committed to being an equal opportunities employer and aim to treat all employees and job applicants fairly, regardless of their gender (including gender reassignment), age, race, sexuality, full or part-time status, marital status, and disability. We believe it is important to attract and keep a workforce that reflects the customers and communities we serve.

### **11.1 What is the gender pay gap?**

The gender pay gap is concerned with differences in the average earnings of men and women over a standard time period, regardless of their role or seniority. The law requires any organisation with more than 250 employees to publish its gender pay gap information annually based on a snapshot date. For the public sector, the snapshot date is 31 March.

The gender pay gap is not the same as equal pay. The law says that men and women must be paid the same for doing the same or equivalent work. We use job evaluation techniques to evaluate each role and not the post holder to ensure that all roles are fairly remunerated in comparison to other roles. It makes no reference to gender or any other personal characteristics of any existing or potential job holders.

### **11.2 Our gender pay gap data.**

At 31 March 2024 Chesterfield Borough Council employed 1014 people. The gender split of our workforce is 48% female and 52% male, however, this isn't an equal split across our services. The majority of Chesterfield Borough Council services are provided in-house





including services which many authorities have either contracted out such as building cleaning or moved to alternative models such as arms-length organisations for example for managing Council housing and associated repairs and maintenance. These services tend to have a large gender imbalance, for instance, building cleaning employs a large number of female part-time staff whereas the majority of higher-paid trades staff and associated professions working in housing repairs and maintenance are male. These services have a disproportionate impact on our gender pay gap data.

Our gender pay gap figures for 2024 are:

Gender pay gap measure	31 March 2023	31 March 2024
Average gender pay gap as a mean average	7%	6.6%
Average gender pay gap as a median average	13%	7.3%
Average bonus gender pay gap as a mean average	0%	0%
Average bonus gender pay gap as a median average	0%	0%
Proportion of males receiving a bonus payment	25%	23%
Proportion of females receiving a bonus payment	0%	0%

Quartile	31 March 2023		31 March 2024	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Upper quartile	67%	33%	68%	32%
Upper middle quartile	53%	47%	50%	50%
Lower middle quartile	47%	53%	48%	52%
Lower quartile	38%	62%	44%	56%

Chesterfield Borough Council's mean gender pay gap for 2024 is 6.6% in favour of men and the median gender pay gap is 7.3% also in favour of men. We have seen a positive reduction in the gender pay since we first started recording this measure in 2017. In the 2017 gender pay gap report the mean gender pay gap was 17.2% and the median 15.1% both in favour of men. Between 2017 and 2024, we have seen a gradual reduction in the gender pay gap across both measures.

To understand the gender pay gap it is essential to understand certain key facts about the distribution of grades, genders and working patterns in each of the four quartiles. Further information and our full gender pay gap reports are available:

<https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/living-here/people-and-families/equality-and-diversity/gender-pay-gap.aspx>

### 11.3 How we are addressing the pay gap

We aim to recruit from the widest possible talent pool. We have updated our recruitment policy and procedures and trained all our recruiting managers to ensure that language in job adverts is neutral, that they understand the importance of interviewing people with gender balanced panels in order to avoid unconscious bias and can develop a recruitment

experience that enables candidates to showcase their knowledge, experience and skills across their whole life experience. In 2021 we updated the policy to include 'blind' recruitment methods to ensure candidates are shortlisted for roles on merit only.

We use job evaluation techniques to evaluate each role to ensure that all roles are fairly remunerated in comparison to other roles and also pay at least the Living Wage Foundations living wage level to all our employees which has a positive disproportional impact on female employees who make up a larger proportion of the workforce in services for example building cleaning that benefit from the living wage.

Once we have the right people, we want them to stay. To support this, we have developed a range of flexible working opportunities including part-time working and compressed hours etc. We have also updated and promoted our policies and procedures regarding maternity, paternity and adoption leave and have updated our shared parental leave policy and offer career breaks.

We devote significant time and resources to helping our employees' progress in their careers and accessing quality learning and development opportunities. This includes regular development conversations with line managers, a formal personal development review meeting every quarter and service level succession planning activities. There are also opportunities to learn from women who have progressed into the highest levels of organisations, this is a key consideration for our leadership sessions and international women's day activities.

We use apprenticeships to enhance the skills, knowledge and experience of our existing employees and to give opportunities to new employees. We recognise however that offering new apprenticeship opportunities, may in the short negatively impact our gender pay gap as these roles attract a lower salary, but this is about investing in a pipeline of talent and creating career pathways for apprentices to progress and meet their potential. We carefully consider how to support female staff and apprentices to take the next steps in their career and identify and reduce any barriers to gender equality. Over time this will reduce the gender gap and quartile distribution.

We work with schools and colleges regularly via our local democracy programmes and work experience opportunities. These help us to develop a relationship with young people in the Borough early on which in turn helps us to identify as an employer of choice within the area particularly for apprenticeship opportunities. In a typical year we will engage over a thousand children and young people in these activities.

We also take our wider role as a key place shaper seriously and consider how we can help to address the gender pay gap within the Borough. As part of our commitment to local labour clauses we work with employers and partner agencies to enable them to showcase opportunities and career pathways in schools and colleges. Across the borough large scale regeneration activity is taking place, this matched with a clear focus on the skills agenda will

provide significant employment and educational opportunities which have the potential to further reduce the gender pay gap within the borough. Some highlights include:

Along with the Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum we support International Women's Day.

We continue to secure local labour clauses on all eligible developments and support businesses and communities to get the maximum benefit from these opportunities. Once local labour clauses are secured we offer a range of support to companies including advice on local recruitment, links with local training providers and information about how they can best explore local supply chain opportunities.

We encourage local businesses to engage with schools in the area to encourage children and young people to think about their future career aspirations.

Our work with Chesterfield College and other key partners to develop the apprentice town initiative. There are now thousands of young people embarking on apprenticeships and giving investors in Chesterfield access to a pool of high- quality skills that will enable their businesses to grow and prosper.

The Construction Skills Hub, which is funded through the Staveley Town Deal is a partnership between Chesterfield Borough Council, Chesterfield College and the University of Derby. Currently more than 40 students are studying on the site earning trade-based qualifications in things like groundworks, brickwork, joinery and more through Chesterfield College supporting students from level two up to degree level.

The University of Derby and Chesterfield Borough Council have formalised a strategic partnership to drive growth, innovation, and community development in Chesterfield enhancing education, boosting economic growth, and addressing local challenges. The University of Derby Chesterfield campus offers a large range of health and social care courses where students can gain valuable work experience as well as academics qualifications utilising NHS standard mock hospital wards, interactive suite, clinical suite and high-tech computer suite.

Our partners Destination Chesterfield co-ordinate the successful 'Made in Chesterfield' campaign which is a celebration of the manufacturing, engineering, science and technology industries in the town. The campaign looks to inspire the next generation to the industry, with businesses, schools and training providers coming together to showcase the sector.

Peak resort – a multi-million pound integrated leisure, health, sport and education resort will provide not only a large range of new jobs and careers but also an additional university campus, specialising in leisure and hospitality.

Young people and their parents or carers have also been able to access a number of sessions where they can learn more about careers in the health and social care sector. Apprenticeship and Technical Education Information events include a question-and-answer panel session and the chance to speak to experts in the sector including Chesterfield Royal Hospital and

NHS Joined Up Care about the training and career options available to young people after completing school.

Our skills brokerage service which aims to help businesses access the funding and the information they need to deliver skills development programmes for their employees.

This is just a snapshot of the exciting activities taking place within the borough which will provide high quality career pathways for people across our borough.

## **12.0 Looking forward to 2025/26**

We will continue to work with partners to promote and support equality and diversity with our communities and within our organisation. Here is a sample of some of the activities we would like to take forward in 2025/26:

- Following the Supreme Court ruling surrounding the legal definition of a person's sex under the Equality Act 2010, we will review our policies and practice in light of the new Code of Practice, expected to be introduced during the summer of 2025.
- Continuing to work in partnership with communities to organise a range of equality and diversity themed awareness activities and events, through the Equality and Diversity Forum.
- Continuing to embed the Council's commitment to equalities in its service planning and delivery of major projects (e.g. Staveley Town Deal and Plan for Neighbourhoods Programme) by delivering a robust Equality Impact Assessment process and upholding the importance of this during financially challenging times.
- Providing employees with training and development opportunities so that they have the skills, abilities and confidence to recognise and respond appropriately and sensitively to diversity and discrimination, both within the workplace, when delivering services and, ultimately, in their everyday lives. Delivering ongoing equality and diversity refresher training as required with services and a range of additional awareness raising modules on locally relevant themes.
- Continue to work in partnership to deliver the year 3 community grants programme which aims to develop and improve community infrastructure, resilience and volunteering opportunities.
- Continue to meet our statutory duties including Gender pay gap and Public Sector Equality Duty reporting and working on the objectives detailed in our Equality and Diversity Strategy, 2023 - 2027.
- Having refreshed the State of the Borough document with data from the 2021 Census, we will continue to share and utilise up to date and consistent demographic information within CBC and the wider community, enabling us to consider the protected groups in all we do and to support the Equality Impact Assessment process.
- Continuing to work both formally and informally in partnership with local groups, including the Equality and Diversity Forum, Climate Change Forum, Cultural Access Group and Dementia Friendly Chesterfield to share knowledge, experiences and resources.

- Continue to deliver a range of accessible sport and leisure opportunities from our two leisure centres.

### **13.0 Further information**

If you have any comments on our Equalities Annual Report or would like to request further information or copies of any of the documents highlighted in the report, please contact:

Allison Potter

Policy Officer

Tel: 01246 959644

E-mail: [allison.potter@chesterfield.gov.uk](mailto:allison.potter@chesterfield.gov.uk)