

Tameside Council Equalities

2023/24
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Foreword

As the newly appointed portfolio holder for Population Health and Equalities, I know how vital it is to reduce inequalities to improve the life chances of all our residents.

Thank you for reading this annual review of Tameside Council's new Equalities Strategy for 2023-2027. We launched our strategy last year to commit ourselves to supporting our staff and local communities, and we're proud to provide this update on the progress we've made since then.

I am keen to take a fresh approach to equalities, reviewing how we drive progress and work collectively to address inequalities. For me, it is my priority to listen and bring together our diverse communities, particularly following the summer riots. I recently welcomed residents, community groups and leaders from across Tameside to our 'Tameside Together' community cohesion event, raising awareness and inviting discussions about what can be done locally to celebrate diversity and tackle hate crime.

Responding to global movements such as the Me Too Movement and Black Lives Matter, we have seen communities come together to demand change. We want to make sure that all our residents' receive the equity of treatment that they deserve and that diversity is celebrated across the Borough. It has never been more urgent to work collectively to embrace diversity, reduce inequality and to make sure we meet the needs of all our residents across Tameside. The wealth of activities highlighted in this update ranging from funding the Tameside Racial Inequalities Project to elevating the voices of our diverse workforce through establishing the EDI Network Chairs meeting, showcase our commitment to equality through deeds not words.

We have more in common than what divides us and we cannot be complacent in the face of hate and prejudice. All of our activities across the borough to end discrimination, advance equal opportunities and to foster good relations are crucial in shaping the society we want see.

Councillor Tafheen Sharif
First Deputy (Population Health and Wellbeing)



Context

Tameside's Equalities Strategy 2023-2027, published last year, sets out the Council's commitment to protecting and supporting the equality of our staff and residents, and formalises the ways we're going to deliver on our commitments and lead the way for an equal and inclusive borough through six Equality Objectives.

To go along with our Equalities Strategy, the Council also produced an Equalities Action Plan which sets out the clear actions we're taking to meet our goals, set out under our Equality Objectives:

Continuous Effective Monitoring

Enhance our ongoing systematic approach to monitoring performance in terms of equalities and local community profiles, enabling transparency, accountability, and rigour in the tracking of equalities.

Embedding Equalities in Service Change

Embed equalities in service changes, strategy, and policy development, and decision-making processes across the organisation through robust and rigorous Equality Analysis and Impact Assessments.

Cultivate Seldom-Heard Voices in Engagement

Expand our engagement and consultation approaches to increase the involvement of seldom-heard groups, and tailor these where appropriate, to ensure that their perspectives and experiences are central in the development of Council strategies, policies, and services.

Addressing Barriers to Information and Services

Address and alleviate barriers to accessing information and services that protected groups encounter.

An Accepting Organisational Culture

Instil an organisational culture and practice of acceptance of different staff needs and requirements to ensure that all staff, particularly those from protected groups, feel valued.

Celebrating Diversity

Promote and celebrate the value of diversity in Tameside, so that as an anchor institution, the Council can be a positive exemplar to the broader community.



The Council will publish annual updates showing the progress we've made towards our goals and celebrate the positive outcomes that have come in the past year. This is first annual update for our new Equalities Strategy, which will run up to 2027, and will cover all of the progress made in the last year as well as the previous years while the strategy was being developed.

Our Action Plan

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 states that we must publish specific and measurable equality objectives every four years. Tameside's Equalities Strategy 2023-2027 was developed to meet this obligation, alongside an Action Plan to detail the steps we'll be taking to promote equality both within the Council and across the borough. Both documents are structured around our six Equality Objectives:

Continuous Effective Monitoring

- A1:** Develop an equalities dashboard to present relevant data in a usable and trackable format
- A2:** Obtain an understanding of how services monitor equalities and improve monitoring where appropriate
- A3:** Embed equalities into the Council's procurement processes

Embedding Equalities in Service Change

- B1:** Conduct an internal review of Equality Analysis processes to develop an understanding of how Equality Analysis is embedded across directorates and services
- B2:** Review and update the Council's standardised processes of completing Equalities Impact Assessments
- B3:** Review the extra protected groups included in Equalities Impact Assessments beyond those prescribed in the Equality Act 2010
- B4:** Update training and best practice guidance on equalities, including the completion of Equalities Impact Assessments
- B5:** Develop mechanisms to improve accessibility to and evaluate the completion of Equalities Impact Assessments
- B6:** Develop processes of Cumulative Equality Analysis to determine the cumulative impact of service changes and policy development on particular demographic groups

Cultivate Seldom-Heard Voices in Engagement

- C1:** Develop a concrete plan of reaching out to seldom-heard groups
- C2:** Review relationships with VSCE organisations who work with and support seldom-heard groups
- C3:** Produce a tailored engagement offer for seldom-heard groups on key pieces of engagement

Addressing Barriers to Information and Services

- D1:** Review current corporate communications offer to determine if it is inclusive and is tailored to different groups, and establish corporate standards incorporating improvements where identified
- D2:** Promote the Council website's accessibility functions – translations (including audio translations), colour formatting, etc
- D3:** Review cultural training provisions for all staff in terms of engaging with customers, and address any gaps that are identified, to improve customer access and experience
- D4:** Review all Council physical spaces for the public to ensure accessibility for people with physical disabilities and visual/hearing impairments, as well as people who are neurodivergent and from an ethnic/cultural minority
- D5:** Review food offers at Council events to ensure inclusive food provision – Halal, Kosher, vegan, allergies, etc

An Accepting Organisational Culture

- E1:** Drive forward the establishment of staff network groups
- E2:** Develop inclusive staff policies for staff from different backgrounds
- E3:** Review EDI training already offered to staff to ensure staff inclusivity
- E4:** Establish a Staff Wellbeing Survey to monitor wellbeing in the workplace
- E5:** Review Council workspaces to ensure they are accessible and inclusive environments for all staff

Celebrating Diversity

- F1:** Develop a communications calendar to promote important dates for messaging pertaining to equality and diversity
- F2:** Develop programmes of activities for important calendar periods and events
- F3:** Achieve the LGA Equality Excellence Award through successful peer review

We believe that each of these top-level actions constitute a meaningful and deliverable step that can make a real difference and help us meet our Equality Objectives over the next three years, and we've already made good progress on a number of these actions, including publishing our Tameside Equalities Monitor (A1), refreshing the Council's Equality Impact Assessment process (B1), and expanding the number of diverse communities covered by our work by adopting a number of "extra protected groups." In addition to the nine protected characteristics identified by the Equality Act 2010, Tameside had added the following as protected groups in our impact assessments:

- Mental Health
- Carers
- Military Veterans
- Breast Feeding

We have recently expanded on this to also include:

- Neurodivergence
- Cared for Children and Care Leavers
- Socio-Economic Disadvantage

The Council has also expanded the “Gender Reassignment” protected characteristic as defined in the Equality Act 2010 to a wider “Gender Identity”, as proposed by the LGBT Foundation, to be more inclusive of trans and gender non-conforming people whether or not they choose to undertake any form of legal or medical transition.

Therefore, the protected characteristics and extra protected groups considered in Tameside are:

- Age
- Sex
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Disability
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity
- Pregnancy/Maternity
- Marriage/Civil Partnership
- Carers
- Cared for Children and Care Leavers
- Ill Mental Health
- Neurodivergence
- Socio-Economic Disadvantage
- Multiple Marginalisation

Our Corporate Plan

In early 2024 Tameside Council adopted a new Corporate Plan, our top-level strategy document that sets out the Council’s ambitions and vision for Tameside as a community and as a place to live and work. The vision for Tameside we’ll be working towards is “a place where everyone can achieve their hopes and ambitions”.

The plan sets out our five key priorities to deliver for the residents of the borough. These are:

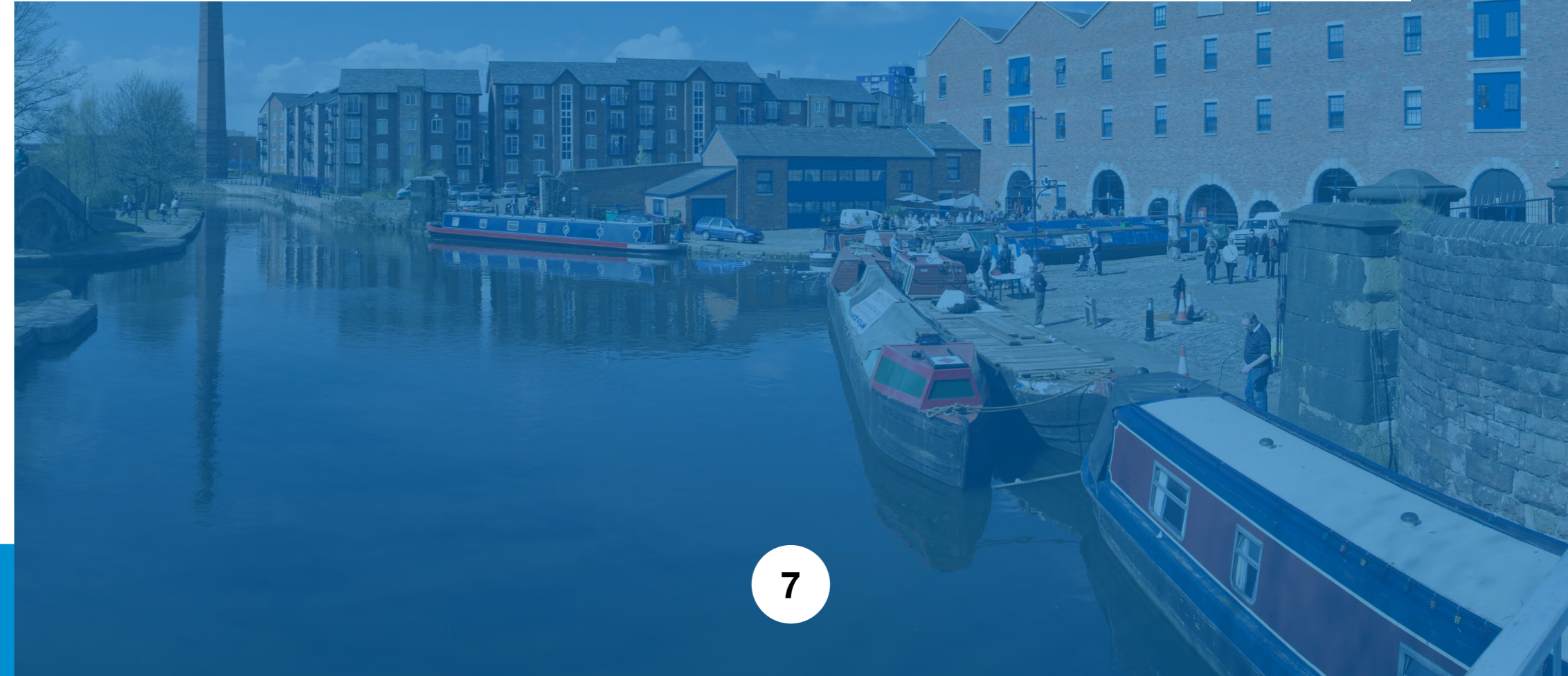
- Best start in life,
- Opportunity to learn and earn,
- Safe, green, and supportive communities,
- Healthy and active lives,
- Financial sustainable public services, an underpinning priority supporting the other four.

Advancing equality is central to our corporate plan and must be embedded across all our services across the council. Key commitments include providing all children have an inclusive education, working to reduce health inequalities and improve health outcomes, designing public spaces based around residents needs and promoting equitable employment practices.

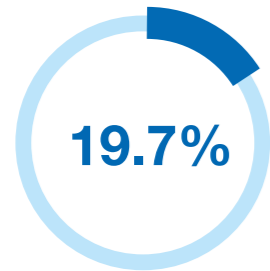
The plan also commits to a cross-cutting approach of ‘Evidence based decision making – voice, demographics, equalities and finance’. A key tenet of Equalities work, this reinforces the principle that as a local authority we must consider the impacts on people with protected characteristics when making decisions.

Life in Tameside

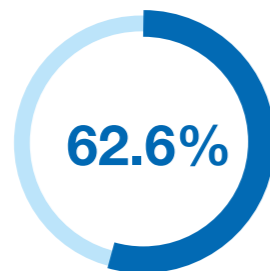
It wouldn’t be possible for Tameside Council to work effectively to improve equality outcomes without a comprehensive understanding of the borough’s residents, their needs, and the challenges they face. In order to achieve this, the Council uses a wide range of demographics data which include statistics on people with protected characteristics like age, sex, faith, and disability. Much of this data comes from the national Census of England and Wales, surveys of every household in the country that take place every ten years, the latest being from 2021, supported by official population estimates published every year.



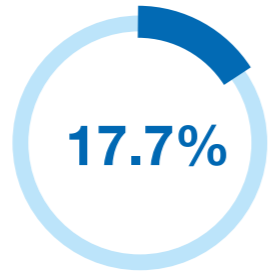
**Population
2023
234,666**



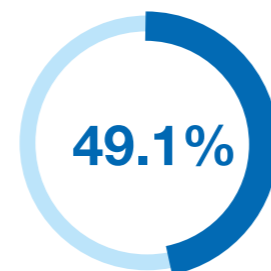
under 16



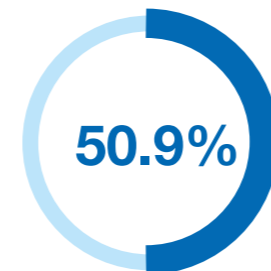
16-64



65+

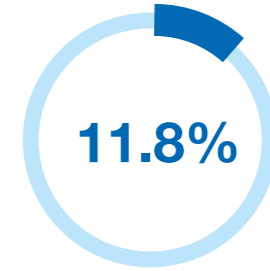


male

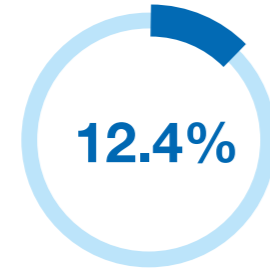


female

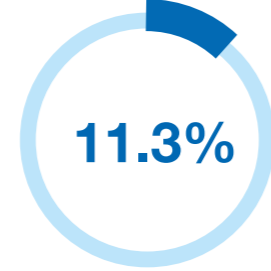
**10-year
age groups
2023**



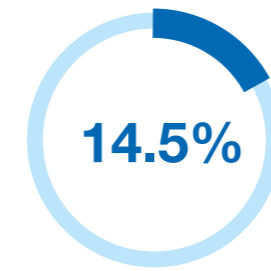
0-9



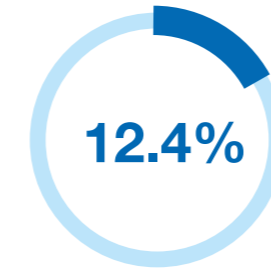
10-19



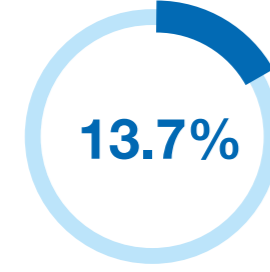
20-29



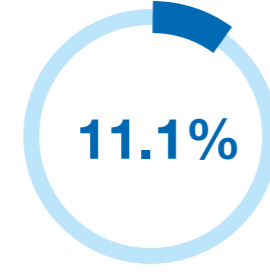
30-39



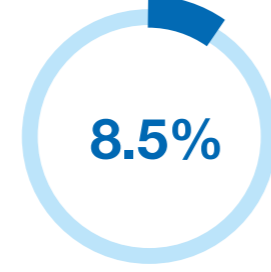
40-49



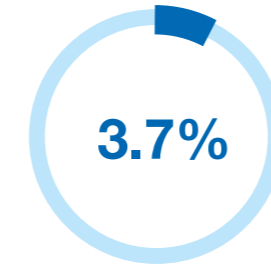
50-59



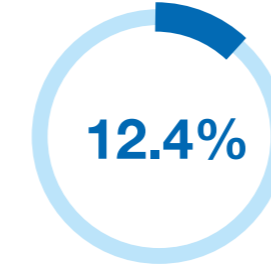
60-69



70-79



80-89



90+

**Disability
2021**



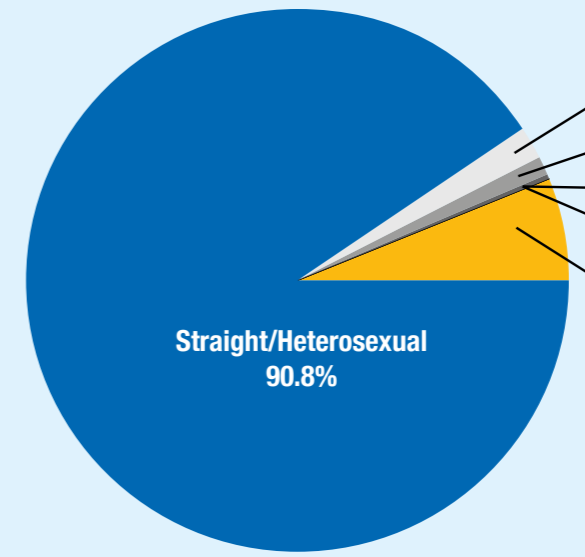
day-to-day activities limited either a little or a lot compared to 17.3% across England

**Health
2021**



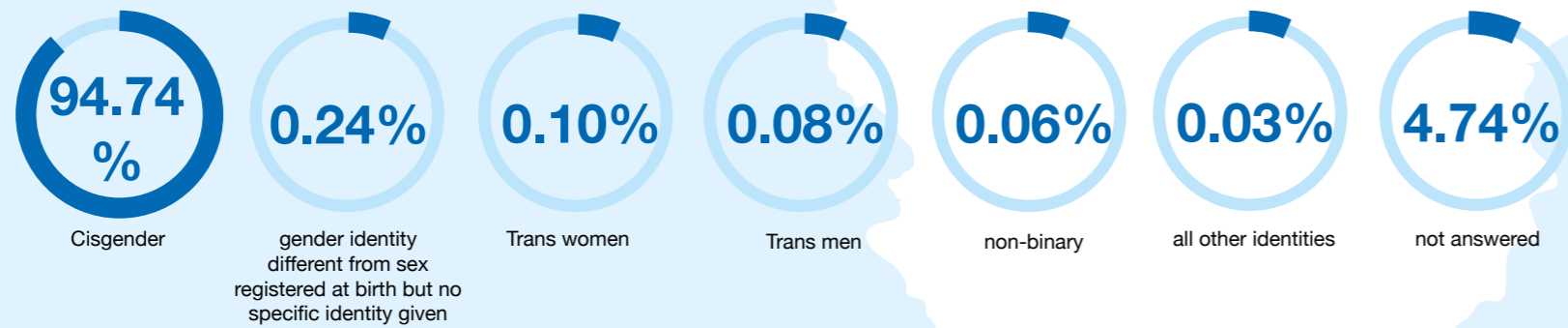
bad or very bad health

**Sexual
Orientation
2021**

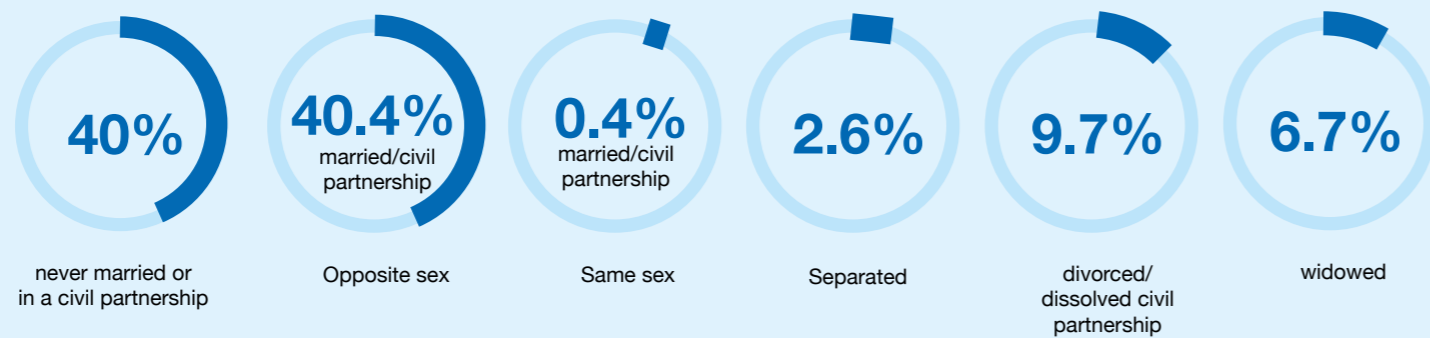


- Bisexual 1.1%
- Pansexual 0.1%
- Asexual 0.01%
- All other 0.01%
- Not answered 5.9%

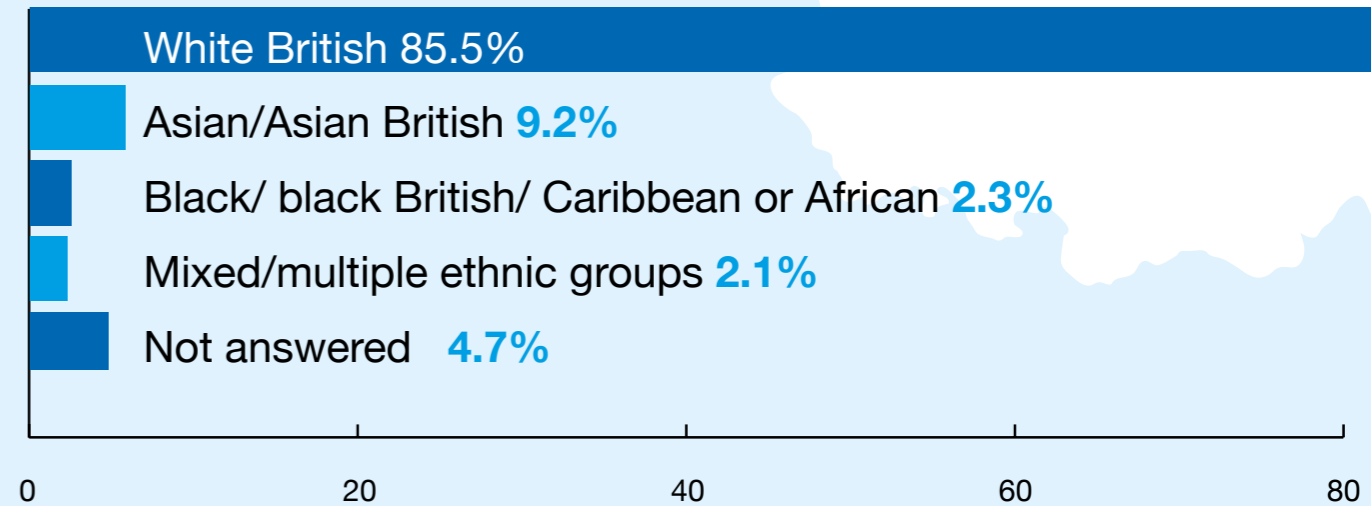
Gender 2021



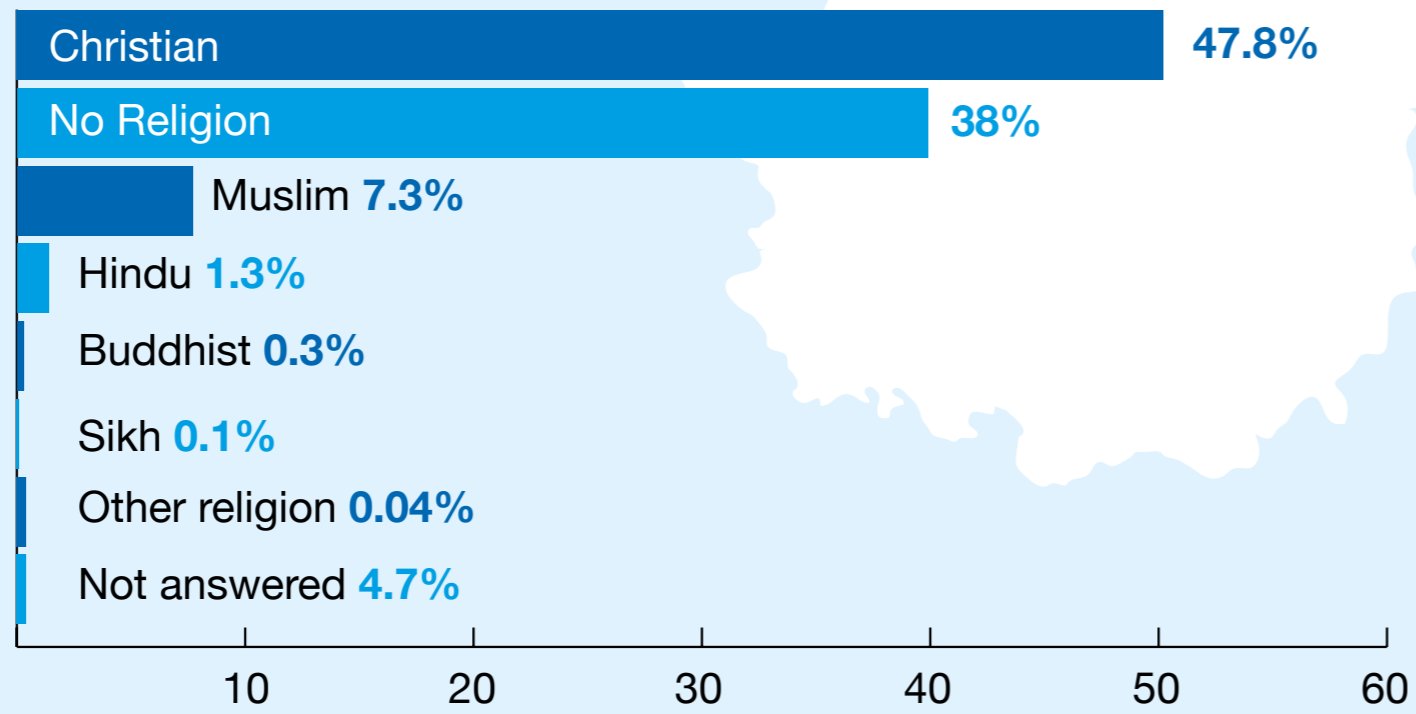
Relationships 2021



Ethnic Population 2021



Religion 2021



Unpaid Care 2021



of residents provide some unpaid care

Sep 2024 Children in Care



Sep 2024 Care Leavers



Achieving our Objectives

Inequalities Reference Group (IRG)

The IRG aims to reduce inequalities in Tameside. It is chaired by the First Deputy (Population Health and Wellbeing), and membership of the group is drawn from:

- Elected Members
- Council services
- NHS
- VCSE organisations

Several important developments for the IRG have occurred since the previous update:

- ◇ A formal connection has been established with the Health and Wellbeing Board, providing a greater ability to influence decision-making and enable greater accountability relating to issues emphasised by the IRG.
- ◇ Provided funding on projects to be conducted on:
 - Debt journeys and service responses
 - Access to and experiences of ethnic minority groups in healthcare
 - Experiences of people with protected characteristics in the private rental sector
 - Educational inequalities

Progress against the plan:

Continuous Effective Monitoring: Enhance our ongoing systematic approach to monitoring performance in terms of equalities and local community profiles, enabling transparency, accountability, and rigour in the tracking of equalities.

- **Equalities Monitor** – An equalities monitor has been developed by TMBC to present relevant data in a useable and trackable format and to enable transparency, accountability and rigour. The data covers six key areas: borough profile, TMBC employment monitoring, health, crime, engagement data and poverty monitor. The Tameside Equalities Monitor can be accessed [here](#).
- **Ward Profiles** – Ward profiles showing demographic data across the 19 wards in Tameside have been added to GM Tableau. The data shows the proportions of people in each ward based on different factors, including population, ethnicity, lifestyle risk factors, disease and poor health, housing types, qualifications, economic activity, life expectancy and mortality, local election turnout, language and religion. This will support us to monitor demographics data at a more granular level, enabling us to tailor services to meet local needs. The ward profiles can be accessed [here](#).

Embedding Equalities in Service Change: Embed equalities in service changes, strategy, and policy development, and decision-making processes across the organisation through robust and rigorous Equality Analysis and Impact Assessments.

- **Updated Equalities Impact Assessment Template** - Executive Cabinet have passed the updated Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) which includes the addition of Neurodivergent individuals to our local protected groups. We are dedicated to building a more equitable community for all residents in Tameside, and its right that we continue to go beyond the nine protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010. The changes reaffirm our commitment to these nine groups as well as cared for children, looked after children, carers, those at a socio-economic disadvantage and mental health. We have now also strengthened our commitment to inclusivity by providing greater support for neurodivergent individuals and have expanded our definition of gender reassignment.

Cultivate Seldom-Heard Voices in Engagement:

Expand our engagement and consultation approaches to increase the involvement of seldom-heard groups, and tailor these where appropriate, to ensure that their perspectives and experiences are central in the development of Council strategies, policies, and services.

- **IRG Tameside Racial Inequalities Project** - In response to the launch of the Greater Manchester Race Equity Framework, Tameside Council developed the Tameside Racial Inequalities Project in conjunction with Diversity Matters North West, West

African Development, Caribbean and African Health Network, and Lindley Education Trust. The aim of this project is to understand the experiences of local residents in what is driving racial inequalities and how local services can best respond. Focus groups and workshops have been conducted with local residents from South Asian and Black African/Caribbean backgrounds – the findings have resulted in a number of recommendations which will go to Health & Wellbeing Board or consideration.

- **Tameside SEND Strategy** – Tameside Council and Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board have been working together to develop a Tameside SEND Strategy to create a more supportive network for children, young people and families with SEND in Tameside. To aid the development of the strategy and to provide feedback on whether the I-Statements and commissioning priorities accurately reflect the needs of families with SEND in Tameside, professionals, parents and others are being invited to attend one of the two upcoming virtual meetings.
- **Islamophobia Workshop** – In December 2023, community groups and local organisations came together at Dukinfield Town Hall to discuss working together to address concerns about anti Muslim hatred within the community. The workshop was organised by Cllr Tafheen Sharif, Cllr Naila Sharif, Cllr Shibley Alam and Atta ul Rasool. At a time when community unity is paramount, the organisers wanted to raise awareness of this form of discrimination, emphasising that there is no place for Islamophobia, antisemitism or any form of hate crime, in our society.



- **IRG Access to and Experiences of Health Care by Ethnic Minorities Report** - Healthwatch Tameside undertook research to understand the experiences of people from ethnic minority communities accessing health and care services. This research drew findings from both a literature review and from focus groups held in Tameside and formed the basis for conclusions and recommendations for further action.
- **Partnership Engagement Network** – Over 2023 and 2024 we held five Partnership Engagement Network Events on a range of topics from Greater Manchester Elective Care Services to Places for Everyone. All of our events were hybrid, to enhance the accessibility of the events and to enable residents to access the events virtually or in-person. Our last PEN event featured discussions on the council's Engagement Strategy and Transformation strategy.

Addressing Barriers to Information and Services:

Instil an organisational culture and practice of acceptance of different staff needs and requirements to ensure that all staff, particularly those from protected groups, feel valued.

- **Neurodiversity Celebration Week and Network Drop in** – The staff Neurodiversity Network hosted a drop-in event in the Tame St Depot reception area as part of Neurodiversity Celebration Week and the ongoing work to highlight our inclusive workforce.
- **Establishing Sunflower Staff Network Welfare Association** – In October, the first meeting of the Sunflower SEN Staff Network is due to be held. The Sunflower S.E.N Staff Network will provide support for parents and caregivers of children or adults with special educational needs, help to raise awareness and increase the visibility of SEN within the workplace, offer advice to management on how to support parents or caregivers of SEN adults or children and help support local SEN communities.
- **World Mental Health Day** - To promote World Mental Health Day, on the 10th October HR and Workforce Development will be holding a team talk day with a mental health drop in, raising awareness of the support available locally. The drop in will be taking place from 12.15-1.15pm.
- **EDI Network Chairs Group** - Since January 2024, Tameside Council has been running an internal staff network chairs group to ensure the voice of employees is at the heart of workforce development. Membership of the group consists of the Assistant Director for People and Workforce Development, chairs of the

Equality networks, representatives from people and workforce development and the Policy and Strategy Manager. The group work collectively to champion equality, diversity and inclusion, provide two way feedback on workforce equality and to inform council policy, strategy and equality impact assessments.

- **Greater Manchester People Inclusion Standards** – Public services across Greater Manchester have come together to launch the first workforce inclusion standards for our city-region. The standards were launched on 1 October 2024 and have been co-designed with organisations across Greater Manchester and staff members, including representatives from staff equality, diversity and inclusion networks. There are nine standards, which collectively aim to improve the employee experience and ensure our organisations are fair, open and inclusive for all – championing fair recruitment practices and continuously learning from our people. We will be adopting these standards as part of our equality, diversity and inclusion work within Tameside Council.
- **Cohesion Event brings Tameside Communities Together** Community groups and leaders from across Tameside came together at an inspiring event to promote cohesion, celebrating and building stronger communities. The gathering, held at Dukinfield Town Hall on 27 October, was organised by Tameside Council Lead Member for Health & Equalities Cllr Tafheen Sharif, working alongside Khush Amdid and West African Development community groups and was open to all residents and communities across Tameside. Keynote speakers including Greater Manchester Police and Tameside Council provided presentations delivering messages about what can be done locally to celebrate diversity

and tackle hate crime. Tameside Council Executive Leader Cllr Eleanor Wills, Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner, Member of Parliament Andrew Gwynne and Faith & Communities Minister Lord Wajid Khan also attended to express the importance of an untied borough. Thoughts and experiences were shared to help grow understandings and appreciations for one another. Coming together like this reflects Tameside's commitment to unity, understanding and most importantly, celebrating our differences.

Celebrating Diversity

Promote and celebrate the value of diversity in Tameside, so that as an anchor institution, the Council can be a positive exemplar to the broader community.

- **British-Pakistani Tape Letters exhibition at Ashton library** - Modus Arts' Tape Letters Exhibition was displayed Ashton Library as part of South Asian Heritage Month, following a 5month display in Ashton Market. The exhibit platforms the cassettes and stories from Ashton's British-Pakistani community. Tape Letters is an oral history project that highlights the little-known cultural practice within the British-Pakistani community of recording and sending voice messages on cassette tape between the 1960s-1980s. Director of Modus Arts, Wajid Yaseen grew up in Ashton, and discovered the tapes when searching for his father's cassettes. Drawing directly both from first-hand interviews and from the informal and intimate conversations on the cassettes themselves, the project seeks to unearth, archive and re/present a portrait of this method of communication, as practised mainly by Pothwari-speaking members of the British-Pakistani community,



- **Shared Lives Party in the Park** – In June, the annual Shared Lives Party in the park was held, celebrating the Shared Lives Scheme. Shared Lives empowers adults with physical, learning and mental health needs to lead an independent life in their community by sharing their daily lives with a shared lives carer. The celebratory event included a range of fun activities such as Zumba, rounders, arts and crafts and even a sing-along.

commenting on their experiences of migration and identity, the unorthodox use of cassette tape technology, and language. The Tape Letters project will be on display from 20th July - November 2024.

- **Retreat to the Exhibition** – In June, the annual collaboration by the borough’s special educational needs and disabilities (SEN/ SEND) arts hub – supported by Cultural Services took place at Thomas Ashton School, Hyde. It displayed work done by young creatives from six Tameside schools who worked with residents at the Lakes Care Home, Dukinfield. Its central feature was the sculpture of two shackled hands made for Holocaust Day. It was complemented by leaflets filled with art, collage and reflections about things the pupils are able to enjoy because they are free.
- **Hawthornes Primary School in Mottram** - In September the new Hawthornes Primary School in Mottram opened its doors to students. Robertson Construction North West were appointed to build the £21million development, which will be managed by New Bridge Academy Trust. The new site will provide 246 school places for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities have been created, significantly increasing capacity within the borough. The standalone bespoke single-storey building, with an internal floor space of 4,038m2, comprises of four early years classrooms, twelve classrooms dedicated to pupils with autistic spectrum disorder, and nine classrooms designed for pupils with moderate learning difficulties.
- **Opening of Brickfields House** - In September, Southway Housing Trust in collaboration with Watson and BTP Architects celebrated the opening of 42 affordable rented homes supporting

residents aged over 55. The council supported this by helping the developers to secure funding from Homes England and GMCA.

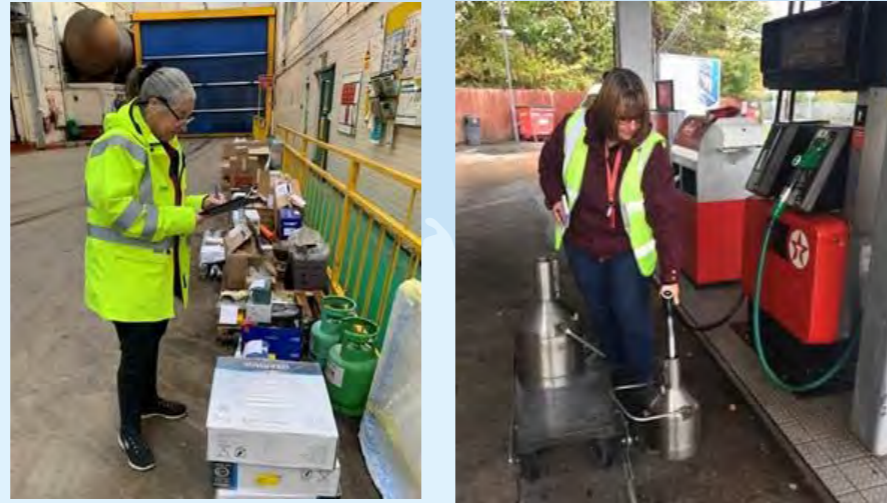


- **Learning to Challenge Sexist Behaviour** – In June school pupils in Tameside learned how to call out sexist behaviour in an education scheme commissioned by the Council and delivered by Talk, Listen, Change. Ten schools in Tameside took part in lessons on emotional wellbeing, identifying unhealthy & abusive behaviours, online literacy & objectification and informed approaches to consent, using age-appropriate content to support healthier relationships. The programme also covered learning how to spot incidents of sexism and public harassment with lessons on

allyship designed to create a holistic approach to supporting safer schools for women and girls.

- **Outloud Play** – During Hate Crime Awareness week, a play based on real life experiences of young people in Tameside, called Outloud, started its tour around local schools to change attitudes and raise awareness of homophobia, bullying and discrimination. The production seeks to open discussions and change attitudes, celebrate diversity and to help increase knowledge about the nature and impact of hate crimes.
- **Breastfeeding Parents Invited to Peer Support Session** – In August, to celebrate World Breastfeeding Week and promote the achievements of those who breastfeed, a free soft play session will be held at Denton Wellness Centre on Wednesday 7 August. This was an event held in collaboration between TMBC Public Health Team and Home-Start.
- **LGBTQ+ Adoption and Fostering Week** - Tameside Council celebrated LGBTQ+ Adoption and Fostering Week by sharing the stories of amazing fostering couples in Greater Manchester to show their experiences. We promoted videos from [Chris & Michael](#) and [Karen & Gaynor](#), showcasing their fostering journeys and providing helpful advice. More and more people from the LGBTQ+ community are discovering that their sexuality and gender is no barrier to becoming a foster carer.

- **International Women's Day** – To celebrate International Women's Day, Tameside Council highlighted the amazing work being done by women working across our services. In particular, to challenge out dated attitudes towards what type of work women can perform, we highlighted the work being done in traditionally male dominated areas including our Greenspace team where several women are undergoing chainsaw training so that they can play a full part in maintaining our extensive woodland.



- **Young Carers Poetry on Display** - The impact our young carers make to the lives of their loved ones is hugely appreciated, and they have now depicted what life is like for them in poetry. The emotional and poignant poems earned the young carers an invitation to take part in a Poetry Together event where they won £250 worth of book vouchers for their participation. The poems written by ten of the children were displayed in the Carers' Centre in Tameside One and our youth centres. There are 421 young carers registered in Tameside aged from five to 18-years-old, who

selflessly provide significant support for family members including making meals, shopping, helping with medication and offering emotional support.



- **Carers Quiz Night** - Carers Centre had some well-deserved time at a fun-filled quiz night held at the Together Centre in Dukinfield. [Tameside Carers Centre](#) provides valuable support to those who care for someone who is ill, struggling or disabled and could not manage without this help, providing helpful advice. More and more people from the LGBTQ+ community are discovering that their sexuality and gender is no barrier to becoming a foster carer.



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