

Chesterfield Borough Council

Equality and Diversity Annual Report

2023 – 24



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Introduction from Cllr. Judy Staton, Cabinet Member for Governance



Welcome to Chesterfield Borough Council's Equalities Annual Report for 2023/24. The report highlights some of the work we have been doing over the last year to promote and celebrate equality and diversity within our services and out in the wider community.

Despite the budget challenges we are currently facing we continue to be committed to treating people fairly in everything we do as a service provider, employer and community leader. We believe we are continuing to make a real difference to the quality of life of our residents, businesses and visitors.

Meetings and activities have continued throughout the year and it is pleasing that they were attended by a much wider and diverse audience than previously. Once again, the Holocaust Remembrance Day event was, for me personally, such a moving and effective event managing to, somehow, take the participants into the fearful world described.

I am acutely aware of how important the various exercise programmes designed for people with or recovering from ill health are - socially as well as for the physical benefits. It is fantastic that these have resumed at the leisure centres, for example "Exercise by Referral" or "Live Life Better" programmes, and out in the community, for example walking groups, giving some of the most vulnerable people a lifeline to a more fulfilling life.

We are very proud of our achievements and will continue to "Put Our Communities First".



1.0 Introduction

Welcome to Chesterfield Borough Council's Equalities Annual Report for 2023/24. This report highlights some of the work we have been doing over the last year to promote and celebrate equality and diversity within our services and out in the wider community. It also looks to the future and includes our planned activities and focus areas for the next year, including the agreed actions for the next three years within our Equality and Diversity Strategy 2023/27.

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

- The continued success of the Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum; acting as a critical friend to the council, hosting guest speakers at meetings to provide education and raise awareness of equality and diversity issues and hosting four events during the year as per the Council Plan.
- Increased focus on partnership working with a range of organisations to maximise the positive impacts we can achieve in our local communities.
- A summary of the equality impact assessments undertaken during 2023/24 around Council policies, strategies and plans.
- Progress updates on Equality and Diversity issues throughout the year.

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

2.0 Equality and Diversity Strategy

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

2.1 Action Plan Progress

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

The table below details progress during 2023/24 for the activities which contribute to the action plan.

Objective 1: Ensuring a fair approach to the Council's decision making, and that service changes address the needs of our communities in an equitable way, taking account of the needs of people with protected characteristics.	
Fair decision making	Update
<p>1. Continuing to embed the Council's commitment to equalities in its service planning, design and delivery by delivering a robust equality impact assessment process capturing challenges and opportunities at the very beginning, ensuring barriers are considered and mitigated where possible. and upholding the importance of this during financially challenging times. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>Equality considerations are a mandatory section of the Council's reports used in all decision making. EIAs are a tool help ensure that any policies, practices and decisions are fair and they are not inadvertently discriminating against any protected group. This has been of particular importance during recent months when the council has been considering difficult decisions based on the budget conversation.</p> <p>EIAs are published alongside the reports via ModGov, with the Policy and Partnerships team providing guidance and expertise to ensure equalities issues are fully considered when the Council makes decisions.</p> <p>In January 2024 the EIA form was reviewed and updated in line with new Public Sector Equality Duty guidance which focusses on the need</p>



	<p>for due regard to certain equality considerations when making decisions.</p>
<p>2. Providing employees and members with training and development opportunities so that they have the skills, abilities and confidence to recognise and respond appropriately and sensitively to diversity and discrimination, both within the workplace and when delivering services. Delivering ongoing equality and diversity refresher training as required with services and a range of additional awareness raising modules on locally relevant themes. <i>(Lead service: Learning and Development / Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>Working with the Equality and Diversity Forum, the Policy and Partnerships team have provided equality and diversity awareness training which is available for staff to attend (for example Mental Health and Hidden Disability awareness days and the Holocaust Memorial Day event).</p> <p>Induction and refresher training for staff continues to be provided online via Aspire learning. In addition we have accessed some specific sessions which staff were invited to attend, e.g. neurodiversity and safeguarding and also menopause awareness.</p>
<p>3. Encouraging involvement from all communities in the shaping, development, delivery and monitoring of local services, continuing to monitor use and satisfaction with our services to identify access/accessibility issues / satisfaction with our services from different groups. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>The Policy and Partnerships team continue to work closely with the Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum which acts as a critical friend for CBC (e.g. choosing locally relevant themes for training, helping to consider accessibility needs for the Staveley Canal path project).</p> <p>Regular engagement and consultation activity supported by the Policy and Partnerships team throughout the year helps the shaping of local services (e.g. annual Leisure survey). Documentation for the website is now being accessibility checked before being published.</p> <p>Our corporate equalities monitoring approach ensures that we are able to look for trends in access and satisfaction with our services from people who share protected</p>



	characteristics, and identify any potential issues.
<p>4. Empowering local communities and organisations by publishing equality and diversity information and outcomes so that they feel they can understand the reasons for Council decisions and challenge them if they feel it necessary. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>Regulatory Public Sector Equality Duty data is published on line and can be found here: https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/living-here/people-and-families/equality-and-diversity/equality-and-diversity-data.aspx</p> <p>The data is updated each year, In addition it was reviewed in January 2024 to ensure it continues to be accessible and compliant.</p>
Understanding, listening to, and working with our communities	
<p>5. Reviewing the output from the 2021 Census to gain up to date and consistent demographic information for CBC and the wider community, enabling us to consider the protected groups in all we do and to support the Equality Impact Assessment process. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>The 2021 Census data has been reviewed and the up to date information is now available within the State of the Borough report on the council website for services to use when considering their service provision.</p> <p>Updated information available includes population by age, household size, ethnicity and country of birth and also takes into account the changes to the ward boundaries made in 2023 where appropriate.</p>
<p>6. Maintain the State of the Borough report in line with latest available information, including Census 2021 data when this becomes available. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>The State of Borough for 2024 is now available on the CBC website. This includes the latest data from the 2021 Census.</p>
<p>7. Ensuring that translation and interpretation made available by Chesterfield Borough Council meets the needs of local communities by reviewing and revising our current arrangements. Once Census 2021 data is received, it will be analysed and translation / interpretation available will be adjusted accordingly. In addition, procedures are now in place to respond to the translation needs of refugees and asylum seekers, this may</p>	<p>Procedures are in place to support translation needs. Census data has been analysed and any translation / interpretation available adjusted accordingly.</p>



<p>mean that additional languages need translation services moving forward. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	
<p>8. Continue to listen to residents and service users through consultations and feedback to improve the evidence base that informs service delivery. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>Regular engagement and consultation activity supported by the Policy and Partnerships team throughout the year helps the shaping of local services (e.g. annual Leisure survey). Documentation for the website is now being accessibility checked before being published.</p> <p>We have refreshed our community engagement standards during 2023 to continue to demonstrate our commitment to inclusive engagement, and our corporate equalities monitoring approach ensures that we are able to look for trends in access and satisfaction with our services from people who share protected characteristics, and identify any potential issues.</p>
<p>9. Continue further investigations regarding Climate Change and local risks for vulnerable groups. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>The Chesterfield Climate Change Forum was set up in September 2023, including representatives from local groups, organisations and businesses. The Equality and Diversity Forum are represented on Chesterfield Climate Change Forum and corresponding updates have been shared between groups. The Climate Change Forum is also being used to steer community grants.</p> <p>Climate has become a greater focus for future years' community grants funding. Climate change has been included in next year's Community Grants Fund application guidance and programme. The criteria and scoring now include climate considerations and comments were made by climate team on applications in Tranche 3.</p>



	<p>A need for climate change training for community groups was identified through engagement to plan the UKSPF capacity building project. 11 people from community groups took part in a two Fresk sessions with the Climate Change Team as part of the capacity building launch event in March. The workshop explored the causes and effects of climate change and the effects on local community groups.</p> <p>During 2023-2024 and continuing into 2025, all council decisions are subject to a climate change impact assessment (CCIA) including the impact of decisions on drought, flooding and heatwave vulnerability. The expected changes in the climate are likely to result in a local increase in the frequency and severity of floods, droughts, and heatwaves and the effects are likely to disproportionately affect vulnerable groups. Therefore, priority 10 of the Climate Change Delivery Plan 24/25 has been developed to include activity to adapt council policies and strategies to account for a changing climate, ensuring that local protocols and arrangements are in place for warm spaces, flood risk/response and climate relate vulnerabilities of rough sleepers.</p>
<p>10. Progress an action plan from the LGBT+ project report findings, working closely with key service managers to improve the service experiences for our LGBT+ community. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>We continue to work closely with Derbyshire LGBT+. This year they have provided us with some valuable suggestions regarding our leisure services provision helping us to improve experiences for our users.</p>



<p>11. Maintain and update the Equality and Diversity Corporate Monitoring Form in line with current standards and guidelines. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>The Corporate Monitoring Form has been updated to reflect the wording used in the 2021 Census when asking respondents about their gender and sex.</p>
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Objective 2: Supporting equitable access to high quality services that recognise the needs of different customers	
Supporting access to services	Update
<p>12. Supporting and facilitating the Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum and its subgroups (Cultural Access Group and Dementia Friendly Chesterfield) to act as a critical friend, improving and championing access to the Council's services for all. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>The Equality and Diversity Forum have met regularly and have worked together with Chesterfield Borough Council and acted as a critical friend when discussing current issues and projects and agreeing relevant topics for discussion at meetings and training events. The forum has worked with the Policy and Partnerships Team to plan activities for the year to meet the Council Plan objective. Examples are detailed within this report.</p>
<p>13. Making sure that our communities are able to access our bespoke health and wellbeing offer in our Theatres, (for example by facilitating the Cultural Access Group), parks and leisure centres, (for example, by providing targeted activities such as autism friendly swim sessions and accessible exercise equipment) , encouraging groups who share protected characteristics to use our parks for events, maintaining our Green Flag status for 5 parks, and promoting positive mental health and wellbeing especially in targeted and hard to reach sectors of the community. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>Our Health and Wellbeing Officer continues to support the provision of this service; the cultural access group continues to work effectively and targeted swimming sessions are being run. More details are provided within the services updates in this report. Our Green Flag status for five parks has been retained. In addition the King George V Park in Staveley now has Green Flag status following improvements carried out over the last two years.</p>
<p>14. Concessions policy – ensuring a consistent approach to how we charge for discretionary services while retaining the flexibility needed to achieve the Council's social and legal obligations. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>The Concessions policy continues to be used when charging decisions are being made. The policy will undergo a formal review during 2024-2025.</p>



Sharing and presenting information in appropriate and accessible formats	
<p>15. Review the corporate accessibility statement to ensure that it is reflective of and accessible to our local communities. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>The accessibility statement has been reviewed and amendments have been made to ensure it is relevant.</p>
<p>16. Developing the council’s website, intranet and microsites to make them accessible to all our internal and external customers. This will include improving the quality and usability of our online information, to comply with EU Web Accessibility Directive, and to improve the user experience for customers with additional needs (such as visual, reading or motor impairments). We will also include subtitles on all videos published online, such as on YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and on the council website including self service areas. <i>(Lead service: ICT, Communications)</i></p>	<p>The council website was migrated to a new content management system (CMS) in June 2024, to improve security and functionality. As part of this project a new website quality and accessibility service was reinstated and a programme of work is currently underway to improve accessibility standards in line with the Web Content and Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2). Weekly spot checks of key content and quarterly reviews of the full council website will be carried out to make sure that it remains accessible to our customers.</p> <p>An up to date website accessibility statement was published on 17 June 2024 in accordance with the EU Web Accessibility Directive.</p> <p>We add subtitles to all our videos using the functionality in YouTube; subtitles are carried forward wherever the video is displayed such as on Facebook, Twitter, or embedded in web pages on the council website.</p>

Objective 3: Encourage mutual understanding and respect between our communities.	
Raising awareness	Update
<p>17. Raising awareness and understanding across communities of local equality issues and celebrating our diversity through the delivery of a minimum of four events each year through Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum on a range of locally relevant equality themes.</p>	<p>The Equality and Diversity Forum have successfully delivered four events during 2023/24; Mental Health Awareness Day, Hidden Disabilities Awareness Day, Holocaust Memorial Day and International Women’s Day.</p>



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



	and Wellbeing Partnership’s own programme.
<p>21. Continue to work with partners to tackle homelessness – dealing with over 900 cases per year. <i>(Lead service: Housing)</i></p>	<p>A Derbyshire Homelessness Forum and Strategy event was held in February 2024 to increase engagement with third and public sector statutory agencies to ensure a joined up approach to tackling homelessness. An action plan was approved and tasks allocated to specific delivery partners.</p>
<p>22. Health and Wellbeing Partnership activities, including financial inclusion activities, fuel poverty, supporting mental health and social connectedness. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>The Council plays a key role in the coordination and facilitation of the Chesterfield Health and Wellbeing Partnership, at a Derbyshire Board, Chesterfield Partnership and Sub-Group level. This has included delivery and commissioning of a wide range of activities in the local community to support financial inclusion, mental wellbeing, and healthy lifestyles focussing on the wider determinants of health and working closely with other Partnerships such as the Place Partnership.</p> <p>This year, the Health and Wellbeing Partnership activities have been complemented by the range of UKSPF funded projects including community development which the Council has led on.</p>

Objective 4: To strive to maintain a modern and diverse workforce that is reflective of the local community and feels valued and treated fairly	
Employee wellbeing	Update
<p>23. Responding effectively to the gender pay gap reporting requirements including action planning. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership, HR)</i></p>	<p>The most recent gender pay gap report can be found here: https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/living-here/people-and-families/equality-and-diversity/gender-pay-gap.aspx</p>



<p>24. Seek employee feedback through the annual employee survey and develop and deliver annual action plans to address issues and trends identified. <i>(Lead service: HR and Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>We are currently developing a new approach to employee engagement including surveys in order to maximise engagement opportunities.</p>
<p>25. Providing Leadership and Organisational commitment to actively promote equalities at all levels, ensuring that there is confidence in working together to deliver the best possible services for residents. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership, HR)</i></p>	<p>Senior political and officer leadership of actively engaged in equality, diversity and inclusion work and act as champion within the Council and the community.</p>
<p>26. Progressing with our Ways of Working post-Covid, ensuring that we are innovative and agile, that our workforce policies are accessible and inclusive and that we have refreshed values and behaviours to underpin what we do. <i>(Lead service: HR)</i></p>	<p>Improvements made to key communication routes including a more prominent HR section on aspire (staff intranet). A single button takes staff to the key council HR policies including flexible working.</p> <p>There is a weekly e-mail to all users that highlights news and new key content on aspire.</p> <p>There is also a weekly managers bulletin for key HR and organisational messaging that enables cascade throughout the organisation.</p> <p>Valuing Individual Performance (VIP) enables a minimum of quarterly quality conversations to consider employee performance, organisational values, learning and development opportunities, ideas for improvement etc. These are supplemented with more regular one to ones and team meetings.</p>
<p>27. Developing our workforce development programme that takes account of different needs and also promotes equalities, diversity and inclusion as being at the heart of what we do. <i>(Lead service: HR)</i></p>	<p>34 apprenticeships were started in 2023/24. Many of these included existing staff gaining new skills and qualifications, while working in a supportive working and learning environment.</p> <p>Equality and diversity focused development opportunities have been</p>



	<p>maximised during the year. For example over 60 front line employees attended a Derbyshire County Council developed neurodiversity in safeguarding. This has helped to build confidence within teams, learn new techniques to support people and led to better outcomes for residents.</p>
<p>Recruitment</p>	
<p>28. Maintain the Council’s Investors in People Gold Award status. <i>(Lead service: HR)</i></p>	<p>The Gold standard has been maintained and reflects the culture of trust, collaboration, and strong values that we have all created here at Chesterfield Borough Council.</p>
<p>29. Transform the recruitment web portal to attract a diverse range of candidates, using best practice from other councils. <i>(Lead service: HR)</i></p>	<p>The web portal has been reviewed and updated firstly to make sure it was in an accessible format for applicants and secondly to refine all of the documents held on the site. HR have worked alongside the Communications and Marketing team to update all of the materials using a variety of methods and the process has been made more straightforward as CVs are now accepted for many roles advertised by the Council.</p>
<p>30. Maximise opportunities for engagement with businesses and schools, promoting careers and apprenticeships in local government. <i>(Lead service: HR, Policy and Partnership, Economic Growth)</i></p>	<p>During 2023/2024 a refreshed Skills Action Plan was approved. The action plan provides a framework for activities that support the overall aim of Chesterfield’s Growth Strategy (2023-27). More details regarding progress is within this report.</p>
<p>Objective 5: To make sure that local people who share protected characteristics are able to access opportunities in employment and growth.</p>	
<p>Inclusive approach to growth</p>	
<p>31. Providing the Young Person’s Market, where stalls are available free of charge for anyone aged between 5 and 25 years old. <i>(Lead service: Town Centre Management)</i></p>	<p>The Young Persons’ Market is a national initiative being run across England and has been successfully run in Chesterfield for the last 6 years with 4 markets held each year.</p>



<p>32. Social Investment Community and Wellbeing activity supported by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund including digital skills and work readiness activity. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>The Council is leading on arrange of projects under the Chesterfield UKSPF Programme. This includes community development, community grants fund and capacity building in the voluntary sector.</p> <p>The community development activity has focussed on key areas of Poolsbrook, Duckmanton and Old Whittington, working closely with local communities to build stronger and more resilient communities. During 23/24 a total of 133 organisations engaged with the community development activities receiving non-financial support.</p> <p>During 23/24 around £120,237 has been awarded to local community groups through this fund to support projects in Chesterfield. As a result of these projects, 23 projects have been provided and 162 volunteer opportunities have been supported in Chesterfield. A further 11 projects have received CIL Neighbourhoods funding totalling £39,000.</p> <p>The capacity building training programme has been launched, with Links and DVA local delivering capacity training to other local community groups including, volunteer recruitment, risk assessing activities, governance and funding, and marketing and communications. A total of 80 people have attended training sessions during 23/24.</p>
<p>33. Social Value Developing our Social Value Policy and incorporating outcomes and measures to promote equality in the local community. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>	<p>New Procurement Regulations are to come into force in October 2024, and arrangements are being updated to reflect this. The Procurement team currently ask for added value in</p>



	<p>Tender activity evaluation criteria. The added value elements are weighted up to 10% and there were 21 projects this year where added value was included in the evaluation criteria of tender activities.</p> <p>A working group is being established to develop a more formal corporate approach to social value delivery and how this is going to be measured. This is reflected in the climate change delivery plan for 2024/25.</p>
<p>34. Development and delivery of the Council’s Growth Strategy, particularly the ‘inclusive growth’ theme. <i>(Lead service: Economic Growth)</i></p>	<p>The Growth Strategy for 2023 – 2027 provides a framework for actions over the period 2023 to 2027 that will deliver our priority of making Chesterfield a thriving borough and contribute towards the priority of improving the quality of life for local people. The development of the strategy has been under-pinned by a detailed assessment of the local economy. It builds on the success of the last decade which has seen the creation of more than 2000 new jobs in the local economy and more than 500 new businesses operating in the area, along with significant regeneration and investment across the borough.</p>
<p>Apprenticeships</p>	
<p>35. Help to develop the careers of over 90 apprentices across the Council by ensuring that we provide opportunities for people to develop qualifications, vocational skills and increase employability. <i>(Lead service: HR)</i></p>	<p>We continue to support apprenticeships across the council. The number of apprentices that have started a new apprenticeship within the last is 19. The number of apprenticeships which have been completed during the last year is 35 this includes the upskilling of many existing staff.</p>
<p>36. Promote and support an uplift in apprenticeships across the Borough. <i>(Lead service: Economic Growth)</i></p>	<p>This year saw the successful delivery of the first Apprenticeship, Technical Education Community Twilight event</p>



	<p>at Staveley Miners Welfare Club on 15th November, attended by 54 residents and 13 employers. More events will follow to further promote apprenticeships across the Borough.</p>
<p>37. Work in partnership with Chesterfield College and Derby University to explore opportunities for joint working (e.g. catering placements, trade staff supporting tutors and assessors) <i>(Lead service: HR, Economic Growth)</i></p>	<p>Chesterfield Borough Council and the University of Derby have signed a new strategic partnership agreement to establish a closer working relationship and recognise shared ambitions between the two organisations.</p> <p>The strategic partnership agreement sets out three joint ambitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To establish Chesterfield as a University town – delivering higher level skills and education for our people and employers.• To work jointly with business partners, education providers and the public sector to deliver world leading research that drives innovation, provide world class facilities to meet the needs of our community and establish a platform to help our entrepreneurs reach their potential.• To use our combined assets, within community partnership across Chesterfield, to raise people’s aspirations through delivering effective core skills, careers information, support and advice. <p>CBC are utilising the University’s vacancy portal and student employment agency where appropriate to do so.</p> <p>We continue to work closely with Chesterfield College to provide experiences of work for students – In 2023/24 though the Staveley Town</p>



	<p>Deal and as an action within the Chesterfield Skills Action Plan, the Staveley Eat Well programme (STEW) has been introduced as a pilot which has seen Chesterfield Hospitality Students deliver Health Eating sessions to students at Springwell School in Staveley. More sessions are planned with Staveley Junior School in 20-24/25. We are also currently considering how we can support T-level placements for academic year 2024/25.</p>
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<p>Objective 6: Supporting independence at home for our tenants, local residents and vulnerable people.</p>	
<p>38. Support independence at home for vulnerable people through our Careline and Housing Services and delivering Disabled Facilities Grants. <i>(Lead service: Housing)</i></p>	<p>74 Disabled Facilities Grants were completed in 2023/24.</p> <p>Careline have continued to provide an essential falls service and support for our customers. During 23-24 1913 people were supported via Careline teams.</p> <p>Over the past year, Careline have continued to provide a 24/7 alarm monitoring and response service, providing peace of mind and a rapid response to falls and requests for assistance. The service has received 88,096 alarm calls and attended 3,990 callouts.</p> <p>Careline worked in partnership with Derbyshire County Council, the NHS and East Midlands Ambulance Service on a pilot project to help reduce pressure on the ambulance service locally. Trained Careline staff attend to take basic medical observations of patients triaged by EMAS via a Local Access Point team.</p>



	<p>The service is continuing to roll out its investment in digital equipment and explore options for innovative uses of technology to promote independence and support hospital discharge.</p> <p>The Independent Living service has continued to support older people to live safely and independently at home on a needs-led basis.</p>
<p>39. Maintain independent living through the ongoing investment in the quality of council homes including adaptation as required to support vulnerable people. <i>(Lead service: Housing)</i></p>	<p>Since 2017, we have refurbished all our independent living schemes to provide modern independent living flats with attractive, accessible communal spaces for socialising. Each flat has a new kitchen, level access shower room and integrated Careline equipment.</p> <p>During 2023/34 we recruited two dedicated officers to work with tenants in our six independent living schemes. The officers provide quality housing management and support services to meet the needs of customers living in our independent living schemes, making a positive contribution to the safety, social and physical environment of the area managed.</p> <p>Our tenant engagement team worked with Spire Trust as part of a funded partnership to provide chair-based exercise sessions in our independent living schemes during 2023/24. The programme was offered in all schemes to promote social inclusion and health and wellbeing, with exercises led by qualified instructors. Further funding opportunities are being explored for 2024/25.</p>



	<p>During the past year we have continued to invest in new build properties, as well as making improvements to our housing stock including fitting new kitchens, bathrooms, boilers and improving energy efficiency. The Capital Programme also invests in adapting properties to ensure they meet tenant needs.</p> <p>During 2023/24 171 major adaptations to council were completed at a cost of £827,700. Installations include level access showers and ramps. In addition, 330 minor adaptations including grab rails and stair rails were completed costing £86,724.</p>
<p>40. Look for opportunities to secure Government and external funding to deliver improvements to properties within the private sector to enable vulnerable residents to live as safely and independently as possible. <i>(Lead service: Housing)</i></p>	<p>We utilise various funding streams both Government and external to improve properties in the private sector. The funding is largely targeted at vulnerable people to ensure they can live more safely and independently. The funding includes Better Care Fund for adaptations and heating improvements in partnership with DCC as well as essential home repairs, Foundations Independent Living Trust funding for gas safety checks for vulnerable homeowners and Green Homes Grant funding for energy efficiency measures to reduce bills and carbon emissions.</p>
<p>41. Continue to support independence at home for vulnerable people by inspecting private rented properties, dealing with landlord where there are reports of disrepair and signposting to other agencies when required. <i>(Lead service: Housing)</i></p>	<p>Housing standards are enforced in the Borough under the Housing Act 2004 and utilisation of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, which offers a risk-based approach to the assessment of Houses. This enables the team to target properties that present the greatest</p>



health and safety risk to the most vulnerable occupiers/ tenants.

The team are responsible for the licencing of houses in multiple occupation and implement/enforce standards in relation to fire-safety/ facilities/ amenities /space provision within the HMO licencing regime to ensure that all and the more vulnerable tenants are safe and comfortable whilst living within shared accommodation.

The team also investigates matters concerning illegal eviction/harassment under the Protection from eviction Act 1977 and will continue to pursue prosecution procedures against landlords who wilfully harass or illegally evict their tenants.

We work with internal departments such as Homeless and allocation teams/benefits/ planning and Environmental Health. External organisations include the fire service /police/ Derbyshire CC safeguarding/social services. which enable us to help signpost vulnerable tenants to receive further help and advice when and if required.

3.0 Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum

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

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



It's been an honour for me to continue as chair of the Equality and Diversity Forum again over the last year, and what an action-packed year it's been! All the forum members have been busy filling up the calendar with events and celebrations to mark important milestones and we have introduced several new members to the meetings. These individuals have brought fresh ideas with them and we have been able to source a wide variety of speakers for our meetings throughout the year on topics such as:

- Managing high functioning anxiety
- DCC day support services and the No Limits group (who are now based at the new Quad building)
- A presentation from Chesterfield Time Bank
- A charity called Fifth Sense who support people with smell and taste disorders
- Derbyshire Police providing the latest Hate Crime Data

In October 2023 we hosted a Mental Health Awareness Event at the Town Hall and welcomed colleagues from a variety of charities such as Compassionate Voices, Mental Health Carers, You're Never Alone, P3, Derwent Rural Counselling Service and Stand To. The event was very well attended and thought-provoking. Feedback from participants was excellent.

In November we also organised a Hidden Disabilities Event, highlighting the difficulties that people may have such as chronic fatigue, Crohn's and colitis, OCD and visual impairments.

Then in January we welcomed Melanie Martin as the guest speaker online to mark Holocaust Memorial Day 2024. Melanie spoke on behalf of her mother, Tootje (Cato) Granaat, a Jew who was born in Amsterdam in 1926. Life in occupied Amsterdam,



resistance activities, deportation, death marches, Auschwitz-Birkenau and Sobibor were all covered by Melanie, as well as some acts of supreme kindness which contributed to the survival of Melanie's mother, her aunts and uncle.

Finally, we marked International Women's Day on the 8th of March by welcoming Theresa Peltier, High Sheriff of Derbyshire, as our guest speaker. Theresa spoke about her passion for equality, diversity and social justice. Theresa retired as the Head of Equality for Derbyshire Police in December 2019, having spent 27 years in policing. Her role enabled her to work with the Home Office, National Police Chief's Council, Equality and Human Rights Commission, the College of Policing as well as becoming Vice-President of the National Black Police Association. She talked about her upbringing and her humble roots and brought both smiles and tears to the audience with her captivating talk.

We are always pleased to recruit new members to the forum and will shortly be announcing our plans for the year ahead. If you would like further details of our future meetings or activities, please get in touch.

3.1 Equality and Diversity Forum meetings and engagement

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

During 2023/24 there were high levels of engagement at the meetings with a variety of issues being considered including: Managing High Functioning Anxiety, the new Equality and Diversity Strategy for 2023-27, Hate Crime Data and Day Support Services. During February, the Forum had an initial workshop looking at local data to plan equality and diversity events, training and activities for 2024-2025.

3.2 Equality and Diversity Forum events and activities

In addition to the meetings, the Equality and Diversity Forum have continued to organise, host and support a number of events throughout the year on a range of equality themes that are relevant to the community, and drawing in additional funding to maximise the impact we can all make in the community and to pool our limited resources.

We would like to thank all those who have given up their time to support and help plan the following events that have taken place over the past year. Events during 2023/24 included:



Mental Health Awareness Event

In October 2023, to mark World Mental Health Day, the forum hosted a Mental Health Awareness event at the Town Hall. Guest speakers were welcomed from local organisations; Compassionate Voices CIC, Mental Health Carers, You're Never Alone, P3, Derwent Rural Counselling Service and Stand To.

The groups spoke about the mental health support they provide in our community and the services they offer. There was also the opportunity for attendees to speak to the organisations directly about accessing their services and to receive basic health checks.



Feedback regarding the event was excellent. Comments included:

Very useful and informative. I would defiantly attend another similar event.

I did enjoy the event and the opportunities for networking were very useful. Thank you.

Brilliant event! Thank you. It was great to hear from so many inspiring speakers and to find out more about the support available in Chesterfield. It was well attended too.



Hidden Disabilities Awareness Day

In November we held an awareness raising event discussing peoples lived experiences relating to hidden disability and illness, breaking down barriers that affect many people in their everyday lives.

The guest speakers will be focussed on subjects including living with Chronic fatigue, obsessive compulsive disorder, Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis, as well as there being a representative from the Guide Dogs

Chesterfield who spoke about how the dogs they train make a huge difference in people's lives.

Feedback and comments included:

I think more events like this in the community, in schools and places of employment could be hugely beneficial.

Great engaged audience and it was good that nobody left after they spoke and listened to others. Thanks for all the time and effort everyone put into this.



Holocaust Memorial Day 2024

The Holocaust Memorial Day activities continue to be very well supported by our local community, drawing in large audiences. The theme for the Holocaust Memorial Day for 2024 was 'Fragility of Freedom'; Freedom means different things to different people. What is clear is that in every genocide that has taken place, those who are targeted for persecution have had their freedom restricted and removed before many of them are murdered.

This year we were joined by Melanie Martin, who is a speaker for the Holocaust Education charity, Generation 2 Generation, also known as G2G. G2G empowers second and third generation Holocaust survivors and close family friends to present their family histories to a wide range of audiences. Through the use of survivor testimony, G2G aims to keep these Holocaust stories alive and promote the importance of inclusivity and Human Rights.

Melanie spoke on behalf of her mother, Tootje (Cato) Granaat, a Jew who was born in Amsterdam in 1926. Life in occupied Amsterdam, resistance activities, deportation, death marches, Auschwitz-Birkenau and Sobibor were all covered by Melanie, as well as some acts of supreme kindness which contributed to the survival of Melanie's mother, her aunts and uncle.

The online event ended with a Q and A session touching on locally relevant issues and themes.



International Women's Day

International Women's Day 2024



For International Women's Day in March 2024, we welcomed Theresa Peltier who is Derbyshire's High Sheriff for 2023/24. Theresa spoke to us about her passion for equality, diversity and social justice. Theresa retired as the Head of Equality for Derbyshire Police in December 2019, having spent 27 years in policing. Her role enabled her to work with the Home Office, National Police Chief's Council, Equality and Human Rights Commission, the College of Policing, and national staff associations as well as becoming Vice-President of the National Black Police Association.



The session was attended by more than thirty-five participants who provided some excellent feedback including:

An amazing, inspiring speaker, so down to earth yet charismatic.

I could have listened to her all day!!

It was very powerful and really engaging. Loved it!

The event was fantastic, the time flew by because of how interesting and inspirational the speaker was.

4.0 Promoting equality and diversity through our services.

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

4.1 Sport and leisure

The service has been able to provide a range of activities which were well received by our customers as follows;

- Children's swimming lessons have record numbers of children actively engaged on our programme ensuring this life skill is being delivered to a large number of local children, with our autism sessions continuing to prove popular.
- Attendance to other children's courses, e.g. gymnastics and trampolining has been really strong enabling more children to engage in their chosen activities.
- Enabling programmes such as 50+ sessions continue to be delivered providing a range of physical activity options and opportunities.

Gym membership continues to grow enabling large numbers of customers to routinely engage in their chosen forms of physical activity.

The Exercise by Referral programme continues to provide access to hundreds of people in need of support and ensures that those who are vulnerable can access physical activity in a supportive and safe environment.

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

The Outswimming Cancer sessions, held at Queen's Park Sports Centre, have supported around 50 people over the last two years, and continues to go from strength to strength. Led by Lesley Rechert, a swimming teacher at Queen's Park Sports Centre, the initiative continues to provide swimming sessions, free of charge, for people living with and beyond cancer in Chesterfield or the surrounding areas. The project grew from an initial six people to an average attendance of 12 during the two years, with 18 people attending the project's final session last year. We have supported around 50 people over the course of two years, with 47 swim sessions, with an age range from 20s to 85. It has also supported people with a range of different cancer types including bowel, lung, breast, neck, throat and prostate cancer.

CBC participates in the Walk Derbyshire initiative helping to make every day walking the norm for our residents, whether that be walking to the shops, school, work or walking for pleasure in the local community. This offers residents the chance to take safe, simple exercise outdoors and enjoy the benefits to both their physical and mental health. We have



maintained our own "Walk With Us" group walks at Holmebrook Valley Park and in the community around Birdholme. Our largest group at Holmebrook Valley Park regularly hosts 20+ walkers who attend in all but the worst of weathers!

We have continued to support local organisations and voluntary sector groups to help them build walking into their regular activities. Community walking groups in Brimington, Holme Hall and Staveley which we helped to launch last year are thriving with attendances growing so we have recruited and trained extra walk leaders to help the groups operate safely. This year we have offered 5 walk leader training courses including bespoke courses for staff at Chesterfield Royal Hospital mental health and staff health and wellbeing teams, Chesterfield FC Community Trust schools' outreach team and staff and volunteers at Derbyshire Voluntary Action and Inkersall GP surgery.

We have worked with the Deafinitely Women group to organise several walks in our borough for deaf, deaf-blind and hard of hearing women who often find it difficult to engage in regular physical activity sessions or social opportunities. With funding from Walk Derbyshire we were able to provide a sign language interpreter at each walk and also gave the group a chance for a combined walk and canal boat ride on the Chesterfield Canal.

We once again hosted a very successful Inclusive Activity Day in Queen's Park and Queen's Park Sports Centre, working alongside a local organisation which offers support to people with learning difficulties, which more than 60 people attended. Activities included adapted karate, dance, tennis, football, adapted cycling and chair-based dance.

The CBC Community Lifestyles Officer continues an outreach program offering healthy lifestyle and physical activity advice and guidance to community and health-related groups, such as Community Respiratory Rehabilitation groups and cancer support groups.

The CBC Community Lifestyles Officer is also supporting the Walk Derbyshire project and Active Neighbourhoods Walking consortium. The vision of Walk Derbyshire is to make every day walking the norm for all residents of Derbyshire. It is intended that a systems approach to walking will create a culture of walking across the county, with a focus on areas with the highest levels of inactivity and deprivation. Holme Hall has been identified as a pilot area for the project and the consortium are working to identify new community connections through groups, organisations and services that are involved in work in the Holme Hall community. Through this work they will intentionally seek the views of marginalized and underrepresented residents whose voice might not have already been heard.

Through the year we have supported initiatives to promote positive mental health, such as Mental Health Awareness Week and ThinkFest. We participate in the County-wide "Happy to Chat" scheme where many of our benches in parks and green spaces and in the town and village centres (and more recently in warm indoor spaces) are earmarked to encourage people to sit and chat to fellow residents and hopefully feel less lonely or isolated.

We have participated in initiatives to promote positive mental health and reduce the stigma around mental health, such as Mental Health Awareness Week, ThinkFest, World Mental Health Day, World Suicide Prevention Day and the Derbyshire-wide "Happy to Chat" bench

scheme which encourage people to sit and chat to fellow residents to help people feel less lonely or isolated. We are active members of the Chesterfield Health and Wellbeing Partnership's Mental Health Network of mental health professionals, community, voluntary and statutory groups with an interest in mental health issues.

CBC also hosted a performance of "We are What We Overcome", a show highlighting one man's journey from despair to good mental health through songs and comedy.

The dementia friendly Film Screenings continue to be popular. CBC has helped organise regular meetings of the Dementia Friendly Chesterfield group to continue to raise awareness of the condition and enable professional, voluntary and community groups to share information and best practice and help support those living with dementia and their families.

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

4.2 Parks and open spaces

Chesterfield's parks continue to provide excellent facilities for the community and visitors. We are proud to hold 6 Green Flags which recognise the best parks and green spaces across the country with one of the key considerations being accessibility. We continue to invest in our smaller local parks aiming to make them as accessible as possible.

Parks provide outlets to play sport (football, petanque, cricket, walking football, bowls and pickleball) and informal recreation. The majority of parks have maintained play areas, several of which have had recent makeovers and new facilities. 2023 saw the opening of 2 brand new tennis courts.

A growing number of people are holding events on our parks. For the annual walking festival, we offer easy circular walks for the less able, or as an introduction to walking with one being specifically 'accessible'. Chesterfield Pride is returning once again for their event in Stand Road Park. In late summer 2023, the council repeated the inclusive activity day which was held in the Queen's Park and the sports centre. This attracted around 70 people from a variety of day centres across the borough. We regularly engage with organisations such as Macintyre and Our Vision Our Future and these groups have attended sessions in the park such as outdoor yoga, bulb planting, orienteering and bird box building. An external partner delivers an inclusive 'Pedals in Queen's Park' which is attended by the Freedom Centre.

We aim to instil ownership and pride at a young age by engaging with infant and junior schools, along with many community groups holding bulb planting sessions at their local parks. This has helped contribute towards the 14,500 spring bulbs planted in 2023 by 350



children to make Chesterfield a brighter borough. We also engage with schools and other community organisations with our pledge to plant 1000 trees across the borough.

4.3 Chesterfield Pride 2023

Chesterfield Borough Council were proud to once again host Chesterfield Pride 2023 at Stand Road Park. The annual family-friendly event supports and celebrates members of the LGBTQ+ community. As well as live acts on two stages, there was entertainment for all the family along with stalls promoting local services available for the community.



4.4 Housing

Following the reshape of the Housing management and Statutory Housing Services in 2022, we have continued to provide a more proactive housing service throughout 2023/24. The new service has been designed to meet the diverse needs of our tenants, with increased opportunities for engagement, contact and support through home tenancy visits and more staff in frontline roles.

4.5 Home tenancy visits

During 2023/24 we carried out 1,059 home tenancy visits (and 266 new tenancy visits). Our home tenancy visits provide an opportunity for our housing officers to visit tenants at home to discuss any issues. During the visit housing officers will:

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

Housing officers work to understand tenant's individual needs and have provided personalised support including helping a tenant to access funds from a closed bank account and arranging adaptations to a home to make it easier for a resident to get out of their flat more often.

4.6 Collaborative working with the benefits team

Between April 2023 and February 2024, the housing management team worked closely with Chesterfield Borough Council's benefits team which resulted in over £280k of additional benefits for our customers. The benefits team liaised with housing staff to advise new tenants at the sign-up stage, of the benefits they need to claim from the start of their tenancy. Tenancy Support Officers and Housing officers also supported tenants to access benefits that they were entitled to.

4.7 Personal housing plans

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

For example, a customer might be applying for their first home and may need tenancy support or help to access benefits they are entitled to. We may refer them to other teams or signpost on to specialist agencies. During the visit, we can also answer any questions, advise about likely waiting times and discuss other housing options which might be available. During 2023/24 our housing and health team completed 1,070 personal housing plans.



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

4.8 Tenancy support

Between April 2023 and March 2024, the tenancy support team have supported 392 tenants. Our specialist team works with our most vulnerable tenants. This includes those who have:

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

The team provide support with:

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

4.9 Tenant engagement

It has been a busy year for the newly relaunched tenant engagement team. During 2023/24 the team reviewed the menu of engagement opportunities available for tenants and leaseholders, to ensure that their voices and views are at the heart of decision making on a wide range of subjects.

Several new tenant groups have been established including a group to focus on communication and accessibility, which has been identified as one of the priorities for our tenants and leaseholders. The group offers in-person, online and 1:1 engagement where required.

The team are also producing accessible formats of information as a result of feedback received from tenants. This includes video content and social media content to meet wider communication needs as well as easy read guides to documents such as the tenancy agreement.

Other engagement activities have included a programme of van visits in the local community, community litter picks, estate inspections and family fun days for tenants.

4.10 Independent living schemes

Since 2017, we have refurbished all our independent living schemes to provide modern independent living flats with attractive, accessible communal spaces for socialising. Each flat has a new kitchen, level access shower room and integrated Careline equipment.

During 2023/34 we recruited two dedicated officers to work with tenants in our six independent living schemes. The officers provide quality housing management and support



services to meet the needs of customers living in our independent living schemes, making a positive contribution to the safety, social and physical environment of the area managed. Our tenant engagement team worked with Spire Trust as part of a funded partnership to provide chair-based exercise sessions in our independent living schemes during 2023/24. The programme was offered in all schemes to promote social inclusion and health and wellbeing, with exercises led by qualified instructors. Further funding opportunities are being explored for 2024/25.

4.11 Investment and improvements to council homes

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

During 2023/24 171 major adaptations to council were completed at a cost of £827,700. Installations include level access showers and ramps. In addition, 330 minor adaptations including grab rails and stair rails were completed costing £86,724.

4.12 Private Sector Housing team

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

In 2023/24 we approved 102 disabled facilities grants for home adaptations and spent £961,460 on disabled facilities grants and loans.

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

- Lent £65,347 to vulnerable homeowners to carry out urgent repairs and maintenance to improve their home environment.
- Helped 88 households under our gas safe scheme to service and repair boilers.
- Continued to be part of the 'Healthy Home' programme with Derbyshire County Council, supporting households who are vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home, including those with a long-term health condition.

4.13 Careline and independent living service

Over the past year, Careline have continued to provide a 24/7 alarm monitoring and response service, providing peace of mind and a rapid response to falls and requests for assistance. The service has received 88,096 alarm calls and attended 3,990 callouts.

Careline worked in partnership with Derbyshire County Council, the NHS and East Midlands Ambulance Service on a pilot project to help reduce pressure on the ambulance service locally. Trained Careline staff attend to take basic medical observations of patients triaged by EMAS via a Local Access Point team.



The service is continuing to roll out its investment in digital equipment and explore options for innovative uses of technology to promote independence and support hospital discharge.

The Independent Living service has continued to support older people to live safely and independently at home on a needs-led basis. During 2023/24 outcomes have been achieved in relation to:

- Improving independence and quality of life.
- Improving health and wellbeing.
- Referring to, and working alongside, Adult Care and NHS services to help prevent hospital admissions, falls and deterioration in health.
- Property adaptations and improving the home environment.
- Reducing social isolation and increasing opportunities for meaningful activity.

The team also supported customers to manage money and debt effectively by accessing specialist services, grants and loans and providing support to access benefits. Referrals made by the team to Chesterfield Borough Council's Benefit Team resulted in nearly £160k of additional benefits for customers between April 2023 and February 2024.

4.14 Homelessness

The Homelessness Team continued their work to rehouse and support vulnerable people in the borough. Cost of living pressures, increasing number of evictions and limited options for alternative accommodation, have resulted in high demand for homelessness services.

Between April 2023 and March 2024, 1590 homelessness cases were opened. 347 of these cases resulted in Chesterfield Borough Council accepting a duty to prevent or relieve homelessness. Homelessness was successfully prevented or relieved in 82.5 % of cases.

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

- Fund a post at Derbyshire Law Centre to support homelessness prevention.
- Support the jointly commissioned 'Call B4 You Serve' service to help prevent homelessness in the private rented sector.
- Help to fund a homelessness hub provided by Pathways, a joint initiative provided by three local councils. The hub provides personalised packages of support for individuals including housing advice and health care.

4.15 Repairs and Maintenance

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



During early 2024, the tenant challenge panel began a review of the repairs service. This will continue throughout 2024 with the aim of producing recommendations for service improvement.

5.0 Apprentice town and improving our economy

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

This refreshed Skills Action Plan sets out a prioritised set of actions across 6 priority themes that have been arrived at following extensive evidence review, consultation input and discussion with a dedicated partnership Steering Group. The actions build on existing activity, whilst at the same time introducing new elements that allow us to capitalise on opportunities and challenges that have emerged in recent years. It is designed to be a partnership plan that is overseen by the newly established Skills and Employment Partnership; hence the actions are a mix of direct delivery by Chesterfield Borough Council and delivery by and with partners.

As with the previous Skills Action Plan, the refreshed plan continues to recognise Chesterfield as an Apprentice Town under the priority theme of Young People, Ambitions and Connections to work; recognising the findings of the evidenced based review that showed Apprenticeship starts increased by 18% between 2021 and 2022, but not enough to counteract a marked fall (as nationally) between 2017 to 2022, most notably at Level 2 and for those aged under 19; and changes to Apprenticeship funding and regulations since the Apprentice Town Initiative was launched in 2017. Apprentice Town remains widely supported but there is scope for re-focusing and re-energising it to better connect those looking for and those offering opportunities; and for provision to increase accessibility and widen routes into apprenticeships, especially for people with additional needs, lower qualifications or from less advantaged communities and at Level 2, where apprentice numbers have reduced. As such, work is being undertaken to review and evaluate the Apprentice Town Initiative to assess impact, lessons and recommendations for future delivery. Evaluation findings will inform refreshed Apprentice Town Activity from September 2024.

Apprenticeships once again featured in the annual Skills and Employability Conference which took place at the Winding Wheel on the 8th of February 2024. The conference was attended by 75 delegates from across the business and education community. Apprenticeships were featured in a question-and-answer session with local business BHP Chartered Accountants whose HR Manager and level 7 apprentice discussed the benefits of utilising apprenticeships to build a resilient workforce. In addition, Employer Apprenticeship Ambassadors from Marker study and East Midlands Rail hosted Roundtable discussions with businesses who



were able to learn more about the benefits of apprenticeships and how to access funding to support them.

Also under the Young People, Ambitions and Connections to Work is the Careers Made In Chesterfield Project. The project seeks to strengthen links between young people and employers and raise awareness of the training and careers opportunities. During 2023/24 the Careers Made in Chesterfield Programme has seen 263 students from Parkside School, Netherthorpe School and Springwell Community School engage in sector specific careers workshops; delivery of two Apprenticeship and Technical Educations (ATE) Careers Engagement Events at community-based settings where young people and their parents/carers learn more about the training and career opportunities available locally in the Property and Construction and Health and Care Sectors. A third event, focussing on opportunities within Manufacturing and Engineering is scheduled to be delivered at Chesterfield Football Club in May 2024.

Also, under the Careers Made in Chesterfield action area has been the pilot delivered of STEW (Staveley Eat Well) Programme that has seen 40 students from Springwell School.

Chesterfield Borough Council continue to work with Job Centre Plus to deliver recruitment events. A total of 13 events have been delivered in the last year, including an event focussed on BME residents, attracting 1,160 job seekers (across all events). The events have provided members of the public and job centre plus customers with direct access to employment and training opportunities. A total of 397 vacancies have been advertised at the events, supported by 184 employers and support organisations.

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

Local labour clauses have continued to be agreed on 100% of eligible developments and from Q1-Q4 of 2023/24 so far 271 local jobs and 10 apprentices have been provided and over £13.9 Million of contracts awarded to local supply chain businesses as well as creating a number of other social value outputs including careers support, school visits, partnerships with FE colleges and work experience.

6.0 Equalities training for our staff

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

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

The course has raised my awareness to the various types of disabilities and the reasonable adjustments that can be made to improve our service to the public.

Make sure all customers and service users are treated fairly

To be respectful at all times and to treat others as i would like to be treated.

I will be more confident in how to interact with people in the workplace

Treating all with respect dignity and fairness. Being open and aware of our unique and diverse community.

I will ensure I comply with the legislation whilst carrying out my role



6.1 Mental Health First Aid

We now have 38 qualified MHFAs across all areas of the council. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is an internationally recognised training course which teaches people how to spot the symptoms and signs of mental ill health and provide help on a first aid basis. In the same way as learning physical first aid, MHFA teaches people how to recognise crucial warning signs of mental ill health and feel confident to guide someone to appropriate support.

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

6.2 Mentoring programme

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

6.3 Violence and Aggression De-escalation Training

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

6.4 Employee benefits scheme

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

6.5 Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

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

6.6 Employee Appraisals (VIP)

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



7.0 Working in partnership to promote equality and celebrate diversity.

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

Chesterfield Health and Wellbeing Partnership and sub-groups, and the Derbyshire Health and Wellbeing Board

Chesterfield Local Place Alliance

Chesterfield Community Safety Partnership

Chesterfield Childrens Locality Partnership

Derbyshire Districts Safeguarding Leads

UK Resettlement Partnership (regional)

Derbyshire Community Response Forum

Derbyshire Armed Forces Covenant

Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Local Authorities Energy Partnership

Vision Derbyshire

Derbyshire Homelessness Officers Group

Derbyshire MAPPA Strategic Management Board

Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire Financial Inclusion Group

Derbyshire Housing Strategy Group

Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service

Social Housing Providers

Apprentice Town (Chesterfield)

Destination Chesterfield

Derbyshire Economic Partnership

Derbyshire Skills Forum

Visit Peak District and Derbyshire

D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership

South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority

Staveley Town Deal

Chesterfield Waterside

(Development of the Derbyshire Integrated Care System)

Climate Change Forum

7.1 Chesterfield system framework

A key aim of Chesterfield strategic partnerships is to support and promote community wellbeing, creating healthy, safer and stronger communities. Across the borough we have created a range of partnerships to coordinate our efforts to maximise outcomes. Key aspects that underpin the approach to how we work in partnership are:

- Understanding the Chesterfield system framework
- Commitment to partnership principles



To work as collaboratively as possible, it is important that all organisations understand how the Chesterfield system framework is set up and how different partnerships relate to each other. If we can gain a collective understanding of this framework, working out how to get things done should become easier; and this will help to improve outcomes for individuals and the borough.

It should be recognised that there are many sub-groups and independent task and finish groups that feed into these community voice and strategic partnership groupings that are not shown on the plan; the connectivity that these other groups and individual partners provide as they work within the partnerships is a key element of achieving successful delivery of overall outcomes.

The framework is not fixed and other partnership groups may be established as the system evolves to support our overall aims; there are discussions being carried out with a view that a skills partnership group might be established.

7.2 Chesterfield strategic partnership principles

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

7.3 UK Shared Prosperity Fund

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



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

It is being used to fund a range of projects, which will have a positive impact on our local communities including:

- Improvements to local parks, greens spaces and outdoor sports facilities to provide residents with even better access to quality outdoor facilities across the borough.
- Help for local businesses to reduce their carbon footprint, contributing towards the council's goal of creating a net zero borough by 2050.
- Grants to help community and voluntary groups fund grassroots projects and to support volunteering opportunities and strengthen our local communities.
- Community development support in local areas including Duckmanton, Poolsbook and Old Whittington to complement the community grants programme.
- Funding to support entertainment in Chesterfield town centre and across the borough, including speciality markets.
- Investment in anti-social behaviour initiatives, which will help to tackle the root causes of nuisance behaviour, in line with the council's new anti-social behaviour strategy.
- Continued support to help local businesses start and grow, and to boost opportunities for local people to learn new skills.
- Investment in tourism and marketing campaigns to support Chesterfield's appeal as a destination for visitors.

7.4 Armed forces community

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

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

- Changed leave policies to support staff to carry out their duties including up to ten days per year for reservist duties.
- Access to employee assistance and occupational health schemes to support employees' physical and mental health.
- A generous career break policy which can be used to support mobilisation.
- A clear support plan for members of the Armed Forces returning from mobilisation and a clear cross-council understanding of their rights.
- Chesterfield's Armed Forces cadet units are given pride of place at our key annual ceremonies including Armistice Day, Remembrance Sunday and the Mayor's annual parade.



- We are partners in the Veterans Hub (Chesterfield) led by the Department for Work and Pensions, which includes regular events at the Town Hall
- The council is a registered employer with both the Career Transition Partnership and Forces Families Jobs.

8.0 Health and Wellbeing Partnership activities

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

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

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





This year the Great Chesterfield Get2Gether took place at Dunston Primary and Academy School. It was a fabulous space for all the organisations we had invited to engage with the community and network with each other. The event was organised to raise awareness of local health and wellbeing agencies that can support people living in the Dunston areas and enable people to access information and support that could help them tackle the issues they were struggling with such as the impact of the current cost of living crisis. It was a really positive event with great outcomes and successful method of engagement with members of the community.

9.0 Press Releases and Communications

Throughout 2023/24 the CBC Communications and Marketing Team have continued to promote equality and diversity events and news items via our social media platforms. Some examples (and links) are below:

- Residents invited to join community litter picks (17 May 2023)
<https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/living-here/neighbourhoods/street-cleaning/litter-and-littering/litter-picks.aspx>
- Council tenants encouraged to have their say on housing services (30 May 2023)
<https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/home/latest-news/council-tenants-encouraged-to-have-their-say-on-housing-services.aspx>
- Attend Chesterfield Crematorium's open day and service of remembrance (31 May 2023)
<https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/home/latest-news/attend-chesterfield-crematorium-s-open-day-and-service-of-remembrance.aspx>
- Sixteen local groups benefit from grant funding (6 June 2023)
<https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/home/latest-news/local-groups-benefit-from-grant-funding.aspx>
- New scheme launched in Chesterfield to improve night-time safety (3 July 2023)
<https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/business-and-economic-growth/licensing-and-regulation/best-bar-none.aspx>
- Chesterfield and District Crematorium donates £12,000 to local charities (5 July 2023)
<https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/home/latest-news/chesterfield-and-district-crematorium-donates-12-000-to-local-charities.aspx>



- We Are What We Overcome is coming to the Winding Wheel (15 August 2023)
<https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/home/latest-news/we-are-what-we-overcome-is-coming-to-the-winding-wheel.aspx>
- Free activities in Chesterfield Parks (14 August 2023)
<https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/home/latest-news/free-activities-in-chesterfield-parks.aspx>
- Attend our mental health awareness event this October (12 September 2023)
<https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/home/latest-news/attend-our-mental-health-awareness-event-this-october.aspx>
- Organising inclusive activities in Queen's Park (15 September 2023)
<https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/explore-chesterfield/walking-and-cycling/inclusive-pedals.aspx>



- Get help searching for work in Chesterfield (5 September 2023)
<https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/home/latest-news/get-help-searching-for-work-in-chesterfield.aspx>
- Sponsored swim raises more than £7,000 (2 November 2023)
- <https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/home/latest-news/sponsored-swim-raises-more-than-7-000.aspx>



- Chesterfield's 'off-grid' households set for energy efficient boost (9 October 2023)
<https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/home/latest-news/chesterfield-s-off-grid-households-set-for-energy-efficient-boost.aspx>
- Transition Chesterfield opens Eco Hub thanks to community funding (10 October 2023)
<https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/home/latest-news/transition-chesterfield-opens-eco-hub-thanks-to-community-funding.aspx>



- Transforming Futures in Chesterfield (13 October 2023)
<https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/home/latest-news/transforming-futures-in-chesterfield.aspx>
- Developing healthy skills for Staveley students (5 November 2023)
<https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/home/latest-news/transforming-futures-in-chesterfield.aspx>
- People invited to pause and reflect to mark Holocaust Memorial Day 2024 (10 January 2024)
- Helping to help – free training for community groups (14 February 2024)
- Celebrate International Women's Day with Derbyshire's High Sheriff (15 February 2024)



<https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/home/latest-news/celebrate-international-women-s-day-with-derbyshire-s-high-sheriff.aspx>

- Local groups benefit from grant funding (19 February 2024)
<https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/home/latest-news/local-groups-benefit-from-grant-funding.aspx>
- £117m to be invested in council housing across Chesterfield (7 March 2024)
<https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/home/latest-news/117m-to-be-invested-in-council-housing-across-chesterfield.aspx>
- Further funding available to help residents service gas appliances (11 March 2024)
<https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/home/latest-news/further-funding-available-to-help-residents-service-gas-appliances.aspx>

10.0 Equality impact assessments

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

The EIA process enables us to look at our work in depth to see what impact it has on different equality groups, and to mitigate against any potentially negative impacts that are identified. Staff received training in the completion of EIAs ensuring that the process is embedded across all council services. In January 2024 the EIA form was reviewed and updated in line with new Public Sector Equality Duty guidance which focusses on the need for due regard to certain equality considerations when making decisions.

During 2023/24 the Council undertook around 30 Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) for a variety of changes to policies, strategies and projects. These have taken into consideration: best practice, demographic information and employee and customer feedback and other engagement activities. The EIAs were published with the relevant reports to the Council's Cabinet. Through the EIA process, we have been able to address any negative impacts on sections of the community promote equality by identifying and acting on opportunities to implement positive impacts for groups where possible.

Examples of EIAs completed this year include the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) review, Asbestos Policy and the Asset Management Strategy. In addition, a number of complex EIAs have been completed to support the Budget Conversation, including Voluntary Redundancy / Voluntary Early Retirement (VR/VER), Green Waste consultation and the Venues review.



11.0 Gender pay gap report 2023

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

11.1 What is the gender pay gap?

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

The gender pay gap is not the same as equal pay. The law says that men and women must be paid the same for doing the same or equivalent work. We use job evaluation techniques to evaluate each role and not the post holder to ensure that all roles are fairly remunerated in comparison to other roles. It makes no reference to gender or any other personal characteristics of any existing or potential job holders. We are therefore confident that our gender pay gap does not stem from paying men and women differently for the same or equivalent work, rather it is a result of the roles in which men and women work within the organisation and the salaries these roles attract.

11.2 Our gender pay gap data.

At the 31 March 2023 Chesterfield Borough Council employed 943 people. The gender split of our workforce is 49% female and 51% male, however, this isn't an equal split across our services. The majority of Chesterfield Borough Council services are provided in-house including services which many authorities have either contracted out such as building cleaning or moved to alternative models such as arms-length organisations for example managing Council housing and associated repairs and maintenance (OSD). These services tend to have a large gender in-balance, for instance, building cleaning employs a large number of female part-time staff whereas the majority of higher-paid trades staff and associated professions working in housing repairs and maintenance (OSD) are male. These services have a disproportionate impact on our gender pay gap data.

Our gender pay gap figures for 2023 are:

Gender pay gap measure	31 March 2022	31 March 2023
Average gender pay gap as a mean average	10%	7%
Average gender pay gap as a median average	13%	13%
Average bonus gender pay gap as a mean average	0%	0%
Average bonus gender pay gap as a median average	0%	0%
Proportion of males receiving a bonus payment	23%	25%
Proportion of females receiving a bonus payment	0%	0%



Quartile	31 March 2022		31 March 2023	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Upper quartile	63%	37%	67%	33%
Upper middle quartile	49%	51%	53%	47%
Lower middle quartile	48%	52%	47%	53%
Lower quartile	38%	62%	38%	62%

The Chesterfield Borough Council’s mean gender pay gap for 2023 is 7% in favour of males and the median gender pay gap is 13% also in favour of males. These figures are significantly affected by the Council’s decision to retain in-house delivery for the majority of our services and the transfer in of staff from outsourced services during the year.

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

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

11.3 How we are addressing the pay gap

We aim to recruit from the widest possible talent pool. We have updated our recruitment policy and procedures and trained all our recruiting managers to ensure that language in job adverts is neutral, that they understand the importance of interviewing people with gender balanced panels in order to avoid unconscious bias and can develop a recruitment experience that enables candidates to showcase their knowledge, experience and skills across their whole life experience. During 2021 we have updated the policy to include ‘blind’ recruitment methods to ensure candidates are shortlisted for roles on merit only.

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

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

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



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

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

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

- Along with the Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum we support International Women's Day
- We continue to secure local labour clauses on all eligible developments and support businesses and communities to get the maximum benefit from these opportunities. Once local labour clauses are secured we offer a range of support to companies including advice on local recruitment, links with local training providers and information about how they can best explore local supply chain opportunities.
- We encourage local businesses to engage with schools in the area to encourage children and young people to think about their future career aspirations.
- Our work with Chesterfield College and other key partners to develop the apprentice town initiative. There are now thousands of young people embarking on apprenticeships and giving investors in Chesterfield access to a pool of high- quality skills that will enable their businesses to grow and prosper.
- Our partners Destination Chesterfield co-ordinate the successful 'Made in Chesterfield' campaign which is a celebration of the manufacturing, engineering, science and technology industries in the town. The campaign looks to inspire the next generation to the industry, with businesses, schools and training providers coming together to showcase the sector.
- Derby University's Chesterfield campus offers a large range of health and social care courses where students can gain valuable work experience as well as academic qualifications utilising NHS standard mock hospital wards, interactive suite, clinical suite and high-tech computer suite.



- Peak resort – a multi-million pound integrated leisure, health, sport and education resort will provide not only a large range of new jobs and careers but also an additional university campus, specialising in leisure and hospitality.
- Young people and their parents or carers have also been able to access a number of sessions where they can learn more about careers in the health and social care sector. Apprenticeship and Technical Education Information events include a question-and-answer panel session and the chance to speak to experts in the sector including Chesterfield Royal Hospital and NHS Joined Up Care about the training and career options available to young people after completing school.
- We are launching a skills brokerage service which aims to help businesses access the funding and the information they need to deliver skills development programmes for their employees

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

12.0 Looking forward to 2024/25

We will continue to work with partners to promote and support equality and diversity with our communities and within our organisation. Here is a sample of some of the activities we would like to take forward in 2024/25:

- Continuing to work in partnership with communities to organise a range of equality and diversity themed awareness activities and events, through the Equality and Diversity Forum.
- Continuing to embed the Council's commitment to equalities in its service planning and delivery of major projects (e.g. Staveley Town Deal, Revitalising the Heart of Chesterfield Project and the ongoing Budget Conversation) by delivering a robust Equality Impact Assessment process and upholding the importance of this during financially challenging times.
- Providing employees with training and development opportunities so that they have the skills, abilities and confidence to recognise and respond appropriately and sensitively to diversity and discrimination, both within the workplace, when delivering services and, ultimately, in their everyday lives. Delivering ongoing equality and diversity refresher training as required with services and a range of additional awareness raising modules on locally relevant themes.
- Continue to work in partnership to deliver the year 2 community grants programme which aims to develop and improve community infrastructure, resilience and volunteering opportunities.
- Continue to meet our statutory duties including Gender pay gap and Public Sector Equality Duty reporting and working on the objectives detailed in our Equality and Diversity Strategy, 2023 - 2027.
- Having refreshed the State of the Borough document with data from the 2021 Census, we will continue to share and utilise up to date and consistent demographic information within CBC and the wider community, enabling us to consider the protected groups in all we do and to support the Equality Impact Assessment process.



- Continuing to work both formally and informally in partnership with local groups, including the Equality and Diversity Forum, Climate Change Forum, Cultural Access Group and Dementia Friendly Chesterfield to share knowledge, experiences and resources.
- Continue to deliver a range of accessible sport and leisure opportunities from our two leisure centres.

13.0 Further information

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

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