

Equalities Impact Assessment 2025.

**For the Milton Keynes City
Plan 2050**

**September 2025
Version 1**

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Introduction

Purpose

1.1 This Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) examines how the policies in the MK City Plan 2050 may affect equality. The primary goal of the EqIA is to provide Milton Keynes City Council with information regarding the impact on the protected characteristics (as identified in the 2010 Equality Act). to support its decision-making process in adopting the Local Plan.

1.2 As a public body, Milton Keynes City Council (MKCC) has a legal duty when creating new plans and policies to pay due regard to the objectives set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which is included in the Equality Act 2010 under s149. These objectives include:

- a) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- b) Foster good relationships between different groups within the community.

1.3 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is a tool that enables us to make an initial assessment of the potential impacts that our policies could have on people throughout our community, with a particular regard to groups with protected characteristics. Therefore, the purpose of Equality Impact Assessments is to ensure that MKCC is considering the needs of such groups when implementing new policies.

Milton Keynes City Plan 2050

Vision and Objectives for the MK City Plan 2050

1.4 'The MK City Plan 2050 will take forward, and should be read alongside, our Strategy for 2050 which sets out a bold vision for Milton Keynes. This vision seeks to bring transformational change, while protecting that which is unique to Milton Keynes and will play an important role in our future success. The Strategy for 2050 also provides important context that has been integrated into the City Plan's evidence base and policies. An integrated plan is one that will consider and balance a range of difficult, and at times competing, things and do this in a way that helps growth to be virtuous and beneficial to the communities living in Milton Keynes today and tomorrow.'

1.5 There are 14 objectives in the MK City Plan 2050, including:

Our objectives

People-Friendly and Healthy Places

Objective 1 Create inclusive and safe places that encourage greater physical activity, social interaction, and healthier lifestyles.

Objective 2 Create streets and neighbourhoods that prioritise walking, cycling and wheeling for access to shops, services, community facilities, and parks and open space.

Objective 3 Provide a suitable range of facilities and infrastructure in the right places at the right time to promote walkable neighbourhoods and good physical and mental health.

Climate and Environmental Action

Objective 4 New homes and commercial buildings to be net zero carbon by 2030 and carbon negative by 2050.

Objective 5 New growth prioritises active travel and public transport to reduce carbon emissions.

Objective 6 Support the efficient use of resources as part of a circular economy.

Objective 7 Create space for nature and deliver significant gains in biodiversity.

Objective 8 Ensure that communities and nature can cope with and bounce back from negative climate impacts and environmental change.

High Quality Homes

Objective 9 Provide a range of homes for those most in need including affordable homes, and to meet the wider market demand for housing.

Objective 10 Support renewal and regeneration within neighbourhoods and communities that would benefit from it.

Objective 11 Support delivery of social infrastructure to enable people to prosper and have a high quality of life.

Economic and Cultural Prosperity

Objective 12 Enable better access to education, skills and training, and economic opportunities to strengthen our regional and national economic role, with Central Milton Keynes at the heart of a diverse and resilient economy.

Objective 13 Conserve our unique heritage and provide a greater diversity of places where culture can be produced and enjoyed strengthening our role as a national and international centre of cultural and creative significance.

Objective 14 Support the maintenance and creation of thriving high streets and centres for leisure.

Methodology

Legislative Context

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 is an Act of Parliament with the primary purpose of protecting people from discrimination both in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced and updated numerous former Acts and Regulations that formed the basis of anti-discrimination law, including the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Race Relations Act 1976, and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The Act ensures that individuals with certain 'protected characteristics' are not indirectly or directly discriminated against. The protected characteristics include:

- **Age:** this refers to persons defined by either a particular age or a range of ages.
- **Disability:** defined as a person having a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
- **Gender reassignment:** this refers to persons proposing to undergo, currently undergoing, or have undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex.
- **Marriage and civil partnership:** this refers to persons who are married or are civil partners. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples.
- **Pregnancy and maternity:** pregnancy refers to the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after birth. In non-work cases, the protected period of maternity is 26 weeks after giving birth.
- **Race:** this encompasses colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origins. A racial group is a group of persons defined by reference to race.
- **Religion or belief:** religion means any religion and a reference to religion includes a reference to a lack of religion. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief and a reference to belief includes a reference to a lack of belief.
- **Sex:** this refers to a man or to a woman, or to a group of persons of the same sex.
- **Sexual orientation:** refers to a person's sexual orientation towards persons of the same sex, persons of the opposite sex or persons of either sex.

All public bodies are also obliged to have regard for the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), under section 149 of the Equality Act. The PSED requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under the PSED to:

- a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010.

- b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Guidance for local authorities published by the Government Equalities Office, outlines that the 2010 Act does not impose a legal requirement to conduct an Equality Impact Assessment, but it emphasises the importance of consciously considering the aims of the PSED in decision making¹.

As outlined in Section 149 (3) of the 2010 Act, the need to advance equality of opportunity includes the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; and
- Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

Relevant Policy

Milton Keynes City Council Equality Policy² (2021)

Milton Keynes City Council strives to be responsive to the needs of those it serves and those it serves alongside. Equality and inclusion are extremely significant to the Council's Equality Vision which strives to:

'Improve the way we engage, think, plan and act to deliver equality and inclusion for everyone, everyday'.

MKCC serves a diverse community, where people from a range of backgrounds and experiences enhance the life and development of the City. The Council therefore will:

- Engage
- Think
- Plan
- Act

MKCC places equality and inclusion at the heart of everything it does in employing people, providing services to people, and shaping the places they live and work in. The Equality Policy requires MKCC to equality impact assess all key decisions.

¹ Government Equalities Office, 2011. Public Sector Equality Duty: guidance for public authorities. Available online at: [Public Sector Equality Duty: guidance for public authorities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/214698/Public_Sector_Equality_Duty_guidance_for_public_authorities.pdf)

² Milton Keynes City Council Equality Policy, 2021. Available online: <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-03/Equality%202021%20Policy.pdf>

Equality and Diversity in Milton Keynes³ (2021)

Since 2002, MKCC has prepared various versions of Equality and Diversity in Milton Keynes, with the most up to date one being in 2021. The latest edition sets out good practice guidelines to improve equality and diversity considerations for the council's staff and its partners. Although this guide was prepared to provide greater understanding of diversity for organisations and professionals that come into contact with children, parents, and schools, it has also been used by MKCC for other purposes.

Diversity Action Plan (2021)⁴

'We are dedicated, we are respectful, and we are collaborative'.
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At the end of 2020, colleagues were asked for their thoughts on equality with the aim of building confidence in how we apply our professional skills and work collaboratively. The action plan sets out how MKCC's plans to be 'dedicated, respectful and collaborative'.

MK Strategy for 2050 Commission: Making a Great City Greater⁵

Milton Keynes' Strategy for 2050 sets out how it will keep and strengthen those things that make us special – our green open spaces, our vibrant economy, our grid roads and Redways and our diverse communities and strong community spirit. The aim is to achieve all of this whilst tackling current threats such as the global challenge of climate change and the affordability of homes. The vision sets out MKCC's ambition for low-carbon growth and excellent equality of life for everyone in Milton Keynes.

NHS Milton Keynes – Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2021-2024⁶

MKUH is committed to providing services that meet each individual's needs, treating everyone with the compassion they deserve. Aim to encourage their staff, patients, and visitors to foster an environment that is free from discrimination. The Trust is required to publish annual information that demonstrates its compliance with the PSED and Equality Act 2010.

Proposed Approach to Screening Equality Impacts

The policies in the MK City Plan 2050 will have an impact on those living, working and visiting Milton Keynes. Each of these groups will have some protected characteristics as defined by the 2010 Act set out above. There will also be varying amounts of intersectionality between these characteristics (for example age, race and sex).

³ Equality and Diversity in Milton Keynes 2021. Available online: <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-02/M19186%20Equality%20and%20diversity%20COMMUNITIES%20%28All%20pages%29%20V4.pdf>

⁴ Milton Keynes City Council Diversity Action Plan. Available online: [Diversity Action Plan 2021.pdf \(milton-keynes.gov.uk\)](#)

⁵ Milton Keynes strategy for 2050. Available online: https://www.mkfutures2050.com/files/ugd/02d3f7_0e68db27402441c49a453b4c945edc83.pdf

⁶ Milton Keynes University Hospital, Equality and Diversity. Available online: [Equality and Diversity - Milton Keynes University Hospital \(mkuh.nhs.uk\)](#)

The purpose of this Equalities Impact Assessment is to recognise where there may be a *differential equality effect*, affecting members of a protected characteristic group differently compared to the rest of the general population. Because of specific needs, or a recognised sensitivity or vulnerability associated with their protected characteristics, irrespective of the number of people affected.

As such, policies were assessed in accordance with their potential to differentially affect people with specific protected characteristics, consequence of those protected characteristics. In some cases, a disproportionate impact could be likely where people with a particular protected characteristic form a greater proportion of those affected than in the general population.

The scale and assessment of the significance of such impacts is not always numerical and quantifiable. So, the consideration of equality impacts is supported by a descriptive analysis of the potential impacts, and nature of the effect, of a policy. Also including a description of a policy's positive or negative impact.

The proposed approach for screening is as follows:

• Step One: A Policy Review – sets the context for the assessment, identifying the key national, regional, and local policy and legislation relevant to equality.
• Step Two: A Baseline Profile – provides an overview of the study area using key datasets pertinent to the EqIA such as Census 2021. This will identify groups with protected characteristics, living and working in the area, compared to national rates.
• Step Three: A Full Review of Local Plan – this will be undertaken alongside a review of public consultation with the aim of identifying a set of equality themes relating to each of the policy areas.
• Step Four: A Screening Assessment – will be undertaken of each policy, using the evidence collated in the previous steps to identify if there is likely to be a positive or negative impact as a consequence of the policies included within the Local Plan.

In a lot of cases, the definite equality effect will in practice depend on the detail of implementation of policies, and therefore where possible this EqIA focuses on the effects resulting from the adoption of those policies individually. Individual decisions taken under these policies, for example decisions on whether to grant planning permissions, will themselves also need to meet the PSED, within the framework set by the MK City Plan 2050.

Local Context

This section of the EqlA provides relevant baseline information, in relation to protected characteristics, to understand the demographics of the local population.

Baseline Profile

A baseline profile of the population living and working within Milton Keynes is necessary for the equality screening so that an assessment can be made on the potential level of impact the new Local Plan may have on groups with protected characteristics. The main source of data used in the baseline profiling is Census 2021 data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

Population

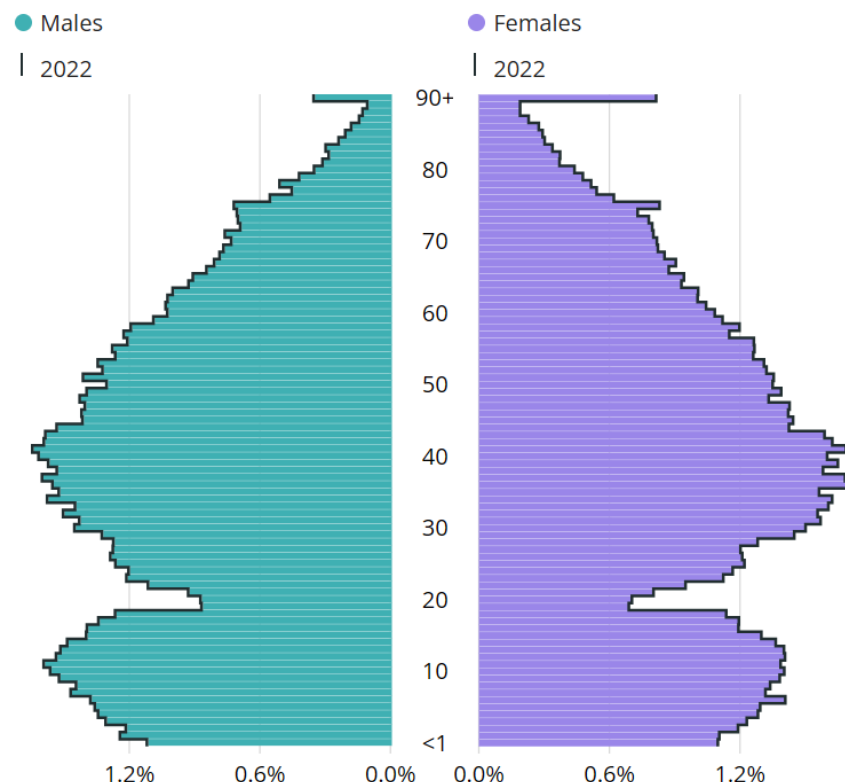
In the borough of Milton Keynes, the population size saw an increase by 15.3%, from around 248,800 in 2011, to 287,000 in 2021. This is higher than the overall increase for England (which was 6.6%).

More recent data indicates that since 2022 it has grown a further 7.8% compared to 6.4% across the rest of England.

Milton Keynes was in the top 2 regions with the largest population increases in the South East region. At a growth rate of 15.3%, Milton Keynes' population increase is higher than the overall increase for the South East.

The median age in Milton Keynes is projected to rise from 37 years in 2022 to **40 years** in 2032. In England as a whole, the median age is projected to be 41 years in 2032. In 2032, **16%** of the population in Milton Keynes are projected to be aged 65 years or over, up from 13% in 2022.

Figure 1:
Population
Pyramid showing
the population
structure of MK
by age. ONS Data
Census 2022.



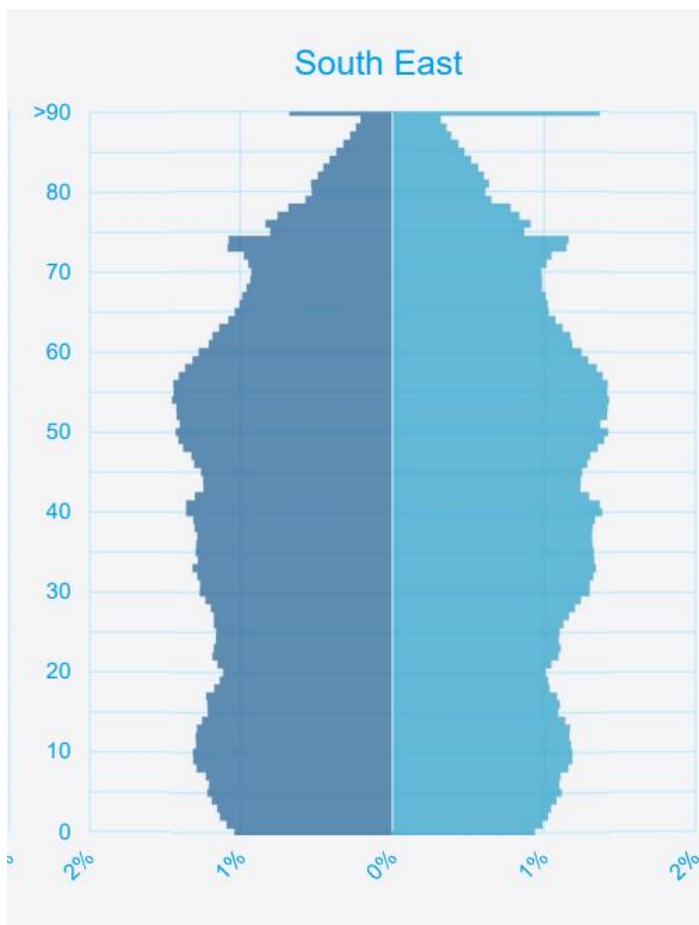


Figure 2: Population pyramid showing the population structure of South East England. ONS Census Data 2021.

Both *Figure 1* and *Figure 2* showcase that Milton Keynes has a relatively young population compared to the South East of England.

In accordance with ONS' 2021 Census Data, the average age in England was 40 years old. The average age in Milton Keynes is 37 years old, which is 2 years higher than the average of 35 years old in 2011. MK's average age is 4 years younger than that of South East of England at 41 years old.

The number of people aged 35-49 increased by around 9,100, an increase of 16.1% from 2011 to 2021. While the number of residents aged 4 years and under fell by around 2,200 (a 10.9% reduction). There has been an 11.6% increase in people aged 15-64 years, as well as an increase by 12.3% of those aged below 15 years. The population aged 15-24 also increased by 12.3%, however, on the opposite scale, MK's population aged 65+ has increased by 43.6%.

Broadly the data does not indicate that there is a significantly sensitive resident age range in MK. Though, MK's younger population, those aged 0-4, 15-19 and 20-24 account for a lesser proportion of MK's population. This is in addition to those aged 65+ which, although MK has experienced an increase growth rate of those in this age range, account for a smaller ratio of the population than those aged 25-59. Individuals within different age groups can be more sensitive to changes. For example, policies which promote active travel and connectivity can impact the elderly, and so they might differentially affect such an age group. This EqlA therefore sets out to understand these impacts relative to MK's local context.

MK population profile compared with England

The chart displays two sets of data for MK and England. The first set shows the 2011-2021 growth rate for each age band, and the second set shows the percentage of the population in each age band in 2021.

Category	Age Band	Value
2011 - 2021 Growth rate of each age band %	MK	15 and under: 12.3
	MK	16-64: 11.6
	MK	Age 65 plus: 43.6
	England	15 and under: 5
	England	16-64: 3.6
	England	Age 65 plus: 20
2021 % of pop in each age band	MK	15 and under: 20.4
	MK	16-64: 65.8
	MK	Age 65 plus: 13.8
	England	15 and under: 17.4
	England	16-64: 64.2
	England	Age 65 plus: 18.4

Projections to 2032 (ONS 2022 Census Data)

Between 2022 and 2032, the share of the working age population (people aged 16 years to State Pension age) in Milton Keynes is projected to stay the same, at around 66%.

In 2032, 22% of people are projected to be aged 18 years and under, down from 25% in 2022. This is above average for England in 2032 (20%). Looking at the youngest age groups in Milton Keynes between 2022 and 2032, we can see the share of:

- Figure 4 shows the overall projected population change in Milton Keynes from 2022 to 2047.

Population change in Milton Keynes

Projected total population, 2022 to 2047

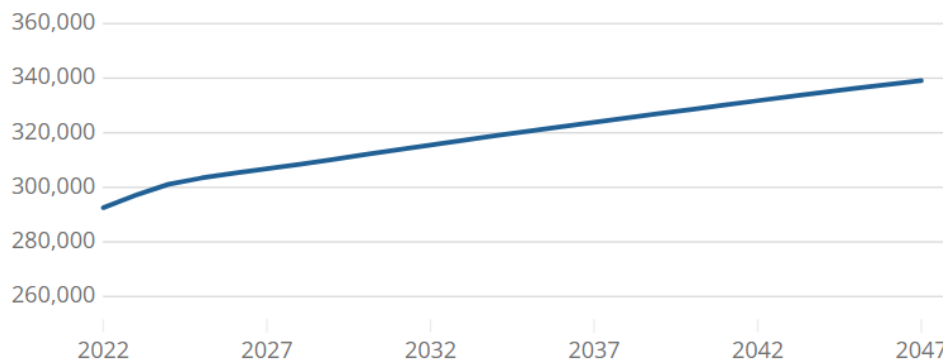


Figure 4 - Overall projected population change in Milton Keynes from 2022 to 2047. ONS 2022 Data.

Sex

In accordance with the ONS 2021 Census Data, nationally, as a whole, females account for 51.04% of the population and males account for 48.95%. This is similar to the sex split in the South East of England where 51.07% of the population are female and 48.92% are males. In Milton Keynes, 50.6% of the population are female (145,486), slightly lower than the national split, and 49.39% are male (141,574) which is slightly higher than the national split, though not significantly.

As shown in *Figure 1* the proportion of female and male residents declines between the ages of 45-49. In general, the sex split is largely similar across the age groups. However, there are slightly more males than females aged 0-4, 10-14 and 20-24. And there are more females than males aged 85-89 and 90.

Gender Reassignment:

Gender Identity

Gender is a way to describe how someone feels about their identity. It is not related to the physical body and biology and is fluid⁷. Gender identity refers to a person's sense of their own gender, whether male, female or another category such as non-binary. This may or may not be the same as their sex registered at birth.⁸

⁷ RTPi Inclusive language guide (Source)

⁸ [Gender identity, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/gender-identity)

An individual has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the individual is proposing to undergo, is undergoing, or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the individual's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex (2010 Act, Section 7).

In accordance with 2021 ONS Census Data, 93.4% of residents in Milton Keynes identify as the same sex as that registered at birth, this is broadly similar to the national average (93.47%) and the average in the South East of 94.12%. In total, 0.3% of residents identified with a gender identity different from sex registered at birth, but with no specific identity given. And 0.1% of residents identified as a Trans Woman, and 0.1% of residents identified as a Trans Man. This is lower than the national average at 0.10%, and average in the South East of 0.9%, for those who identified as either a Trans Woman or Trans Man,

104 MK residents identified as non-binary (someone who is non-binary does not identify with the binary categories of man and woman). Which is lower than the average of 0.07% of individuals who identified as non-binary in the South East.

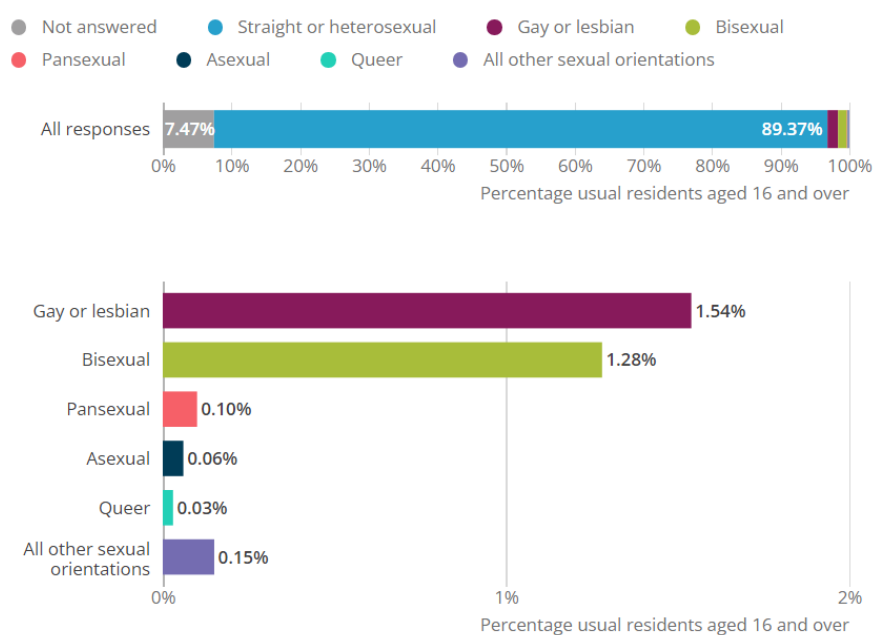
Notably, in total 6% (13,537) of residents did not answer the question on gender identity in the 2021 ONS Census. And so, there is a significant proportion of MK residents whose gender identity is unknown.

Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation is an umbrella term covering sexual identity, attraction, and behaviour.

Sexual orientation is a protected characteristic to enable individuals to choose how to express their sexual orientation without discrimination. This, for example, could include discrimination in the provision of goods, facilities and services on grounds of sexual orientation.

For an individual respondent, these may not be the same. For example, someone in an opposite-sex relationship may also experience same-sex attraction, and vice versa. With regards to data collected regarding sexual orientation, it means that the statistics should be interpreted purely as indicating how people responded to the question, rather than being about whom they are attracted to or their actual relationships.



Source: Office for National Statistics – Census 2021

Figure 5: Sexual Orientation in the UK (2021 ONS Census Data)

In accordance with 2021 ONS Census Data, nationally, as a whole, 43.4 million people (89.4%) described themselves as straight or heterosexual. 1.5% described themselves as gay or lesbian, 1.3% described themselves as bisexual, 0.10% described themselves as Pansexual, 0.06% as Asexual and 0.03% selected ‘all other sexual orientations’. In total, 7.5% of people did not answer this question. In the South East of England, 89.8% of people described themselves as straight or heterosexual, 1.5% described themselves as gay or lesbian and 1.3% of people described themselves as bisexual. 0.11% described themselves as Pansexual, 0.06% as Asexual and 0.03% described themselves as Queer. In the South East, in total, 0.13% of individuals opted for all other sexual orientations.

The figures reported for those who describe themselves as straight or heterosexual in Milton Keynes are relatively similar to those nationally and the South East of England (89.9%). However, 1.23% of people described themselves as gay or lesbian which is slightly less compared to the national figure of 1.5%.

In total, in Milton Keynes, 1.25% of people described themselves as bisexual, 0.24% as pansexual (slightly higher than the figure nationally and in the South East), 0.06% as Asexual (similar to the figure in the South East), 0.01% as queer. In total 0.02% of respondents opted for all other sexual orientations. In total 7.3% of people did not respond to this question.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

In accordance with ONS data (2021) in Milton Keynes the marital status distribution of residents is as follows: 34.3% have never married, 46.8% are married or in a civil partnership, 2.50% are separated, 9.86% are divorced, and 6.54% are widowed. When compared to the national averages, MK has a slightly lower percentage of never married individuals (37.9% nationally), a comparable percentage of those married or in a civil partnership (46.9% nationally), a lower percentage of divorced individuals (9.1% nationally), and a slightly higher percentage of widowed individuals (6.1% nationally).

Pregnancy and Maternity

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) uses the definition of conception as a pregnancy of a woman that leads either to a maternity or an abortion.

Conception rates for women aged 15 to 44 years, English regions and Wales, 2011 and 2021

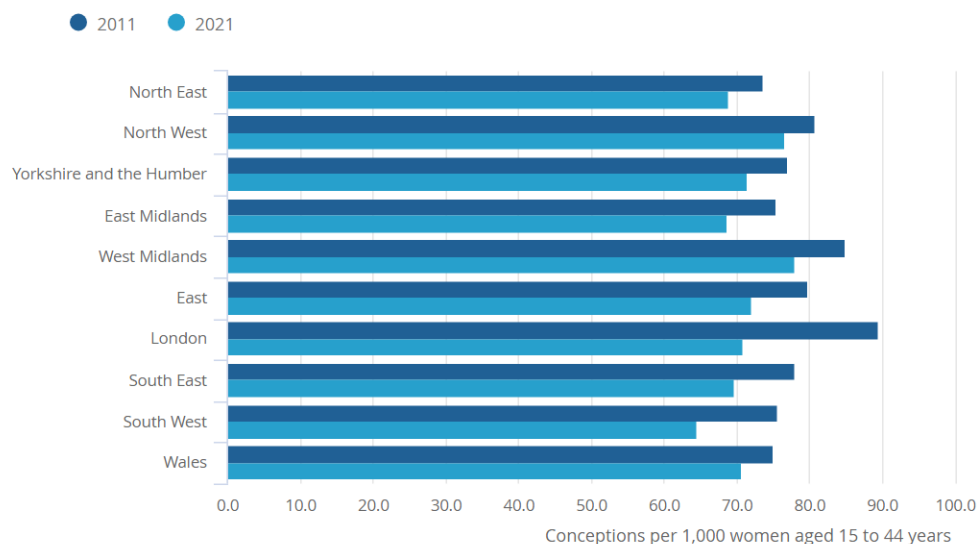


Figure 6: Conception rates for women aged 15 to 44 years, English regions and Wales 2011 and 2021⁹

As shown in Figure 5 conception rates have reduced in the South East since 2011. In England and Wales there were 824,983 conceptions (reported from all age groups), and a conception rate of 71.5. In 2021, there were 4240 conceptions in Milton Keynes, and the percentage of conceptions leading to an abortion was 27.7%, compared to 26.5% in England and Wales.¹⁰ In Milton Keynes, in 2021 the conception rate was 71.2 – slightly below the national average.

The ONS does not provide statistics on the number of people who are pregnant, as such this baseline assessment also considers live birth data. In 2023, there were 3170 live births in Milton Keynes and a general fertility rate (GFR) of 51.6 (the general fertility rate is measured via the number of live births

⁹ [Conceptions in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics](#)

¹⁰ The ONS' conception statistics do not include miscarriages or illegal abortions.

in a year per 1,000 women aged 15 to 44 years). As shown in Table 1 below, Milton Keynes has a general fertility rate above that of the average in England and Wales and the Southeast of England – though its GFR is lower than other neighbouring authorities, especially Central Bedfordshire with a GFR of 61.6.

Area	Live Births	General Fertility Rate
Milton Keynes	3170	51.6
Bedford	2095	56.7
Buckinghamshire	5585	54.6
Central Bedfordshire	3581	61.6
West Northamptonshire	4524	53.5
South East	88,164	49.9
England and Wales	591,072	49.8

Table 1: Live Births and General Fertility Rate in Milton Keynes relative to other neighbouring authorities and the South East as a whole.¹¹

Race

Race encompasses various personal characteristics, including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origins, as defined by the 2010 Act. Therefore, this baseline assessment has included diverse data sources such as ethnicity, place of birth, and language spoken to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the study area in terms of race.

Ethnicity

As of 2021, the demographic composition of Milton Keynes was as follows: 71.8% of individuals identified as White, 12.4% as Asian, Asian British, or Asian Welsh, 9.7% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean, or African. Additionally, 4.1% of individuals identified as Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups, and 2.0% identified as an Other Ethnic Group.

Milton Keynes is a diverse City. It has a lower proportion of those who identified as White and a higher proportion of residents who identified as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh and Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups compared to other surrounding spatial areas. See Table XXX below for a comparison nationally and compared to other Local Authority Areas.

Area	White %	Asian, Asian British, or Asian Welsh %	Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African %	Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups %	Other Ethnic Group %
England and Wales	81.7%	9.3%	4.0%	2.9%	2.1%
Milton Keynes	71.8%	12.4%	9.7%	4.1%	2.0%
Bedford	75.7%	12.6%	5.3%	4.6%	1.8%
Buckinghamshire	79.9%	12.4%	2.6%	3.5%	1.6%
Central Bedfordshire	90.2%	3.5%	2.4%	3.0%	0.8%
West Northamptonshire	85.9%	5.3%	4.9%	2.8%	1.1%

Table 2: Racial Composition of Milton Keynes relative to other neighbouring authorities.

¹¹ Produced from the NOMIS report on Live births in England and Wales : birth rates down to local authority areas [Nomis - Query Tool - Live births in England and Wales : birth rates down to local authority areas](#)

Place of Birth

The 2021 Census provides data on Country of Birth. In Milton Keynes, 74% of respondents were born in the UK; 9.8% were born in the rest of Europe, 7.7% were born in the Middle East and Asia; 6.7% were born in Africa; 1.3% were born in the Americas and Caribbean, and 0.2% were born in Antarctica and Oceania (including Australasia) and Other.

Area	United Kingdom	Europe	Middle East and Asia	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Antarctica and Oceania (including Australasia) and Other
Milton Keynes	74%	9.8%	7.7%	6.7%	1.3%	0.2%
Bedford	78.6%	10.7%	6.1%	3%	1.3%	0.2%
Buckinghamshire	83.4%	6.3%	6.1%	2.4%	1.5%	0.4%
Central Bedfordshire	89.0%	5.9%	2.3%	1.9%	0.8%	0.2%
West Northamptonshire	81.2%	11.1%	3.2%	3.3%	0.9%	0.2%

Table 2: Country of Birth in Milton Keynes relative to other neighbouring authorities.

Language

Language has been defined in the 2021 Census as an individual's 'main language', which is considered "a person's first or preferred language". The proportion of residents who indicated that English is their preferred language is broadly similar across all spatial areas.

The 2021 ONS statistics reported that nationally 91.1% (52.6 million) of usual residents aged three years and over had English (English or Welsh in Wales) as a main language. 87.41% of people aged 3 years and over in Milton Keynes speak English (English or Welsh if in Wales) as their main language; compared to 92.74% in Buckinghamshire, 95.15% in Central Bedfordshire and 87.85% in Bedfordshire. (West Northants)

Nationally, the most common main languages, other than English (English or Welsh in Wales), were: Polish (1.1%), Romanian (0.8%), Panjabi (0.5%) and Urdu (0.5%). In Milton Keynes 1.6% of residents reported Polish as their main preferred language, 1.9% of residents selected Romanian as their preferred main language, 0.28% Panjabi and Urdu 0.5%. In addition to spoken languages, British Sign Language was the main language of 0.4% of residents in England, similarly 0.4% of residents in Milton Keynes reported British Sign Language as their main preferred language.

Main Languages within Households

In Milton Keynes 8.6% of households comprised of multiple main languages; compared to 6% nationally, 6.1% in Buckinghamshire, 6% in West Northamptonshire, 8.2% Bedford, and 3.5% Central Bedfordshire.

English Language Proficiency

Area	Can Speak English Very Well, or Well %	Cannot Speak English Well %	Cannot Speak English %
Milton Keynes	86.3%	11.9%	1.7%
Bedford	77.8%	19.1%	3%

Buckinghamshire	84.4%	13.3%	2%
Central Bedfordshire	85.6%	10.9%	3.5%
West Northamptonshire	80.2%	17.3%	2.5%

Table 3: English Language Proficiency across neighbouring authorities

Religion or Belief

Based on the 2021 Census, within England and Wales, 46.2% of the population described themselves as 'Christian' (the most common response to the religion question). Meanwhile, 37.2% described themselves as having 'No religion'. Milton Keynes compared similarly to this, with 38% of the population describing themselves as having no religion, and 42.8% describing themselves as a Christian. In terms of those describing themselves as being of no religion, Buddhist, Jewish, and other Milton Keynes' population compares similarly to Buckinghamshire, Central Bedfordshire and West Northamptonshire.

However, compared to these areas Milton Keynes' population has a lower proportion of individuals who describe themselves as 'Christian', and a larger proportion of individuals who describe themselves as Hindu (4.5%) compared to an average of 1.6% across Bedford, Buckinghamshire, Central Bedfordshire, and West Northamptonshire. Milton Keynes' population has a similar proportion of individuals who describe themselves as Muslim (see Table 4 for comparisons).

Notably, Milton Keynes has a greater proportion of individuals who describe themselves as 'Sikh' (0.7%) compared to Central Bedfordshire (0.5%) and West Northamptonshire (0.4%), however the proportion is considerably less than both Bedford (2.2%) and Buckinghamshire (1.6%).

Area	No Religion	Christian	Buddhist	Hindu	Jewish	Muslim	Sikh	Other
Milton Keynes	38%	42.8%	0.5%	4.5%	0.1%	7.1%	0.7%	0.5%
Bedford	34.1%	47.6%	0.3%	1.6%	0.1%	7.1%	2.2%	1.1%
Buckinghamshire	34.2%	47.2%	0.5%	2.7%	0.3%	7%	1.6%	0.5%
Central Bedfordshire	42.8%	47.9%	0.3%	1%	0.2%	1.3%	0.5%	0.5%
West Northamptonshire	38.2%	49.5%	0.4%	1.3%	0.1%	3.5%	0.4%	0.6%

Table 4: Religion across neighbouring authorities

Disability

Overall, 6.9% of MK's population identified as being 'disabled under the equality act and limited a lot', 9.9% identified themselves as 'Disabled under the equality act and limited a little' and 83.2% identified as being 'Not disabled under the equality act'. The proportion of residents in MK who indicated they are disabled or not disabled under the Equality Act 2010 is broadly similar to the

levels across Bedford, Central Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and West Northamptonshire. Though, out of these

In Milton Keynes the proportion of households with no people disabled under the equality act was 70.8%, which is like other neighbouring authorities such as Bedford, Central Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and West Northamptonshire.

Potential Disproportionate Effects

Table 5 – Protected characteristics in baseline data for consideration for potential disproportionate effects

Protected Characteristic	Potential for Disproportionate Effects (Y/N)	Comments
Age	Y	Those aged 0-4, 15-19 and 20-24 and 65+ account for a lesser proportion of MK's population.
Sex	N	No disproportionate representation identified.
Gender reassignment	Y	Not enough data to identify if a disproportionate representation exists.
Sexual Orientation	Y	Low proportion of local population identified as gay, lesbian or bisexual
Marriage and Civil Partnership	N	No disproportionate representation identified
Pregnancy and Maternity	N	No disproportionate representation identified
Race	Y	Milton Keynes City has an ethnically diverse population.
Religion or Belief	Y	Milton Keynes City is a culturally diverse place, with a high proportion of those describing themselves as either Hindu, Muslim, or Sikh. There are numerous places of worship across the city.
Disability	Y	Low proportion of local population identified as disabled.

Assessment

Local Plan Equalities Impact Assessment Screening Table

Potential impact of assessed group	
Positive	+
Negative	-
Positive and/or negative	+/-
Neutral	0

Table XX Scoring Parameters

Policy Area and Draft Policy	Age	Disability	Gender Reassignment	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Pregnancy and Maternity	Race	Religion or belief	Sex	Sexual Orientation	Comments
Growth Strategy										
Policy GS1 Our Spatial Strategy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	This policy directs development within Milton Keynes up to 2050 according to a settlement hierarchy, focusing growth in the City of Milton Keynes (Tier 1) and supporting local needs in Olney and surrounding villages (Tier 2). The policy is considered to have a neutral to positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics as it does not directly target or exclude any group, but its implementation may influence access to services, infrastructure, and opportunities.
Policy GS2 Strategy for Homes	+	+/-	0	0	+	+/-	+/-	+	0	This policy is expected to have a positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics, particularly through the provision of diverse housing types, regeneration of existing estates, and inclusive growth strategies, benefitting older people, young adults and families, along with those living with a disability. However, careful implementation is required to ensure equitable access and avoid unintended negative consequences, particularly for those from an ethnic or religious minority.

Policy GS3 Strategy for Economic Prosperity	+	+	0	0	+	+	0	+	0	This policy outlines the spatial strategy for employment land development in Milton Keynes up to 2050. It includes the allocation of office, industrial, and research and development floorspace across a range of locations, with a focus on Central Milton Keynes and strategic employment areas. It also supports the reuse and redevelopment of existing employment land, expansion of education and training institutions, digital infrastructure, and public transport improvements. The policy is expected to have a positive to neutral impact on individuals with protected characteristics. It promotes inclusive economic growth, supports access to employment and training, and encourages infrastructure improvements that can benefit a wide range of groups. However, implementation must be mindful of accessibility, inclusion, and equitable opportunity.
Policy GS4 Strategy for People Friendly and Healthy Places	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	This policy requires developments of 10 or more dwellings to contribute to improved physical and mental health through a range of measures, including the provision of community infrastructure, prioritisation of active travel, inclusive public realm design, accessible housing, and environmental resilience. The policy is expected to have a positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics. It promotes inclusive, healthy, and accessible environments that support wellbeing across diverse communities. However, implementation must ensure that benefits are equitably distributed and that no group is inadvertently excluded.
Policy GS5 Our Retail Hierarchy	+	+	0	0	+/-	+/-	0	+	0	This policy establishes a retail hierarchy for Milton Keynes, supporting retail and other main town centre uses within designated centres. The hierarchy ranges from the City Centre (regional shopping and civic hub) to Town, District, and Local Centres, each serving different catchment populations and roles. Positive and negative impacts may occur on protection of local shops for example depending on the type of facility and outcome of planning applications. Assessing edge of centre and out of centre proposals will provide positive impacts, giving choice of public and sustainable transport options, along with greater accessibility for people with disabilities. New shops in rural areas will positively impact those without a car (mostly young and older people) and women (as they use public transport more often than men). New local centres impact positively for those without a car again and women (who tend to use them more than men).
Policy GS6 Open Countryside	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	This policy designates land outside settlement boundaries as Open Countryside and restricts development to proposals that maintain its openness and character. The policy is considered to have a neutral to positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics. While it primarily focuses on land use and environmental protection, it includes provisions that support inclusive housing needs and rural livelihoods. Reuse of

										buildings and provision of rural worker housing may support older residents and disabled individuals who require proximity to rural employment or accessible housing.
Policy GS7 Wind and Solar Development Spatial Strategy	+	+	0	0	+	+	0	+	0	This policy identifies preferred areas for solar and wind energy development within Milton Keynes and supports proposals that meet environmental and land-use criteria. It also encourages the installation of solar panels and canopies on buildings and parking structures. The policy is expected to have a neutral to positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics. While primarily focused on environmental sustainability and land use, it can indirectly support inclusive outcomes through improved infrastructure, climate resilience, and energy affordability. Renewable energy infrastructure can improve comfort and accessibility for older people and disabled individuals. Improved air quality and reduced pollution from renewable energy sources can positively impact maternal and child health. Communities disproportionately affected by environmental degradation may benefit from cleaner energy infrastructure and improved environmental conditions.
Policy GS8 Hanslope Park	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	This policy designates Hanslope Park as a key employment site removed from the Open Countryside. It supports proposals for redevelopment that maintain or enhance its role in national security and governmental logistics, subject to environmental, heritage, and transport considerations. The policy is expected to have a neutral to positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics. While focused on strategic employment and infrastructure, it includes provisions that can support inclusive access to employment and sustainable transport. However, its specialised nature means benefits may be limited to specific groups such as disabled and older persons, women and maternity/pregnancy who benefit the most from sustainable transport initiatives.
Policy GS9 Supporting Transit-Oriented Development and Estate Regeneration	+	+/-	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	This policy is likely to have a positive impact on several protected characteristics, particularly disability, age, and pregnancy and maternity, by promoting inclusive access to public transport, community facilities, and healthy food environments. The focus on estate regeneration and improving the quality of affordable homes can benefit low-income households, which often intersect with other protected groups. The requirement for community collaboration in regeneration schemes also supports equality of opportunity and participation, particularly for groups who may otherwise be underrepresented in planning processes. However, care should be taken to ensure that higher-density development does not inadvertently reduce accessibility or amenity for those with mobility impairments or other specific needs.
Policy GS10 Movement and Access	+/-	+/-	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	This policy sets out requirements for development proposals to ensure safe, inclusive, and sustainable transport infrastructure. It prioritises active travel, public transport, and accessibility for all users, including those with disabilities and reduced mobility. It

										also safeguards the redway network, canal access, and supports integration with existing infrastructure. The policy is expected to have a strong positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics. It promotes inclusive mobility, prioritises active travel, and supports infrastructure that enhances accessibility and safety for all users. Its emphasis on design standards and safeguarding public routes is particularly beneficial for disabled people, older residents, and those without access to private vehicles. Care must be taken as changes to existing routes (e.g. redways or canal towpaths) could temporarily impact access for vulnerable groups unless well-managed.
Policy GS11 Adjacent and cross-boundary growth	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	This policy sets out principles for joint-working and coordinated development on the edge of Milton Keynes City, particularly where proposals fall partly within neighbouring authorities. It promotes early engagement, infrastructure planning, sustainable design, transport integration, and the extension of green infrastructure and community amenities. The policy is expected to have a positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics. It promotes inclusive, well-connected, and sustainable urban extensions that are integrated with existing communities. Its emphasis on infrastructure, accessibility, and early engagement supports equitable outcomes, though implementation must ensure that cross-boundary coordination does not overlook the needs of vulnerable groups.
Strategic Allocations										
Policy GS12 Redevelopment of Wolverton Railway Works	+	+	0	+	+	+/-	+/-	0	0	This policy allocates the Wolverton Railway Works site for a mixed-use residential-led development, aiming to regenerate a historically significant area while delivering new homes, infrastructure, and community benefits. The policy is likely to have a broadly positive impact on people with protected characteristics by delivering a diverse range of housing, supporting inclusive education (including SEND provision), and improving access to health, social care, and active travel infrastructure. These measures particularly benefit older people, disabled individuals, families with children, and low-income groups. While heritage-led design and transport improvements are generally neutral or beneficial, care must be taken to ensure inclusive consultation and mitigate any potential negative impacts from increased traffic or building demolition. Site specific EqIA may be required.
Policy GS13 Redevelopment of Walton Campus	+	+	0	+	+	+	0	0	0	The Walton Campus policy is likely to have a positive impact on people with protected characteristics by delivering a mix of housing, inclusive education (including SEND provision), and improved access to health and social care services. The inclusion of community facilities and green/blue infrastructure supports wellbeing and social inclusion, particularly benefiting disabled people, older residents, families with

										children, and low-income groups. Active travel and public transport enhancements promote accessibility and independence, while low-carbon infrastructure contributes to healthier living environments. Overall, the policy supports the creation of a people-friendly, inclusive neighbourhood with minimal risk of negative impacts if implemented with inclusive design and engagement practices. Site specific EqlA may be required.
Policy GS14 Eastern Strategic City Extension	+	+	0	0	+	+	0	+	0	This policy allocates a major mixed-use development to the north and east of Milton Keynes, aiming to deliver approximately 16,000 homes (7,750 within the plan period), employment land, transport infrastructure, education and healthcare facilities, green and blue infrastructure, and community hubs. It is expected to have predominantly positive or neutral impacts on individuals with protected characteristics. The inclusion of a diverse range of housing types, including affordable, older persons, and specialist needs housing, supports equality for disabled people, older residents, and low-income households. The allocation of land for Gypsy and Traveller pitches promotes racial and cultural inclusion, while the provision of SEND education facilities ensures appropriate support for children with special educational needs. Prioritisation of active travel and public transport infrastructure enhances accessibility for those who may not drive, including younger, older, and disabled individuals. The planned delivery of healthcare and community facilities within the site further supports the needs of pregnant women, older people, and those with health conditions. While employment land provision may not directly target disadvantaged groups, it has the potential to support economic inclusion if linked to local skills and enterprise initiatives. Site specific EqlA may be required.
Policy GS15 East of Wavendon Strategic City Extension	+	+	0	0	+	+	0	+	0	The policy for the East of Wavendon Strategic City Extension is anticipated to have predominantly positive or neutral impacts on individuals with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. The planned delivery of 2,250 homes includes a mix of housing types and tenures, including affordable, older persons, and specialist needs housing, which supports inclusion for disabled people, older residents, and low-income households. The provision of SEND education facilities ensures appropriate support for children with special educational needs, while the inclusion of healthcare infrastructure benefits pregnant women, older people, and those with long-term health conditions. The prioritisation of active travel and public transport infrastructure enhances accessibility for individuals who may not drive, including younger, older, and disabled people. The policy also supports inclusive community development through the planned delivery of local centres and social infrastructure from the early phases of development. No negative impacts have been identified at this stage, but continued engagement with diverse communities and inclusive design practices will be essential

										to ensure equitable outcomes throughout the development process and further site specific EqIA's may be necessary.
Policy GS16 Wavendon Strategic Buffers	+/-	+/-	0	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	0	This policy relating to the Wavendon Strategic Buffers is expected to have a neutral impact on individuals with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Its primary purpose is to preserve the open character and historic identity of Wavendon as a distinct settlement within the wider Milton Keynes area. While it does not directly address housing, infrastructure, or service provision, it contributes to maintaining a sense of place and local heritage, which can support community cohesion. There are no identified negative impacts on protected groups, but care should be taken to ensure that any enhancements to open space and landscape quality are designed to be inclusive and accessible to all, including disabled people, older residents, and families with young children.
Policy GS17 South of Bow Brickhill Strategic City Extension	+	+	0	+	+	+	0	+	0	The policy is expected to have positive or neutral impacts on individuals with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. It includes a mix of housing types, including affordable, older persons, and specific needs housing, supporting inclusion for disabled people, older residents, and low-income households. Education and healthcare provision, including SEND and maternity care, will benefit families and those with health needs. Active travel and public transport infrastructure will improve accessibility for those who do not drive. No negative impacts are identified, but inclusive design and ongoing engagement with diverse communities will be important to ensure equitable outcomes and further site specific EqIA's may be necessary.
Policy GS18 Levante Gate Strategic City Extension	+	+	0	+	+	+	0	+	0	The policy is expected to have positive or neutral impacts on individuals with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. It includes a mix of housing types, including affordable, older persons, and specific needs housing, supporting inclusion for disabled people, older residents, and low-income households. Education and healthcare contributions, including SEND provision, will benefit families and those with health needs. Active travel and public transport infrastructure will improve accessibility for those who do not drive such as young people, those with disabilities or older people. No negative impacts are identified, but further site specific EqIA's may be required which will be more robust.
Policy GS19 Shenley Dens Strategic City Extension	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	0	The policy is expected to have positive or neutral impacts on individuals with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. It includes a mix of housing types, including affordable, older persons, and specific needs housing, supporting inclusion for disabled people, older residents, and low-income households. Education and healthcare provision, including SEND and maternity care, will benefit families and those with health needs. The allocation of land for Gypsy and Traveller pitches promotes racial and

										cultural inclusion. Active travel and public transport infrastructure will improve accessibility for those who do not drive. No negative impacts but further site specific EqIA's may be required as the development progresses which will be required to be more robust.
Policy GS20 Western Expansion Area	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	0	The policy is expected to have positive or neutral impacts on individuals with protected characteristics. It includes a significant proportion of affordable housing, supporting inclusion for low-income households, older people, and disabled individuals. The provision of schools, open space, and community facilities—including a remembrance garden—supports families, older residents, and those with health or mobility needs. Public transport and active travel routes will improve accessibility for those who do not drive. No negative impacts are identified, but inclusive design and continued engagement with diverse communities will help ensure equitable outcomes.
Policy GS21 Milton Keynes East Strategic Urban Extension	+	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	0	The policy is expected to have positive or neutral impacts on individuals with protected characteristics. It includes a substantial number of homes with a mix of types and tenures, including affordable housing, supporting inclusion for older and younger people, and disabled individuals. Planned education, healthcare, and community facilities, including SEND provision, will benefit families and those with health needs. Active travel and public transport infrastructure will improve accessibility for those who do not drive such as young people. No negative impacts are identified.
Policy GS22 South East Milton Keynes Strategic Urban Extension	+	+	0	+	+	0	0	+	0	This policy is likely to result in broadly positive or neutral impacts for individuals with protected characteristics. The planned delivery of 5,000 homes, including affordable and specialist housing, will help meet the needs of diverse groups such as older people, young people and disabled individuals. The inclusion of education, healthcare, and community facilities, alongside active travel and public transport infrastructure will support accessibility and wellbeing for families, young people, and those without access to private vehicles. While no adverse impacts are anticipated, it will be important to embed inclusive design principles and maintain engagement with underrepresented communities throughout the development process.
GS23 South Caldecotte Strategic Employment Allocation	+	+	0	0	+/-	+	+	+	0	This policy is likely to have a neutral impact on individuals with protected characteristics. While primarily focused on employment land, it includes measures that support accessibility and inclusion, such as footpath connections to Bow Brickhill railway station and integration with existing public rights of way. The creation of green open space links and sustainable drainage features may enhance wellbeing and access to nature for all groups, including disabled people and older residents. The policy does

										not address housing or social infrastructure, but inclusive design and transport connectivity will be important to ensure equitable access to employment opportunities and public spaces.
Infrastructure First										
Policy INF1 Infrastructure First Principles	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	This policy is likely to have a positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics, particularly age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, and children, by ensuring that new development is supported by timely and appropriate infrastructure. The requirement for phasing plans and long-term management of infrastructure (including roads, green and blue spaces, community buildings, and flood management) helps ensure that essential services and amenities are available from the outset, supporting inclusive and healthy communities. The use of planning obligations and direct engagement with infrastructure providers also helps address the specific needs of different sites and populations.
Policy INF2 Infrastructure planning and delivery principles for strategic allocations	+/-	+/-	0	+/-	+/-	0	0	+/-	0	This policy promotes a fair and consistent approach to infrastructure planning and delivery, which is likely to have a positive impact on people with protected characteristics by supporting equitable access to infrastructure and services. However, there is a potential risk that developments unable to participate in the overarching framework may deliver infrastructure less effectively, which could disadvantage groups who rely more on accessible public facilities, such as disabled people, older people, or families with young children. Ongoing monitoring is recommended to ensure no group is adversely affected.
Central Milton Keynes										
Policy CMK1 Central Milton Keynes Development Framework Area	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	The policy is expected to have positive or neutral impacts on individuals with protected characteristics. It promotes a mix of uses across CMK, including residential, education, cultural, leisure, and community facilities, which support inclusion for a wide range of groups. The provision of flexible and affordable premises for start-ups and independent businesses may benefit younger people, ethnic minorities, and disabled entrepreneurs. Improved public transport, pedestrian and cycle routes enhance accessibility for those who do not drive. No negative impacts are identified, but inclusive design and continued engagement with diverse communities will be important to ensure equitable outcomes.
Policy CMK2 Central Milton	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	This policy is expected to have positive or neutral impacts on individuals with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. It promotes inclusive and accessible public

Keynes Placemaking Principles										spaces to assist with wayfinding and legibility within Central Milton Keynes, active travel infrastructure, and safe pedestrian routes, which benefit disabled people, older residents, and those without access to private vehicles. The emphasis on multifunctional open spaces, community facilities, and adaptable building design supports diverse needs and encourages social interaction. No negative impacts are identified, but inclusive design and continued engagement with underrepresented groups will be key to ensuring equitable outcomes.
Policy CMK3 Central Milton Keynes Skyline and Tall Buildings Strategy	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	+	0	This policy is expected to have a neutral impact on individuals with protected characteristics. While it focuses on the design, scale, and placement of tall buildings, it includes requirements for high-quality architecture, safe and inclusive public realm, and mitigation of micro-climate effects, which can support accessibility and comfort for disabled people, older residents, and families. There are no identified negative impacts, but inclusive design at ground level and consideration of surrounding communities will be important to ensure equitable outcomes.
Central Bletchley										
Policy CB1 Supporting Investment in Central Bletchley	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	The policy is expected to have positive or neutral impacts on individuals with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. It supports inclusive regeneration through the delivery of affordable housing, community facilities such as a health hub, and improved public realm. Enhancements to active travel routes and connectivity to Bletchley Station will benefit those who do not drive, including disabled people, older residents, and young people. No negative impacts are identified, but inclusive design and continued engagement with local communities will be important to ensure equitable outcomes.
People Friendly and Healthy Places										
Policy PFHP1 Delivering Healthier Places	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	This policy is expected to have a positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics. By requiring proportionate Health Impact Assessments for major developments, it encourages the design of places that actively promote physical and mental wellbeing, reduce health inequalities, and respond to local health needs. The focus on inclusive access to healthy environments, active travel, and community infrastructure supports a wide range of groups, including disabled people, older adults, and those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage and/or living in deprived areas. The additional scrutiny of uses such as betting shops and fast-food outlets helps protect vulnerable populations from potential harm such as young people. Overall, the policy

										strengthens the link between planning and public health in a way that supports equitable outcomes.
Policy PFHP2 Provision and Protection of Community Facilities	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	This policy is expected to have a positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. By supporting the provision of community facilities in accessible locations and protecting existing ones unless suitable alternatives are provided, it helps ensure that all residents—including disabled people, older adults, families, women and children, along with those without access to private transport—can benefit from essential services and social spaces. The emphasis on active travel and integration with existing development patterns further supports inclusive access.
Policy PFHP3 New Local Centres	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	This policy is expected to have positive impacts on individuals with protected characteristics. By requiring the provision of new local centres in strategic growth areas, it supports access to essential services—such as convenience retail and community facilities within walking or wheeling distance of most homes. This benefits disabled people, older adults, families, and children and those without access to private transport. Locating services close to where people live helps reduce barriers to inclusion and supports healthier, more connected communities. No negative impacts are identified, but ensuring the centres are designed to be accessible and welcoming to all will be key to delivering equitable outcomes.
Policy PFHP4 Delivering a Healthier Food Environment	+/-	+/-	0	0	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	0	This policy is expected to have positive impacts on individuals with protected characteristics. By promoting access to healthy food through urban growing spaces, allotments, and restrictions on fast-food outlets in areas of high childhood obesity, it supports improved health outcomes and helps reduce inequalities. The focus on inclusive access to food-growing opportunities, such as balcony or communal spaces, benefits residents in higher-density housing, including families, older people, and those with limited mobility or income. Restrictions on unhealthy uses near schools and community facilities help protect vulnerable groups, particularly children. There is potential for indirect negative impact on owners or operators of hot food takeaways who may fall within protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010—such as race, age, disability, or religion. However, these impacts are typically considered justifiable under equality law if the policy aims to achieve a legitimate public health objective, such as reducing childhood obesity, and as long as the measures are proportionate, and evidence based.
Policy PFHP5 Designing People Friendly Places	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	This policy is expected to have broadly positive or neutral impacts on individuals with protected characteristics. By promoting well-connected, walkable neighbourhoods with a mix of housing types and tenures, it supports inclusive access to homes, services, and

										public spaces. The emphasis on active travel, crime prevention, and adaptable design helps create safer and more welcoming environments for disabled people, older adults, families, and others who may be more vulnerable to poor design. Ensuring that design codes and layouts reflect the needs of diverse communities will be key to delivering equitable outcomes.
Policy PFHP6 Designing Healthy Streets	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	This policy is expected to have positive impacts on individuals with protected characteristics. It promotes the creation of inclusive, safe, and accessible public spaces that support social interaction, active travel, and wellbeing. Features such as shade, seating, safe crossings, and clear pedestrian routes are particularly beneficial for disabled people, older adults, children, women, and those with limited mobility. The emphasis on designing streets for people rather than vehicles helps reduce barriers to participation in public life.
Policy PFHP7 Well-designed Buildings and Spaces	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	This policy is expected to have positive impacts on individuals with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. It promotes high-quality, adaptable design that supports people of all ages and abilities, including those living with dementia and related conditions. The emphasis on safe, attractive public-facing buildings, secure boundaries, and accessible servicing and cycle storage helps ensure that developments are inclusive and welcoming. No negative impacts are identified, but careful attention to inclusive design standards and consultation with affected groups will help ensure that buildings meet the needs of a diverse population.
Policy PFHP8 Tall Buildings outside Central Milton Keynes	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	This policy is expected to have a neutral impact on individuals with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. It focuses on the design quality, visual impact, and environmental performance of tall buildings, with requirements to avoid negative effects such as shadowing, wind tunnelling, and poor public realm. These measures can indirectly benefit vulnerable groups—such as disabled people, older adults, and children—by promoting safer and more comfortable environments.
Policy PFHP9 Amenity for Healthy Buildings and Spaces	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	This policy is expected to have positive impacts on individuals with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. It promotes the creation of safe, comfortable, and accessible living environments by ensuring adequate daylight, privacy, ventilation, and external space. Specific attention to inclusive circulation routes, passive surveillance, and safety features such as fall prevention on balconies, supports the wellbeing of disabled people, older adults, and those with mental health conditions. The requirement for accessible and well-designed servicing areas also benefits all users, including those with mobility impairments.
High Quality Homes										

Policy HQH1 Healthy Homes	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	This policy is expected to have positive impacts on individuals with protected characteristics. By requiring housing developments to reflect local needs and support mixed and balanced communities, it promotes inclusion across age, disability, and socio-economic groups. The specific requirement for accessible and wheelchair-adaptable homes ensures that disabled people and older residents are better served by new development. Support for self-build and custom homes may also benefit groups seeking culturally appropriate or flexible housing solutions.
Policy HQH2 Affordable Homes	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	0	This policy is expected to have positive impacts on individuals with protected characteristics. By requiring a proportion of affordable housing in new developments, it supports access to secure and suitable homes for low-income households, which may include disabled people, older adults, single parents, and ethnic minority groups who are disproportionately affected by housing inequality. The emphasis on tenure mix, integration with market housing, and accessible design helps promote inclusive and balanced communities. No negative impacts are identified, but careful implementation and monitoring will be important to ensure that affordable homes are delivered equitably and meet the needs of diverse residents.
Policy HQH3 Supported and Specialist Homes	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	This policy is likely to have a positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics, particularly age, disability, and potentially pregnancy and maternity, by promoting the delivery and retention of supported and specialist housing. By aligning provision with evidenced need and ensuring accessibility to community facilities, the policy supports inclusive communities and helps meet the specific needs of vulnerable groups. The emphasis on avoiding over-concentration also promotes social integration and reduces the risk of marginalisation. It safeguards against the loss of existing provision and the inclusion of temporary accommodation for those in urgent need further enhance its positive impact.
Policy HQH4 Homes for Co-living	+/-	+/-	0	0	0	+/-	+/-	0	0	This policy is likely to have a neutral to positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics, particularly younger people, single adults, and potentially those with lower incomes, who are more likely to access co-living arrangements. By requiring developments to be in accessible locations and to integrate positively with the surrounding area, the policy supports inclusive and sustainable communities. The emphasis on avoiding over-concentration and protecting residential amenity helps mitigate risks of community tension or stigma sometimes associated with HMOs. However, care should be taken to ensure that co-living developments are inclusive and not indirectly discriminatory in terms of affordability, accessibility, or design, particularly for disabled people or older residents.

Policy HQH5 Houses in Multiple Occupation	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	This policy is likely to have a neutral to positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics, particularly young people, students, low-income households, and potentially some ethnic minority groups, who are more likely to live in HMOs due to affordability. By supporting HMOs within settlement boundaries and requiring good standards of amenity (e.g. waste storage, parking, drying areas), the policy helps ensure decent living conditions. The cap on HMO concentration (35%) and the “sandwiching” rule aim to prevent over-saturation, which supports community cohesion and avoids stigmatisation of HMO residents. However, care should be taken to ensure these restrictions do not inadvertently limit access to affordable housing for those who need it most.
Policy HQH6 Pitches for Gypsies and Travellers	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	This policy is likely to have a positive impact on individuals with the protected characteristic of race, as Romany Gypsies, Irish Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople are recognised ethnic groups under the Equality Act 2010. By safeguarding existing sites, allocating new permanent pitches, and setting clear criteria for new or extended sites, the policy supports the right to culturally appropriate accommodation and helps address long-standing inequalities in access to housing and services. The emphasis on early delivery, access to community facilities, and protection from unjustified loss of sites promotes inclusion and stability. However, implementation should be sensitive to potential community tensions and ensure that site design and location do not lead to isolation or discrimination.
Policy HQH7 Accommodation for Boat Dwellers	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	This policy is likely to have a positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics, particularly those who may part of minority lifestyle communities, including some ethnic groups and older individuals who choose or rely on boat dwelling. By supporting permanent moorings with access to essential services, community facilities, and safe infrastructure, the policy promotes inclusion and helps address inequalities in access to secure, appropriate accommodation. The criteria ensure that boat dwellers are not excluded from basic amenities or community life, while also protecting the environment and public access. Care should be taken to ensure that implementation does not unintentionally restrict opportunities for boat dwellers through overly rigid design or location requirements.
Policy HQH8 Exception Sites	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	This policy is likely to have a positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics related to age, disability, and socio-economic disadvantage (though not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, it often intersects with others). By enabling affordable and community-led housing in rural areas, the policy supports those who may be priced out of the housing market, including older residents wishing to downsize, young people seeking to remain in their communities, and disabled

										individuals requiring accessible homes. The requirement for up-to-date housing needs assessments ensures that developments are responsive to local needs, while the emphasis on community involvement in community-led schemes promotes social inclusion and empowerment. However, care should be taken to ensure that occupancy controls do not inadvertently exclude those with protected characteristics who may not have long-standing local connections.
Policy HQH9 Children's Homes	+/-	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	This policy is likely to have a positive impact on the protected characteristic of age, specifically children and young people, including those with disabilities or complex emotional and behavioural needs. By setting clear criteria to ensure children's homes are located in safe, accessible areas with adequate amenities and school/healthcare capacity, the policy promotes the wellbeing and safeguarding of looked-after children. Requirements around noise mitigation, space standards, and regulatory compliance further support high-quality, stable placements. The restriction on clustering (400m separation) helps avoid stigmatisation and supports integration into the wider community. However, care should be taken to ensure this does not unintentionally limit the availability of suitable homes in areas of high need.
Climate and Environmental Action										
Policy CEA1 Sustainable Buildings	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	This policy is likely to have a neutral to positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics. While it does not directly target specific groups, its emphasis on energy efficiency, indoor air quality, and overheating mitigation can particularly benefit older people, children, and those with disabilities or long-term health conditions, who may be more vulnerable to poor housing conditions and climate-related risks. The circular economy principles also support long-term affordability and resilience, which can indirectly benefit low-income households, usually intertwining with young people and ethnic minorities.
Policy CEA2 Green Roofs and Walls	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	This policy is likely to have a neutral to positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics. While it does not directly address specific groups, the environmental and health benefits associated with green infrastructure—such as improved air quality, reduced urban heat, and enhanced biodiversity. This can particularly benefit older people, children, and those with respiratory or other health conditions. The potential for public access and enjoyment also supports inclusive urban environments.
Policy CEA3 Resilient Design	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	This policy is likely to have a positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics, particularly age, disability, and pregnancy and maternity, as these groups are more vulnerable to the health risks associated with overheating and poor air quality. By requiring design measures such as shading, cross-ventilation, and passive

										cooling, the policy promotes healthier living environments. The inclusion of indoor air quality standards and sustainable construction practices further supports wellbeing, especially for those with respiratory conditions or limited mobility.
Policy CEA4 Retrofitting	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	This policy is likely to have a positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics, particularly age and disability, by supporting improvements to the comfort, safety, and sustainability of existing buildings. Enhancing energy and water efficiency can reduce utility costs and improve indoor environments, which is especially beneficial for vulnerable groups who may spend more time at home or be more sensitive to temperature and air quality.
Policy CEA5 Water Efficiency	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	This policy is likely to have a neutral to positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics. While it does not directly target specific groups, improving water efficiency and integrating sustainable drainage and reuse systems can support low-income households by helping to reduce utility costs over time. Additionally, better management of surface water and integration of SuDS can reduce flood risk, which disproportionately affects vulnerable groups such as older people, disabled individuals, and pregnant women.
Policy CEA6 Low and Zero Carbon Energy Provision	+/-	+/-	0	0	0	+/-	+/-	0	0	This policy is likely to have a neutral to positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics. While it does not directly target specific groups, the promotion of low-carbon and renewable energy infrastructure can contribute to energy affordability and air quality improvements, which benefits older people, disabled individuals, and those with long-term health conditions. Support for community energy networks may also empower local groups, including those in economically disadvantaged areas, to participate in and benefit from the energy transition. However, care should be taken to ensure that infrastructure delivery does not disproportionately affect marginalised communities through land use or visual impacts, and that connection requirements are feasible for all types of development.
Policy CEA7 Mitigating Wider Environmental Pollution	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	This policy is likely to have a positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics, particularly age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, and those with long-term health conditions, as these groups are more vulnerable to the effects of pollution, poor air quality, noise, and environmental hazards. By requiring thorough assessments and mitigation for air, noise, light, and water pollution, the policy helps safeguard public health and residential amenity. The emphasis on protecting occupiers near major roads, railways, and industrial sites ensures that vulnerable populations are not disproportionately exposed to environmental risks. The policy also supports biodiversity and the natural environment, contributing to healthier, more inclusive communities.

Policy CEA8 Provision and Protection of Accessible Open Space	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	This policy is likely to have a positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics, particularly age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, and children, by promoting inclusive access to high-quality open spaces and recreational facilities. The requirement for integration with active travel routes and green infrastructure supports mobility and wellbeing, especially for those with limited access to private transport. Protection of existing open spaces and formal playing fields ensures that communities retain vital amenities, while the emphasis on design, access, and long-term maintenance helps ensure usability for all. The policy contributes to equitable health and social outcomes, though implementation should ensure that provision is inclusive and responsive to the needs of diverse user groups.
Policy CEA9 Biodiversity and Habitats Network	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	This policy is likely to have a neutral to positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics. While it does not directly address specific groups, the enhancement and protection of biodiversity contributes to healthier, more attractive environments, which can benefit older people, children, and those with disabilities or long-term health conditions, especially where access to nature supports mental and physical wellbeing. The policy's support for long-term habitat management and integration with landscape design also promotes inclusive green infrastructure. However, care should be taken to ensure that biodiversity measures do not conflict with accessibility needs or limit usable outdoor space in residential developments.
Policy CEA10 Protection and Enhancement of the Environmental Infrastructure Network, Priority Species and Priority Habitats	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	0	0	This policy is likely to have a positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics, particularly age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, and children, by safeguarding and enhancing access to natural environments that support physical and mental wellbeing. Protection of biodiversity, habitat networks, and open spaces contributes to healthier living conditions and inclusive public spaces. The policy's emphasis on avoiding harm to designated ecological sites and ensuring compensatory provision supports environmental justice and long-term sustainability. However, implementation should ensure that access to green and blue infrastructure is equitable across all communities, including those in more urbanised or deprived areas.
Policy CEA11 Urban Greening, Trees and Woodland	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	This policy is likely to have a positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics, particularly age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, and children, by promoting greener, healthier urban environments. Increased tree canopy cover and green infrastructure can help mitigate urban heat, improve air quality, and support mental wellbeing—benefits that are especially important for vulnerable groups. The emphasis on retaining and enhancing green cover, protecting woodland, and ensuring access to natural spaces contributes to inclusive placemaking. However, implementation should ensure that greening measures are equitably distributed across

										all neighbourhoods, including those with higher concentrations of disadvantaged or marginalised populations.
Policy CEA12 Conserving and Enhancing Landscape Character/Special Landscape Areas	+	+	0	0	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	0	This policy is likely to have a neutral to positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics. While it does not directly address specific groups, the protection of landscape character and public access to countryside areas supports mental wellbeing, recreational access, and community identity, which can particularly benefit older people, disabled individuals, and women and children. Care needs to be taken to ensure this policy does not inadvertently restrict accessibility or exclude marginalised groups from enjoying natural spaces.
Policy CEA13 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and Integrated Flood Risk and Water Management	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	This policy is likely to have a positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics, particularly age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, and those with long-term health conditions, as these groups are often more vulnerable to the impacts of flooding and poor drainage. By requiring integrated flood risk management, early delivery of SuDS, and climate-resilient design, the policy helps protect homes and communities from flood risk and associated health hazards.
Policy CEA14 Protecting and Enhancing Watercourses	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	This policy is likely to have a positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics, particularly age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, and those with long-term health conditions, by reducing flood risk and protecting water quality and biodiversity. Maintaining undeveloped buffer zones and enhancing watercourse habitats supports public health, recreational access, and climate resilience, which are especially important for vulnerable groups.
Policy CEA15 Managing Flood Risk	+	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	This policy is likely to have a positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics, particularly age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, and those with long-term health conditions, as these groups are often more vulnerable to the impacts of flooding. By requiring robust flood risk assessments, maintaining and improving flood defences, and controlling surface water runoff, the policy helps protect residents and communities from flood hazards. The emphasis on not increasing flood risk and on providing improvements where necessary supports safer, more resilient environments for all, especially those less able to respond to or recover from flooding events.
Economic and Cultural Prosperity										
Policy ECP1 Protecting Employment	+/-	+/-	0	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	0	This policy is likely to have a neutral to positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics. By safeguarding employment land and buildings, the policy helps maintain local job opportunities and economic diversity, which can benefit groups who may face barriers to employment, such as disabled people, older workers, and ethnic

Land and Buildings										minorities. The requirement for robust evidence before permitting the loss of employment space ensures that the needs of the wider community are considered, supporting inclusive economic growth. However, implementation should ensure that any changes do not disproportionately affect access to employment for disadvantaged or underrepresented groups.
Policy ECP2 Supporting the Vitality and Viability of Centres	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	This policy is likely to have a positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics, particularly age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, and ethnic minorities, by supporting the vitality and accessibility of town, district, and local centres. By encouraging a diverse mix of uses—including retail, leisure, community, and health services—at ground floor and upper levels, the policy promotes inclusive access to essential amenities and social opportunities. The protection of retail floorspace and support for local centre expansion helps maintain local employment and services, which can be especially important for those with limited mobility or access to private transport.
Policy ECP3 Sequential and Impact Tests	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	This policy is likely to have a neutral to positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics. By requiring sequential and impact tests for retail and leisure proposals outside designated centres, the policy helps protect the vitality and accessibility of established town and district centres, which are often more accessible by public transport and active travel. This benefits older people, disabled individuals, young people, and those without access to private vehicles, supporting equitable access to shops, services, and leisure opportunities. The policy also helps prevent the dispersal of key amenities, which can disproportionately affect those with limited mobility or resources.
Policy ECP4 Hotel and visitor accommodation	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	0	This policy is likely to have a neutral to positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics. By supporting the increase and improvement of hotels and other visitor accommodation, particularly in accessible town centre locations, the policy can enhance the availability of inclusive and accessible places to stay for disabled people, older visitors, families with young children, and ethnic minorities. The town centre sequential approach also helps ensure that accommodation is well-located for public transport and local amenities, supporting equitable access for all.
Policy ECP5 Supporting a diverse Rural Economy	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	This policy is likely to have a neutral to positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics. By supporting the expansion and diversification of rural businesses, as well as tourism and recreation, the policy helps sustain local employment opportunities and economic vitality in rural areas. This can benefit older people, disabled individuals, and those with limited access to transport, who may rely on local jobs and services. Implementation should ensure that new employment opportunities are inclusive and

										accessible to all, and that any changes do not inadvertently disadvantage underrepresented groups.
Policy ECP6 Horse-related development	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	This policy is likely to have a neutral to positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics. While it does not directly address specific groups, supporting horse-related development in accessible countryside and park locations can promote recreational opportunities and wellbeing, which may benefit children, older people, and those with disabilities who participate in equestrian activities, including therapeutic riding. The policy's emphasis on reusing existing buildings, minimising environmental impacts, and ensuring appropriate access helps maintain inclusive and sustainable rural environments. However, restrictions on commercial services and associated accommodation should be monitored to ensure they do not inadvertently limit opportunities for participation by underrepresented or disadvantaged groups.
Heritage										
Policy HE1 Heritage	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	This policy is likely to have a neutral to positive impact on individuals with protected characteristics. By requiring thorough heritage assessments and careful consideration of the significance and accessibility of heritage assets, the policy helps ensure that historic environments are preserved and enhanced for the benefit of all. The protection and sensitive adaptation of heritage buildings can support community identity and inclusive access to cultural heritage, which is particularly valuable for older people, disabled individuals, and ethnic minorities who may have strong connections to local history.

Screening Results

This report has outlined the approach, evidence and findings for the EqIA screening for the draft MK City Plan 2050. The screening has considered equality legislation and MKCC's duty under the Equality Act 2010, as well as evidence from national demographic datasets and feedback from stakeholder consultation. The screening assessment has been undertaken by examining each of the individual policies set out in MK City Plan 2050 and identifying any potential differential or disproportionate negative or positive impacts on groups with protected characteristics.

The Equalities Impact Assessment for the Milton Keynes City Plan 2050 demonstrates a broadly positive impact across all protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010. Notably, no policies scored negatively, and the majority received positive (+) or mixed positive/neutral (+/0) scores, with some policies showing positive and/or negative (+/-) potential impacts depending on implementation. This indicates that the Plan has been designed with inclusive growth and accessibility in mind, and that it is likely to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations across diverse communities.

Overall, the Plan is expected to have a beneficial effect on protected groups, particularly through policies that promote inclusive housing, accessible infrastructure, active travel, community facilities, and environmental resilience. Age, disability, race, religion or belief, and pregnancy/maternity are the characteristics most positively affected, with multiple policies directly addressing their needs. For example, older adults and disabled individuals benefit from improved public realm design, accessible housing, and health infrastructure, while racial and religious inclusion is supported through culturally appropriate housing (e.g., Gypsy and Traveller pitches) and community facilities.

While gender reassignment, sexual orientation, and marriage/civil partnership are less directly impacted, the neutral scores suggest no adverse effects, and the inclusive design principles embedded throughout the Plan provide a foundation for equitable outcomes. Where mixed scores (+/-) appear, they typically reflect the need for careful implementation to avoid unintended consequences, such as in estate regeneration or food environment policies.

In conclusion, the MK City Plan 2050 is well-aligned with the Public Sector Equality Duty and demonstrates a strong commitment to creating a fairer, more inclusive city for all residents.