

Scrutiny committee

Date: **Thursday, 07 December 2023**
Time: **16:30**
Venue: **Council chamber City Hall, St Peters Street, Norwich, NR2 1NH**

There will be a pre meeting for members of the committee at 16:00.

Committee members:

Councillors:

Ackroyd (Chair)
Thomas (Va) (Vice chair)
Carrington
Driver
Fox
Francis
Fulton-McAlister (M)
Galvin
Haynes
Osborn
Padda
Prinsley
Thomas (Vi)
(Vacancy)

For further information please contact:

Committee officer: Alex Hand
t: (01603) 989398
e: alexhand@norwich.gov.uk

Democratic services
City Hall
Norwich
NR2 1NH

www.norwich.gov.uk

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Agenda

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|----------|---|-----------------|
| 1 | Apologies

To receive apologies for absence. | |
| 2 | Declarations of interest

(Please note that it is the responsibility of individual members to declare an interest prior to the item if they arrive late for the meeting). | |
| 3 | Minutes

To agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2023. | 5 - 12 |
| 4 | Equality Information Report 2024

This report sets out the council's draft statutory Equality Information Report 2024.
The report is a statutory requirement and needs to be published by 31 January each year. This report will be signed off by Cabinet in January 2024. It should enable the Scrutiny Committee to determine any recommendations or comments it should wish to make.
The council's draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-27 is also appended to this report for information. The strategy will be going to cabinet in January. | 13 - 82 |
| 5 | Consideration of Cabinet decision to award Exceptional Circumstances Relief (ECR) from the payment of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in respect of phases 1 and 2 of the redevelopment proposals at Anglia Square which received planning permission on 18 July 2023.

Purpose: For members of the scrutiny committee to consider a call-in of the cabinet decision of 22 November 2023 to award Exceptional Circumstances Relief (ECR) from the payment of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in respect of phases 1 and 2 of the redevelopment proposals at Anglia Square which received planning permission on 18 July 2023. | 83 - 110 |

Date of publication: **Wednesday, 29 November 2023**



Scrutiny Committee

16:30 to 17:35

23 November 2023

Present: Councillors Ackroyd (chair), Thomas (Va) (vice-chair), Carrington, Champion (substitute for Haynes), Fox, Francis, Fulton-McAlister, Galvin, Osborn, Padda, Prinsley, Sands (M) (substitute for Driver), Stutely and (Thomas (Vi).

Apologies: Councillors Driver and Haynes.

Also Present: Councillors Jones and Hampton

1. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes

RESOLVED to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meetings held on 20 July 2023, 25 July 2023 and 21 September 2023.

3. Report from the Retrofitting Task and Finish Group: Warm, low bills, no carbon: a plan for Norwich's council homes

The chair thanked members of the task and finish group for their work and officers for supporting the group. Councillor Galvin, chair of the task and finish group introduced the report, she advised that the group met five times to explore the topic with the support of officers. Retrofit was a complex area of work and through the process of learning the group concluded that the most effective approach to retrofitting was a place based one. It required the trust of the local community, a systems approach, an investment in upskilling and behaviour change. The rewards of implementing retrofitting were that it positively affected fuel poverty, health and reduced carbon emissions.

The work of the task and finish group focussed on retrofitting within the council's housing stock in recognition that being the landlord of approximately 14,500 homes provided a unique opportunity. Councillor Galvin expressed her gratitude to cabinet members for attending the meeting to hear the outcome of the group's work. She went through the recommendations on the report, thanked officers for supporting the group and took member questions.

The chair asked officers if they would like to add anything to the introduction of the report, the Environmental Strategy Officer noted that retrofitting was the most important task for the council in terms of its positive impacts on the environment and resident's quality of life. Councillor Osborn a member of the task and finish group summarised the approach the group took, the first meeting looked at scoping the item and members determined that it would focus on the council's own housing stock, members considered what evidence they would like presented and which witnesses they would like to hear from. At subsequent meetings the group received reports and presentations from officers in various departments including environmental strategy, housing, finance and development. The group heard from witnesses such as Flagship, Leeds City Council and Lion Homes.

Councillor Stutely, another member of the task and finish group noted that lessons had been learnt from the previous task and finish group on fly tipping of which he was a member. He commended the recommendations on the report to the committee and expressed a desire that this were accepted by cabinet. Further he proposed an extra recommendation in that scrutiny committee follow up on the recommendations on a regular basis and adapt them as new concepts and technologies were introduced.

Councillor Prinsley another member of the task and finish group noted that Norwich was not alone this was a challenge that was being faced all over the country. He referred to the witnesses that had submitted evidence to the task and finish group and advised this was extremely useful.

A member asked if the interests of members of the task and finish group were declared and the chair advised that yes they were at the first meeting of the group when the terms of reference were agreed. In response to a member question the Environmental Strategy Officer advised that the Retrofit Academy was an online course provider which accredited certain retrofitting courses. A member contributed that colleges across the county were partnered with the Retrofit Academy as they did not have the skills to deliver retrofit courses themselves.

In response to a member question the Environmental Strategy Officer advised that in terms of schemes offered by the government to enable retrofitting there were various different types of funding schemes with the focus being on competition based funding. The main source of funding relevant to the council was the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF), the council had successfully bid for Wave 1 funding, was unsuccessful in Wave 2 funding and was optimistic for its bid for Wave 2.2 funding. The funding was limited in scale at £1 to £2 million which was obviously not insignificant but below what the council required to fund necessary works.

A member asked why the bid for Wave 2 funding was unsuccessful and what were the limitations of applying for these types of schemes. In response the Environmental Strategy Officer noted that the process of bidding was very competitive, and it was inevitable some councils would be unsuccessful. The council did not receive feedback as to why its bid was unsuccessful and he emphasised that when feedback was received it tended to be generic. Wave 2.2 offered the opportunity to bid for a £80million pot of funding however councils were not clear on how much they were actually bidding for. In terms of the limitations of these funding mechanisms he commented that there was no guarantee that funding would be received and bids were time consuming to make. Further government funded schemes had a number of

onerous reporting requirements which were administratively intensive compared to if the council could fund the work itself.

In response to a member question the interim head of building safety and compliance advised that boilers which were recently fitted by the council were hydrogen gas enabled. The task and finish group had not considered hydrogen as it had focussed on decarbonisation measures with most hydrogen being made using fossil fuels. A member noted that hydrogen was not available at scale within the UK currently, further a range of studies indicated it was not a viable alternative to gas due to the cost of production, representing three times the amount of gas. There were other uses for hydrogen such as industrial use, transport and agricultural processes with home heating not considered a priority.

In response to a member question the chair of the task and finish group advised that the term social value was a commonly used one in the world of procurement and could include requirements to consider local suppliers on tenders and so forth. In terms of the number of recommendations within the report these could be clustered in groups if committee preferred, they were listed individually as they evolved out of the evidence which the group looked at. She considered each recommendation was valuable and should go forward to cabinet as the report would be weakened if they were removed.

A member referred to recommendations c) and d) within the report and noted that these had resource implications and questioned given the financial pressures on the council whether these should be amended to include that an uplift in council funding would be needed. A member of the task and finish group responded that the report recognised that the existing Housing Revenue Account commitments were not enough to meet retrofitting needs and additional funding would need to be sought.

A member referred to the report and that it highlighted the government's commitment to introduce heat networks and zones and asked what this would look like. The Environmental Strategy Officer commented that there was uncertainty in relation to this and no detail had been provided by government on how this would be funded or who would deliver it. He advised that Norwich had been selected as part of a study into heat networks and zones and an external consultant had been tasked with mapping out areas that would be suitable in terms of high demand. There was no information on how the scheme would work but there was expected to be consultation on the project early next year.

In response to a member question on how retrofitting would work across mixed tenures a member of the task and finish group responded that evidence considered by the group from Leeds City Council who had conducted a number of place based retrofitting projects highlighted how to manage this and emphasised engaging proactively with the local community. How to get people onboard was a key question which needed to be considered as part of a retrofitting communication strategy.

A member of the task and finish group highlighted that retrofitting provided an opportunity for Lion Homes going forward. He emphasised that Lion Homes had social value at its core and using them to deliver a retrofitting business plan would enable the delivery of social value such as training for local people. In response to a member question a member of the task and finish group highlighted that by 2050 or sooner homes would not be on the gas network. The government had indicated that 80% of

homes would be off the gas network by 2025 and subsequently the remaining 20% would experience very high standing charges. It was therefore essential to move away from gas.

Councillor Hampton the cabinet member for climate change welcomed the report and advised that the official response would be made at the next meeting of cabinet. She noted that the report was timely in that it outlined work that had already been ongoing as evidenced within the corporate plan and environmental programme. She advised that Councillor Jones, the deputy leader and cabinet member for housing and community safety and she would take the report away to consider with other cabinet colleagues as it covered a number of portfolios and a considered response would be provided at cabinet.

Councillor Jones the deputy leader and cabinet member for housing and community safety welcomed the report and noted that retrofitting not only had climate benefits but social benefits too. She noted that retrofitting had to be balanced alongside the new build programme and funding was limited. The piecemeal nature of funding provided by government resulted in increased costs. She hoped that the council would be enabled to move to a situation where retrofitting could be considered across tenures as the social, financial and climate impacts were significant. She advised that cabinet would take time to consider the recommendations and how they fitted into the work the council was already undertaking.

RESOLVED:

- a) That scrutiny committee follow up on the recommendations on a regular basis and adapt them as new concepts and technologies are introduced.

To request that cabinet:

- b) Recognise its key roles in essential decarbonisation, combatting fuel poverty and health and economic development, add retrofitting as a core and central theme to the new Corporate Plan.
- c) Develop a state of evidenced readiness for future funding to allow quality funding applications to be submitted efficiently for all available funding opportunities.
- d) Allocate sufficient resource to reach this state of readiness, enabling the council to plan strategically and to effectively manage projects, particularly in the housing team. Writing quality bids, planning strategically and managing the projects will take significant additional resource.
- e) Agree to monitor the effectiveness of the housing team restructure to ensure that the team includes the necessary skills and capacity to deliver retrofitting. Similarly, review the capacity of key support services in other teams within the council – e.g. procurement – to ensure an understanding and culture of retrofit.
- f) Offer ongoing training and advice, including site visits, to all councillors and staff in relation to retrofitting so that they can be a conduit for information to residents.

- g) Aspire and plan to deliver retrofit services through its own companies. Long term, contracts need to be written with this possibility in mind, and development and business planning undertaken to support this as an income stream. This entails exploring opportunities for new builds in collaboration with Lion Homes, assessing the feasibility and ambition for Lion Homes to offer retrofit services, and consequently identifying the necessary support the company will require for successful implementation.
- h) Examine Norwich City Services Limited (NCSL) opportunities and ambition for income generation related to retrofit, and develop an early stage plan in readiness.
- i) Use the knowledge and experience of work already undertaken by Lion Homes to understand resident behaviours and identify the most effective way of communicating with residents around retrofit, as well as using research and experience from experts in this field.
- j) Develop a Retrofit Communications Plan and Engagement Strategy to share learning, best practice, and opportunities, and to ensure that local residents are well informed and engaged.
- k) Play a leading role with its own estate, using public buildings and community centres as demonstrators to showcase and highlight the potential for retrofit whilst working with communities and community associations to help them unlock energy and carbon savings for community benefit.
- l) Consider reworking the HRA business plan in order to deliver retrofitting at pace.
- m) Consider implementing an internal carbon value, alongside Net Present Value (NPV) modelling, to assess and capture the carbon benefits and implications of retrofitting the council's housing stock.
- n) Explore alternative funding, for instance community municipal bonds and other mechanisms in line with previous scrutiny recommendations. A project should be developed to fund the retrofit of community spaces or similar, in the near future, to start to build understanding and public support.
- o) Work with private sector investors to utilise potential external funding opportunities, i.e. in large scale heat networks.
- p) Investigate the potential for additional funding and partnership working resulting from the forthcoming County Deal, as has been the case from Manchester and Leeds' respective devolution deals.
- q) Explore the concept of "comfort charges", following the lead of other local authorities' trials, as a potential source of additional funding.

- r) Ensure that any contract for delivering retrofit delivers social value too.
- s) Assess the existing skills provision and capacity in the local economy, in partnership with other local authorities.
- t) Work with relevant partners, including trade unions, to ensure equal opportunities for all, including skill development, job creation, and community involvement, in the council's retrofit initiatives.
- u) Work with planning officers to use the National Planning Policy Framework to develop local supplementary planning documents to promote and enable retrofit, and to respond to the Future Homes Standard consultation.
- v) Thank officers and external contributors for their significant work informing and writing this report.

4. A review of the effectiveness of Scrutiny Committee

The chair introduced the report and asked for member comments. In response to a member question, she noted that there was training for scrutiny committee members and ideally nominated substitutes would then attend this training. Another member noted that there were nominated substitutes for NCCSP and NHOSC. A member proposed a further recommendation in that the cabinet members underwent joint training with scrutiny committee.

RESOLVED to agree that:

1. There should be quarterly meetings between the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee and group leaders to review the Scrutiny Committee work programme, recommendations and any areas of concern.
2. The Council should develop a scrutiny-executive protocol to outline the relationship and expectations between the Scrutiny Committee and cabinet.
3. There should be reinforcement of the need to attend training, supported by group leaders.
4. Democratic Services should send reports of training attendance to group leaders.
5. The Scrutiny Committee to have named, standing substitutes who are expected to include meetings in their diaries in the event members of the Committee cannot attend, and should attend committee training.
6. The Committee should have a mission statement in the constitution explaining its purpose and role.
7. Each item on the work programme should be supported by a clear intention as to what outcomes are being sought from the review.
8. The TOPIC forums used to establish items on the work programme should be

focused more on outcomes sought and what evidence, witnesses and data is desired to support a review by Scrutiny.

9. TOPIC forms should be circulated to members ahead of consideration of each item and members should be expected to feedback on what evidence they would wish to see; key witnesses they expect to be present; what lines of enquiry they may wish to explore, and what areas should be covered in the report.
10. For the review of the constitution being undertaken to look at how meetings of the whole council can focus most on matters which the Council has most influence on.
11. Cabinet members should be expected to be the primary presenter of reports or issues at scrutiny, with operational support from officers; cabinet members should also lead on responding to questions, referring operational questions to officers to respond to.
12. When recommendations are made to Cabinet, there should be a report back to the Scrutiny Committee on which recommendations were agreed, and which were disagreed (and why).
13. The Chair should attend Cabinet to present the scrutiny recommendations. If the Chair is unable to attend, a volunteer should be sought from the scrutiny committee to attend in their place and present the findings.
14. If Cabinet members have concerns with the scrutiny recommendations, they should ideally raise these at the meeting at which the recommendation was raised, and if that is not feasible, to raise them with the scrutiny committee as early as possible.
15. Where the Cabinet significantly disagrees with the Scrutiny Committee, the cabinet member will be asked back to the scrutiny committee to explain why that was the case.
16. To review ways to promote the outcomes of the scrutiny committee and the benefits of scrutiny work done.
17. To work with the communications team to look at ways to encourage feedback and input from members of the public head of each scrutiny item.
18. The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee to do a circular to all members following each scrutiny committee summarising what happened and the outcomes, to be shared on e-councillor.
19. The Council should consider whether there are sufficient resources to justify the appointment of a scrutiny officer to support the work programme development and the consideration of items on the work programme, such as scheduling and briefing witnesses to attend.
20. Review opportunities of the Scrutiny Committee to get out and about in the

community and broaden how it undertakes its work.

21. Look at changing the approach to the work programme setting, for example a quarterly more formal review.
22. To undertake a 6 monthly check-in on how the recommendations have progressed; and
23. For joint training with cabinet and scrutiny committee to take place.

5. Scrutiny committee work programme 2022-23

The chair highlighted that the item on the NCSL business plan would not be received at the December scrutiny committee meeting and in response to a member question the committee officer responded that the Managing Director of NCSL advised that the company would be considering its business plan in 2024/25 and it would then subsequently come to scrutiny. The chair further advised members that the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Strategy 2024-2027 which was scheduled for the December meeting was only for information and not for consideration by members.

It was noted that this left space at the December meeting of scrutiny committee and members requested to hear from officers about the process and structure used for the corporate plan and if possible to hear about the progress of the Communication and Engagement Strategy which was linked to the corporate plan refresh. Members noted that the December meeting was only in two weeks and the request should be made on the proviso that officers had time to accommodate it.

RESOLVED to ask that the committee officer to:

- 1) Request that the Strategy team attend the December meeting of scrutiny committee to provide an update on the process and structure used to refresh the corporate plan; and
- 2) Request that the Strategy team attend the December meeting of scrutiny committee to provide an update on the progress of the Communication and Engagement Strategy used to refresh the corporate plan.

6. Report from the Norfolk Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Prinsley the committee's representative on the Norfolk Health and Overview Committee apologised to members as he had failed to attend the last meeting or to notify the substitute to attend. Please note the full minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2023 are available on the county council's website [here](#).

CHAIR



Committee name: Scrutiny

Committee date: 07/12/2023

Report title: Norwich City Council - Equality Information Report 2024

Portfolio: Councillor Giles, Cabinet member for communities and social inclusion

Report from: Interim executive director of housing and community safety

Wards: All wards

OPEN PUBLIC ITEM

Purpose

This report sets out the council's draft statutory Equality Information Report 2024 which is appended.

The report is a statutory requirement and needs to be published by 31 January each year. This report will be signed off by Cabinet in January 2024. It should enable the Scrutiny Committee to determine any recommendations or comments it would wish to make.

The council's draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-27 is also appended to this report for information. The strategy will be going to cabinet in January.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Scrutiny Committee review the content of this year's annual report to determine any recommendations Scrutiny would wish to make to Cabinet.

Policy framework

The council has five corporate aims, which are:

- People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city.
- Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city.
- Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.
- The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish.
- Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.

This report meets the **People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city** corporate aim – by recognising and tackling existing inequalities that form a barrier to individuals living the independent and safe lives they seek and deserve.

This report meets **The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish** corporate aim – by working with partners and our communities to create an environment that allows people to feel they belong, and that they are respected and heard, whilst working to maximise the opportunities they have to succeed and thrive in Norwich.

Report details

1. As a local authority, the Council has a statutory requirement to publish an annual Equality Information Report. The report will be considered by cabinet in January 2024.
2. The draft Equality Information Report is appended to this report. It provides key data about Norwich residents and city council customers and employees, especially those with protected characteristics under The Equality Act 2010.
3. The council's draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-27 is also appended to this report for information. The strategy will also be going to cabinet in January.
4. Previous Equality Information Reports can be found on the Equality and Diversity section of the council's website: <http://www.norwich.gov.uk/equalityanddiversity>.
5. This report maintains last year's revised format, comprising of five sections:
 - a. Our duty
 - b. Working with our communities
 - c. Celebrations and commemorations
 - d. Changing how we do things
 - e. Information about our people, customers, and employees.
6. The format provides evidence to enable us to better allocate resources to help those communities identified as needing additional support. It will also form part of the evidence base for the forthcoming Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan that is in development.

Consultation

7. This report has been compiled in consultation with officers from across the council, the portfolio holder and key stakeholders.

Implications

Financial and resources

Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the council's stated priorities, as set out in its Corporate Plan 2022-26 and budget.

8. There are no proposals in this report that would reduce or increase resources.

Legal

9. The publication of the Equality Information Report 2024 forms part of our Public Sector Equality Duty requirements under the Equality Act 2010.

Statutory considerations

Consideration	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Equality and diversity	Equality impact assessments are carried out on a project specific basis where appropriate.
Health, social and economic impact	There are positive impacts associated with a number of projects as detailed throughout the report.
Crime and disorder	There are positive impacts associated with a number of projects as detailed throughout the report.
Children and adults safeguarding	There are positive impacts associated with a number of projects as detailed throughout the report.
Environmental impact	There are positive impacts associated with a number of projects as detailed throughout the report.

Risk management

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
As specified in the Equality Act 2010 the Council must publish equality data annually. This includes reporting on how we are integrating equality, diversity and inclusion into our work practices and publishing our workforce employment information.	Failure to have 'due regard' in relation to the Equality Act 2010 could mean: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a judicial review of decision making • incurring unnecessary costs to the council • reputational damage • unconscious discrimination against a part of the city's community • developing services that do not meet the needs of our communities. 	<p>The publication of an annual Equality Information Report every January.</p> <p>The publication of specific SMART equality objectives at least every four years which are aligned to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.</p> <p>The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy allows identification of risks around liabilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010.</p>

Other options considered

10. Not applicable as the publication of an annual Equality Information Report is statutory requirement under the Equality Act 2010.

Reasons for the decision/recommendation

11. This report and the appendix should enable the Scrutiny committee to determine any recommendations or comments it would wish to make in regard to the Draft Equality Information Report 2024.

Background papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Draft Equality Information Report 2024


Appendix 2: Draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-27 (for information).

Contact officer: Strategy Manager

Name: Nick Bodger

Telephone number: 01603 987816

Email address: nickbodger@norwich.gov.uk

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Norwich City Council Equality Information Report 2024

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Further Information and Accessibility

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The council aims to make all the ways that we communicate accessible for everyone, including those with impairments to vision, hearing, mobility, thinking and understanding. As the proportion of our communications that are digital continues to increase, changes we have made to make communications more accessible have been informed by Government's [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\)](#). WCAG is based on four design principles: perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust.

Examples of changes we have made to increase accessibility include:

- Making key documents and publications available as web pages rather than PDFs, for example Citizen and Tenants' and leaseholders' community (TLC) magazines. Content is also structured logically and can be navigated and read by a screen reader or other assistive technologies.
- Ensuring online content works well on mobile devices
- Using descriptive links so users know where a link will take them, or what the downloadable linked content is
- Providing text alternatives ('alt text') for any non-text content and the addition of subtitles to videos
- Implementing simplified and uncluttered format and design in all communications
- Ensuring sufficient colour contrast for online and printed design
- Ongoing review of information to ensure it can be easily understood with calls to action that provide a clear onward journey.

This year, in order to improve the accessibility of this report, we have chosen a consistent colour scheme that is accessible to individuals with vision impairments, such as colour blindness. This is designed in a way that avoids using clashing colours, as well as providing alternative identifiers for different data series, such as different shaped markers. The colour scheme was generated using [Venngage](#), a reliable online resource for accessible colour palettes.

Foreword from the Leader of the Council

As a city, Norwich actively benefits from its rich cultural diversity and history of inclusivity. Through its vibrant community and various key partnerships with local organisations, Norwich City Council endeavors to encourage these communities to thrive, as well as promotes equity for all those living, visiting, and working within the city.

Like every city across the country, we are confronted with the challenges posed by the existing inequalities within our society. These challenges represent the driving force for much of what we do as leaders and champions of this progressive city.

Unfortunately, amid the persistent cost-of-living crisis, we are seeing the expansion of socioeconomic inequalities within our community, which highlights the unmet need for basic necessities such as food, clothing, and affordable energy to heat our homes.

We recognise the stubborn nature of the difficult times our community are facing and remain wholly committed to the reduction of inequality in all its forms. To help us tackle inequality and promote diversity and inclusion, we maintain our strong working relationships with local service delivery partners, as we work together to support our residents, businesses and visitors to access advice and assistance.

Norwich City Council continues to work towards our 2040 City Vision, as we promote Norwich's growth towards a truly creative, liveable, fair, connected, and dynamic city. Against the backdrop of huge national issues, Norwich strives to be at the forefront of change, not following it.

This Equality Information Report will highlight the progress we have made to reduce inequality locally and our work to assist those individuals and communities who need our support the most. This report also provides some useful insights that we may draw upon to help us mitigate and address some of the challenges our residents, service users and partners are facing.

Cllr Mike Stonard
Leader

SECTION ONE: Our duty

Introduction

1. We want Norwich to be a fair, kind, accessible, and inclusive city. We work with our partners to make Norwich the best it can be for everyone, recognising that different people and communities have different needs, so it's a city where everyone:
 - a. Feels they belong
 - b. Is respected
 - c. Has a voice
 - d. Has the chance to succeed and thrive.
2. We also want to be an organisation that makes a real difference for the people of Norwich by:
 - a. Showing respect and kindness to everyone
 - b. Giving the most help to the people who need it the most.
 - c. Continuing to learn and improve
 - d. Focusing on prevention and early intervention.
3. We have been working towards this for many years. This report covers what we have been doing over the last 12 months to tackle the inequalities that exist within our city, improve life within our communities and develop effective working partnerships with residents and organisations across the city, as we work to improve equality together.

Equality refers to everyone having the same chances to do what they can. Some people may need extra help to get the same chances.

Equality is right for many reasons:

- People enjoy life more if they are treated fairly.
- The country is richer because each and every person can do what they are best at.
- It is easier for people to live side by side and get on with each other if everyone is treated fairly.

Public Sector Equality Duty

4. As a public sector body, Norwich City Council has a responsibility to ensure that the needs of all of those we work with and for are considered when developing policy, delivering services, and managing our workforce.

Equality Act or the Act - This is the Government's law to make sure all people are treated fairly. The Act became law in 2010 when Parliament agreed it was right.

5. The [Equality Act 2010](#) works to provide people with legal protection from discrimination in the workplace and wider society. The Act outlines what public bodies must do to prevent discrimination and promote equality, diversity, and inclusion. The council must demonstrate due regard to three general equality duties across its functions. These are:

- a. Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- b. Eliminating discrimination, harassment, and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- c. Promoting good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Equality Duty - This is a law for public bodies telling them they must think about how they can make sure their work supports equality. For example, in their services, through their jobs, and through the money they spend.

- 6. The Act tells some public bodies, like the council to do certain things to help make equality happen, for example:
 - a. Think about equality when we are buying things.
 - b. Make men and women's wages easier to compare.
 - c. Use positive action if we want to make sure our workers are diverse.
 - d. Think about how we can help to stop people doing less well than other people because of their family background or where they were born.
 - e. Think about treating people from different groups fairly and equally.
 - f. Think about what we can do to make our services more helpful to poorer people.

Positive action - This lets employers and service providers think about equality when looking at who they might supply their services to or employ. It might mean providing services in a different way or giving people information or training. For employers it might mean choosing between two people who can do the job as well as each other.

Diverse or diversity - This is a mix of different kinds of people. For example, men and women, young and old people, people of different races, disabled and non-disabled people.

- 7. We also have a duty to review and publish Equality objectives. Our objectives over the past year, as published in June 2021 were:
 - a. Develop a new Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy – This strategy is in development and is due for publication in January 2024.
 - b. Redesign council services and reshape teams around the needs of users, creating more joined up and accessible services which are in tune with the changing needs and behaviours of those we serve – see [Section four](#) of the report for progress.
 - c. Understand our communities and celebrate and respect diversity – see [Sections two](#) and [three](#) of the report for progress.
 - d. Recruit, develop and retain a diverse and representative workforce – see [Section four](#) of the report for progress.
- 8. Our annual [Equality Information Report](#) highlights the progress we are making against these objectives.

Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristics - This refers to different groups of people in England, Scotland and Wales who sometimes get treated unfairly.

9. The protected characteristics covered by the Public Sector Equality Duty are:
 - a. **People of different races** - people who come from different places or have different ethnic origins; they may have different skin colours or hold a passport from a country outside of the UK.
 - b. **Religion or Belief** - people with differing religions or beliefs, or people without a religion or belief
 - c. **People of different ages**
 - d. **People of different sex** – women and men
 - e. **People with a disability** – physical or mental
 - f. **Gender Reassignment** - transgender people who have changed their sex or are in the process of doing so.
 - g. **Pregnancy and Maternity** - women having a baby, and women just after they have had a baby.
 - h. **Marriage and Civil Partnership** - partnerships entered into by a man and a woman or a couple of the same sex.
 - i. **Sexual Orientation** – a person’s sexual attraction to other people, or lack thereof including persons of the opposite, same or either sex.
10. We must have due regard for the **Socio-economic Duty** – family background or where a person is born still affects their life. For example, a child from a rich family often does better at school than a child from a poor family, even if the poorer child is cleverer. This is sometimes called socio-economic inequality.
11. Our policies and actions seek to ensure that we do not negatively impact those who may be from low-income households, carers, people sleeping rough or any other marginalised or vulnerable group.
12. Local data relating to the characteristics can be found at [Section five](#) of this report.

Meeting the Equality Duty

13. We use various tools to meet our duties and to promote equality, diversity, and inclusion across our communities:
 - a. **Equality, diversity, and inclusion officer group** – an internal cross council working group to drive equality improvements.
 - b. **Shared ambitions with strategic partners to reduce inequality** – Through strategic partnerships such as the Norwich 2040 City Vision Partnership, we seek to drive equality improvements across the city through progressive action.
 - c. **Workforce Diversity Strategy** – this works towards us having a more representative workforce that better reflects our local demographic.

- d. **Training and development provision** - ongoing training is provided to officers including equality and diversity duties and responsibilities, equality impact analysis, trauma informed approach, and safeguarding children, young people, and adults at risk.
- e. **Community mapping** – members and officers are updated about the makeup of the Norwich community through briefings, [State of Norwich](#) reports and through links to other data sources including [Norfolk Insight](#).
- f. We have an [Equality and Diversity Policy](#) which is being reviewed and updated, and we are developing an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, due to be published in January 2024.
- g. We carry out **Equality Impact Assessments** wherever appropriate to promote access to services for all members of our communities and to eliminate discrimination and advance equality in our actions, policies, and strategies. Our work predominantly, although not exclusively, focuses on reducing inequality target areas (defined in [section five](#)) and our approach enables residents and groups to produce sustained change.

SECTION TWO: Working with our communities

- 14. Our community enabling team works with residents, grassroots organisations and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise partners across Norwich so that neighbourhoods can be more responsive to what is of value to the communities who live in them. This involves a number of activities including:
 - a. Making it easier for residents to get permission for developing community gardens where neighbours can come together to grow food and plants – our permissions process gives residents a single-entry point via a webform to apply for permission to take on green space in housing estates and support the management of parks.
 - b. Supporting residents with practical advice and guidance to establish new groups and grow existing organisations. This includes supporting learning opportunities and peer to peer networking through our food network, outdoor projects network and local networks we support such as the Lakenham Initiative.
 - c. The provision of small-scale grants for communities to come together for things such as street parties for royal or other celebrations - we have given out a total of 23 “Get Involved” grants consisting of 18 “Get Together” grants of up to £50 each for communities who want to come together around occasions like this. 2 “Get Started” grants of up to £300 for groups who are starting to establish, and 3 “Get Growing” grants of up to £500 for those who are taking that next step in their development.
 - d. Supporting existing organisations working with vulnerable and minority groups, this includes those working with refugees and asylum seekers as well as food provision. We’ve supported a number of these groups, including those who provide advice, guidance and therapy to those fleeing conflict, as well as a number of grassroots foodbanks across the city.

15. A real success story is that of the Tuckswood Cycle Hub. Based on a housing estate in the Lakenham ward of the city, the team have supported the development of this community-led project over the past few years. Today, operating out of two council-owned garages, the hub provides regular repairs sessions as well as the opportunity for local residents to purchase refurbished secondhand bikes at a heavily discounted price. It does so in a way which builds connection in the community, strengthening the assets of the estate.

Community conversations

16. To help guide our ongoing work, we have heard from communities with a range of backgrounds, identities and cultural affiliations through some specific conversations. Equality, diversity, and inclusion were understood to be key elements for any positively functioning environment and city like Norwich.
17. The feedback is being used to shape our forthcoming Equality, diversity and inclusion strategy, which is due to be published in January 2024 and inform our action plan that will sit under this, and which will be published later next year.
18. This approach of having theme-based community conversations was well received. As a result, the council took this approach to reach more people with our annual budget consultation – to ensure the voices of community members in Norwich are better reflected.
19. Conversations have been analysed and we have established a community conversations insights hub. The trends indicate there is a consistency across the city in that residents value community, the natural and built environment, and health and wellbeing. We have also been able to track what assets and deficits residents see in the areas and, through our work in the community, have started to support community assets to increase their capacity as well as build links to address what are seen as the deficits.
20. The insights from this work are now hosted on a website which is shared with partners. Whilst each neighbourhood is different, there are some strong consistencies. Community is consistently considered to be of greatest importance to residents with the natural environment and health & wellbeing following shortly behind. We have also been able to track the increase in concern around the cost of living in some areas.

Gypsy, Romany, and Traveller site development

21. Our housing development team has continued to work in partnership with Broadland Housing Association to help improve the Gypsy, Romany, and Traveller site in the city.
22. To allow more pitches on the site, we have leased additional land to Broadland Housing Association; the land sits next to the current site at Swanton Road. This site has now been redeveloped with 13 new pitches.
23. Planning approval has been granted for an additional 3 pitches on the new site and for existing pitches to be remodelled and refurbished to meet modern standards. Work has now commenced on these projects following the successful awarding of £0.69m DLUHC Traveller Site funding and an additional £0.315m funding from the city council. It is anticipated that the work will be complete in

Spring 2024 and once complete, that there will be a total of 31 pitches, all meeting current standards for space and amenity.

24. The new pitches and the re-modelling have been carried out in consultation with the existing community who have welcomed the proposals.
25. A recent [Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessment](#) undertaken as evidence for the [Greater Norwich Local Plan \(GNLP\)](#), has identified further pitch requirements across the Greater Norwich area. Following public consultation by the GNLP, a number of sites have been proposed for allocation to meet the identified need.

Anti-racism charter

26. In July 2022, we were proud to sign up to [Unison's Anti-Racism Charter](#). At an event organised by Norwich City Unison branch, the leader of the council, the Lord Mayor and our Chief Executive all signed this important document.
27. It is not enough to be non-racist. Signing the Charter commits the council to actively challenge racism wherever it occurs. The pledges we have made will also ensure our policies, processes, and organisational culture celebrate, and champion the diversity of our whole workforce.
28. We are currently progressing the charter's action plan, as we fully embed anti-racist practice within everything we do. The action plan highlights the actions we have taken to promote racial diversity and inclusion, recognise the impact of racism on people's wellbeing and entrench robust training, monitoring, and reporting processes that allow us to fulfil and improve our anti-racism programme of initiatives and actions.

Supporting victim-survivors of domestic abuse

29. Norwich City Council are proud to be the first organisation in the country to receive accreditation through Alpha Vest's Community Advocate Scheme. [The Community Advocate Scheme](#) is a new scheme that acknowledges and recognises businesses and organisations' continued commitment and support of the shared vision to 'break the cycle' of domestic abuse. This can be achieved through a number of different ways, with a clear focus on awareness, prevention, and early intervention.
30. In October 2023, the council was proudly awarded with a certificate verifying the recent work we have undertaken to ensure that our organisation is better equipped to support victim survivors of domestic abuse.

Supporting the Armed Forces community

31. The [Armed Forces Covenant](#) is a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and the local armed forces community. It is a promise by the nation to ensure that those who serve or who have served in the armed forces, and their families, are treated fairly.
32. As an equal opportunity employer, we acknowledge the Armed Forces Covenant to show our continued support and appreciation to those who have served, and it is our commitment to ensure they will not face a disadvantage when accessing

our services. Our work does not stop at those still serving in the armed forces, but we also assist reserve units, veterans, military families, and their dependants.

33. Last year, Norwich City Council was presented with a Silver Award from the Ministry of Defence for recognition for the work that we do to support the Armed Forces, and how we implement the covenant into our employment practices.
34. We are in the process of updating our website to ensure that those protected by the covenant can easily access the support and information about our services that they require. It will include:
 - a. Housing functions: information on how we support the housing of service personnel through our allocations policy for social housing; our tenancy strategy; homelessness; and disabled facilities grants.
 - b. Employment: when a veteran or ex-member of the armed forces applies for a role, if they can provide evidence in their supporting information and, if they meet the minimum and essential criteria for the role, they will be invited for interview regardless of their employment history.
 - c. Special leave: in addition to our range of special leave options, we support service personnel by granting 2 weeks paid leave to attend summer camps for volunteer members of the Non-Regular Forces; if members of the Territorial Army are required to attend additional training, which they are unable to attend outside normal working hours, they will be granted additional paid leave.
35. We have also rolled out the following e-learning training modules for our staff:
 - a. [The Armed Forces Covenant for Front Line Workers](#)
 - b. [Housing, Homelessness, and the Armed Forces Covenant](#)

Accessible Norwich

36. Our community enabling team has started working with the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector to create a network of groups and organisations who are working on making the city more accessible and inclusive. This work has progressed, with a number of VCSE partners having now submitted a joint application for Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) funding for a phased project to improve the accessibility of the city based on lived experience and engagement.

City of Sanctuary

37. Norwich is a part of a national movement building a culture of welcome for refugees and asylum-seekers, many of whom have lost their homes, fled persecution, and sought safety here - [Norwich City of Sanctuary provides details of this initiative.](#)
38. Norwich City Council is proud of its history of welcoming people seeking safety in Norwich. We are committed in the medium-term to becoming an accredited council of sanctuary through cross-team working to ensure our services meet the necessary criteria.

39. Since March 2022, our community support team has been working in collaboration with Norfolk County Council and the other districts to support people fleeing the conflict in Ukraine.
40. In total we have helped support over 240 guests (adults and children) through the scheme since we started. Currently we are working with 50 active hosts that are hosting 83 Ukrainian guests (58 adults and 25 children). Many guests have now successfully moved on from their hosting arrangements (private rental, moved away, returned to Ukraine).
41. In Norwich we have carried out a total of 150+ inspections to ensure the accommodation being offered by hosts is suitable. Furthermore, we are now approaching 300+ welfare visits for guests/hosts – these are done at milestones within the hosting arrangement (or ad hoc as needed), including a welcome visit, 3-month, 6-month and 12-month visit. These are vital to understand any specific issues that our hosts, guests and the Ukrainian community are experiencing and provide an opportunity to advise on any move-on arrangements.
42. Currently, guests are given a three-year visa under the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme. Part of the sponsorship scheme is to offer hosting arrangements (up to two years) and we are very thankful for all the Norwich hosts that have come forward and opened their homes (and lives) to these guests.
43. Our main focus has been to ensure the wellbeing of any people we're welcoming into the city. Last year we recruited two Ukrainian welfare officers, both originally from Ukraine, who have lived in the UK for a number of years. They carry out ongoing welfare checks along with any other visits required to ensure that people are settling in and are receiving the help and support they need.
44. We continue to support guests after they have left hosting arrangements too. The team also help resource and support two 'welcome' support sessions at the library in The Forum on Mondays and Tuesdays, along with a weekly session held at [Norfolk Polonia](#). These drop-in sessions held at the library are well attended – often by guests from all our neighbouring districts, with the team able to advise and signpost them to help answer their queries and questions.

Supporting our LGBTQ+ Community

45. This year we have unfortunately continued to see a concerning rise in transphobia in the UK with 4,732 hate crimes against transgender people being recorded in the year ending March 2023. This represents an 11% increase in transgender based hate crime on the previous year. Trans rights are human rights and affirm the legal rights of all protected groups under the 2010 Equality Act. A graph illustrating this trend can be found within the [Hate Crime & Incidents section](#) of this report.
46. The council states that: Trans women are women. Trans men are men. Non-binary people are non-binary. We believe in the dignity of all people, and their right to respect and equality of opportunity. We value the strength that comes with difference and the positive contribution diversity brings to our community. Our aspiration is for Norwich to be a safe, welcoming, and inclusive city for everyone.
47. We continue to work with [Norwich Pride](#) which, this July, celebrated its fifteenth annual parade. A group of Norwich City Council employees joined friends and

family to celebrate Pride and marched across the city. As part of taking part in the march, Norwich City Council signed the [Norwich Pride Pledge](#), so committing to ensuring our organisation remains a safe, welcoming and friendly place for LGBTQIA+ customers and staff. Like last year, we publicly acknowledged the Trans Day of Remembrance on 20 November - the [Transgender Flag](#) will continue to be flown to mark this day and the International Trans Day of Visibility (March 31st). We have also updated our flag to fly at Pride in July to the [Intersex Progress Pride Flag](#).

48. We have encouraged council employees and Councillors to make small gestures that make it clear that transgender and non-binary people are welcome. This includes adding pronouns to email signatures.
49. We have a large number of online forms and, as these are renewed, we are considering a gender-neutral approach.

Helping people to live independently

50. The council's home improvement team offer [financial and practical assistance](#) to help residents to stay living independently within their own homes. Through our team of highly trained occupational therapists, case workers, technical officers, and qualified contractors, we provide:
 - a. Adaptations, such as converting bathrooms to wet rooms, building ramps to help with getting in and out of the property, and installing stairlifts to help with getting up and down stairs.
 - b. Works or adaptations to help with a timely discharge from, or to prevent admission to hospital, such as the fitting of key safes and other adaptations.
 - c. Small scale emergency repairs such as heating repairs, resolving small leaks and minor electrical issues.
 - d. Significant repairs to rectify hazards such as excess cold, leaking roofs and damp and mould growth.
 - e. Replacing old and inefficient boilers with modern equivalents, reducing heating bills by up to 15%.
 - f. Income maximisation to ensure all eligible benefits are being claimed.
 - g. Signposting to other council services and external organisations as appropriate.
51. The team work hard to make their budget (approximately £4m for 2023-24) go as far as possible in helping as many people as they can. We are the only local authority in Norfolk to offer financial help of at least £5,000 to all eligible applicants to help them adapt their home and continue to live in it.
52. In 2022-2023 the home improvement team awarded 474 grants totalling over £2.4m with a grant average of £5,273. This helped:
 - a. 314 council tenants
 - b. 120 owner occupiers
 - c. 8 private renters
 - d. 53 housing association tenants
53. The people helped were mainly White British (92%). The age profile of people helped was:
 - a. 312 over 65-year-olds
 - b. 182 Working Age Adults
 - c. 1 child

54. In addition to the work our home improvement team have been doing to support residents to live independently, officers within our property development team are actively in discussion with colleagues at Norfolk County Council to understand the housing need for our residents with additional requirements. This includes our residents with physical difficulties, poor mental health, learning disabilities, older people and those fleeing domestic abuse. We are actively looking for development opportunities that would assist with meeting the housing needs for these supported housing clients.

Helping people to keep warm

55. The council's environmental strategy and community enabling team have been supporting households across Norwich through a range of schemes aiming to reduce fuel poverty, helping more people keep warm in their home, whilst also reducing their greenhouse gas emissions.

Fuel poverty is when someone cannot afford to heat or cool their home to a comfortable temperature – if they do, this will more than likely mean getting into debt.

56. 16% of households in Norwich are experiencing fuel poverty. To help our residents, we offer a range of support including:
- a. Advice on how to reduce energy use in their home
 - b. Benefits advice and emergency fuel payments
 - c. Signposting and access to energy efficiency/retrofit grant schemes
 - d. Delivery of energy efficiency improvements to low-income households.
57. We were one of the first councils in the country to run a [collective energy switching scheme](#), helping residents access cheaper energy. Since the scheme began in 2016, we've helped over 6,000 residents switch energy provider, saving households hundreds of pounds on their energy bills each year. The current state of the energy market has meant that opportunities to switch have been limited. However, the scheme will continue as and when switching provides value for money.
58. We were also one of the first councils in the country to take part in the [Solar Together](#) scheme, which allows residents to group together as a collective to buy cheaper solar panels. The 2022 scheme was highly successful, with hundreds of residents signing up. The 2023 scheme is now underway and looks to be equally successful.
59. Over the past two years we've delivered energy efficiency measures, ranging from external wall insulation to solar panels, to over 350 private and social homes across the city. These measures will significantly reduce residents' fuel bills and increase the comfort of their homes, all whilst also reducing their greenhouse gas emissions.
60. One Norwich resident who received free solar panels via the Sustainable Warmth Scheme, said: "I'm really chuffed with the solar on my roof. As winter comes and the cost of energy increases, it's reassuring knowing that I'm creating my own electricity and reducing my bills. Plus, I'm doing my bit for the planet".

61. We continue to make our council housing stock more energy efficient and, in doing so, minimising energy consumption and reducing tenants' bills. The council has committed more than £50 million by 2030 to ensure that all of our housing stock reaches EPC band C, which will involve installing measures such as external wall insulation, solar PV, and air source heat pumps.
62. With the cost-of-living crisis continuing, and energy contributing significantly to this, it is vital that we continue to provide support for residents; over the next year we will be:
- a. Supporting residents to utilise ECO and Great British Insulation Scheme funding to install energy efficiency upgrades in their homes.
 - b. Referring residents through the council's home improvement team to receive support and funding to stay in their homes, particularly residents at risk of hospitalisation and in cold homes.
 - c. Providing vulnerable residents with emergency fuel payments
 - d. Offering the [collective energy switching scheme](#)
 - e. Offering energy advice and support to residents to enable access to appropriate funding for heating repairs and to reduce fuel debts.
63. More information about the council's plans to address fuel poverty can be found in the recently adopted [Sustainable Warmth Strategy](#).

Helping people in debt

64. The council has been committed for many years to reducing financial exclusion, recognising the inequality that exists in our city. The current cost of living crisis has created multiple challenges for both our residents and the services that support them. Demand on support services far outstrips supply which further highlights the importance of the work we deliver with our partners and the ongoing needs of our residents. Support continues to be crucial for many, as people's needs continue to be impacted by the cost-of-living crisis. Increasing private sector rents, food prices and high inflation/low wages mean we are seeing more people fall into poverty.
65. There are key areas that have been underway for some years; they form the central planks within our response to helping and supporting those most affected by the [cost-of-living crisis](#):
- a. Our approach to dealing with personal debt as a result of an adopted [policy](#) that builds holistic, wraparound support for vulnerable customers in debt, whilst at the same time continuing to maintain an income for much needed services.
 - b. The [Debt Respite Scheme](#) (otherwise known as "breathing space") came into force in May 2021. The main aim of this scheme is to incentivise more people to access professional debt advice and to access it as early as possible. The scheme also provides debtors who engage with this advice, the headspace to find a debt solution by pausing creditor enforcement action, interest, and charges.
 - c. In April 2022, the council recommissioned the provision of information, advice, and advocacy services for residents via the [Financial Inclusion Consortium](#), with £174,623 awarded for 2023/24. This service is invaluable - it cannot

prevent people from getting into debt, but it can help people to find a longer term, more sustainable solution to their financial challenges.

- d. The council continues to provide funding of £3,750 per year to use the Norfolk Community Advice Network ([NCAN referral system](#)) to enable our officers to receive referrals from, and refer people to charities and other organisations for information, advice and advocacy support. This includes wider issues that can contribute to debt, such as housing, legal and immigration support. [NCAN](#) is a Norfolk-wide partnership of agencies that provides free independent advice with a 'one front door' approach to support. It provides useful insight into the volumes of people needing the help of support agencies and the types of support they require.
 - e. Many residents across Norwich may, at some point, require help from the council in terms of debt, housing, welfare benefits, financial, or other types of support. Multiple teams are involved in delivering this much needed help. Such support includes:
 - a. [Homeless prevention and housing advice](#)
 - b. [Tenancy support from housing officers](#)
 - c. [Budgeting and money advice service for tenants](#)
 - d. [Access to support funds via the community enabling team](#)
 - e. [Benefits support via the revenues and benefits team](#)
 - f. Financial inclusion advice via the strategy team
 - g. Tenancy sustainment via the specialist support team
 - h. Joined up, multi-agency support through the Norwich Early Help Hub.
66. Further details on the debt advice and support services we offer can be found in the recent [Scrutiny Committee report](#).
67. Through our [Council Tax Reduction Scheme](#), we continue to offer 100 percent discount on Council Tax for eligible residents, allowing us to help approximately 10,000 people each year.

Norwich Living Wage Place

68. We recognise that the most effective pathway out of poverty is a fair and sustainable wage, which is why the council is playing a leading role to promote the [Living Wage](#) in Norwich. In September 2022, a coalition of local businesses, charities and public sector organisations launched a plan to substantially increase the number of Living Wage Employers in the city. The 'Making Norwich a Living Wage City' Action Group has been recognised by the [Living Wage Foundation](#).
69. At the time of writing this report, there were 81 Real Living Wage accredited employers in Norwich, meaning 1,175 workers have already received a pay rise that meets the Real Living Wage. The group's action plan aims to nearly double the number of employers paying the Real Living Wage to 140 by 2025.
70. In late October 2023, the Living Wage Foundation announced the new Living Wage rates and encouraged accredited employers to implement them by May 2024.

Support for people sleeping rough over winter

71. Additional shelter for anyone sleeping rough in Norwich is being provided every night throughout winter, building on the success of the city's approach in previous

years. The shelter is again kindly provided by the Roman Catholic Cathedral and Norwich Central Baptist Church, who have already proved to be welcoming, flexible venues.

72. The winter night shelter is available every evening from November to March, providing additional beds for anyone in need of one. This set up means severe weather arrangements do not need to be formally triggered in response to a drop in temperature, as emergency beds are available throughout the winter months.
73. This provision goes beyond the year-round daily outreach service delivered by the [Pathways](#) team, commissioned by Norwich City Council, and the specialist organisations behind it, so will be targeted at those not accessing accommodation through these routes.
74. In addition to existing support and offers of accommodation to anyone currently [rough sleeping](#), outreach teams will be focusing on offering advice to anyone on the streets. Our proactive, collaborative strategy means we can be confident that emergency beds will be available for people throughout the winter, no matter what the temperature is.
75. Anyone needing a bed at the winter shelter will need to be referred by the [Pathways team or city council](#), who can make sure everyone in need can get the support that they need and be moved into longer-term accommodation as quickly as possible. Concerns about someone sleeping rough should be reported through to www.streetlink.org.uk.
76. The council's rough sleeping strategy seeks to break the cycle of homelessness through prevention, intervention, recovery, and systemic support. Recent examples of innovative partnership work between the organisations include the Pathways service and [Somewhere Safe to Stay Hub](#), providing holistic specialist support and accommodation for people sleeping rough. The council's updated Rough Sleeping Strategy for 2023-28 is currently out for consultation and will be published early 2024.

Social supermarkets

77. With the cost of living remaining high, Norwich residents are continuing to have an expanding offer of social supermarkets across the city. Run by individual charities, the council has supported the establishment of [social supermarkets](#) across the city through the provision of funding or buildings. There are now six social supermarkets across the city based in Lakenham (The Feed), Russell Street (ENYP), Catton Grove (the Soul Foundation), Mile Cross (Phoenix Centre), Magdalen Street (St. Giles Trust) and at Earlham Nursery School. Shoppers can access discounted food and household essentials at a range of times throughout the week, as well as enjoy a free cup of tea or coffee when they visit.
78. [Social supermarkets](#) are run by voluntary organisations, working with local food producers and suppliers to provide products at a lower cost than traditional supermarkets. These shops are aimed at anyone who is struggling to afford food, but there are no specific criteria for who can become a member.
79. The need for social supermarkets was first identified through an action plan developed by the Food Alliance and members of [The Norwich Food Network](#),

community groups working together to alleviate food insecurity. This network was originally set up by the city council who continue to facilitate its vital work.

80. An empty shop unit owned by the city council was identified as the first suitable site, with local organisations invited to apply to be the lead partner. [The Feed](#) were successful and recently opened their social supermarket on Hall Road, with ENYP (Equipping, Nurturing Young People), launching shortly after.
81. Our local voluntary sector is going above and beyond to rise to challenges brought about by the national context and we will continue to find practical ways to support them. Through its food network, the city council hopes to find opportunities for more social supermarkets around Norwich.

New eco-friendly homes

82. Our commitment to social housing continues. Last year we bought the site of the former Kings Arms public house in Mile Cross to build social housing, using a compulsory purchase order, after it was left to stand derelict for years by its previous owner.
83. The homes are designed to save tenants money on heating and hot water. They have extra insulation and low carbon features, including air source heat pumps, triple glazing, and solar panels. Each property also has an electric vehicle charging point. They have been thoughtfully designed to complement the established residential area.
84. Mark, a resident who has moved into the development's bungalow said: "It's a lovely home, it couldn't be better. We have downsized from a three-bedroom house in Norwich and no longer need to worry about the stairs."
85. Purchasing the King Arms site to benefit the community is one example of how we are being creative to address the demand for affordable housing while staying true to our environmental ambitions. As the shortage of affordable housing continues, with many families in our city struggling to find good, well-maintained properties, these new homes are needed now more than ever.

Support to reduce health inequalities

86. Against the pre-existing backdrop of deprivation and the current cost of living crisis, it is a stark reality that these challenges will continue to significantly impact the health and wellbeing of individuals across the city.
87. It is the job of the [Norwich Health and Wellbeing Partnership](#) to support those residents most in need, to affect change at the earliest point possible by co-designing with their communities and listening to what they have to say and what they want.
88. The Norwich Health and Wellbeing Partnership (NHWP) is an important place-based aspect of the Integrated Care System. It brings together colleagues from Norwich City Council, Norfolk County Council, health services, local voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations, and other partners to make a positive impact on people's health and wellbeing across Norwich, driving strategy and activity to:
 - a. Promote the health and wellbeing of communities across Norwich.

- b. Address the wider determinants of health of these communities.
 - c. Tackle health inequalities experienced by these communities.
 - d. Align, develop, and influence NHS and local government services and commissioning.
89. Using locally available data and intelligence, the partnership's role involves identifying projects which work towards solving health priorities and problems within the city council's boundary and awarding money accordingly.
90. A focus for the partnership going forward is to develop the partnership strategy within the group, to ensure the wider determinants of health are understood, and inform wider system planning, including with health colleagues.

Supporting our creative sector

91. This year, our Small Culture Grants were assessed according to the strands of the City Vision's '[Creative City](#)' theme. Grants were awarded to a number of organisations including:
- a. **The Garage** – which has a strong emphasis on engaging those from challenging circumstances with the least access to the arts, particularly young people. Rather than inclusion being siloed it is embedded throughout the activity, from supporting people to engage in the weekly classes, to holiday provision with bursaries, to one-to-one mentoring.
 - b. **The Puppet Theatre** – which hosts a range of inspiring opportunities at the theatre and on tour including puppet making, manipulation and storytelling workshops for young people, family creative learning workshops, specialist creative sessions for young people with complex needs, adult creative learning sessions, and masterclasses for emerging artists and industry professionals.
 - c. **Curious Directive** – which works with young people to ensure they think that Norwich is somewhere an arts career can be forged.
 - d. **Refugee Week** – Norwich Refugee Week, (part of the annual national festival) celebrates the contribution of refugees and asylum seekers to UK culture and promotes cross-cultural understanding.
 - e. **Frozen Light** – which aims to create high-quality, contemporary, devised multisensory theatre specifically for adult and young adult audiences with profound and multiple learning disabilities, so that they can experience this within their community, and exercise their right to participate fully in cultural life.
 - f. **The Common Lot** – which aims to make theatre that matters to people that is free, accessible and original. This is achieved through developing opportunities for cultural collaboration and participation in group based creative activity including research, imaginative response and rehearsal. Producing live theatrical events that are for, with and about the people of Norwich.
 - g. **NORCA and Sistema** – is an arts participation and engagement charity based in Norwich that aims to improve lives and communities through arts and

culture, with a vision to create a world where arts and culture are part of everyone's lives, and the people and communities they work with can live creative, healthy lives, and fulfil their potential, regardless of background.

SECTION THREE: Celebrations and commemorations

Celebrating Black History Month

92. A host of events and activities celebrating the achievements and contributions of Black people throughout history took place throughout October as part of [Norfolk Black History Month](#). Events in the city included a 'Norwich, City of Equality & Diversity Grand Portrait event' which took place in City Hall, and a range of performances at [The Halls](#) and Cinema City. There were also county wide events and online workshops.
93. The council supported the delivery of this year's initiative with funding from its annual culture grant scheme; its ninth year of involvement with the cause. The funding was used to support a launch event, publicity, venue hire, volunteer expenses and some workshops.
94. Norfolk Black History Month is a charitable organisation made up of a small number of volunteers and associate members who work tirelessly throughout the year to engage the community in celebration of Black history. Its aims are to promote knowledge and experience of Black people throughout history and share the positive contributions that they have made to society.
95. It is important to champion Black history all year round but Black History Month gives an opportunity for us all to celebrate and acknowledge the wide-reaching contributions of Black people throughout history. Our cultural grants scheme is intended to help achieve greater innovation and strengthen the cultural sector overall. They also support the delivery of the [Norwich 2040 City Vision - Creative City](#) objectives in the current financial year.

Honorary Freedom of the City of Norwich

96. In November 2022, the council awarded [Honorary Freedom of the City of Norwich](#) to one of its long-standing partners, [St Martins](#), following more than 50 years' service and support to people facing homelessness. After starting out in a garage shed in the Cathedral Close half a century ago, St Martins has grown into an established charity which provides not only hundreds of beds and homes to those in need, but delivers education, training, psychological and intervention, and undertakes partnership work with other city organisations.

Armed Forces Week

97. A celebration to mark the beginning of [Armed Forces](#) Week was held outside City Hall on Monday 19 June. Members of the public were invited to watch the civic procession, including standards and the special flag – which was hoisted in a flag-raising ceremony. Guests were invited by the Lord Mayor of Norwich Councillor James Wright and Sheriff, Dr Jan Sheldon, as well as standard-bearers and representatives of the armed forces, past and present.
98. Armed Forces Day is an annual opportunity to thank the Armed Forces community for their work and to learn more about life in the Armed Forces.

New Routes- Refugee Week

99. Through its cultural development funding, the council supported [New Routes](#) with [Norwich Refugee Week](#). Over the course of Refugee Week (19-25 June 2023) a programme of arts, cultural, sports and educational events, alongside media and creative campaigns, enabled people from different backgrounds to connect beyond labels, as well as encouraged understanding of why people are displaced, and the challenges they face when seeking safety. Refugee Week is a platform for people who have sought safety in the UK to share their experiences, perspectives, and creative work on their own terms. Through this we also celebrate the contributions of refugees and asylum seekers to British and local culture.
100. It is an opportunity to showcase and celebrate diverse cultures and talents, and to foreground different life experiences within the context of 'mainstream' civic participation. Events are an opportunity for asylum seekers/refugees in Norwich to feel comfortable accessing new public spaces, and to facilitate new cultural experiences, exchanging stories between newly-settled and established Norwich residents. Cross-cultural interactions have a positive effect on public attitudes and community cohesion and combat the isolation of newly arrived migrants.

Trees for peace

101. Seeds from a Ginkgo tree, which survived the 1945 atomic bombing of Japan, were given to Norwich City Council to create a lasting symbol of peace. As part of the international Mayors for Peace programme, of which the city council is a member of, seeds from hibaku-jumoku or 'survivor' trees have been gifted to cities across the world, including Norwich. The idea is for the seeds to be germinated and the trees planted in a location where people can gather to nurture them and reflect on peace.
102. In Norwich, one of the Ginkgo trees will be planted in Chapelfield Gardens – with another at Easton College where the seeds have been germinated. Norwich prides itself on being a diverse and welcoming city, where people have lived together in harmony – from the 'strangers' who arrived here in the sixteenth century, to those fleeing conflict in more recent years.
103. Working with its lead arboricultural officer, the city council asked horticulture students at Easton College to germinate the seeds. We wanted to involve the students in the project, both to give them the experience of working with these unique seeds and so they could learn the history of the trees and the Mayors for Peace programme. Depending on how they grow, it is expected the trees will be planted in Norwich and at Easton College next year.

Ukrainian cities of Lviv and Odesa granted Freedom of the City

104. In March last year, the council awarded the [Freedom of the City](#) to the cities of Lviv and Odesa. Communities throughout Norwich, and beyond, have been shocked by the recent events in Ukraine with many people in the city coming forward to express their support for the Ukrainian people.
105. One of the ways the council can stand in solidarity with the Ukrainian cities of Lviv and Odesa – which, along with Norwich, are both recognised as UNESCO Cities of Literature – is to grant them Freedom of the City.

Commemorating the Holocaust

106. On Friday 27 January 2023, the city's key civic institutions commemorated Holocaust Memorial Day at St Peter Mancroft Church. This is an annual event to remember the six million Jews murdered during the Holocaust, as well as the millions of people killed under Nazi persecution and in subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, and Darfur. It is also a time to honour the survivors of these atrocities and use the lessons of their experience to challenge hatred and discrimination today.

SECTION FOUR: Changing how we do things

107. As the city council, we want to lead and shape the future evolution of Norwich. As an organisation, we want to continue our journey to be a progressive, forward-looking authority. Progress has been made over the past four years. The way in which the council responded to the pandemic has shown us at our best – the way services were remodelled, and new ones set up from scratch gives us confidence that we can change at pace. Throughout, focus has, and always will be, to support those who need it most.
108. Like all councils, we are not without our challenges but, set against a backdrop of reducing funding, we are improving standards and coming up with new ways to deliver services. This will take time and a change in culture, but we are building the internal infrastructure to support delivery and have refocused our transformation programme to build on the momentum and changed mindset demonstrated during the pandemic.

Improving the diversity of our workforce

109. In March 2021, Cabinet considered a [report from the chief executive officer](#) setting out a strategy and action plan to improve the diversity of the council's workforce, specifically the ethnic diversity of the workforce.
110. The report identified that the workforce profile of the council is currently not representative of the communities we serve and there was a significant difference in relation to employees from an ethnic minority heritage.
111. While it is not uncommon for local authorities to have workforce diversity numbers which are out of step with the communities they serve, it is something that the city council is determined to address.
112. Three key themes identified in the strategy were to:
- Ensure our recruitment practices and processes are designed to attract a diverse candidate pool.
 - Build an inclusive workplace and create a culture where people from all backgrounds feel included and valued.
 - Embed effective and objective workforce and succession planning to support the retention and progression of talented employees.
113. Progress against these themes is set out in a [further report](#) which was presented to Cabinet in February 2022.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion training

114. Unconscious bias e-learning has been rolled out to all employees and has also been made available to Councillors, to help adjust discriminatory patterns of thinking and behaviours.
115. The rollout of a new programme of mandatory equality, diversity and inclusion training began in December 2021, this included:
 - a. A module for all employees - Being Inclusive
 - b. A module specifically aimed at managers – Inclusive Leadership
 - c. Bespoke training to address specific issues has also been developed on an ad hoc basis.

Climate and biodiversity emergencies

116. The council recognises the climate and biodiversity emergencies and the disproportionality of potential impacts according to protected characteristics and socio-economic demographics. The risks associated with this will continue to be captured through the corporate risk register.
117. With regards climate action, it is the council's aim to develop mitigation and adaption strategies and plans which address inequality, for communities within the city and more widely. With regards biodiversity action, it is the council's aim to create equitable access to nature for the benefit of all communities and groups.

Customer and Digital Strategy

118. The council is currently developing a new customer and digital strategy which is due to be published in April 2024 – this strategy will sit alongside the Corporate Plan and will build on the changes delivered by the existing Customer Experience and Digital Strategy 2021-2024.
119. The strategy will support the council's plans, demonstrating our commitment to improving services by:
 - Embracing technology
 - Investing in customer services
 - Making it easier for things to be done online, whilst providing alternatives for those unable to do so.
120. Feedback is vital in helping to shape the strategy and initial feedback has identified three key emerging themes:
 - Provide services which are easy to access for all customers.
 - Develop our approach to best serve our customers expecting a digital first service.
 - Ensure our systems are reliable and secure.
121. Following the identification of these key emerging themes, the council is now seeking detailed feedback from:
 - Residents
 - Voluntary and community organisations
 - Businesses
 - Councillors
 - Council colleagues

122. This feedback will be vital in shaping our strategy and identifying the key objectives within it. Once objectives are identified, key performance measures will be agreed, which will monitor the success of all strategy objectives.
123. The strategy will provide a framework for how the council can continue to work with its customers to deliver services which meet the needs of all.

SECTION FIVE: Information about our people, customers, and employees

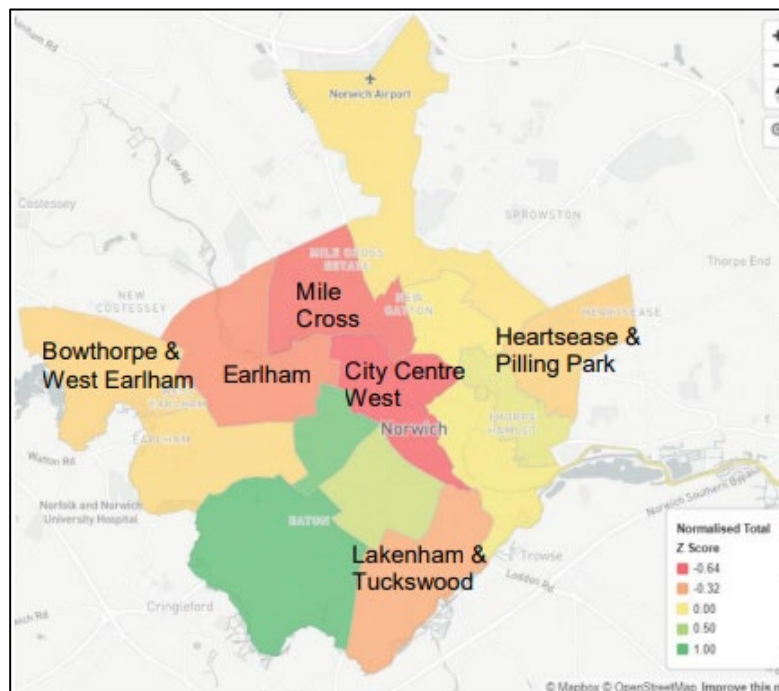
124. Our annual [Equality Information Reports](#) include a range of charts and data to highlight the demographical breakdown of our people, customers, and employees. The reports are informed by data provided by the Office for National Statistics through the Census (national survey of the population) and other quantitative research.

State of Norwich

125. Each year the council produces a data set which provides an overview of key statistics relating to our residents, the city (place), our economy and the overall wellbeing of Norwich. This can be found on the council's website: [State of Norwich](#).

Reducing inequality target areas (RITAs)

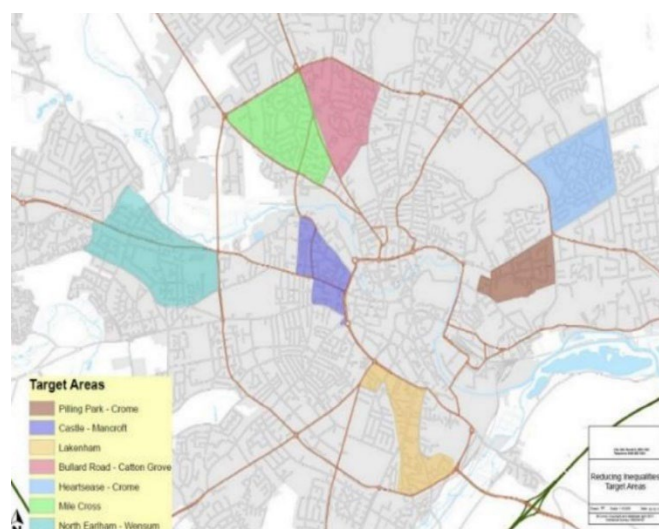
126. Norwich continues to face significant and entrenched inequality. The city's affluent areas sit alongside areas with deep-rooted social and economic issues. Some 40% of small [Lower Super Output Areas](#) (LSOAs) in Norwich are among the most deprived 20% of LSOAs in England.
127. A few years ago, the council reviewed existing data to evaluate the level of inequality across the 13 wards making up our local authority area. We initially identified seven areas across the city where levels of inequality were highest.
128. Since then, the council, in collaboration with local community groups and organisations specialising in support for marginalised people, came together to help volunteers already working in the reducing inequality target areas to tackle inequalities and issues facing the areas they are passionate about.
129. In October 2022, the Norfolk Office of Data and Analytics (NODA) reviewed the existing data to provide us with a more up to date picture of inequality across the city. The report can be found [here](#).
130. The first visual below shows a heat map of the latest Reducing inequality target areas(RITAs) analysis, by all [Middle Layer Super Outputs Areas \(MSOAs\)](#) conducted by NODA.



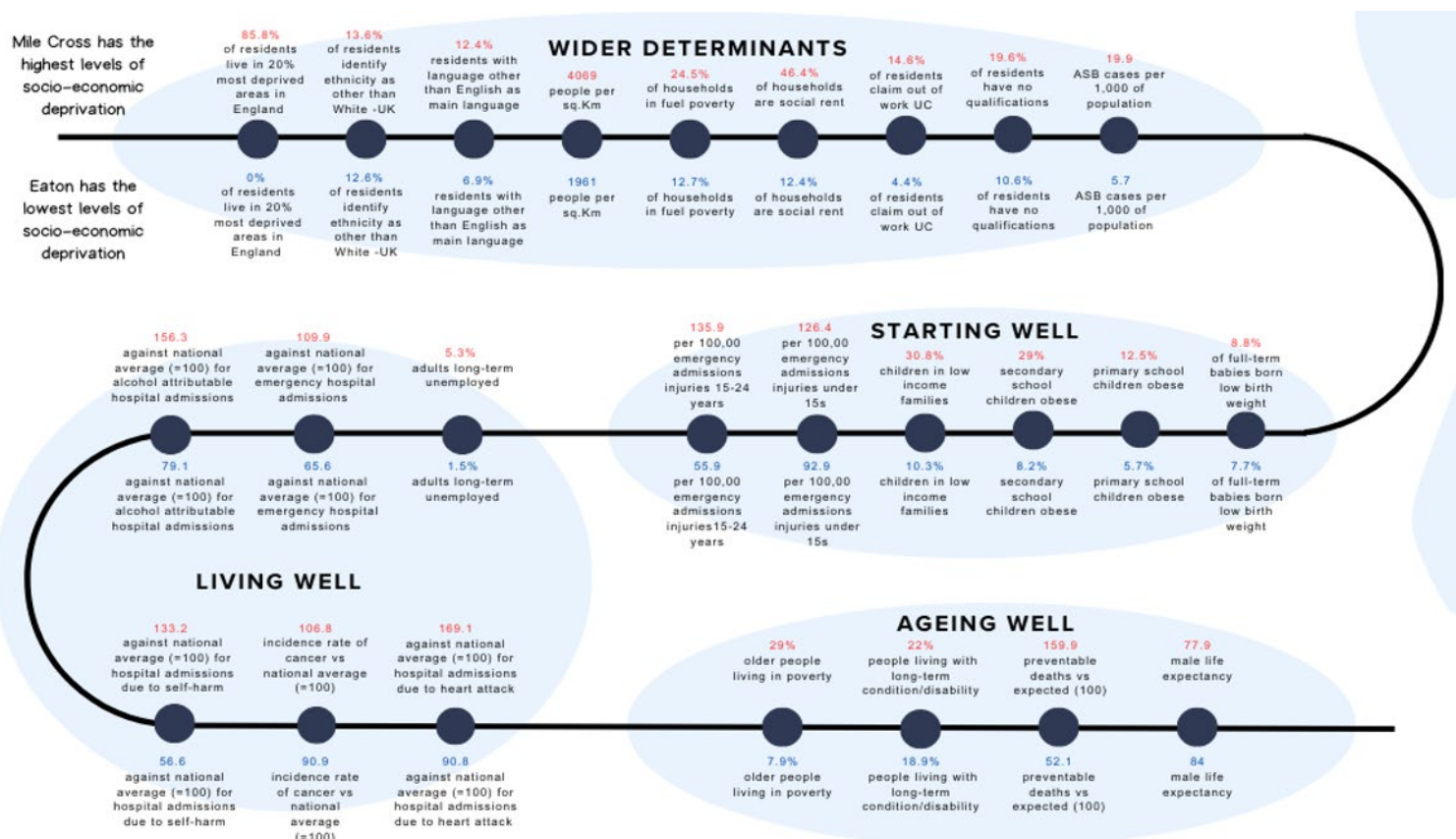
131. The visual to the right highlights the locations of the Reducing Inequality Target Areas within the city of Norwich as identified by NODA in 2015.

Target Areas:

- Pilling Park – Crome Ward
- Castle – Mancroft Ward
- Lakenham Ward
- Bullard Road – Catton Grove Ward
- Heartsease – Crome Ward
- Mile Cross
- North Earlham – Wensum Ward

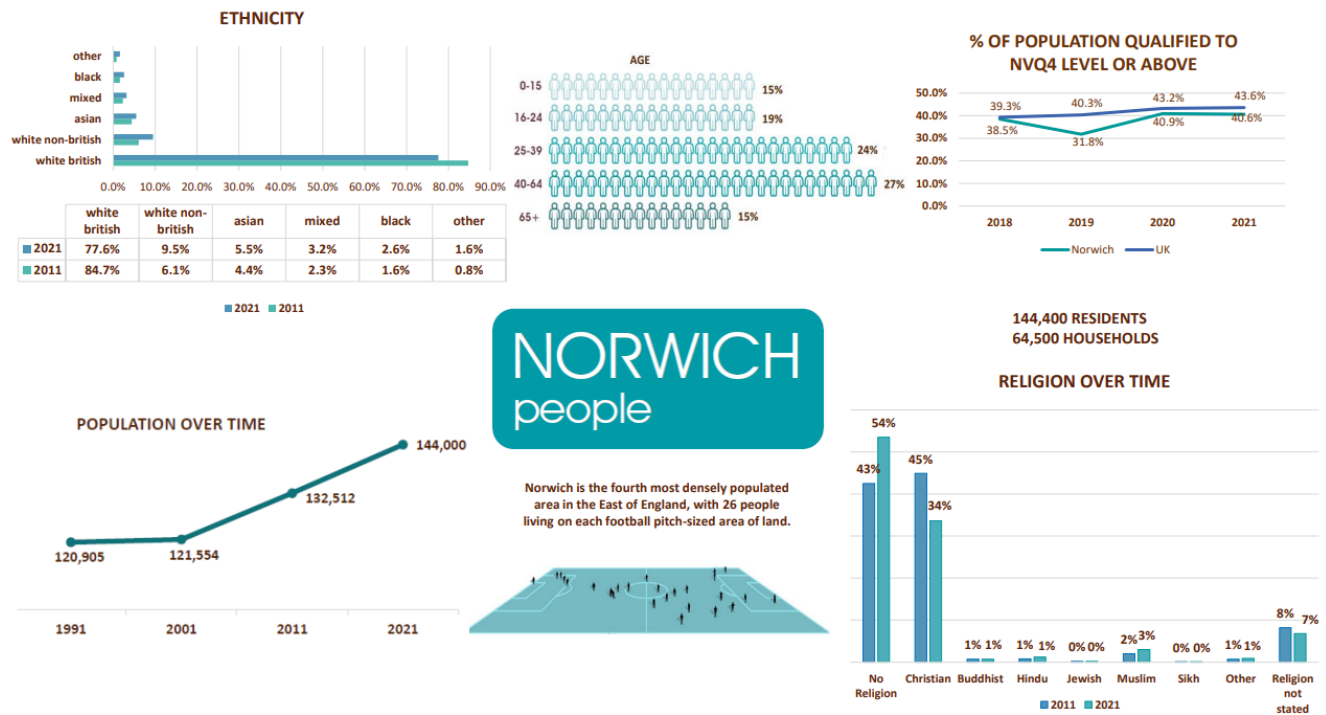


132. The visual timeline below demonstrates how the levels of socio-economic deprivation at the ward level within Norwich impacts local residents' chances of living a healthy life. This graphic highlights the contrasting picture between our Mile Cross Ward, which has the highest levels of socioeconomic deprivation and our Eaton Ward, which has the lowest levels of socioeconomic deprivation within the Norwich local authority area.



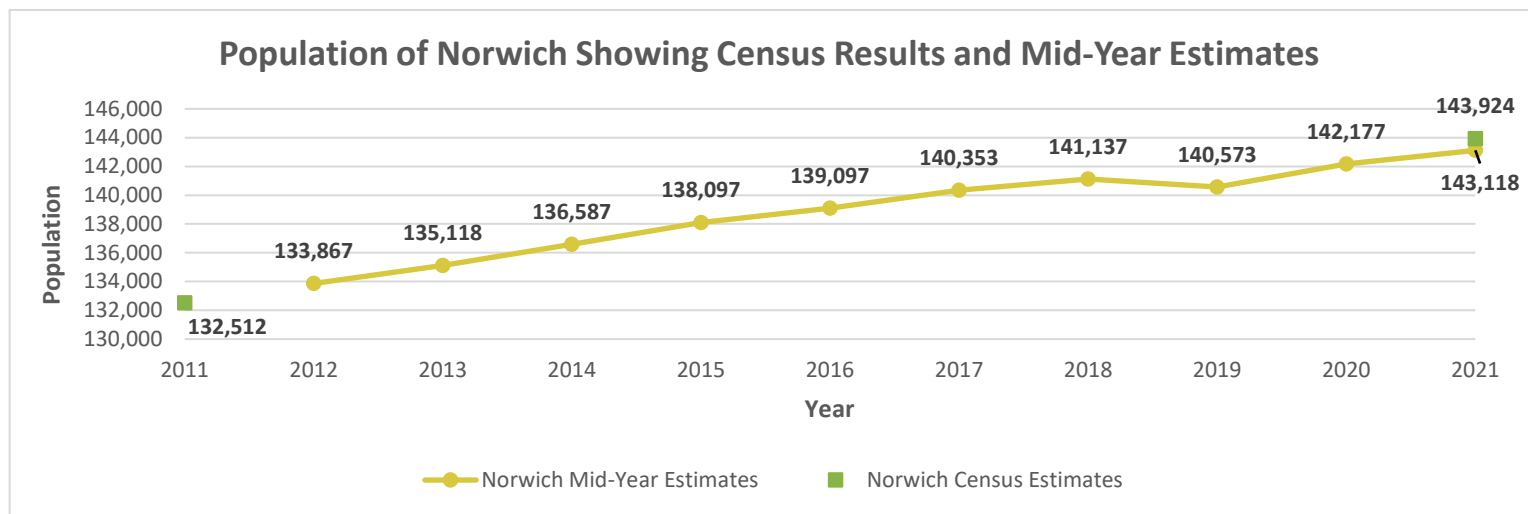
People

133. The 2021 Census places, Norwich in 150th place for total population out of 309 local authority areas in England, moving up eight places in a decade.
134. Norwich is one of the fastest growing cities in the UK and is growing younger, with an average age of just 34 years. According to the latest census data which received a 97% response rate, 42.3% of residents in Norwich are aged 15-39 (11.4% above the national average). Since last year's report, the release of the latest mid-year population estimate for Norwich has been postponed and as such we have been unable to update this section with the latest estimates for population. Looking back to last year's data we can see there has been a slight increase (1.8%) in the number of people aged between 40-64 years within Norwich. The city is becoming more diverse with significant population growth over the last 10 years.



Population

135. On Census Day, 21 March 2021, the size of the usual resident population in Norwich was 143,924 people: this is an increase of 9% (11,412) since 2011, when it was 132,512 people. Norwich is now ranked 15 (out of 39 Districts in the East of England region) in terms of total population.

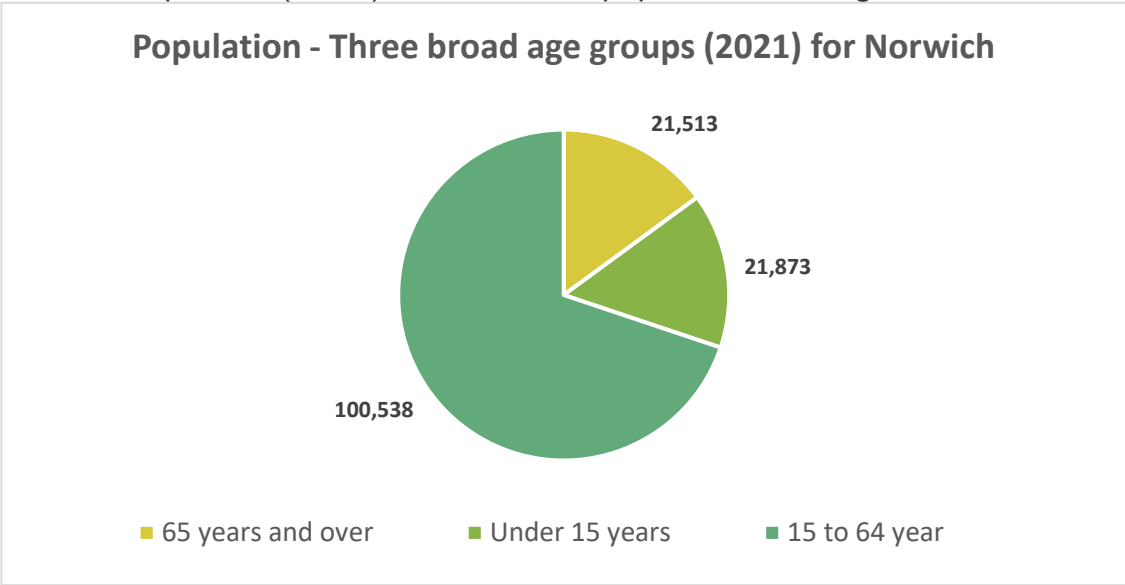


136. Norwich's population increase, at 9%, compares to an 8% increase for the East of England and a 7% increase for England.

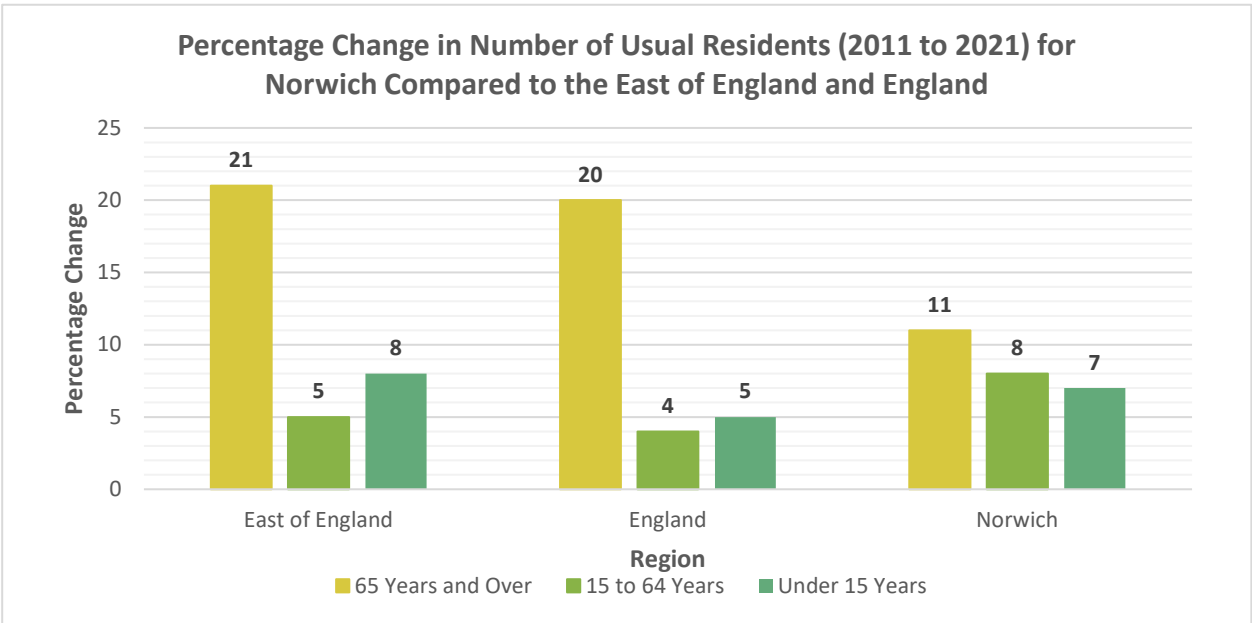
137. As of 2021, Norwich is ranked 4th out of the 45 local authority areas in the East of England for population density, with around 36.88 persons per hectare of land. The population density for the East of England is 3.31 persons per hectare and for England it is 4.34 persons per hectare. The East of England experienced the largest growth in population between the 2011 and 2021 census, when compared to all other regions within England and Wales.

Population by age

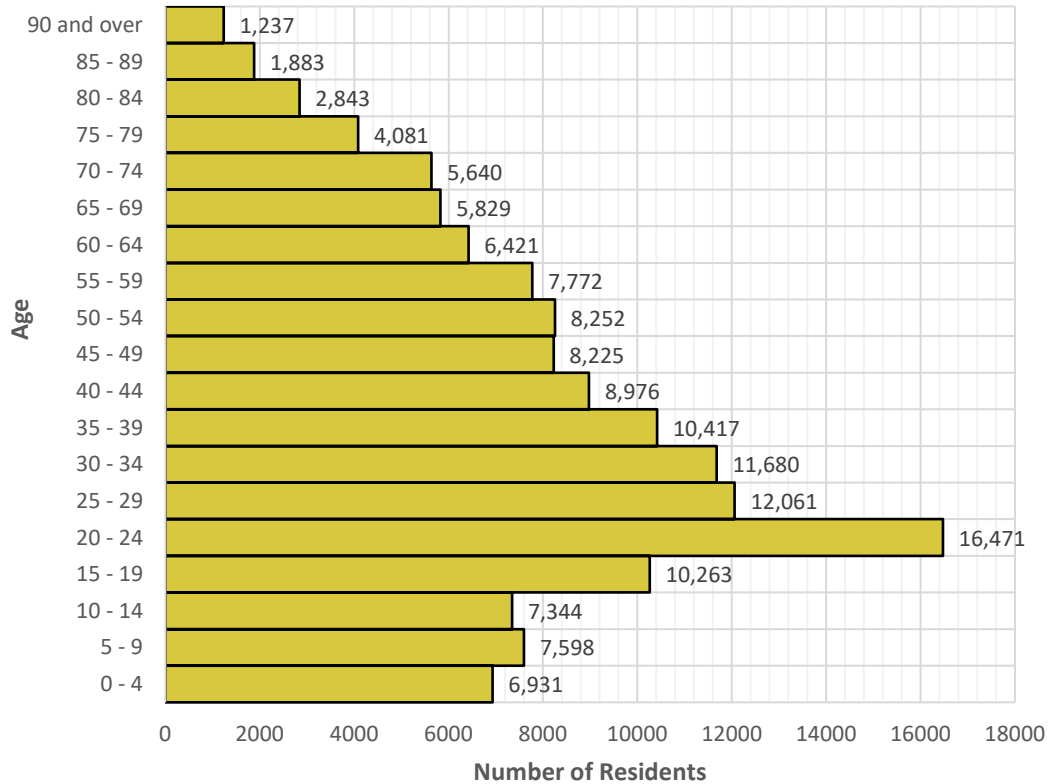
138. On Census Day, the size of the usual resident population in Norwich was 143,922 people, of which: 15.2% (21,873) were children aged under 15, 69.9% (100,538) were adults aged 15 to 64 and 14.9% (21,513) were aged 65 and over; 2.2 percent (3,119) of the resident population were aged 85 and over.



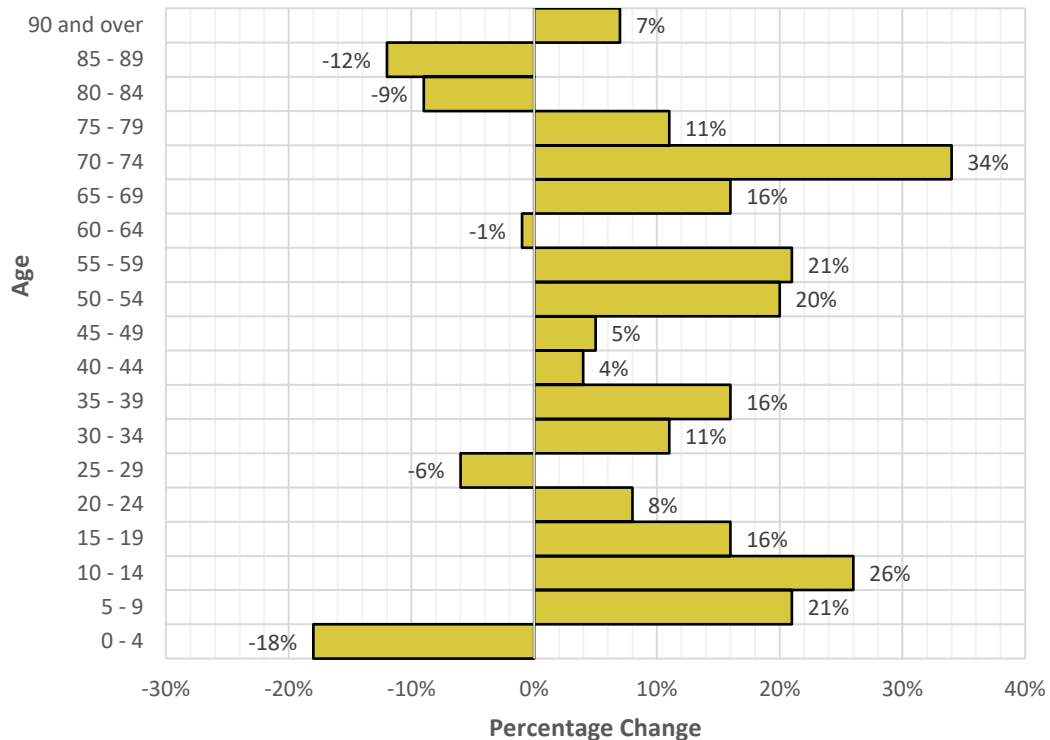
139. The largest age group in Norwich was those aged 20 - 24 (16,471 people or 11.44%). In the East of England, the largest age group was those aged 50 - 54 (6.99%) and in the England the largest age group was those aged 30 - 34 (7%).



Breakdown of Norwich Residents by 5 Year Age Gaps

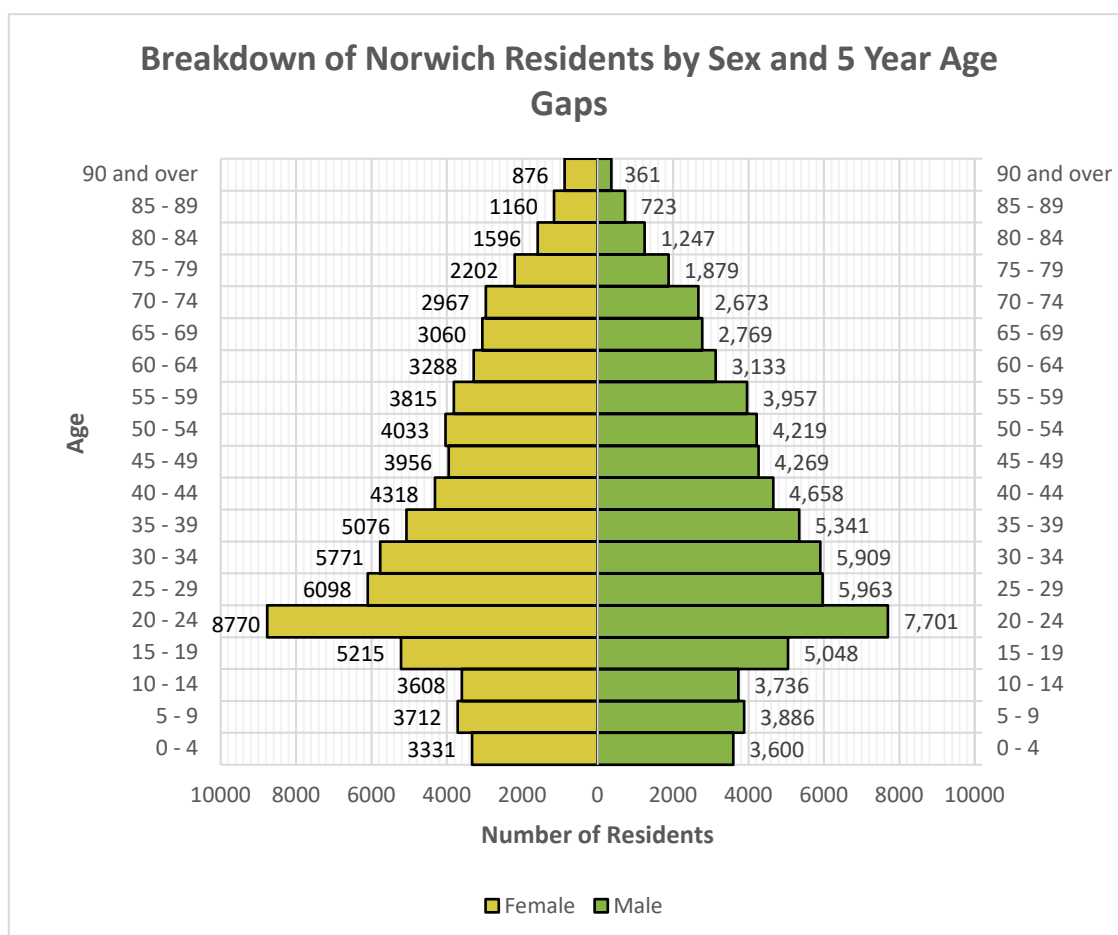


Percentage Change of Norwich Residents by Age Band between 2011 and 2021

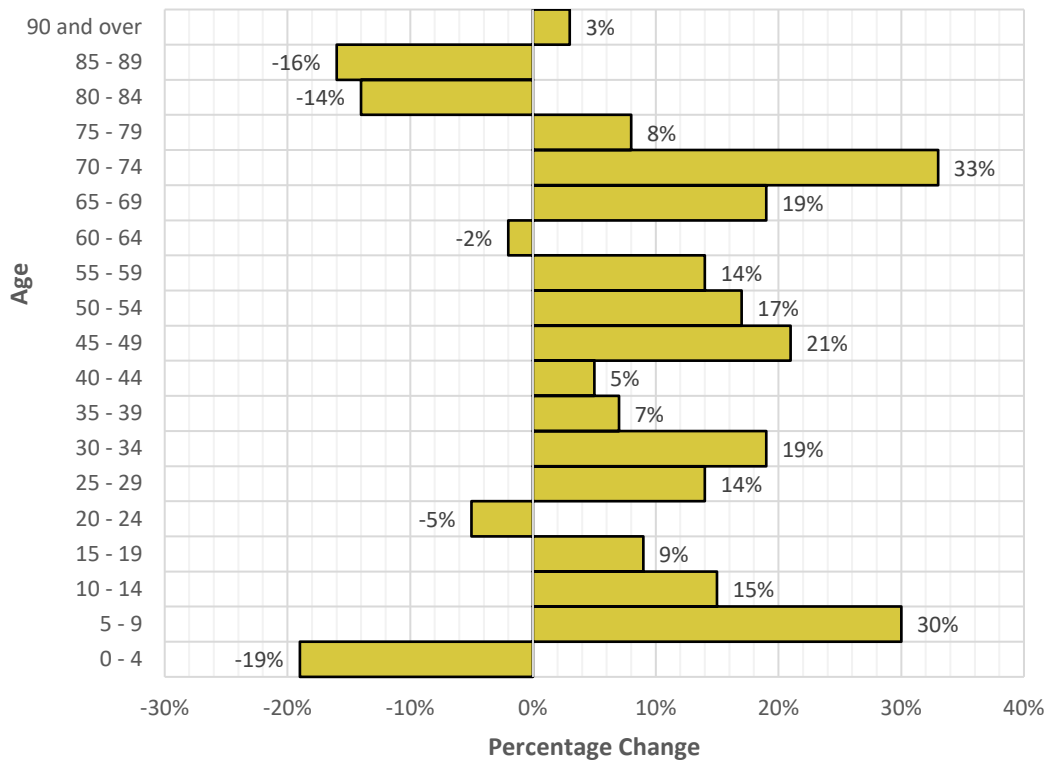


Population by sex and age

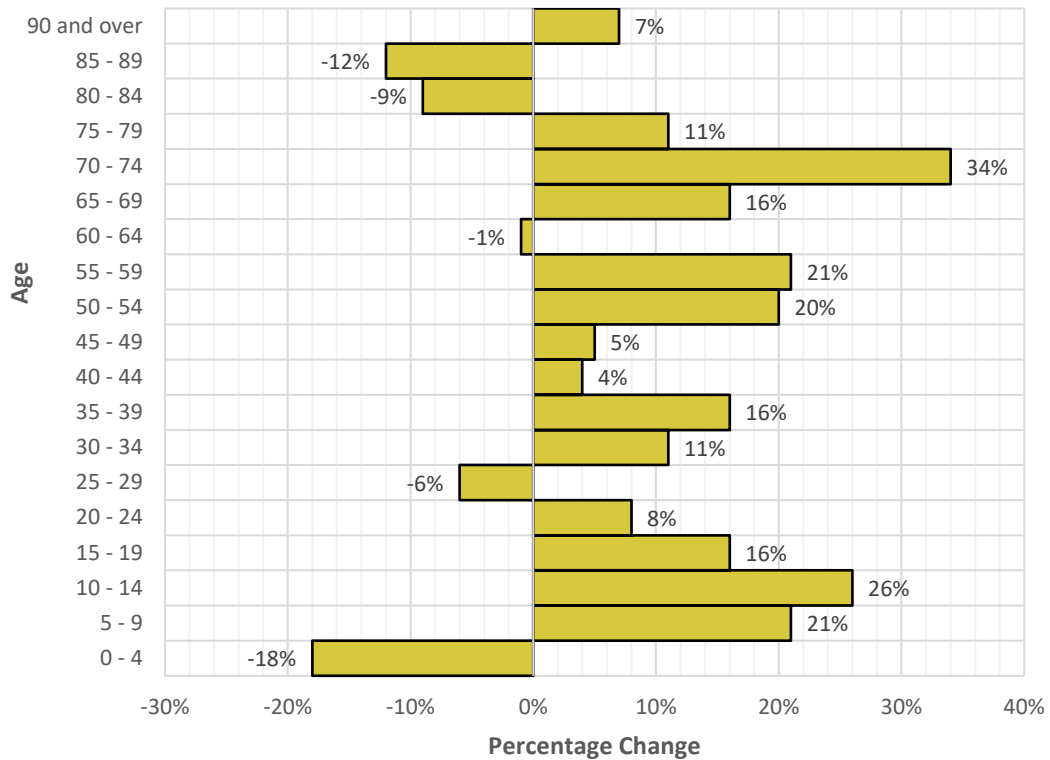
140. On Census day in March 2021, of the 143,924 people in Norwich, 72,852 were women (50.6% of the population) and 71,072 men (49.4%). In 2011, 67,245 were women (50.7% of the population) and 65,267 men (49.3%). In the East of England, 51.0% of the population were women and 49.0% were men. In England, 51.0% of the population were women and 49.0% were men.
141. The female population of Norwich has increased by 8% and the male population has increased by 9% from 2011. In the East of England the female population has increased by 9% and the male population has increased by 8% from 2011.
142. The average life expectancy for females born in Norwich is 82.8 years. This is 1.1 years lower than the Norfolk average and 0.3 years lower than the national average. The average life expectancy for males born in Norwich is 78.0 years. This is 2.0 years lower than the Norfolk average and 1.3 years lower than the national average.
143. The chart below shows the population by sex in five-year age bands for Norwich, with the female population living longer than the male population.



Percentage Change of Female, Norwich Residents by Age Band between 2011 and 2021



Percentage Change of Male, Norwich Residents by Age Band between 2011 and 2021

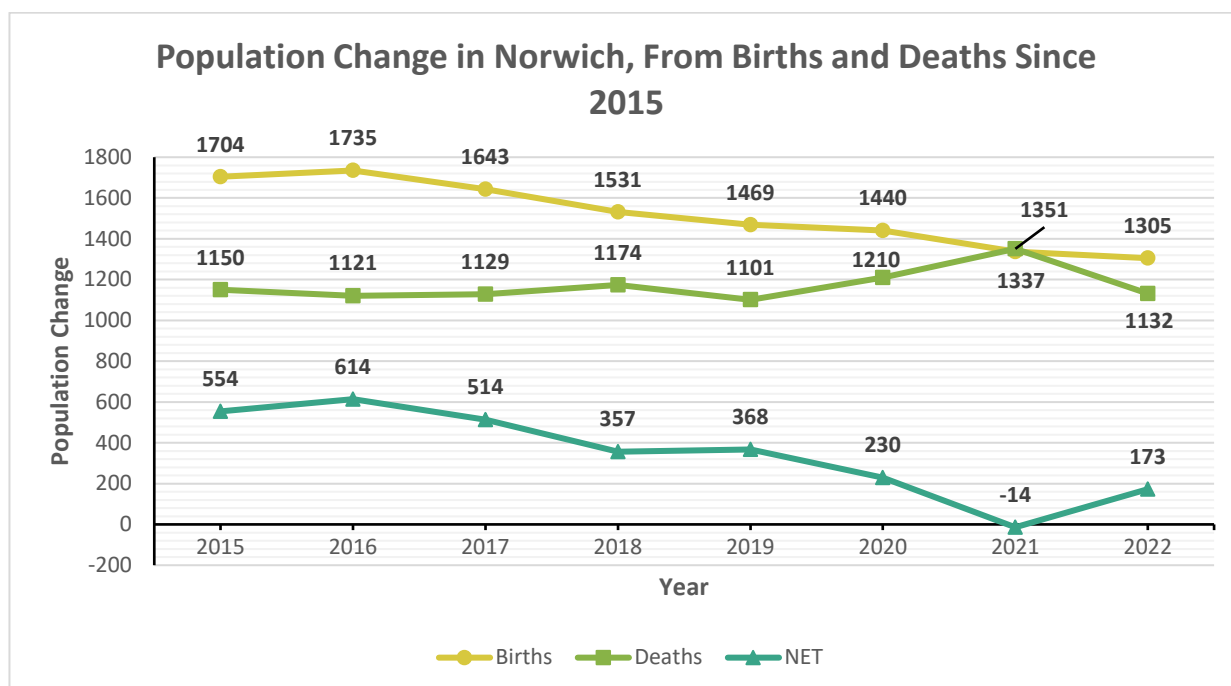


Population changes

144. The total population change in Norwich in 2021 and 2022 has not yet been released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The last available information is for the year to 2020, when there was a net change of 1,604 people. This change was comprised of:

- -218 – natural change (births-deaths)
- -106 – net internal migration (people into/out of the area from within the UK)
- 1,510 – net international migration (people immigrating/emigrating into/out of the UK)
- -18 of all other migration factors.

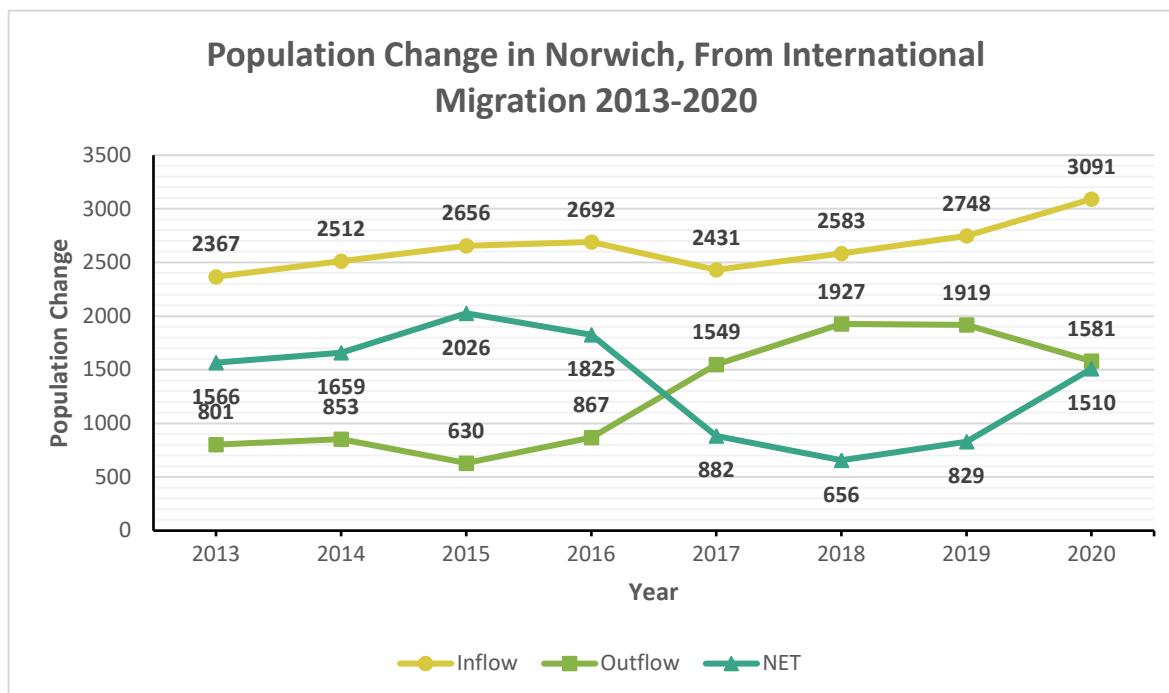
145. However, ONS has released information for both 2021 and 2020 on natural change. We see a continuing trend of declining birth rate, with the number of births falling to 1337 in 2021 and 1305 in 2022. A 7.2% decrease in 2020-21 and a 2.4% decrease in 2021-22. Deaths have held relatively steady in Norwich over the last 8 years. However, there was a slight peak in 2020 (1210) and a particular peak recorded in 2021(1351) likely due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which caused natural change to fall briefly into the negatives in 2021. In 2022, deaths returned to more 'normal' levels of 1132.



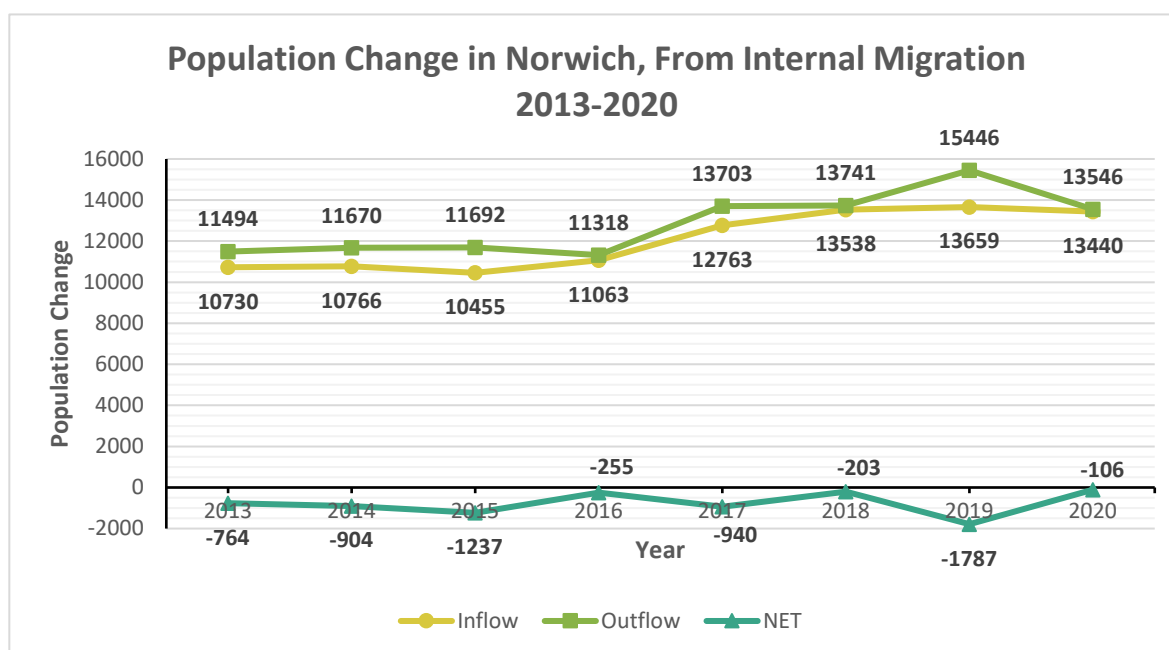
146. Population change include changes in population due to internal and international civilian migration and changes in the number of armed forces (both non-UK and UK) and their dependants resident in the UK. In calculating the international migration component of the population estimates, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) uses the United Nations recommended definition of an international long-term migrant (someone who changes their country of residence for at least 12 months). The graph on the next page does not include short-term migrants and visitors.

147. There has been no new data released for 2021 or 2022 on net International Migration. Looking at the historical data in the graph below, we have seen a general trend of increasing immigration, particularly since 2017. Likewise,

international emigration also increased drastically from 2017, likely as a result of the Brexit referendum. This level of international emigration has decreased slightly from 2019 to 2020, resulting in an increase of net International Migration with values returning to around 2016 levels.

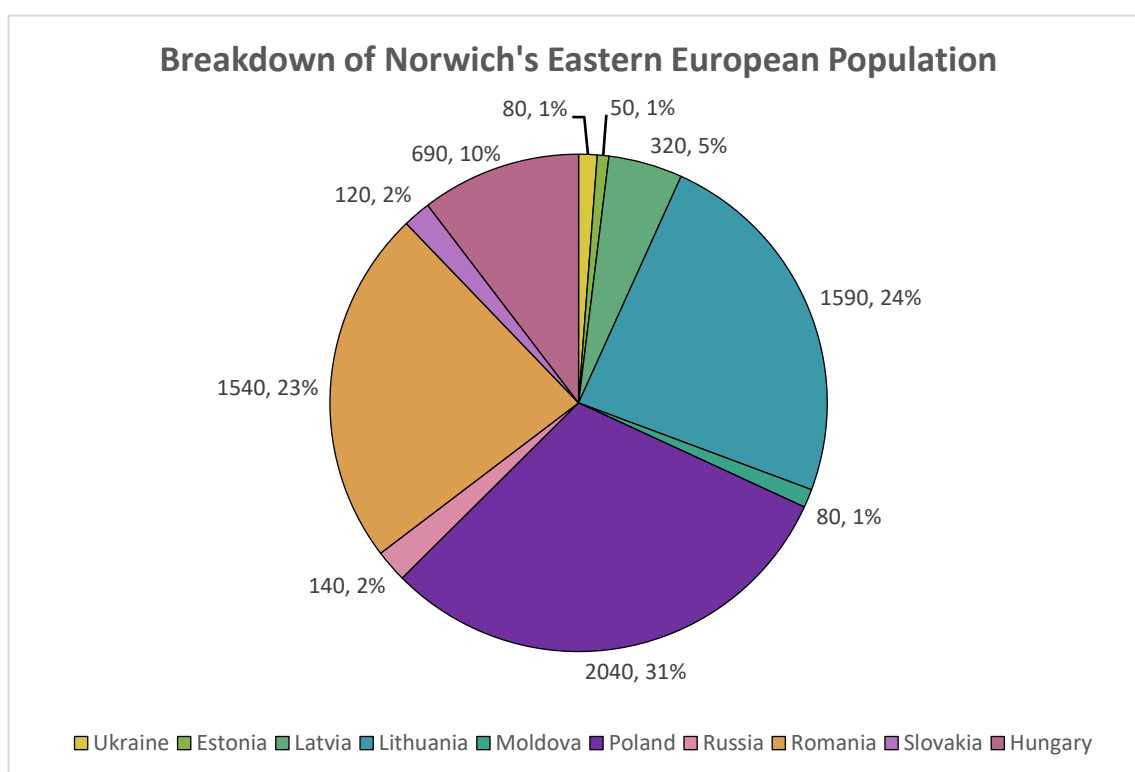


148. Like International migration, the Office for National Statistics is yet to release more recent data on Internal migration, with the latest data relating to 2020. Looking at historical trends, net internal migration has remained slightly negative generally. It is likely that in 2021 and 2022 this would only have become more negative, as large numbers of people elected to move away from cities and into the countryside, as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.



Residents born in Ukraine, Russia, and Other Eastern European Countries

149. The preliminary Census 2021 counts of country of birth by local authority for Ukraine and neighbouring or relevant countries have been published to help local and national emergency response planning to the illegal Russian invasion of Ukraine. There is no data currently available for county councils.
150. It is important to note that the data contained are the rounded counts of Census 2021 responses. They are not final census estimates and have not yet been through all the usual census processing.
151. To help contextualise the numbers, the Local Government Association has rated the figures and calculated percentages using the most recently available authority population data. The population data is from ONS's most recent mid-year estimates, rather than data from Census 2021.
152. The chart below shows the count and percentage of residents born in Ukraine, Russia and other Eastern European Countries who were resident in Norwich at the time of the Census 2021.

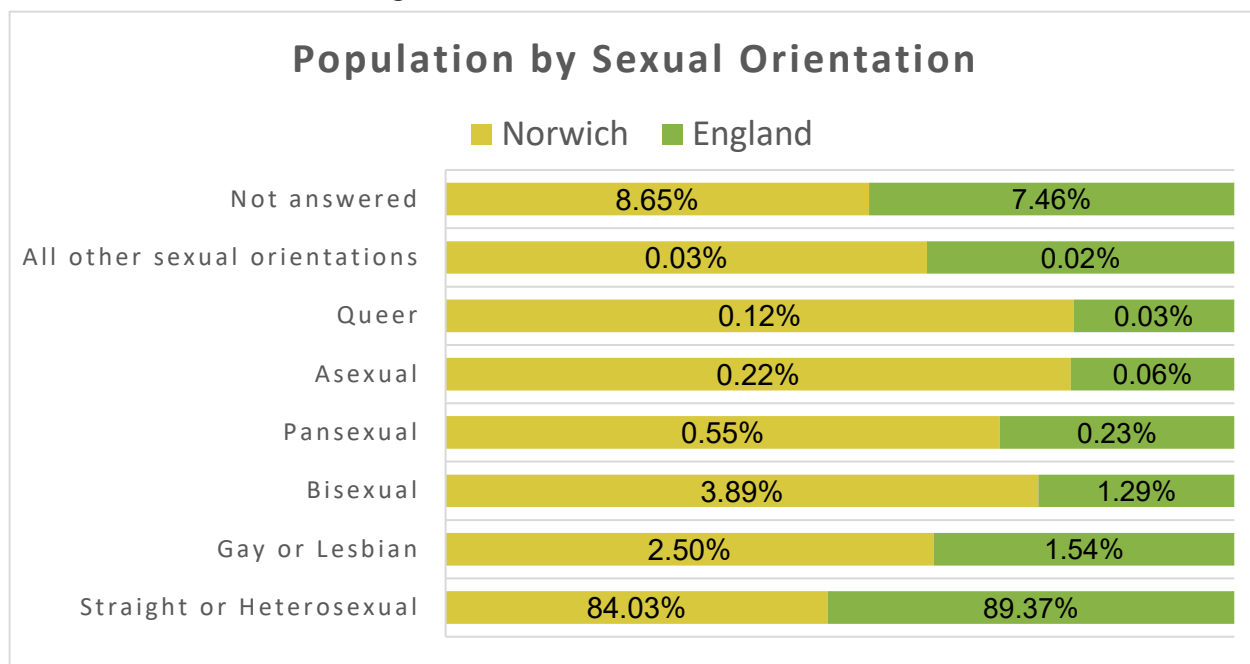


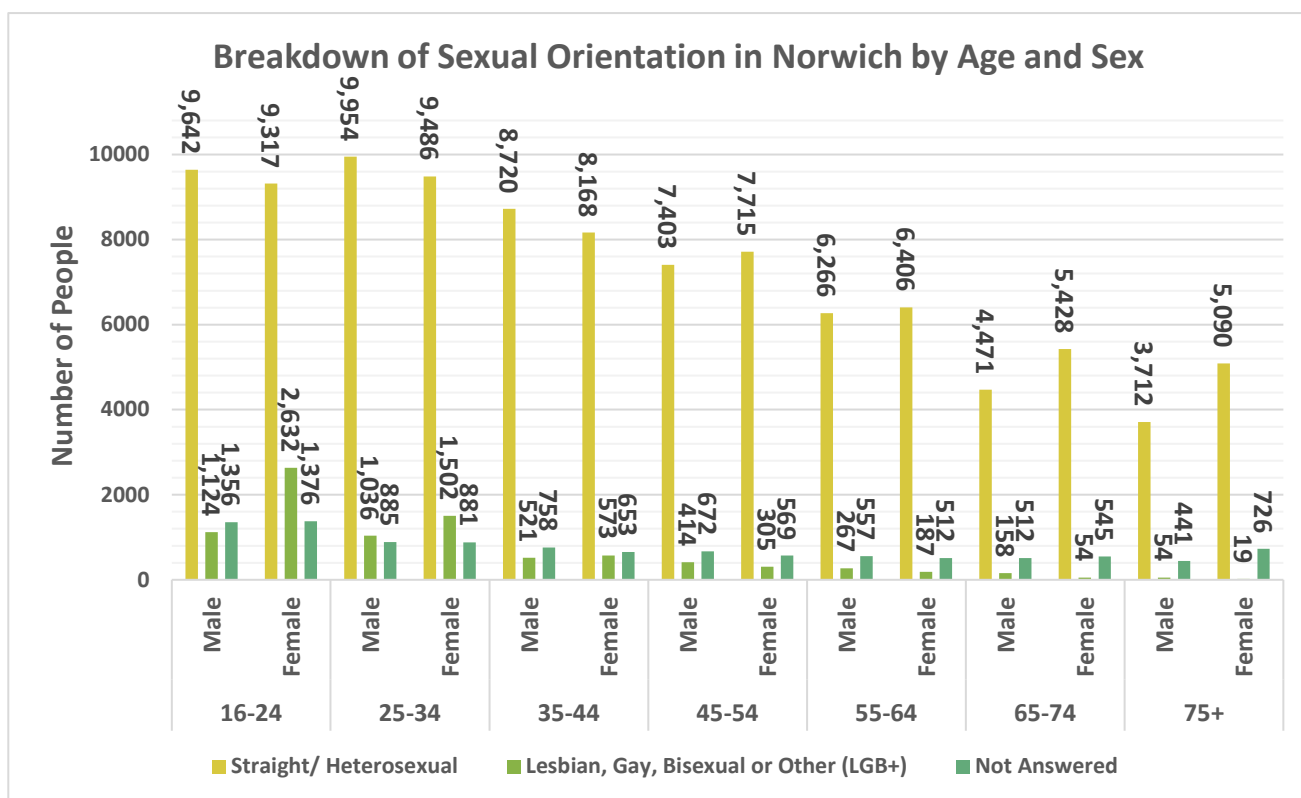
153. During March 2022, the UK Government introduced 2 new visa routes to allow persons affected by the war in Ukraine to come to the UK. These being the Ukraine Family Scheme and the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme.
154. The Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme allows Ukrainian nationals and their family members to come to the UK if they have a named sponsor who can provide accommodation.

155. The number of visas issued to come to or stay and the number of arrivals in Norwich under the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme are detailed below, (data correct as of 10 October 2023):
- The total number of Visas issued to Ukrainians with sponsors in Norwich is 255 (178 per 100,000)
 - The total number of arrivals of Ukrainians with sponsors in Norwich is 224 (170 per 100,000)
 - In Norwich 88 per cent of those with sponsored visas have arrived.

Sexual orientation

156. The question on sexual orientation was new for Census 2021, providing better quality information on the LGB+ population (“lesbian or gay”, “bisexual” or “other sexual orientation”) for monitoring and supporting anti-discrimination duties under the Equality Act 2010.
157. The question was voluntary and was only asked of people aged 16 years and over. People were asked “Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?”. The different sexual orientations that people could choose from included:
- Straight or heterosexual
 - Gay or lesbian
 - Bisexual
 - Other sexual orientation
158. If they selected “Other sexual orientation”, they were asked to write in the sexual orientation with which they identified.
159. The graphs and table below show how people in Norwich answered, compared with the rest of England.





160. More detailed data on sexual orientation from the Census 2021 was published in April this year. The table below illustrates the breakdown of sexual orientation within Norwich by age and sex of those individuals who are aged 16 or over.

Category	Norwich		England	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Straight or Heterosexual	101,477	84.03%	41,114,478	89.37%
Gay or Lesbian	3,025	2.50%	709,704	1.54%
Bisexual	4,700	3.89%	591,690	1.29%
Pansexual	669	0.55%	107,852	0.23%
Asexual	267	0.22%	26,614	0.06%
Queer	143	0.12%	13,928	0.03%
All other sexual orientations	41	0.03%	9,963	0.02%
Not answered	10,443	8.65%	3,432,728	7.46%
Total	120,765		46,006,957	

Financial hardship and economic vulnerability

161. These indicators are designed to provide an indication of how households and their finances have been impacted or are likely to change in the near future. Moreover, these indicators are presented alongside data on pre-existing levels of financial vulnerability, to identify how and where the scale of financial hardship is increasing and thus where relevant support services such as hardship grants and money / debt advice are required or may need scaling up.

Measures of local deprivation

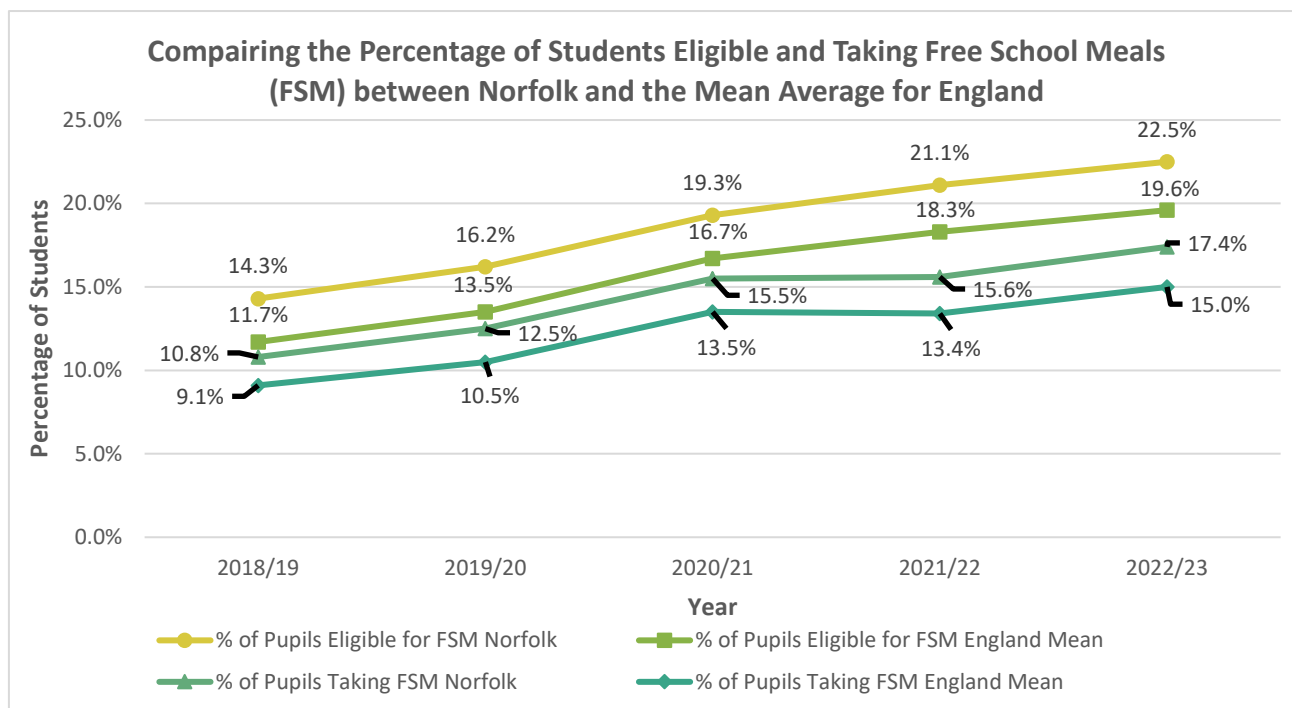
162. The Indices of Deprivation combine a range of economic, social, and housing indicators to provide a measure of relative deprivation, i.e., they measure the

position of areas against each other within different domains. This data therefore provides some useful baseline contextual information for localities in terms of existing deprivation levels, which will influence and inform the scale of impacts due to the rising cost of living. The higher the ranking, the higher the level of deprivation, i.e., 1 is measured as the most deprived area in the Indices of Deprivation. Following the restructuring of local government in Cumbria, North Yorkshire and Somerset, the total number of local authorities which make up the IMD ranking system was reduced. As a result, Norwich's position as measured by the IMD has now changed to the following:

- a. Norwich is ranked **61** out of 317 authorities for deprivation – based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) average rank. This measure is based on population weighted ranks of all neighbourhoods within an area, so an area that is more uniformly deprived will tend to rank higher on this measure.
- b. It is a weighted average of the seven IMD domains: Income Deprivation, Employment Deprivation, Health Deprivation and Disability, Education Skills and Training Deprivation, Barriers to Housing and Services, Living Environment Deprivation, and Crime.
- c. Norwich is ranked **52** out of 317 authorities for deprivation – based on the IMD average score. This measure is based on population weighted scores of all neighbourhoods within an area.
- d. 15.66% of Norwich neighbourhoods (Lower Super Output Areas) are in the 10% most deprived nationally. The domain measures the proportion of the population experiencing deprivation relating to low income.
- e. Specifically, with regards to income deprivation, Norwich is ranked **58** out of 317 authorities – based on the IMD average rank. (County level data isn't available for this metric).

Free school meals

163. Free school meal eligibility continues to increase. For the 2022-2023 academic year, approximately 2.15 million pupils were eligible for free school meals nationally, 23.8% of all pupils. This is an increase of nearly 135,000 pupils since the beginning of the 2021-2022 academic year, when 1.9 million (22.5%) of pupils were eligible for free school meals.
164. The table below illustrates the latest available data on free school meal eligibility and take up within Norfolk compared to the mean average for England over the last 5 years.



165. The percentage of pupils with free school meals had been increasing prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The increase during the first period of the pandemic, from 17.3% in January 2020 to 20.8% in January 2021, was higher than each of these previous year-on-year increases. The most recent increase in free school meal eligibility of 1.3% in January 2023, represents a return to the year-on-year increases seen prior to the pandemic.

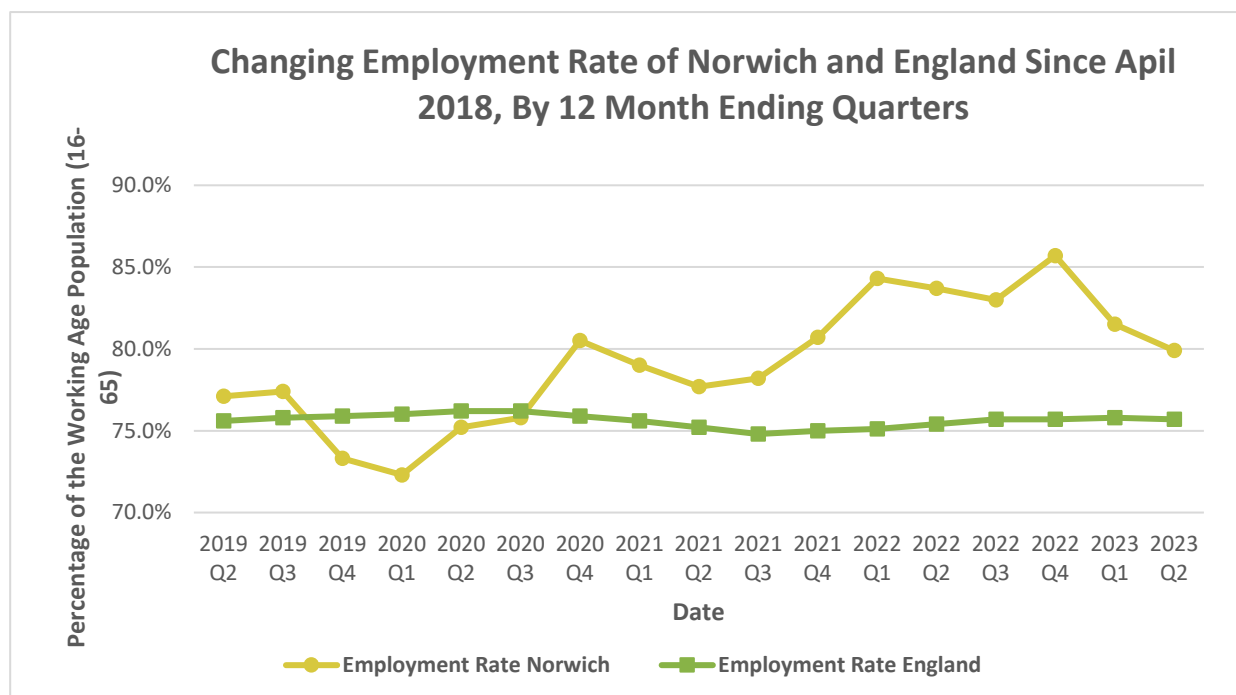
166. The table below shows the change in the percentage of students eligible for free school meals.

Year	No. of Pupils Eligible for FSM		No. of Pupils Taking FSM		% of Pupils Eligible for FSM		% of Pupils Taking FSM	
	Norfolk	England Mean	Norfolk	England Mean	Norfolk	England Mean	Norfolk	England Mean
2018/19	16,457	14,687	12,483	11,398	14.3%	11.7%	10.8%	9.1%
2019/20	18,843	17,082	14,603	13,303	16.2%	13.5%	12.5%	10.5%
2020/21	22,719	21,170	18,199	17,177	19.3%	16.7%	15.5%	13.5%
2021/22	24,950	23,429	19,465	17,227	21.1%	18.3%	15.6%	13.4%
2022/23	26,870	25,387	20,766	19,494	22.5%	19.6%	17.4%	15.0%

Overall employment rate

167. Employment measures the number of people aged 16 years and over in paid work and those who had a job that they were temporarily away from. The employment rate is the proportion of people aged between 16 and 64 years who are in employment.

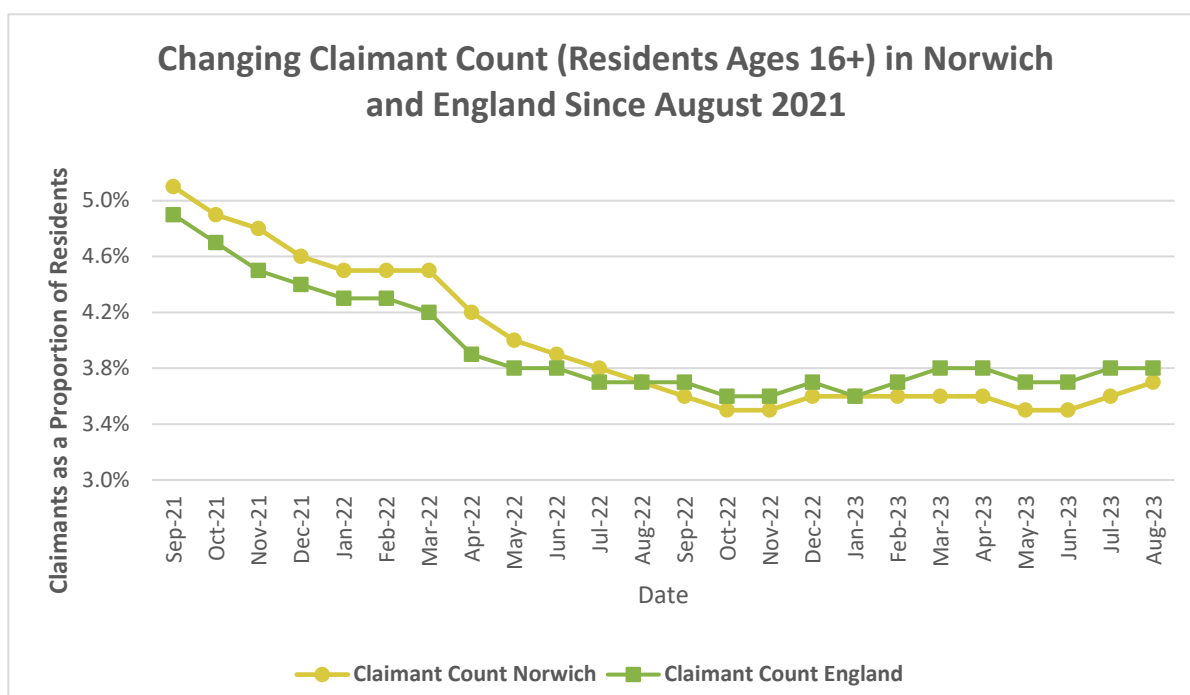
168. The chart below shows that Norwich has an employment rate of 79.9%. This has decreased from 83.7% in the previous period. This is above the All-English single tier and county councils' figure of 75.4% and above the England figure of 75.7%.



Claimant Count

169. Claimant Count is an administrative measure of the number of people claiming benefit principally for the reason of being unemployed, using individual records from the benefit system. It therefore provides a useful indication of how unemployment is changing at a local level.

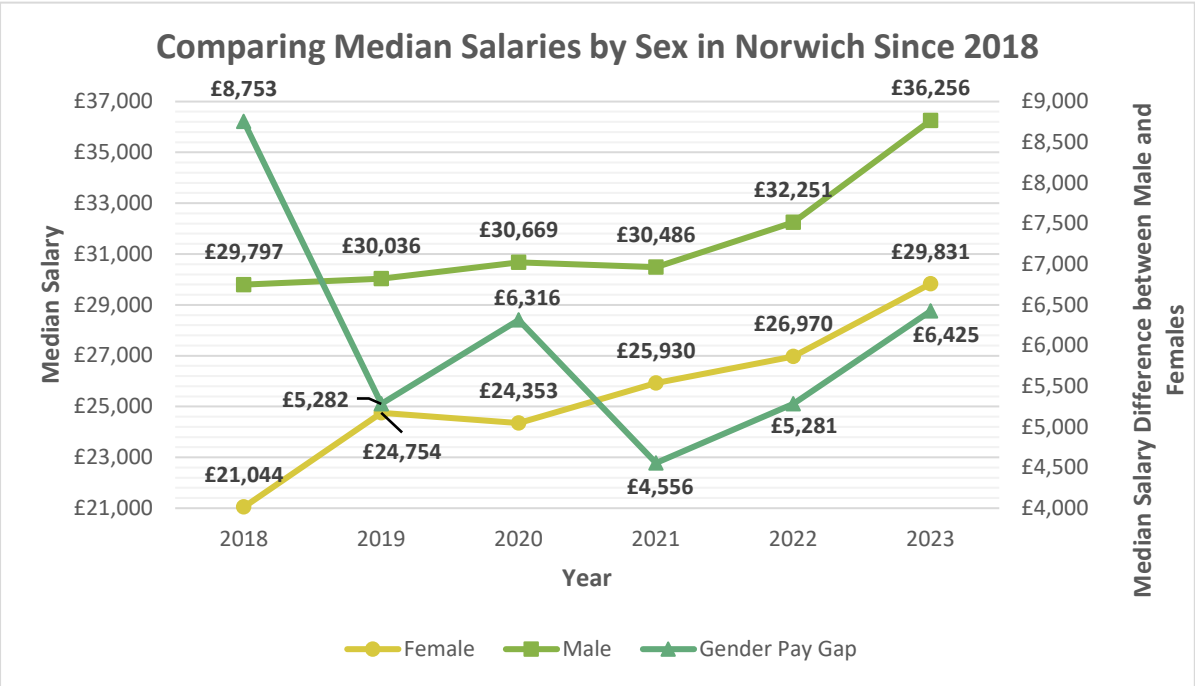
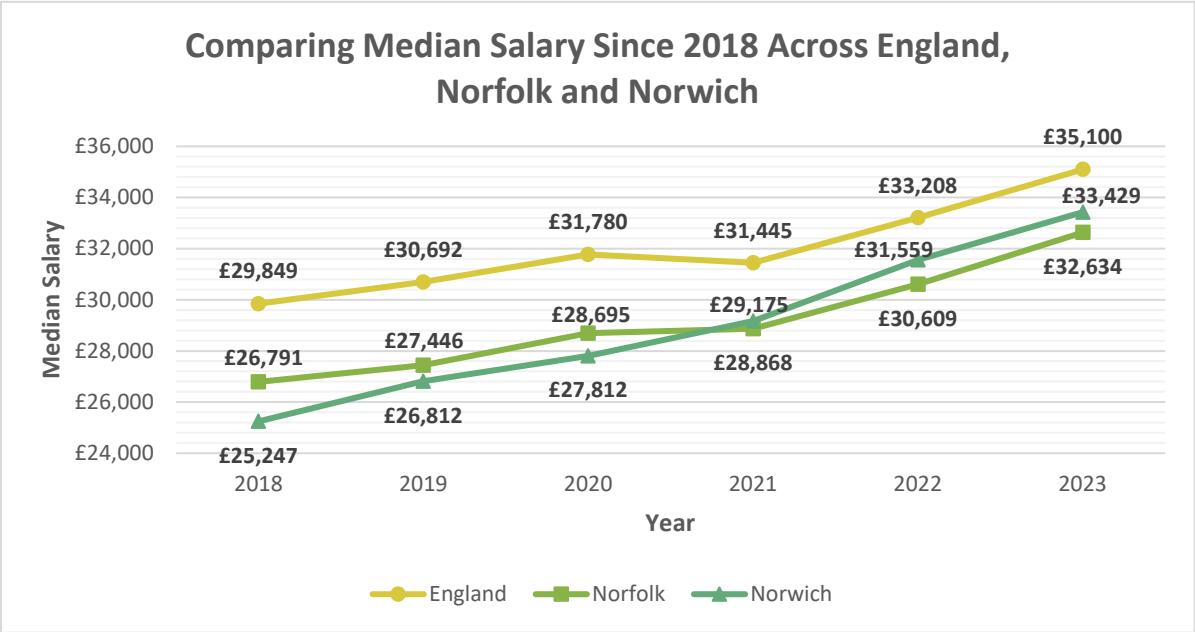
170. The chart below shows the claimant count rate in Norwich in August 2023 was 3.7%, which was the same rate as was recorded in August 2022. The All-English single tier and county councils' rate was 3.8% for the same month and 3.7% last year.



Median Gross Annual Pay of Employees (by Residence)

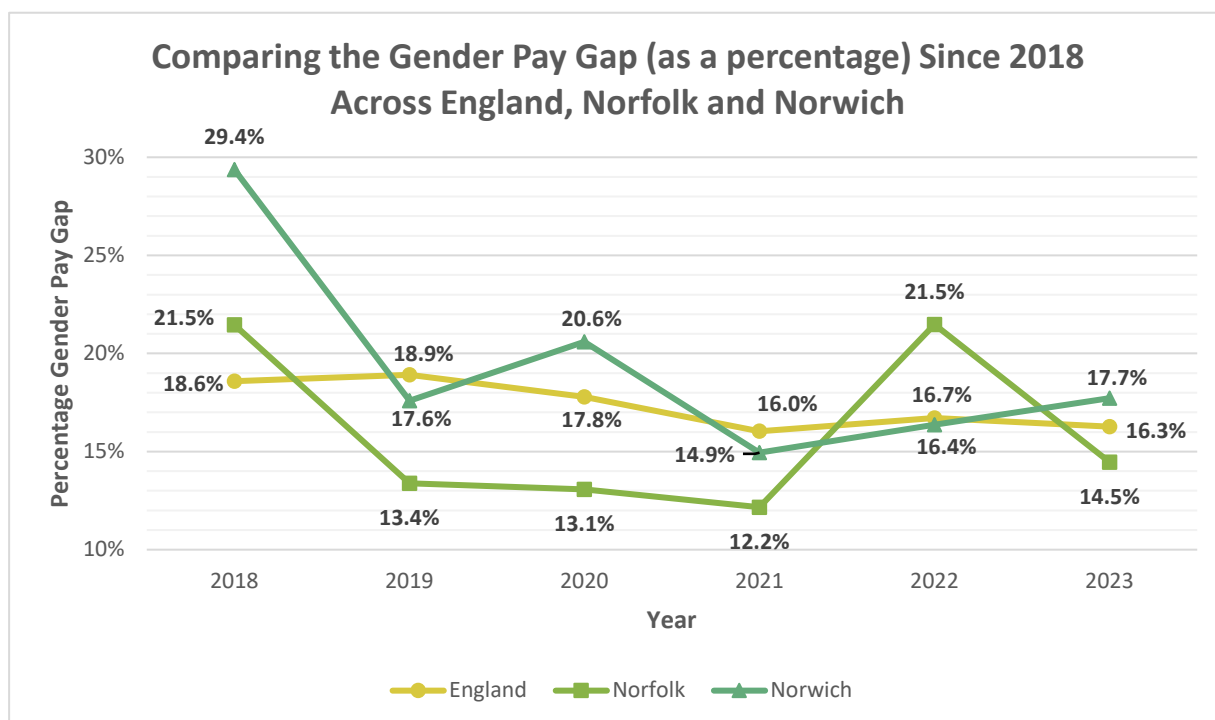
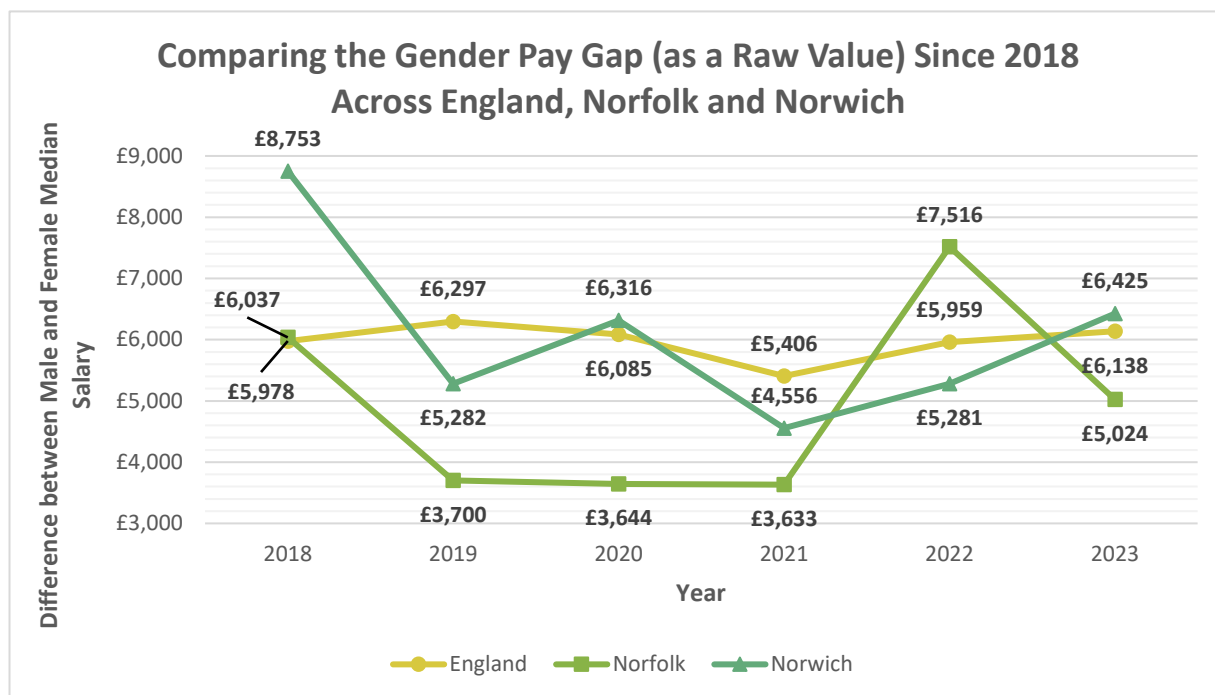
171. The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) is conducted in April each year to obtain information about the levels, distribution and make-up of earnings and hours worked for employees. This data set provides information about earnings of employees who are living in an area, who are on adult rates and whose pay for the survey’s pay-period was not affected by absence. This data therefore provides some useful context in terms of potential economic and financial resilience.

172. The chart below compares the median salaries in England, Norfolk and Norwich. We can see that in Norwich, the median salary was £33,429 per year, representing a 5.9% increase, which is positive, but still lower than inflation. The median yearly salary in Norwich was higher than the Norfolk median of £32,634, but lower than the median value for England of £35,100.



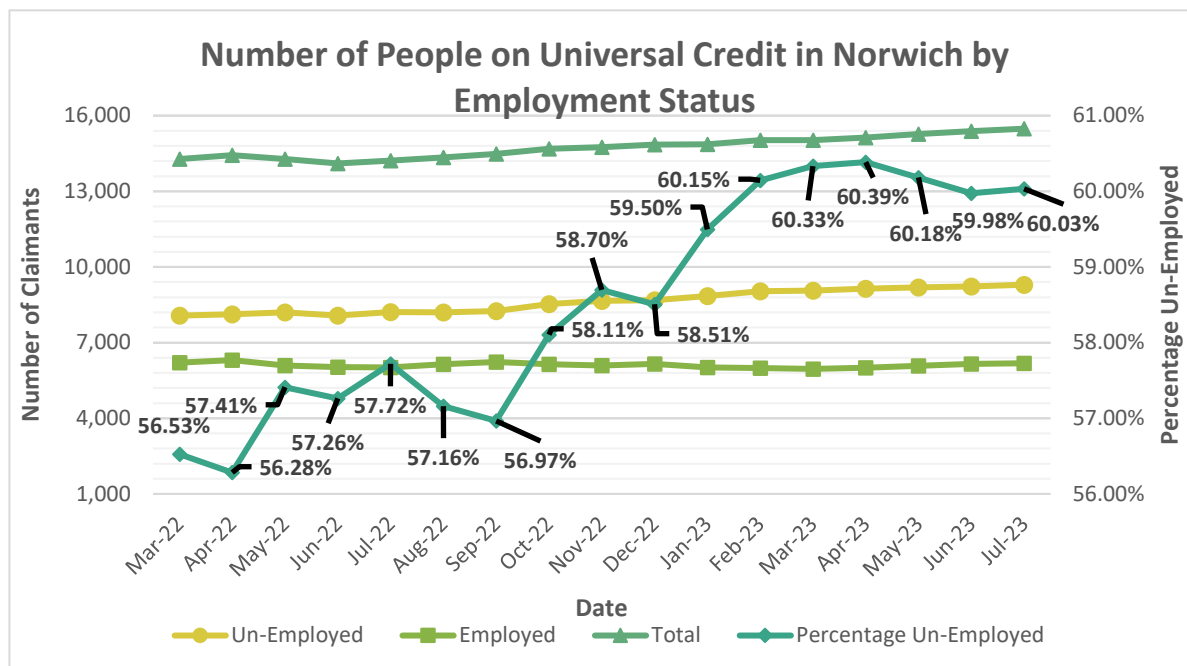
173. Below are two graphs analysing the gender pay gap, looking at the change in male and female salaries in Norwich since 2018. The graphs calculate the

gender pay gap as a raw value and percentage difference in salary, which is calculated as a percentage of the male median salary.



Universal Credit

174. This data covers the period of March 2022 – July 2023 and highlights the total number of people claiming Universal Credit, including the numbers of those in and out of employment. The number of claimants in/out of employment are released one month later than the overall total.



175. 15,483 people were claiming Universal Credit in Norwich in July 2023. For the latest month available (July 2023), 9,295 of these claimants were not in employment, whilst 6,187 were in employment. The total number of claims has increased by 8.8% compared to July 2022.

Cost of Living Vulnerability Index

176. The [Cost-of-Living Vulnerability Index](#) is the total of multiple poverty-based vulnerability and work-based vulnerability indicator rankings for each local authority. This index has been created by the Centre for Progressive Policy to measure the cost of living crisis (not available for County Councils). The index is based on six separate rankings for local authorities, which include, fuel poverty, food insecurity, child poverty, claimant count, economic inactivity, and low pay.

177. The higher the score will indicate an area's relative risk of more people being pulled into poverty, and the relative risk of those who were already struggling being pushed into destitution.

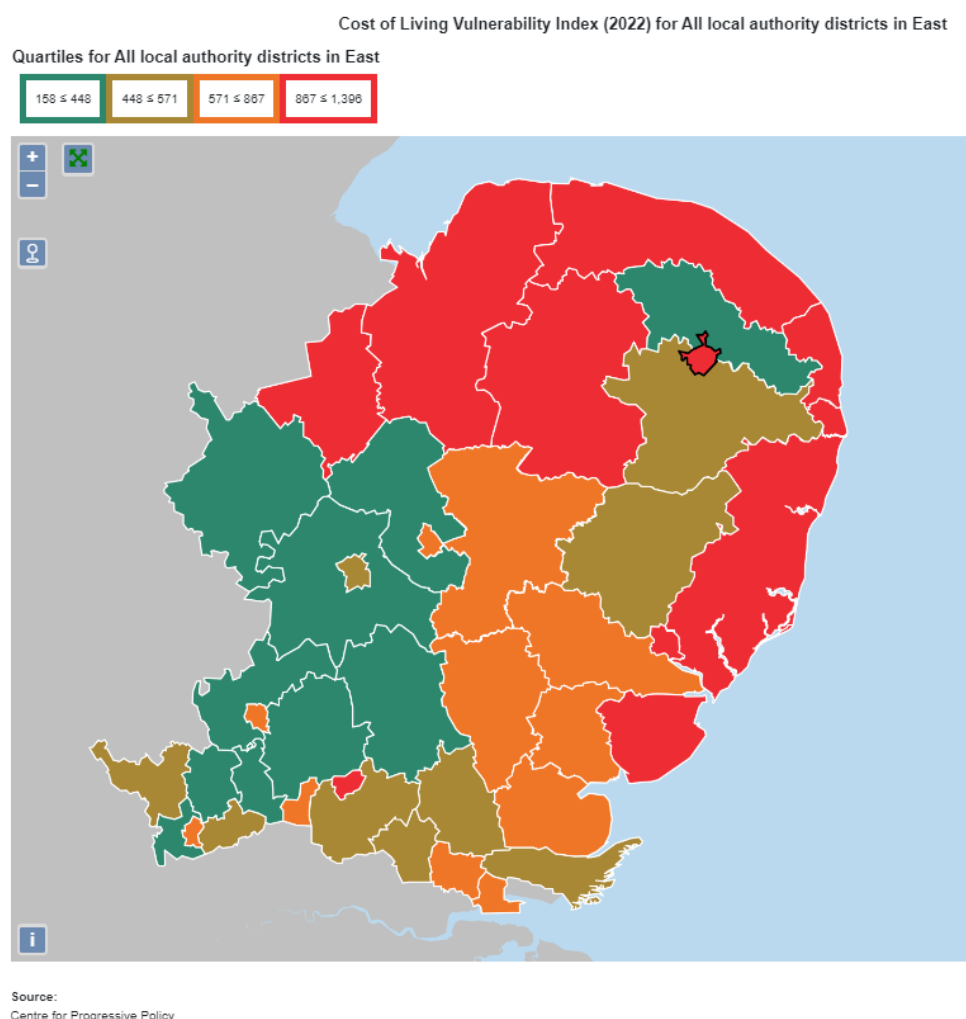
178. For Norwich, our Cost-of-Living Vulnerability Index ranking has improved over the last year with our index being 950. Out of the 307 local authorities which make up the Cost-of-Living Vulnerability Index, Norwich is currently ranked in 155th place.

179. Of the areas within All-English single tier and county councils, the three authorities with the highest index totals are:

1. Middlesbrough (1,706)
2. Sandwell (1,664)
3. Walsall (1,621)

4. The three authorities with the lowest index totals are:
5. South Cambridge (143)
6. Hart (186)
7. West Berkshire (206)

180. Below is a map illustrating the difference in the cost-of-living vulnerability index scores for all local authority districts in the East of England. The darker shades of red indicate a higher (worse) score across the metrics that comprise the index.



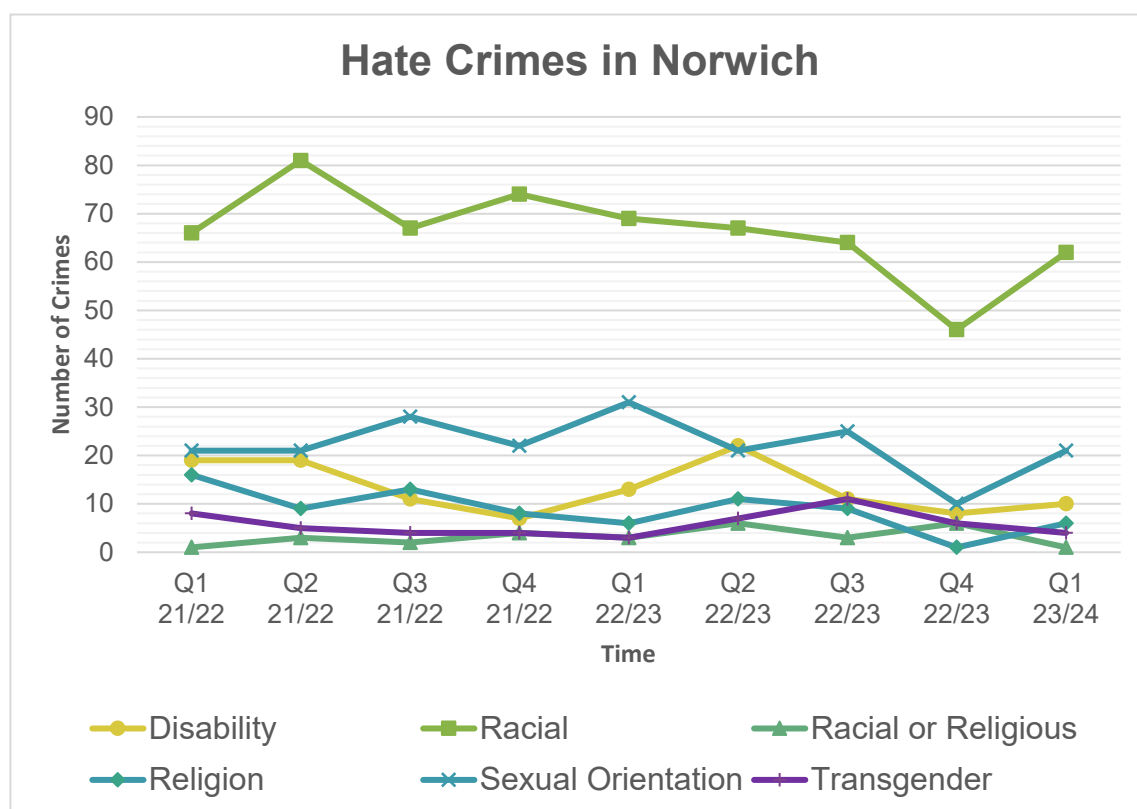
Hate crimes and incidents

181. A hate incident is any incident which is perceived by the person, or any other person as being motivated by prejudice or hatred. It may or may not be a crime. A hate crime is a crime committed against someone because of their protected characteristic. It is likely that the majority of hate crimes or incidents are not reported; therefore, higher figures do not always represent more crime, but possibly more reported crime due to more awareness or confidence in reporting.

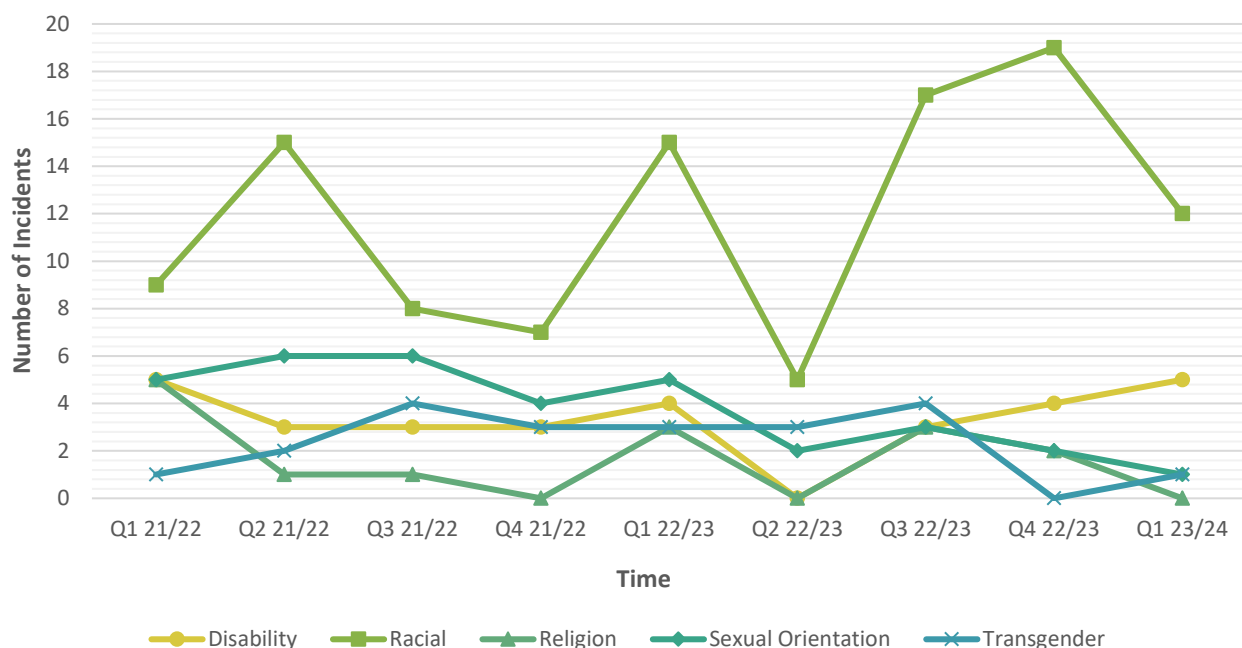
182. Since the total number of hate crimes and incidents was reported in last year's Equality Information Report, Norwich has seen a slight decrease in this figure over the last 12 months, with 524 crimes and incidents being reported between the second quarter of the 2022-2023 and the first quarter of the 2023-2024 financial year. This represents a decrease of 79 hate crimes and incidents over the same time period.

Type	2021-2022 Q2	2021-2022 Q3	2021-2022 Q4	2022-2023 Q1	2022-2023 Q2	2022-2023 Q3	2022-2023 Q4	2023-2024 Q1
Crimes	138	125	119	125	134	123	77	104
Disability	19	11	7	13	22	11	8	10
Racial	81	67	74	69	67	64	46	62
Racial or Religious	3	2	4	3	6	3	6	1
Religion	9	13	8	6	11	9	1	6
Sexual Orientation	21	28	22	31	21	25	10	21
Transgender	5	4	4	3	7	11	6	4
Incidents	27	22	17	30	10	30	27	19
Disability	3	3	3	4	0	3	4	5
Racial	15	8	7	15	5	17	19	12
Religion	1	1	0	3	0	3	2	0
Sexual Orientation	6	6	4	5	2	3	2	1
Transgender	2	4	3	3	3	4	0	1
Total	165	147	136	155	144	153	104	123

183. The charts below shows that racial crimes continue to account for largest type of those reported.

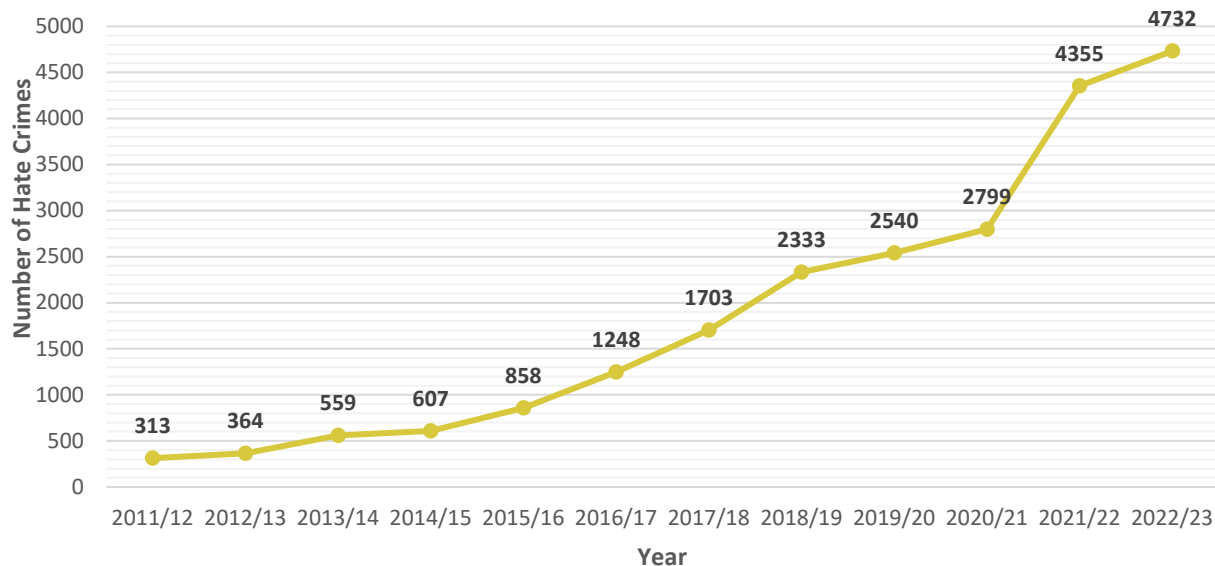


Hate Incidents in Norwich



184. As mentioned [earlier in this report](#), the number of hate crimes against individuals identifying as Transgender have been increasing each year. The graph below illustrates this trend and the number of hate crimes recorded in England and Wales since 2011/12.

Number of Transgender Hate Crimes Per Year in England and Wales since 2011/12



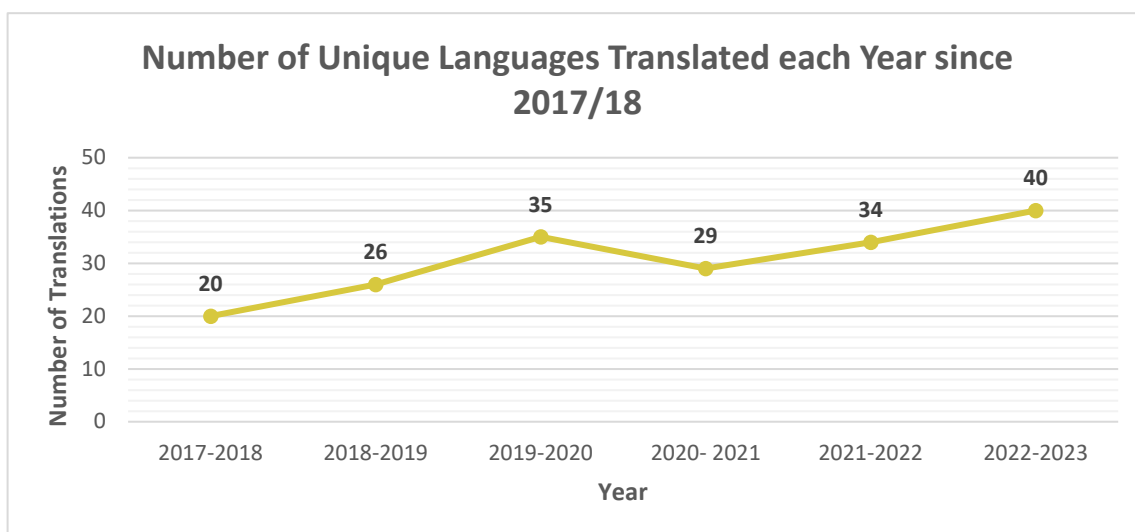
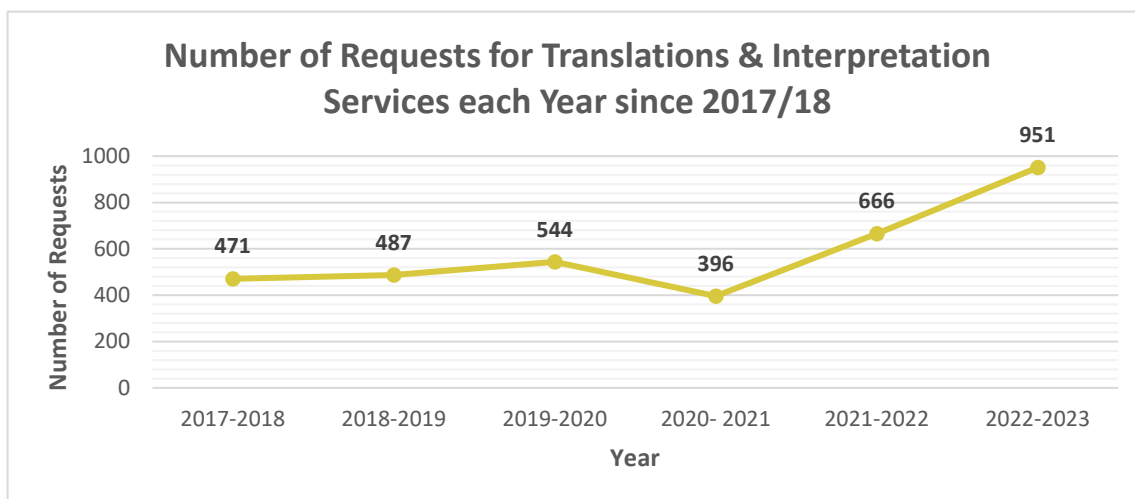
185. This data formed part of the evidence base that informs our new Safer Norwich Strategy for 2023 to 2026, which identifies specific activities we will take to help improve the safety across our communities and neighbourhoods.

Customers

Translations and interpretations

186. The council has seen a 43% increase in the number of translations and interpretations conducted for our customers this year, with the number of languages requested increasing from 34 to 40.

Top 10 languages					
2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020- 2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Arabic	Lithuanian	Arabic	Lithuanian	Arabic	Arabic
Hungarian	Hungarian	Lithuanian	Portuguese	Lithuanian	Lithuanian
Lithuanian	Arabic	Polish	Arabic	Polish	Polish
Farsi	Portuguese	Portuguese	Hungarian	Bengali	Kurdish - Sorani
Polish	Vietnamese	Kurdish - Sorani	Romanian	Kurdish - Sorani	Ukrainian
Portuguese	Kurdish - Sorani	Hungarian	Polish	Italian	Portuguese
Kurdish - Sorani	Mandarin	Romanian	Spanish	Portuguese	Romanian
Latvian	Polish	Bengali	Bulgarian	Mandarin	Albanian
Bulgarian	Bengali	Amharic	Turkish	Sudanese Arabic	Tigrinya
Bengali	Russian	Russian	Mandarin	Bulgarian	Vietnamese



Complaints

187. Below are a series of tables that provide a breakdown of the total number of complaints the council received between 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 by ethnicity, age, disability status, gender.

Ethnicity	Count	Percentage
Black African	4	0.2%
Black Caribbean	1	0.0%
Black Other	2	0.1%
Indian	1	0.0%
Other	3	0.1%
Other Asian	3	0.1%
Other Mixed	5	0.2%
Pakistani	2	0.1%
Romany Gypsy	1	0.0%
White & Asian	1	0.0%
White British	458	22.6%
White European	20	1.0%
White Irish	3	0.1%
White Other	16	0.8%
Unknown/declined to answer	8	0.4%
Not recorded	1,496	73.9%
Total	2,024	

Age	Count	Percentage
19 and under	3	0.1%
20-29	125	6.2%
30-39	241	11.9%
40-49	264	13.0%
50-59	269	13.3%
60-69	177	8.7%
70-79	130	6.4%
80-89	48	2.4%
90-99	6	0.3%
Unknown/declined to answer	761	37.6%
Total	2,024	

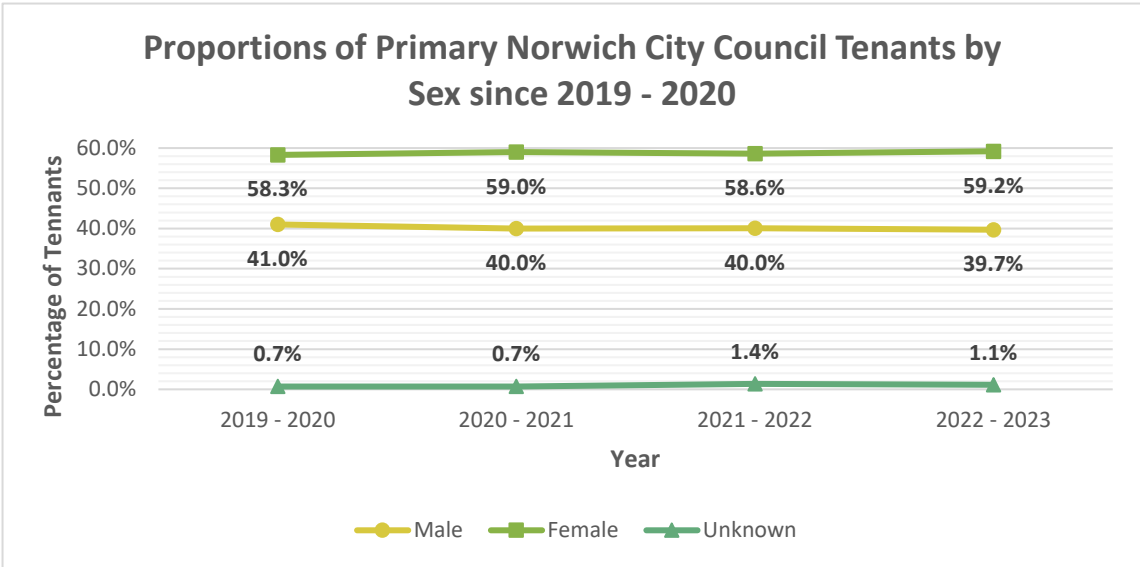
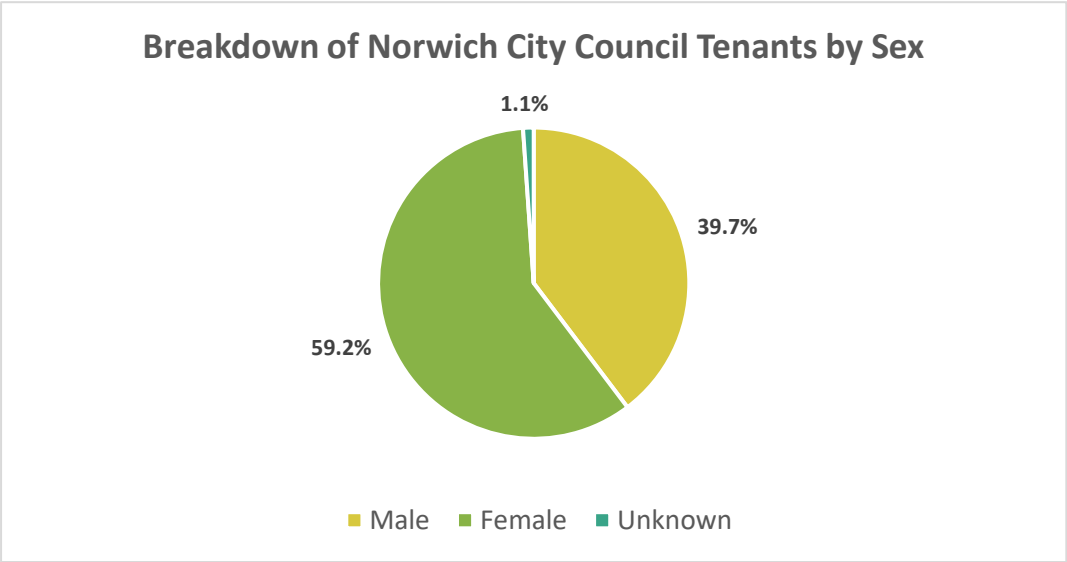
Disability	Count	Percentage
Non-Disabled	719	35.5%
Disabled	310	15.3%
Unknown/declined to answer	995	49.2%
Total	2,024	

Gender	Count	Percentage
Female	844	41.7%
Male	613	30.3%
Unknown/declined to answer	567	28.0%
Total	2,024	

188. Our complaints process has been reviewed and we will be introducing more informative monitoring where we analyse the nature of the complaint from an equality perspective as opposed to just the equality profile of the complainant. This will go live from April 2024, as part of the upgrade to our contact management system.

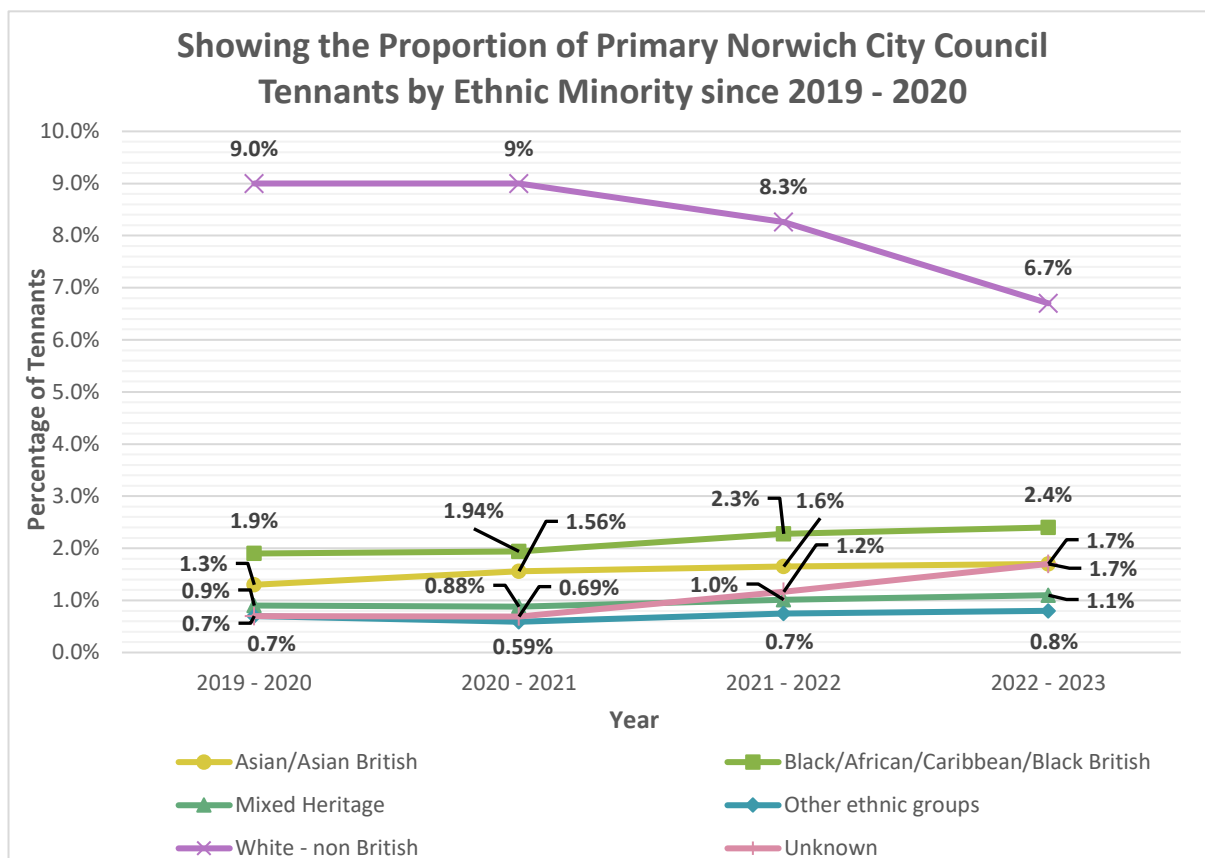
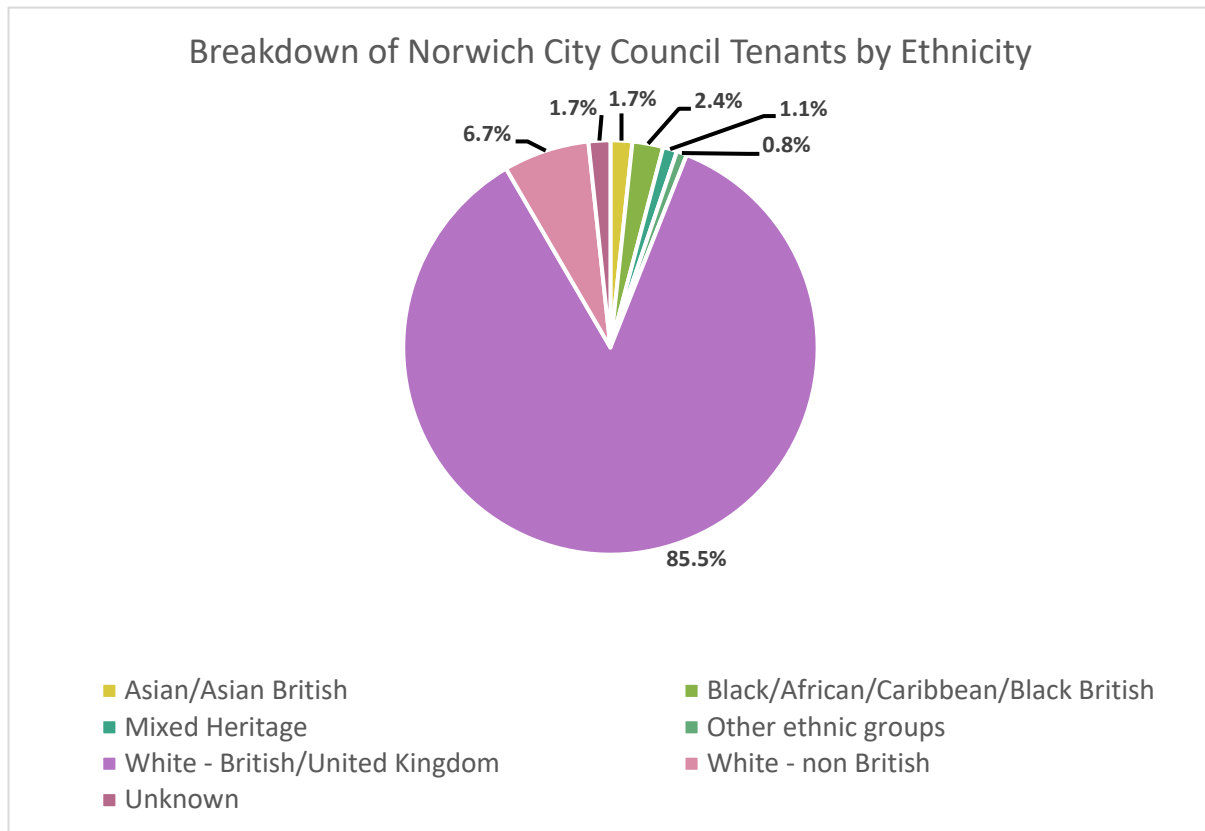
Tenant profiles

189. The tenant data in this section relates to the named Norwich City Council Tenant, and not all occupants of the household, as of 30 October 2023. The charts below show the sex, race, age, and disability levels breakdowns along with the four-year trends for each characteristic.

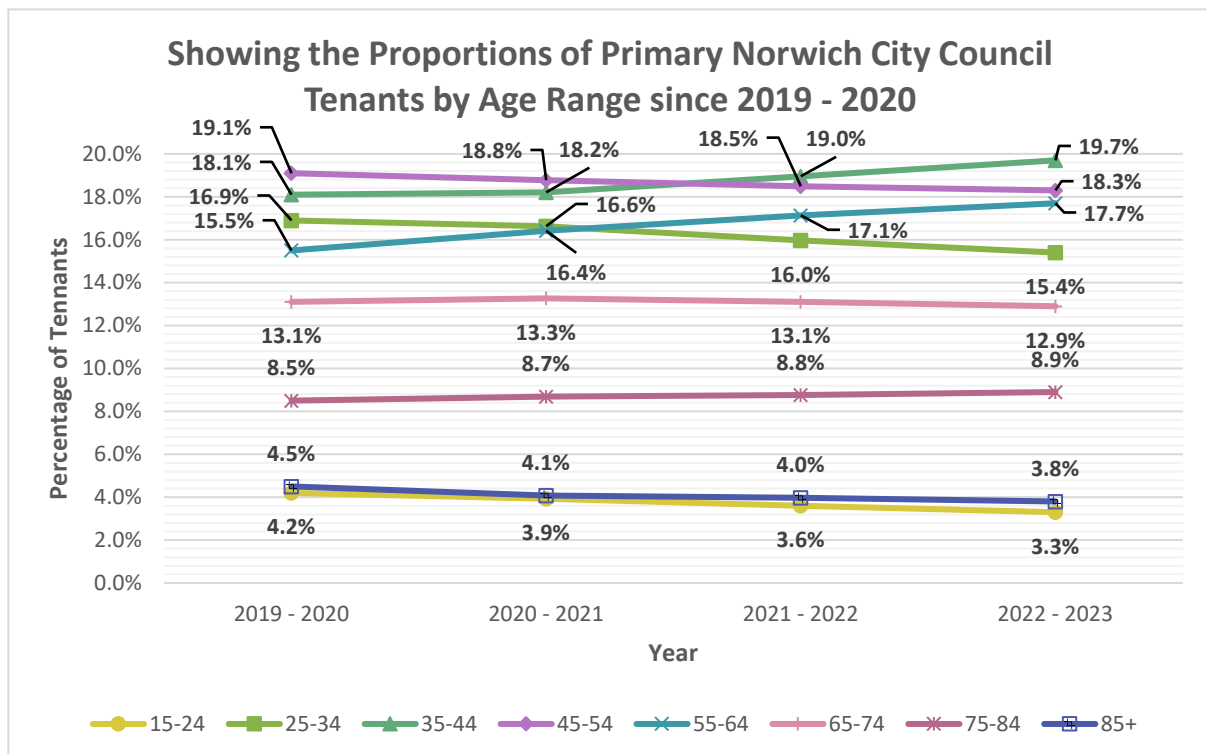
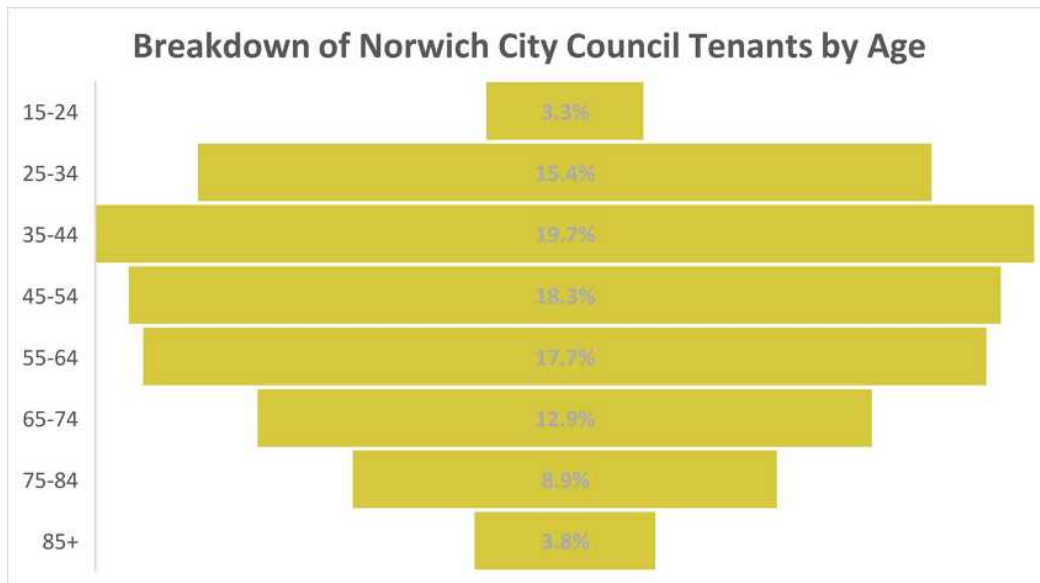


190. There has been little to no change in the distribution of our tenant's sex, with female tenants being more common than male, at around 60% compared to 40%.

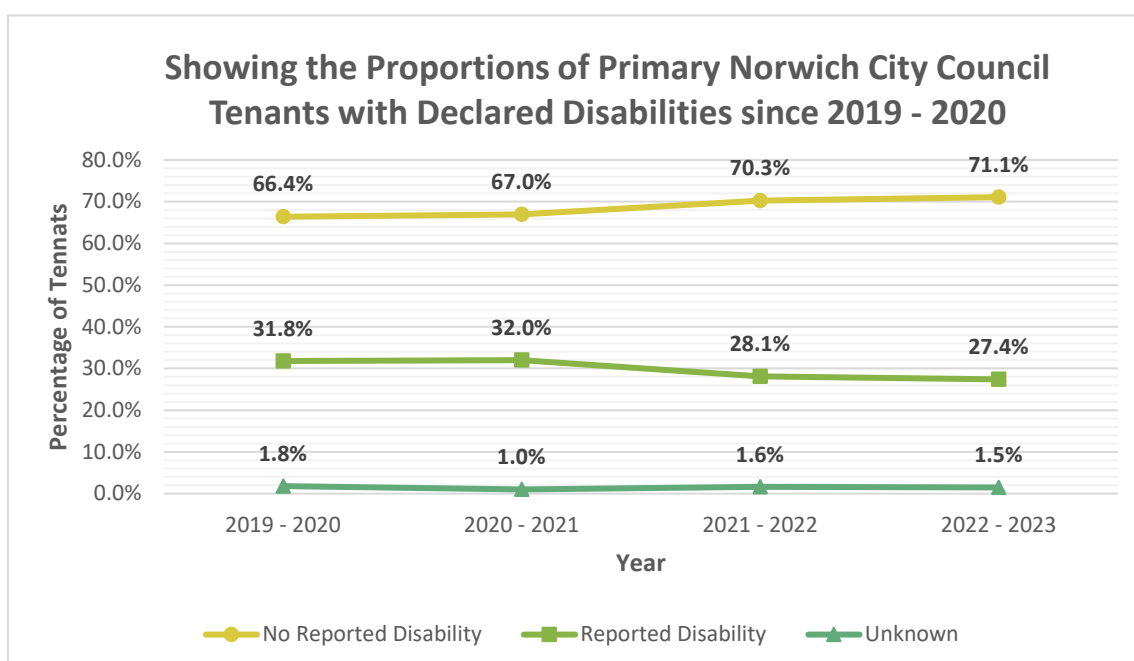
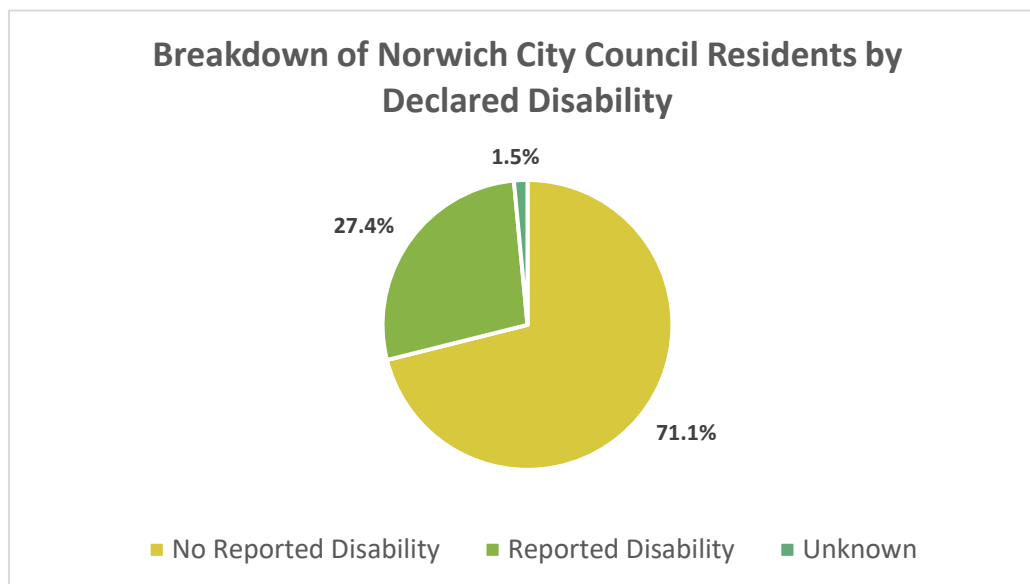
191. Shown below is the changing distribution of ethnic minorities in our council homes. The vast majority of residents are White British (85.5%), and this hasn't changed significantly over the last 4 years. We do see more significant change in the makeup of ethnic minorities however, with White – non-British residents falling since 2019-2020.



192. There have been some slight changes in the distribution of our tenant's ages. The most common age range now being 35-44, compared to 45-54 four years ago. Additionally, the number of 55-64-year-olds has steadily increased over the last four years, becoming the third largest demographic, overtaking 25-34-year-olds. This has resulted in the majority of our tenants (54.7%) being aged between 35 and 64 years of age.



193. There has been a slight decrease in the number of our tenants declaring disabilities, from 31.8% in 2019-2020 to 27.4% in 2022-2023.



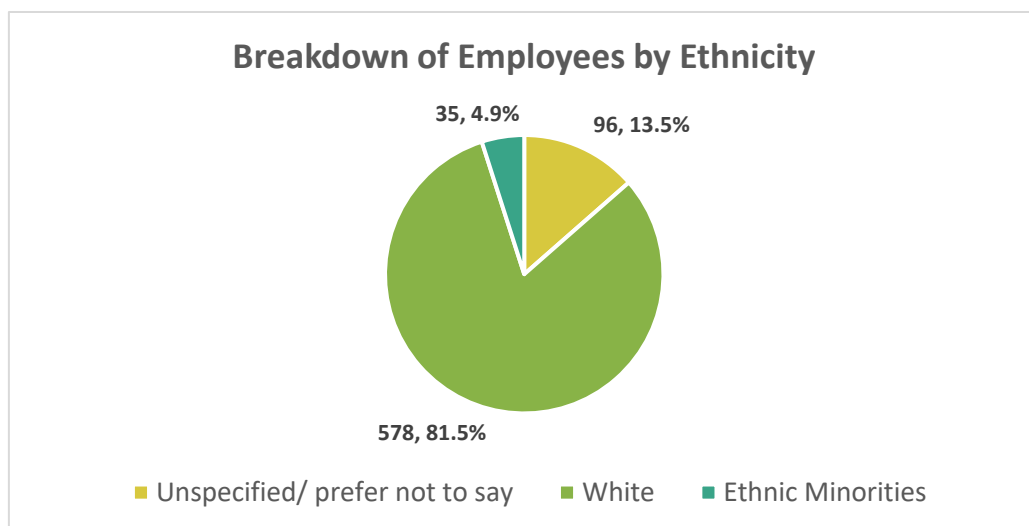
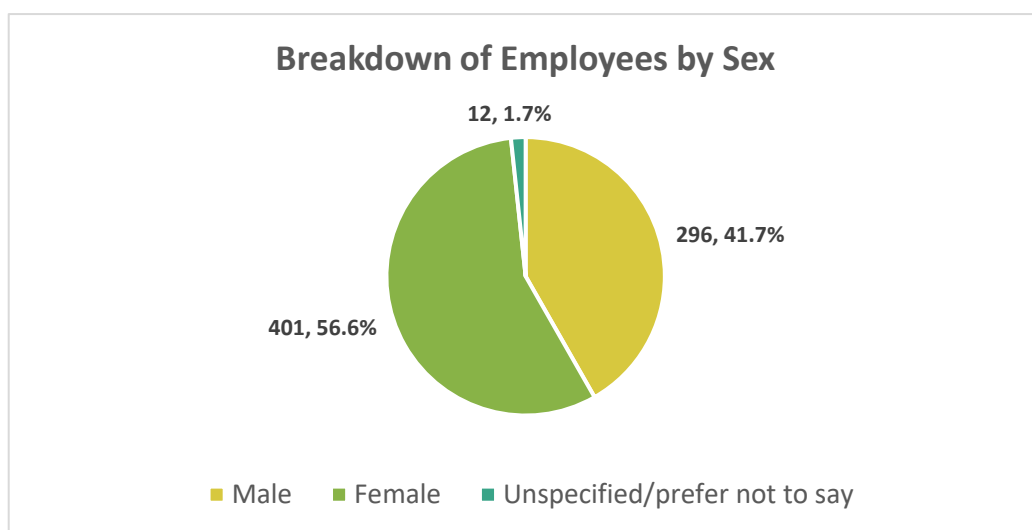
Employees

Profiles

194. The diversity figures in this report are based on a headcount of a total of 709 employees, as of 31st March 2023, and are taken from Norwich City Council's Human Resources system. Employees who are not paid directly by Norwich City Council are not included in the analysis, nor are agency workers/contractors.
195. Norwich City Council's aim is for the workforce to reflect the percentage of the local community who are economically active, from an ethnic minority, who have a disability and who match the gender imbalance.
196. The table below shows the overall declaration rates for each reported characteristic as of 31 March 2023.

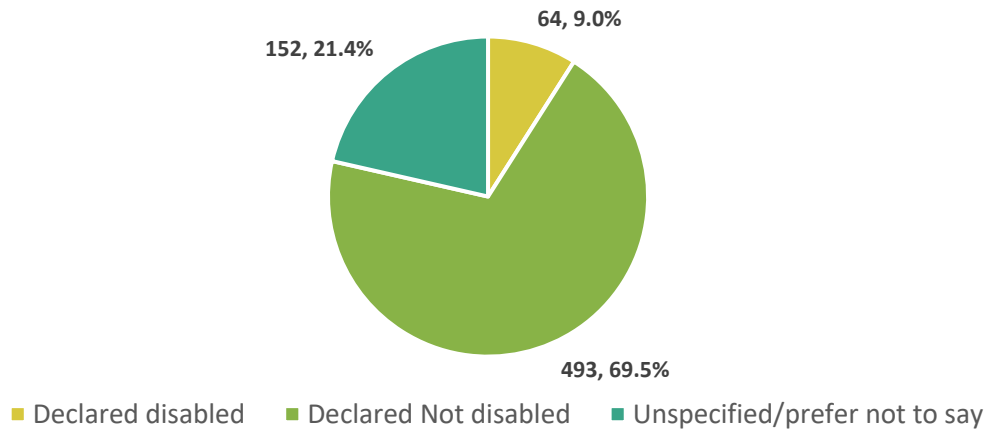
Protected Characteristic	Proportion %	Number of employees
Gender	98.3	697
Ethnicity	86.5	613
Disability	78.5	557
Working Pattern	100.0	709
Sexual Orientation	40.3	286
Age	100.0	709
Religion	41.2	292

197. The data presented below shows Norwich City Council's workforce by protected characteristic as of 31 March 2023. Workforce composition by sex, race, disability, working pattern, sexual orientation, and age.

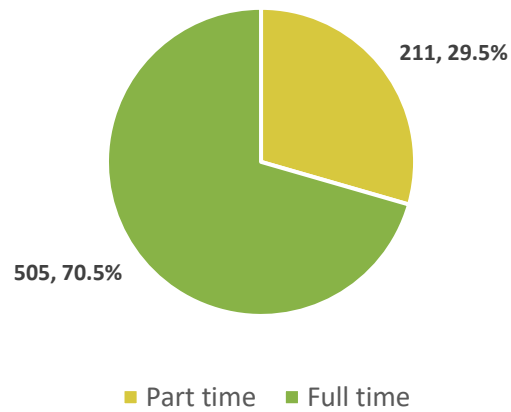


Please note that the data for race is not divided into ethnic groups as it is not appropriate to publish datasets which are based on fewer than ten employees and the lower number poses a threat to employee confidentiality.

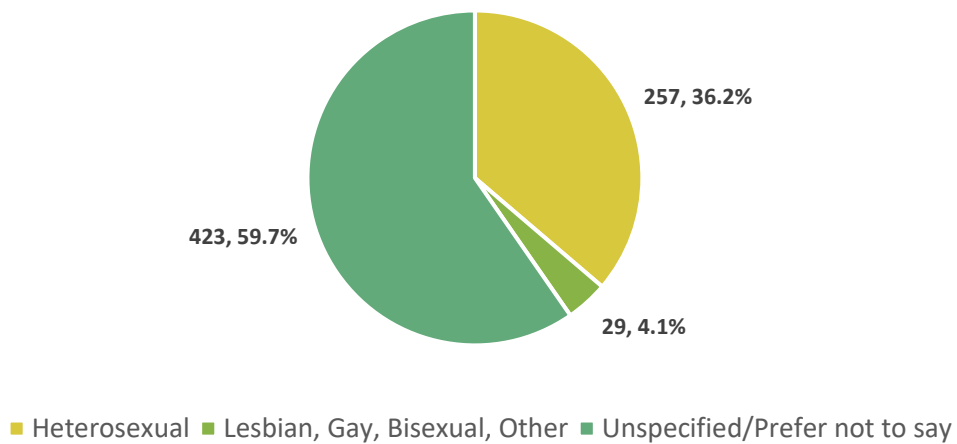
Breakdown of Employees by Disability

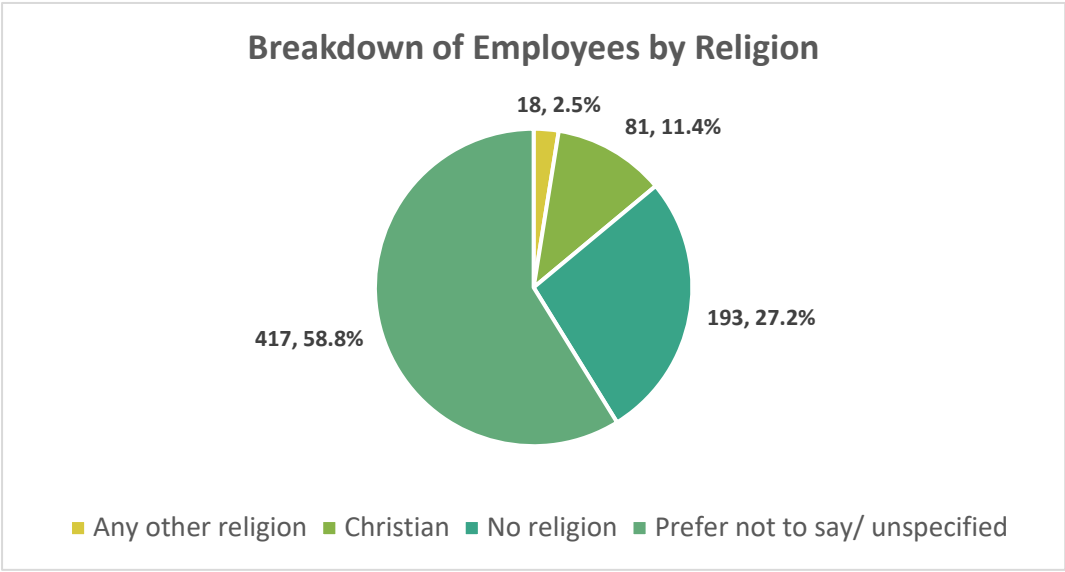
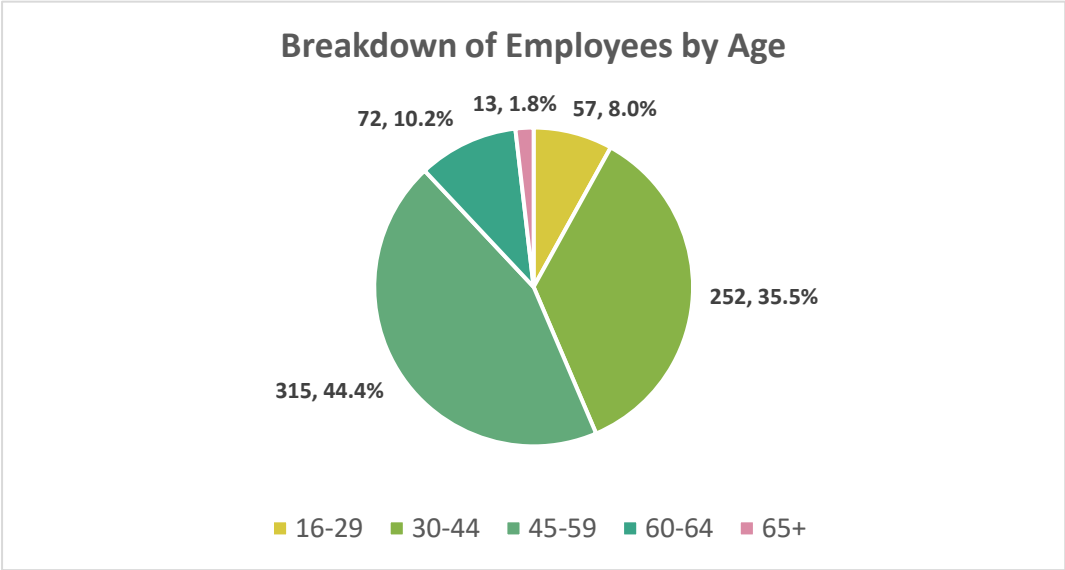


Breakdown of Employees by Working Pattern

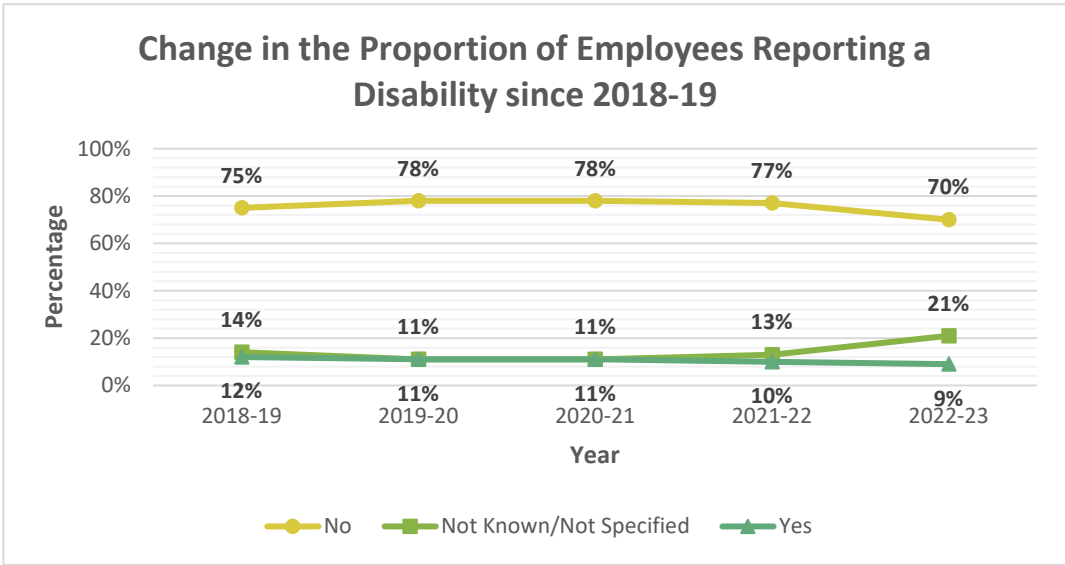


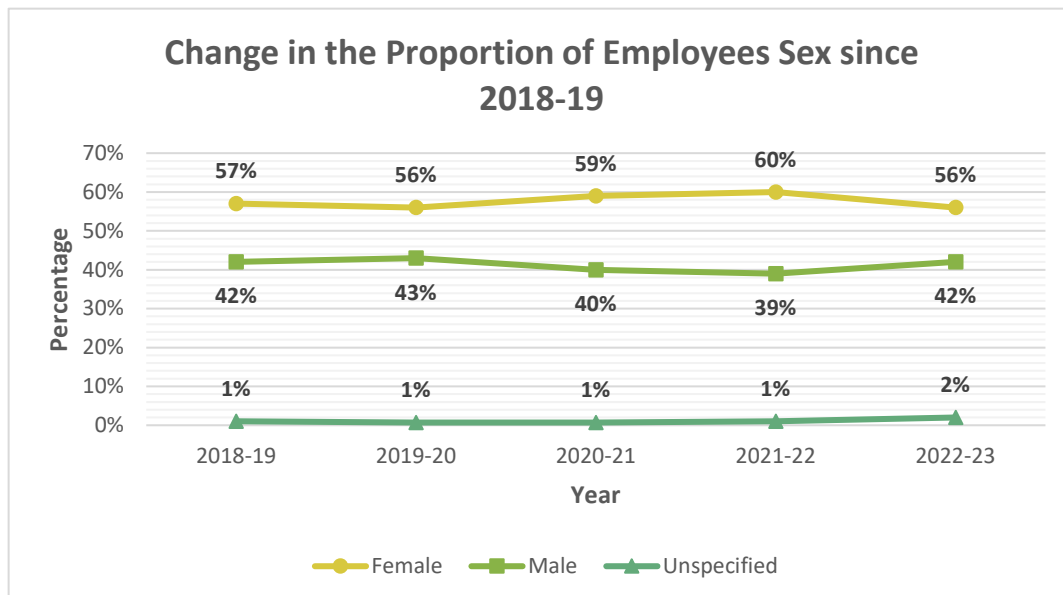
Breakdown of Employees by Sexual Orientation



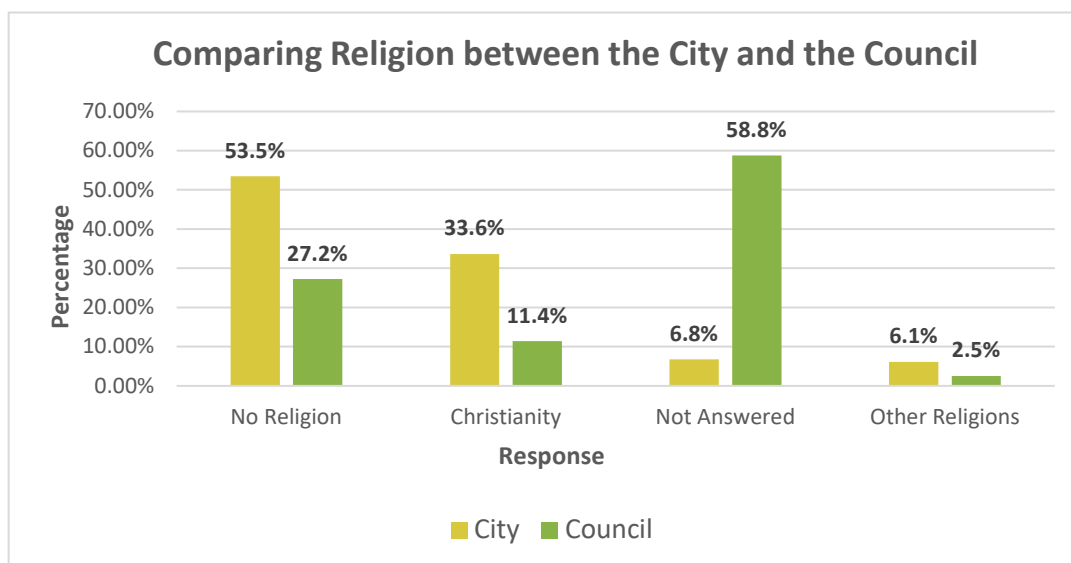
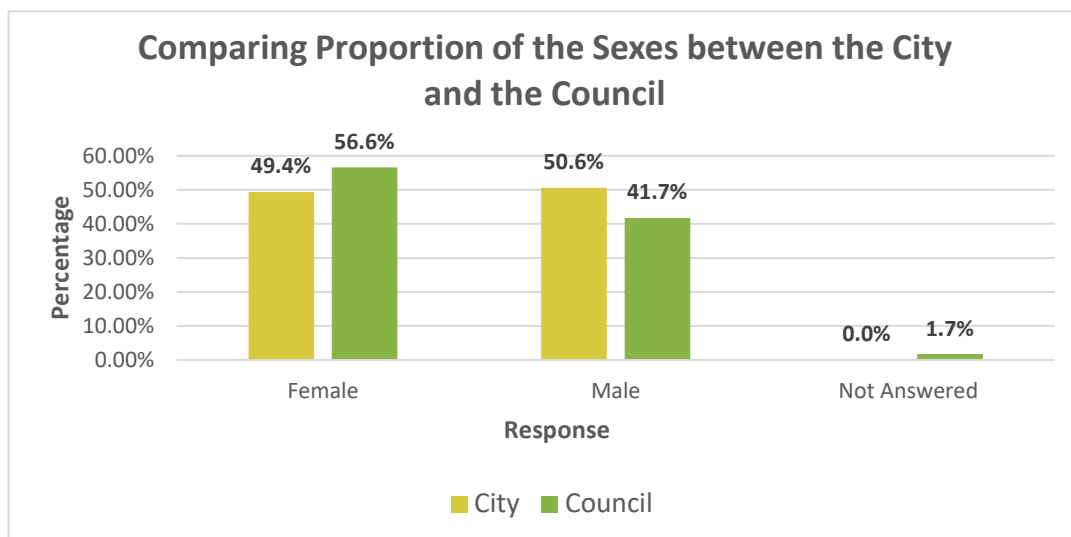


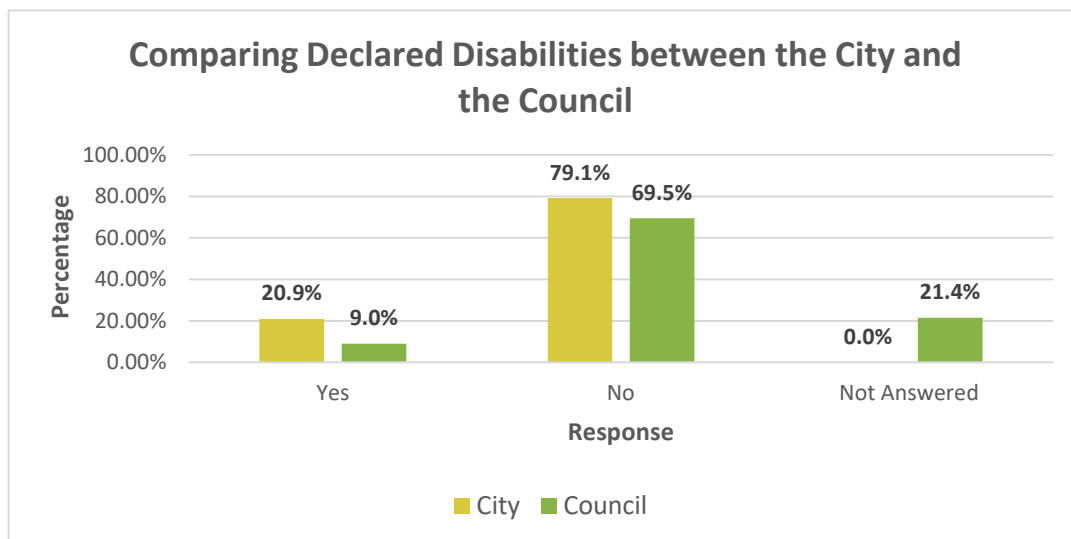
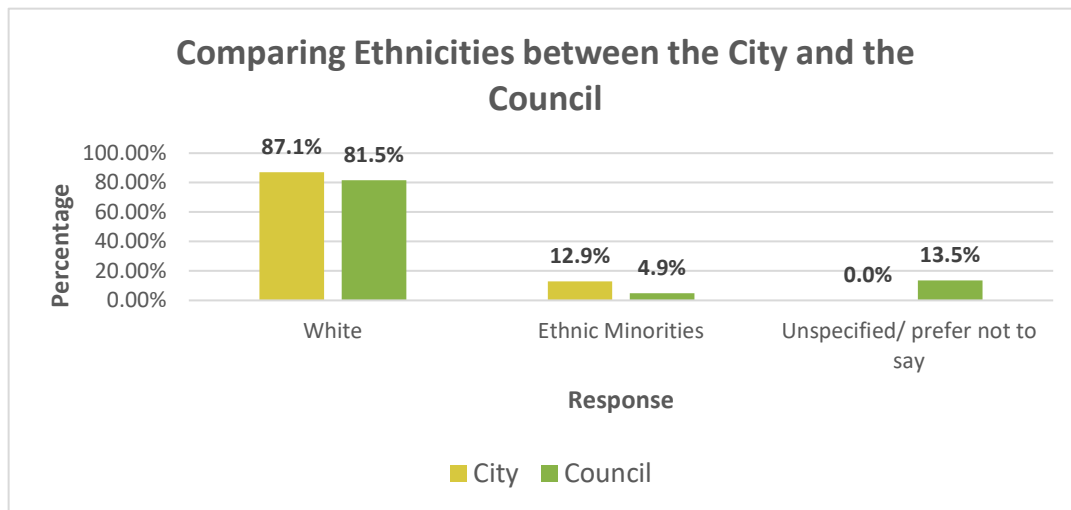
198. The graphs below demonstrate there has been very little change in the sex and disability profiles of our employees over the last five years. Latest data indicates that 9% of our workforce (who chose to answer the question) are reporting a disability.





199. We have mentioned that our goal is to reflect the economically active community in our employees. Below is a comparison, using 2021 census data, comparing our employee demographics, to those of the city by sex, religion, ethnicity and disability.





200. For disabilities, the 'Yes' response in the Census includes those reporting both severe and mild impact on day-to-day living. One assumption we could make, is that those experiencing severe impacts on their day-to-day life are unlikely to be economically active. Making this assumption, and excluding them from this analysis gives a better comparison between our employees and the economically active in our local community, shown below.
201. In general, we still have room to improve in reflecting our local economically active population in our employee profile. It is important to note that this data is taken from the Census data for population, and therefore includes citizens that are not economically active. This, combined with the much higher proportion of employees not answering/preferring to not respond makes analysing the data quite difficult. Regardless, it is still clear that we need to promote the employment of the disabled as well as religious and ethnic minorities.
202. The data for disciplinary, grievance, leavers, and promotions for the year 2022/23 is not appropriate to publish as the datasets are based on fewer than ten employees and the lower numbers pose a threat to employee confidentiality.

Recruitment

203. We have sought to continue to attract, retain and develop diverse talent through our recruitment strategies and use of social media to promote opportunities. Our recruitment practice is inclusive, ensuring job advertisements are checked for accessible language and include positive statements. All are open to reasonable adjustments to support the recruitment process.
204. The data in the table below shows the numbers of applicants at different stages of the recruitment process between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023. All aspects of the recruitment process are reported in relation to each of the following characteristics: ethnicity, disability, and gender. During the period 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023 there were a total of 1,354 applicants for Norwich City Council vacancies. 694 were shortlisted for interview and 310 were successful at interview.

Characteristic	Applicants	Shortlisted	Offered
Ethnicity			
Asian, Asian British, Asian Welsh	80 (5.9%)	31 (4.5%)	15 (4.8%)
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	49 (3.6%)	10 (1.4%)	3 (1%)
Mixed or multiple	47 (3.5%)	28 (4.1%)	11 (3.5%)
Unspecified or prefer not to say	37 (2.7%)	19 (2.7%)	9 (2.9%)
White	1,127 (83.2%)	604 (87%)	271 (87.4%)
Other ethnic group	14 (1%)	2 (0.3%)	1 (0.3%)
Gender			
Female	731 (54%)	397 (57.2%)	196 (63.2%)
Male	608 (44.9%)	292 (42.1%)	112 (36.1%)
Unspecified or prefer not to say	15 (1.1%)	5 (0.7%)	2 (0.7%)
Disability			
Disabled	132 (9.8%)	64 (9.2%)	22 (7.1%)
Non-disabled	1,147 (84.7%)	593 (85.5%)	274 (88.4%)
Unspecified or prefer not to say	75 (5.5%)	37 (5.3%)	14 (4.5%)
Totals	1354	694	310

205. The Covid-19 pandemic forced our culture to change rapidly with an unexpected and first-time move to mass home working. A hybrid working policy was developed during this year and went live in April 2022. A hybrid working approach allows colleagues flexibility of some home working whilst attending the office according to business and personal requirements. We ensure that colleagues who require workplace adjustments are fully supported as hybrid workers and equipment is provided if appropriate.
206. In the majority of our service areas, we operate flexible working to carry out duties during a range of hours. We offer a variety of flexible working arrangements, enabling eligible employees to apply to change the way they work. This includes the ability to apply for any position on a full or part time basis. We are also open to requests for term-time or annualised hours or compressed working hours.

Gender pay gap

207. Our latest gender pay gap was published 31 March 2023 for the year 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. In line with the statutory requirements, the report for Norwich City Council's Gender Pay Gap for 31 March 2023 is due to be reported by 31 March 2024. This will be made available on Norwich City Council website and Gov.uk [here](#).

Data sources

[Local statistics - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

[Census - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

[Sexual orientation, England, and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

[Norfolk Insight - Demographics and Statistics - Data Observatory](#)

[Citizens Advice cost of living data dashboard](#)

Useful links

[Community safety in Norwich](#)

[Community support | Norwich City Council](#)

[Cost of living support in Norwich](#)

[Equality Act 2010](#)

[Get Talking Norwich](#)

[Greater Norwich Homelessness Strategy 2020-2025](#)

[LUMi - Community portal](#)

[Norwich 2040 City Vision](#)

[Norwich City Council Corporate Plan 2022-2026](#)

[Norwich Economic Strategy 2019-2024](#)

[Norwich Good Economy Commission](#)

[Norwich Food Network](#)

[Norwich Food Poverty Action Plan](#)

[Norwich Monthly Economic Barometer](#)

[Norwich Town Deal](#)

[Public Sector Equality Duty](#)

Appendix 2:

Draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-27 (for information).

Norwich City Council

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

2024-27

PLAN ON A PAGE

This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy sets out our continued commitment to tackling inequality and promoting diversity. This covers both our legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 and our wider ambition to reduce socio-economic and health inequalities in the city.

It outlines how we will work with our partners to make Norwich the best it can be for everyone, recognising that different people and communities have different needs, so it's a city where everyone:

- feels they belong
- is respected
- has a voice
- has the chance to succeed and thrive.

We want to be an organisation that makes a real difference for the people of Norwich by:

- showing respect and kindness to everyone
- giving the most help to the people who need it the most
- continuing to learn and improve
- focusing on prevention and early intervention

We have three aims which are supported by key priorities:

Aim	Priorities
Aim 1- Norwich City Council is an inclusive place to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that the profile of our workforce broadly reflects the city's population and the local labour market• Continue to develop inclusive working practices and policies• Support colleagues to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to consider equality in all their work
Aim 2 - Our services will be joined up, accessible and inclusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve a range of communication platforms and channels to enhance accessibility, including for those facing digital exclusion• Undertake service-specific equalities reviews, so every service reflects our ambition• Ensure that our knowledge about the people and communities we serve informs our service planning, and that their voices are heard
Aim 3 - Norwich is a fair city where people facing inequality can share in and contribute to the city's success	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion outcomes inform wider council policies, strategies and programmes• Focus our efforts on the places and communities in the city that face the biggest disadvantages, improving our use of data to help us do this• Develop our leadership capacity and capability around equalities• Continue working with partners to influence investment and target resource.

Introduction

Norwich has a long history of being a radical, innovative city. We are increasingly recognised for our strong economy, quality of life and vibrancy. The city is rich in cultural and ethnic diversity which we aim to both celebrate and promote. This is central to our Norwich 2040 vision and our work with partners to achieve this.

We recognise the contributions that people from different backgrounds make, and actively seek to tackle inequalities and foster good relationships across our communities. We want the city to be a fair, kind, accessible and inclusive place for everyone. This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy sets out our continued commitment to tackling inequality and promoting diversity.

It outlines how we will:

- deliver this ambition and the high standards we expect of ourselves
- work with partners and communities to promote equality, diversity and inclusion and the progressive building of good relations between different groups
- shape services which actively address inequality and exclusion
- build an inclusive culture within our workforce and organisation

A key reason why many people in Norwich are held back is because of inequality and lack of opportunity connected to one or more of the characteristics that are protected under the Equality Act 2010. These are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

As well as a firm commitment to deliver our legal duty under the Act regarding these characteristics, our aspirations go further to include refugees and migrants, those who have served or continue to serve in our Armed Forces, and the socio-economic and health inequalities resulting from deprivation.

All these factors can cause disadvantage around poverty, educational attainment, access to good quality jobs, health and life expectancy.

This strategy re-states our long-held commitment to tackling inequality, with our partners, not just because it is our duty but also because doing so helps create a more successful city.

We want Norwich to be a place in which everyone's hopes and aspirations can be made real. We want to ensure people are not held back by poverty and that success is shared. This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy supports that journey.

Our Ambition

We live in an unequal society and that inequality causes vastly different outcomes for different individuals, groups and communities.

Against that backdrop, we want Norwich to be as fair, kind, accessible, and inclusive as possible. We will work with our partners to make the city the best it can be for everyone, recognising that different people and communities have different needs, so it's a place where everyone:

- feels they belong
- is respected
- has a voice

- has the chance to succeed and thrive.

We want to be an organisation that makes a real difference for the people of Norwich by:

- showing respect and kindness to everyone
- giving the most help to the people who need it the most
- continuing to learn and improve
- focusing on prevention and early intervention.

As a public sector body, we have a legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to have 'due regard' for advancing equality. This includes eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act, advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not, and fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not.

However, this strategy goes beyond this legal duty. It reflects our strong political commitment to equalities, fairness and social justice, which has been the basis of our ambition to reduce socio-economic and health inequalities in Norwich. We have been working towards this for many years. We take action to address inequality and hold ourselves and others accountable for this and will continue to do so. This new strategy sets out the priorities that will shape the new actions we will take over the next few years in addition to all the existing work which continues day-to-day.

What we mean

Equality, diversity and inclusion means different things to different people. For us:

Equality means...	...ensuring that every person has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents. It is also the belief that no one should have poorer life chances because of who they are, where they come from, or what they believe.
Diversity means...	... having a range of people with various backgrounds, circumstances, lifestyles, experience and interests, in line with the variety of people that make up society.
Inclusion means...	...the sense of belonging: feeling respected, having a voice and being valued for who you are; as well as feeling a level of supportive energy and commitment from others so that you can do your best.

How we have developed the strategy

To help guide our ongoing work and the development of this strategy, we have heard from communities via representative groups and from residents across the city as well as businesses, institutions and our own employees and elected members.

We did this through community conversations, online surveys, workshops, and open calls for views, trying to enable people to tell us their thoughts in a way that worked for them. We have also drawn on analysis of a range of quantitative data sources that show the distribution and nature of inequality in the city council area.

From this work, equality, diversity and inclusion are understood to be key elements for a positive and successful city like Norwich. However, listening to people is not a one-off exercise, so we plan to continue doing so as part of delivering this strategy.

Our aims

We have three strategic aims:

Aim 1 - Norwich City Council is an inclusive place to work	It is important that we have a culture that has inclusion and equality at the heart of everything we do. This is not just about the council's role as an employer: we need to be a genuinely inclusive organisation in order to achieve our other aims
Aim 2 - Our services will be joined up, accessible and inclusive	The council has duties and powers to provide a wide range of services in an inclusive way. Many of these services can play a role in creating a more level playing field for people who face inequality or exclusion.
Aim 3 - Norwich is a fair city where people facing inequality can share in and contribute to the city's success	Ensuring that all communities share in the city's success is a core part of the vision set out in our Corporate Plan. Many of the challenges we face need action by a range of partners and the council has a leading role to play in bringing together organisations across the private, public, and voluntary sectors to tackle inequalities and exclusion across Norwich.



Making it happen

We will only realise our ambition and our strategic aims through taking action. Much of this action constitutes our 'business as usual', routine service and business planning processes and our ongoing use of Equality Impact Assessments. However, we are also committing to some specific, additional actions that will support the realisation of our ambition.

The detail of these actions can be found in our forthcoming action plan. This will cover the duration of one year with the expectation that we will build on this in subsequent years covered by the strategy, based on measuring and reviewing the effectiveness of the action plan.

This table outlines the key priorities against each of our strategic aims:

Aim	Priorities
Aim 1 - Norwich City Council is an inclusive place to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that the profile of our workforce broadly reflects the city's population and the local labour market• Continue to develop inclusive working practices and policies• Support colleagues to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to consider equality in all their work
Aim 2 - Our services will be joined up, accessible and inclusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve a range of communication platforms and channels to enhance accessibility, including for those facing digital exclusion• Undertake service-specific equalities reviews, so every service reflects our ambition• Ensure that intelligence about the people and communities we serve inform our service planning, and that their voices are heard
Aim 3 - Norwich is a fair city where people facing inequality can share in and contribute to the city's success	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion outcomes inform wider council policies, strategies and programmes• Focus our efforts on the places and communities in the city that face the biggest disadvantages, improving our use of data to help us do this• Develop our leadership capacity and capability around equalities• Continue working with partners to influence investment and target resource.

Accountability and impact

The responsibility for achieving both our legal duty on equality and realising the ambitions of this strategy lies with the whole organisation, with every officer and councillor having a role to play.

Delivery of the strategy and action plan will be overseen by the Strategy Manager. They will report to the senior leadership team on progress of actions and impact, through the annual Equality Information Report.

The Equality Information Report will also be considered by Cabinet. The report includes data on our recruitment, workforce, customers, tenants and wider demographics of the city, as well as data that shows the patterns of socio-economic and health inequalities in the city. Although there are a range of factors that contribute to changes in these data, it provides some insight into how well we are meeting our aims, for example, in the diversity of our workforce.

[ENDS]

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Committee name: Scrutiny

Committee date: 07/12/2023

Report title: Consideration of Cabinet decision to award Exceptional Circumstances Relief (ECR) from the payment of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in respect of phases 1 and 2 of the redevelopment proposals at Anglia Square which received planning permission on 18 July 2023.

Portfolio: Councillor Stonard, Leader of the council and cabinet member for inclusive and sustainable development

Report from: Head of planning and regulatory services

Wards: Mancroft

OPEN PUBLIC ITEM

Purpose

For members of the scrutiny committee to consider a call-in of the cabinet decision of 22 November 2023 to award Exceptional Circumstances Relief (ECR) from the payment of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in respect of phases 1 and 2 of the redevelopment proposals at Anglia Square which received planning permission on 18 July 2023.

Recommendation:

The scrutiny committee can decide to either:

- a) support the cabinet decision, in which case it can then be implemented, or
- b) It can be referred back to cabinet for reconsideration.

Policy framework

The council has five corporate priorities, which are:

- People live independently and well in a diverse and safe city.
- Norwich is a sustainable and healthy city.
- Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city.
- The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish.
- Norwich City Council is in good shape to serve the city.

This report meets the “Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city” and “The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish corporate aims” priorities.

This report addresses the corporate aim 3 that Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city. In particular:

- to develop and regenerate areas such as East Norwich and Anglia Square;
- to provide and encourage others to provide new homes, open spaces and infrastructure for residents;

This report helps to meet the housing, regeneration and development objective of the COVID-19 Recovery Plan.

Report details

1. At its meeting on 22 November 2023, cabinet made the decision that:
 - a. There are exceptional circumstances (within the meaning of the CIL Regulations 2010 as amended) that justify the grant of Exceptional Circumstances Relief in respect of phase 1 Anglia Square development (REF 22/00434/F) and that it is therefore expedient to grant Exceptional Circumstances Relief;
 - b. To grant Exceptional Circumstances Relief for the phase 1 of the Anglia Square development (22/00434/F) in accordance with the Council's adopted Exceptional Circumstances Relief policy.
 - c. There are exceptional circumstances (within the meaning of the CIL Regulations 2010 as amended) that justify the grant of Exceptional Circumstances Relief in respect of phase 2 Anglia Square development (REF 22/00434/F) and that it is therefore expedient to grant Exceptional Circumstances Relief;
 - d. To grant Exceptional Circumstances Relief for the phase 2 of the Anglia Square development (22/00434/F) in accordance with the Council's adopted Exceptional Circumstances Relief policy
2. This decision was called in by Councillors Ackroyd, Davis and Osborn under the terms of the council's constitution.
3. Please note that the call-in does not challenge the viability assessment nor specifically identify if there are aspects of the Council's CIL ECR Policy it is felt the application does not comply with. Instead, it primarily focuses on important procedural requirements and whether these have been complied with.
4. The reason given for the call in is that the Cabinet Meeting on 22 November left several key questions unanswered, both about the grounds for the decision and the decision-making process. In the interests of robust decision-making, the Members requesting the call in felt that an opportunity should be used to investigate these questions.
5. The following questions were submitted to form the call in and will be answered by officers and the portfolio holder at the meeting. A summary table of these

questions and officer's responses can be found at Appendix B, alongside the EQIA at Appendix C.

1) The Cabinet report states in paragraphs 54-57 the following:

54. Members should note that at present, the HIF contract with Homes England includes a clause which states that 'the Local Authority shall confirm that CIL ECR has been granted on phase 1 prior to the drawdown of any funding (Schedule 4, clause 1.16).

55. This clause is considered to fetter Members' discretion when considering whether to grant or otherwise the CIL relief. As such officers are working to reword the clause to seek clarification that a decision has been made, not that the relief has been granted. The suggested new wording is as follows: 'The Local Authority shall confirm that a determination has been made in respect of CIL ECR on the Works prior to any drawdown'.

56. Homes England has confirmed verbally that it sees no reason why this clause cannot be amended but formal sign off to the change is required from the Board of Homes England on this point. This will only be secured when the fully revised Deed of Variation to the Contract is agreed which is not expected until the end of the calendar year.

57. As such, Members should note this in their decision making and be mindful that any decision to refuse the CIL relief may still pose a risk to the ability to draw down the HIF funding of £15m.

At the Cabinet Meeting, members asked questions about how much weight to give the existing written contract with Homes England as against the verbal agreement that the £15m funding would not be dependent on the CIL ECR being granted. However, it became evident in the meeting that legal advice did not appear to have been sought over whether these circumstances (making a decision based on a verbal agreement not on a written contract) could leave the council open to judicial review. **Further scrutiny is therefore needed to provide members with details of legal implications and legal risks to the council.**

2) At the Cabinet meeting, a member of the public (a representative of the Norwich Over the Wensum (NOW) Neighbourhood Forum covering the area around Anglia Square), drew attention to the fact that the Cabinet report did not detail CIL-funded projects that could have been funded through the Anglia Square CIL contribution. The Council Leader stated that this was due to the uncertainty over the Anglia Square development meaning that projects that would use CIL from Anglia Square had not been planned. However, the fact that projects had not been planned does not mean that the CIL funding could not have been utilised. Cabinet Members were assured that the decision they were making did not, like a planning application, have to take material factors into consideration, but instead should be a weighing up of the benefits and disadvantages of the decision for the city. **Cabinet Reports should always consider alternative options and their possible outcomes, and in this case Cabinet should have more fully considered the outcomes of not awarding CIL exemption.** The advantages of projects that could have been CIL-funded in an alternative scenario were not fully addressed. Scrutiny could

fairly consider that laying out potential CIL-funded projects would form a thorough part of decision-making, as part of the review of options.

3) The NOW representative asked whether any consultation had been carried out with representatives of the local area, including the neighbourhood forum, ahead of the decision being made. There was no such consultation. **Scrutiny should consider whether neighbourhood groups, local businesses, local schools / school governors, the county council, and other partners with a stake in the infrastructure of the wider area should have been consulted, and whether such consultation would have led to more thorough decision-making.** Scrutiny could usefully consider evidence from these groups and whether their input could add value to the decision-making process.

4) The Cabinet Report did not make clear what the Equalities impact or the Health and Social impacts of the decision would be.

- a. The Equality and Diversity section of the Statutory Considerations at the end of the report states that “The Subsidy Control Assessment made as referenced in paragraph 78 sets out in detail how equality is achieved.” However, the paragraphs about the Subsidy Control Assessment in the report provide no detail on equality, only on competition and trade considerations. **Scrutiny may request further detail on the Equalities Impact of the decision, including an Equalities Impact Assessment.**
- b. The “Health, social and economic impact” section of the Statutory Considerations states that “It is not considered there are any health or social impacts arising from this decision.” This seems surprising given that CIL can provide green space (of benefit to health) and community facilities. **Scrutiny may request an assessment of the health and social impacts of the decision.**

5) The report does not detail the impact that the decision could have on pooled CIL arrangements with Broadland and South Norfolk councils or relationships with the GNGB. Some questions were asked about this at the Cabinet meeting; however, no formal consultation was done with these partners. **Scrutiny could ask to see evidence of consultation with Broadland, South Norfolk and the GNGB.**

6) At the Cabinet meeting, the Council Leader stated that he had “had it from the horse’s mouth” that Weston Homes had made a loss in the last two years. Company reporting shows that Weston Homes made a pre-tax profit of £18.2m in the year to July 2022, and a profit of £2.9m in the previous year. Clarification is therefore needed as to which of these versions of accounts is correct. **Scrutiny could request clarification of the financial position of Weston Homes and whether this could be considered a factor in the decision-making of the Cabinet.**

7) Clarification is also needed as to the extent of engagement between Weston Homes and the Leader and/or Cabinet Members. Questions from members of the public highlighted that there had been no engagement with the local community, neighbourhood forum, or other partners, yet the Leader’s comment suggested that there had been ongoing discussions with Weston Homes. Clarification is therefore needed as to the due process for the discussions with Weston Homes. **Scrutiny could request records of**

meetings, including minutes, and correspondence between Weston Homes and the Leader and Cabinet Members. Scrutiny should also consider whether any non-pecuniary interests should have been declared in relation to lobbying either for or against the decision.

8) The Corporate Risk Register lists as risk CORP15 “Failure to draw down £15m of Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) money previously secured from Homes England (HE) to assist with the delivery of Anglia Square”. The residual risk score is listed at 12, with a target of 8. The Cabinet report could have set out the details of this risk, why it remained higher than target, and how the risk was calculated and what risk mitigation was in place. The details behind this risk score could have provided information to inform the Cabinet’s decision-making. **Scrutiny could request details of how this risk has been calculated, risk mitigation that is in place, and could consider whether this information could have formed part of decision-making.**

9) To inform Cabinet Members’ decision, it would have been helpful to consider precedents of where CIL exemption applications have been made, whether other councils decided to award or reject CIL ECR, and the results of the award or rejection. Although the Anglia Square CIL ECR application should naturally be considered on its own merits, Cabinet could have considered any lessons learned from previous cases, as would normally be done with any other financial or policy decision. **Scrutiny could therefore request details of previous CIL ECR applications at other councils and their outcomes.**

To summarise the information that we believe Scrutiny could request:

- 1) Details of legal implications and legal risks associated with a decision being made on the basis of a verbal agreement regarding HIF while an extant contract specifies a different agreement.
- 2) Details of alternative options to awarding the CIL ECR and how these were considered.
- 3) Consultation with neighbourhood representatives.
- 4) Details on the Equality and Diversity and Health and Social impacts of the decision.
- 5) Consultation with Broadland, South Norfolk and the GNGB and details of how the decision could impact on pooled CIL.
- 6) Clarification regarding the financial position of Weston Homes and how this may impact on decision-making.
- 7) Details of meetings and correspondence between the applicant and Weston Homes and the Leader and Cabinet Members.
- 8) Details of how CORP15 was calculated and whether this could inform decision-making.
- 9) Where nationally and locally there have been other CIL ECR applications and, if they have been turned down, how that impacted on developments.

Consultation

Please see the cabinet report attached at appendix A

Implications

Financial and resources

Please see the cabinet report attached at appendix A

Legal

Please see the cabinet report attached at appendix A

Statutory considerations

Please see the cabinet report attached at appendix A

Risk management

Please see the cabinet report attached at appendix A

Other options considered

6. Please see the cabinet report attached at appendix A

Reasons for the decision/recommendation

7. Under the council's constitution, the scrutiny committee is entitled to call in any decision made by cabinet.

Background papers: None

Appendices:

- 1) Cabinet report - For cabinet to consider granting Exceptional Circumstances Relief (ECR) for the payment of Community Infrastructure (CIL), in respect of phases 1 and 2 of the redevelopment proposals at Anglia Square which received planning permission on 18 July 2023.

Link [here](#)

- 2) Officer response table

- 3) EQIA

Contact officer: Head of Planning and Regulatory Services

Name: Sarah Ashurst

Telephone number: 01603 987856

Email address: sarahashurst@norwich.gov.uk



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Scrutiny Call-in: CIL exemption – Officer responses

Point of examination	Detail	Provisional response
<p>Details of legal implications and legal risks associated with a decision being made on the basis of a verbal agreement regarding HIF while an extant contract specifies a different agreement</p>	<p>At the Cabinet Meeting, members asked questions about how much weight to give the existing written contract with Homes England as against the verbal agreement that the £15m funding would not be dependent on the CIL ECR being granted. However, it became evident in the meeting that legal advice did not appear to have been sought over whether these circumstances (making a decision based on a verbal agreement not on a written contract) could leave the council open to judicial review. Further scrutiny is therefore needed to provide members with details of legal implications and legal risks to the council.</p>	<p>Fundamentally, the risks are straightforward: the current agreement requires that the HIF funding would be contingent on CIL relief. If Cabinet was minded to approve the application(s) the risk of the specific clause is mitigated. If Cabinet does not approve the application(s), then the Council cannot meet the terms of the current agreement and therefore could not obtain the £15m HIF funding, unless the deed of variation was agreed by Homes England.</p> <p>The Council has been working with Homes England on a deed of variation to the HIF agreement, which originally related to the 2018 application. There are several revisions required, such as the deadlines for compliance, which, in the original agreement, were based on the earlier application. The need for obtaining a deed of variation to that agreement is clear and agreed by both parties. Throughout, the Council has sought and obtained legal advice. The report, and the wording of this section, was subject to review by the legal advisors.</p>

Point of examination	Detail	Provisional response
		<p>The relevant clauses being referred to here make the assumption Homes England will only award HIF if CIL relief is granted. The rationale for this clause, and why the position and risk profile for Homes England has shifted, was explained at the Cabinet meeting.</p> <p>The decisions on the two CIL ECR applications are stand-alone decisions. There are consequences of these decisions for the HIF funding, but the clause in the contract (as currently worded) does not fetter Members decision making ability, it highlights the consequence of not granting the relief, i.e., the funding falls away. In hindsight, the wording of the Cabinet report could have been clearer. Members are not bound to agree the relief but should be mindful of the consequence of refusing the applications.</p>
Details of alternative options to awarding the CIL ECR and how these were considered	At the Cabinet meeting, a member of the public (a representative of the Norwich Over the Wensum (NOW) Neighbourhood Forum covering the area around Anglia Square), drew attention to the fact that the Cabinet report did not detail CIL-funded projects that could have been funded through the Anglia Square CIL contribution. The Council Leader stated	<p>The options before the Cabinet were either to award CIL relief, to not award CIL relief, or to award partial CIL relief. The report presented to Cabinet the implications and requirements in making a decision, and it was then for Cabinet to determine which option to take.</p> <p>As explained at the meeting, Norwich City Council pools its CIL contributions with 2 other Local</p>

Point of examination	Detail	Provisional response
	<p>that this was due to the uncertainty over the Anglia Square development meaning that projects that would use CIL from Anglia Square had not been planned. However, the fact that projects had not been planned does not mean that the CIL funding could not have been utilised. Cabinet Members were assured that the decision they were making did not, like a planning application, have to take material factors into consideration, but instead should be a weighing up of the benefits and disadvantages of the decision for the city. Cabinet Reports should always consider alternative options and their possible outcomes, and in this case Cabinet should have more fully considered the outcomes of not awarding CIL exemption. The advantages of projects that could have been CIL-funded in an alternative scenario were not fully addressed. Scrutiny could fairly consider that laying out potential CIL-funded projects would form a thorough part of decision-making, as part of the review of options.</p>	<p>Authorities: Broadland District Council and South Norfolk District Council.</p> <p>At the point where CIL is collected following the grant of <i>any</i> planning application, the CIL monies go into a general infrastructure pool, and it is not known where it would be spent within the CIL charging area.</p> <p>80% of the contribution would have gone into the Greater Norwich pool and would be spent on projects across the Greater Norwich area.</p> <p>The neighbourhood element of retained CIL (15%) is not, as advised, spent in north, south, east, and west areas. It is simply pooled and spent on projects throughout the city. Again, whilst contributing to the wider area, any retained neighbourhood CIL may not necessarily have benefitted the immediate area around Anglia Square.</p> <p>The presentation and responses to Members questions outlined a number of S106 obligations and on-site provisions directly related to 3 of the 4 areas CIL is spent on: transport, green infrastructure and community infrastructure. The monetary value of this is circa £4.5million, more than the CIL requirement.</p>

Point of examination	Detail	Provisional response
		<p>The presentation also outlined why an education contribution was not considered necessary.</p> <p>Further, if the development does not proceed because the viability without the CIL relief does not 'stack up' for the developer, then no CIL will be realised at all.</p>
Consultation with neighbourhood representatives	<p>The NOW representative asked whether any consultation had been carried out with representatives of the local area, including the neighbourhood forum, ahead of the decision being made. There was no such consultation. Scrutiny should consider whether neighbourhood groups, local businesses, local schools / school governors, the county council, and other partners with a stake in the infrastructure of the wider area should have been consulted, and whether such consultation would have led to more thorough decision-making. Scrutiny could usefully consider evidence from these groups and whether their input could add value to the decision-making process.</p>	<p>Unlike a planning application, a formal consultation is not required. The planning application for the site included extensive consultation. The report on the CIL ECR decisions was subject to significant input from the Council's legal advisors.</p>

Point of examination	Detail	Provisional response
<p>Details on the Equality and Diversity and Health and Social impacts of the decision</p>	<p>The Equality and Diversity section of the Statutory Considerations at the end of the report states that “The Subsidy Control Assessment made as referenced in paragraph 78 sets out in detail how equality is achieved.” However, the paragraphs about the Subsidy Control Assessment in the report provide no detail on equality, only on competition and trade considerations. Scrutiny may request further detail on the Equalities Impact of the decision, including an Equalities Impact Assessment.</p> <p>The “Health, social and economic impact” section of the Statutory Considerations states that “It is not considered there are any health or social impacts arising from this decision.” This seems surprising given that CIL can provide green space (of benefit to health) and community facilities. Scrutiny may request an assessment of the health and social impacts of the decision.</p>	<p>The EQIA is attached as an appendix to the report to scrutiny committee.</p> <p>There are a number of S106 obligations and on-site provisions directly related to transport, green infrastructure and community infrastructure. The monetary value of this is circa £4.5million, more than the CIL requirement and it is known what would be delivered through this route, unlike the CIL route (see response above).</p> <p>Further, if the development does not proceed because the viability without the CIL relief does not ‘stack up’ for the developer, then no CIL will be realised at all.</p> <p>Health facilities are not funded through the CIL process. CIL receipted within the Greater Norwich area is allocated through the Infrastructure Investment Fund (IIF). Applications to the IIF are restricted to the four thematic groups of Transport, Education, Green Infrastructure and Community, as agreed within the Greater Norwich adopted CIL charging policy. The so-called Regulation 123 list confirming the eligibility for CIL was withdrawn from legislation in September 2019, and government has since announced that CIL will be replaced by a new type of Infrastructure Levy.</p>

Point of examination	Detail	Provisional response
		Until the future of CIL is more certain, the Greater Norwich authorities are required to proceed with their adopted CIL charging policy. The IIF continues to be ringfenced to the original four thematic groups, which does not include healthcare.
Consultation with Broadland, South Norfolk and the GNGB and details of how the decision could impact on pooled CIL.	The report does not detail the impact that the decision could have on pooled CIL arrangements with Broadland and South Norfolk councils or relationships with the GNGB. Some questions were asked about this at the Cabinet meeting; however, no formal consultation was done with these partners. Scrutiny could ask to see evidence of consultation with Broadland, South Norfolk and the GNGB.	<p>Norwich City Council is both a CIL charging and CIL collecting authority. As such, the CIL Regulations enable us to make decisions on CIL ECR applications in accordance with the legislation and against our own policy requirements. Whilst we pool our CIL with neighbouring authorities, there is no requirement in law to consult with them in our decision-making processes.</p> <p>The GNGB has been aware for several years that this application would be likely to request consideration of exemption from CIL due to the exceptional circumstances of developing the site. The officer presentation did set out the 'foregone' CIL amounts which are set out here again for clarity:</p> <p>Admin fee - £108,125 Neighbourhood CIL - £324,322 Pooled CIL - £1,729,702</p>

Point of examination	Detail	Provisional response
		There have been no issues with relationships with the GNGB because of this application.
Clarification regarding the financial position of Weston Homes and how this may impact on decision-making	To inform Cabinet Members' decision, it would have been helpful to consider precedents of where CIL exemption applications have been made, whether other councils decided to award or reject CIL ECR, and the results of the award or rejection. Although the Anglia Square CIL ECR application should naturally be considered on its own merits, Cabinet could have considered any lessons learned from previous cases, as would normally be done with any other financial or policy decision. Scrutiny could therefore request details of previous CIL ECR applications at other councils and their outcomes.	<p>Having sought legal advice, it is clear that from a legal perspective the financial position of the applicant (Here Sackville Properties) is irrelevant for the purposes of the ECR applications. What has to be considered are the tests set out in the Regulations, specifically Regulation 55(3) as set out in the report.</p> <p>The Regulations are clear that the assessment should be made on the economic viability of the specific phase/chargeable development. There is no mention of the assessment including any consideration of the overall profitability of the claimant.</p> <p>In accordance with the CIL Regulations 2010 the claimant for the CIL ECR must be the person with a material interest in the land. In this case: Columbia Threadneedle (company names are Sackville UK Property select II (GO) No 3 Limited and Sackville Property select II Nominee (3) Limited) (the legal landowner) and not Weston Homes (the developer).</p>

Point of examination	Detail	Provisional response
		<p>Under Regulation 55(3) it is stated that a charging authority may only grant relief for exceptional circumstances if:</p> <p>(a) it has made relief for exceptional circumstances available in its area;</p> <p>(b) a planning obligation under section 106 of TCPA 1990 has been entered into in respect of the planning permission; and</p> <p>(c) the charging authority considers that to require the payment of CIL charged by it in respect of the development would have an unacceptable impact on the economic viability of the development.</p> <p>In accordance with the CIL Regulations (57(4)(ii), the ECR application has been accompanied by an assessment of the economic viability of the chargeable development (the individual phase(s)). The Regulations require this to be carried out by an independent assessor, appointed by the claimant with the agreement of the charging authority.</p>
Details of meetings and correspondence between the applicant and Weston Homes and the Leader and Cabinet Members	Clarification is also needed as to the extent of engagement between Weston Homes and the Leader and/or Cabinet Members. Questions from members of the public highlighted that there had been no	In respect of process, in accordance with the CIL Regulations 2010 and the City Council's CIL ECR Policy and Guidance, a pre-application meeting occurred, and officers had visibility of the viability information before submission of the two applications.

Point of examination	Detail	Provisional response
	<p>engagement with the local community, neighbourhood forum, or other partners, yet the Leader's comment suggested that there had been ongoing discussions with Weston Homes. Clarification is therefore needed as to the due process for the discussions with Weston Homes. Scrutiny could request records of meetings, including minutes, and correspondence between Weston Homes and the Leader and Cabinet Members. Scrutiny should also consider whether any non-pecuniary interests should have been declared in relation to lobbying either for or against the decision.</p>	<p>This included agreement to the use of the independent assessor, again in accordance with the CIL Regulations.</p> <p>Given that Weston has been the applicant for the planning application (and their development is driving the HIF), there will have been engagement through the planning application. Provided that Members didn't come to the decision on the CIL ECR applications with a closed mind, then the decision should not be vulnerable in accordance with the Localism Act S25(2). The extent of any meetings between parties was not a determining factor in the decision and therefore is not an appropriate reason for call-in.</p>
Details of how CORP15 was calculated and whether this could inform decision-making	<p>The Corporate Risk Register lists as risk CORP15 "Failure to draw down £15m of Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) money previously secured from Homes England (HE) to assist with the delivery of Anglia Square". The residual risk score is listed at 12, with a target of 8. The Cabinet report could have set out the details of this risk, why it remained higher than target, and how the risk was calculated and what risk mitigation was in place. The details behind</p>	<p>Corporate risk 15 was calculated in line with the methodology in the Council's risk assessment strategy.</p> <p>It is accepted the Cabinet report did not specifically reference CORP15 albeit the risk assessment section of the report did reference the risks associated with CORP15 – that the Council does not get the £15m HIF grant and therefore the development could not proceed.</p>

Point of examination	Detail	Provisional response
	<p>this risk score could have provided information to inform the Cabinet's decision-making. Scrutiny could request details of how this risk has been calculated, risk mitigation that is in place, and could consider whether this information could have formed part of decision-making.</p>	<p>The situation on the HIF grant was outlined in the report and has been subject to separate scrutiny consideration as above.</p> <p>In practice, mitigation of CORP15 was inherent to the cabinet's decision and so specific reference to the named risk was unlikely to add value to the decision.</p>
<p>Where nationally and locally there have been other CIL ECR applications and, if they have been turned down, how that impacted on developments.</p>	<p>To inform Cabinet Members' decision, it would have been helpful to consider precedents of where CIL exemption applications have been made, whether other councils decided to award or reject CIL ECR, and the results of the award or rejection. Although the Anglia Square CIL ECR application should naturally be considered on its own merits, Cabinet could have considered any lessons learned from previous cases, as would normally be done with any other financial or policy decision. Scrutiny could therefore request details of previous CIL ECR applications at other councils and their outcomes.</p>	<p>It was officers view that this was not necessary. Each application for CIL ECR on any development site, in any area, should be made on its own merits and considering the site-specific viability assessments for that development and in accordance with the process as set out in the Regulations.</p> <p>Awards or refusals of the grant would be so site specific that they would be of little or no relevance to the decision Cabinet Members were making. Officers can provide a list of other CIL ECR applications and outcomes, but without knowledge of the site specifics of each case, it is not considered this would add much value to the decision-making process.</p>

High level equality impact assessment for strategic programmes

Programme title	Application of NCC ECR Policy – Anglia Square, and claims for ECR for phase 1 and phase 2 development	Programme start date	Immediate
Team	Development	Directorate	Development and City Services
Senior leadership team sponsor	Sarah Ashurst	Role	Head of Planning and Regulatory Services
Officer completing	Tracy Armitage	Role	Senior Planner

What are the main aims or purpose of the programme?

The CIL Regulations 2010 set out the provisions for exemptions and relief from the payment of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Regulation 55 relates to discretionary relief for exceptional circumstances and regulation 57 sets out the relevant procedure. On 1 July 2019 relief for exceptional circumstances was made available within the Norwich city administration area. Norwich City Council's Exceptional Circumstances Relief (ECR) Policy and accompanying guidance set out the relevant CIL Regulations and local requirements that apply to Norwich.

The policy allows Norwich City Council, as a CIL charging authority, to grant relief from the payment of CIL, provided statutory and local requirements are met.

According to National planning practice guidance, an exceptions policy enables charging authorities to avoid rendering sites with specific and exceptional cost burdens unviable.

A claim for exceptional circumstances relief has been made in relation to phases 1 and 2 of the development scheme approved for Anglia Square (Planning reference 22/00434/F - approved 18 July 2023). The report to Cabinet dated 22 November 2023 (the Report) considers the two claims and the recommendation to grant relief from CIL for Phase 1 amounting to £2,224,657.91 and for Phase 2 amounting to £592,112.02.

The grant of relief will facilitate the delivery of the approved development scheme for Anglia Square.

How does it fit with other services and policies, and how does it support our [corporate objectives](#)?

The council has 5 corporate objectives. The Report to cabinet meets the 'Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city' and the 'The city has an inclusive economy in which residents have equal opportunity to flourish' priorities.

The Report addresses the corporate aim 3 that Norwich has the infrastructure and housing it needs to be a successful city. In particular:

- to develop and regenerate areas such as East Norwich and Anglia Square;
- to provide and encourage others to provide new homes, open spaces and infrastructure for residents;

This Report helps to meet the housing, regeneration and development objective of the COVID-19 Recovery Plan.

What outcomes do we want to achieve, why and for who?

The grant of relief will facilitate the delivery of comprehensive development of Anglia Square.

Anglia Square is a significant regeneration opportunity in the northern part of the city centre and one of Norwich City Council's most important strategic priorities for regeneration. The Development plan and other policies of Norwich City Council have reflected this objective for a significant number of years. These policies have sought the promotion of housing and the revitalisation of both Anglia Square and other brownfield and underutilised sites for productive use including for mixed development comprising commercial, retail, housing and significantly improved public realm.

The assessment of the planning application for the development at Anglia Square (ref: 22/00434/F) identified a broad range of regeneration benefits. These were outlined in detail in the report to [Planning Applications Committee](#) (PAC) dated 7 April 2023. The planning application was accompanied by a significant number of evidence documents including an Environmental Impact Assessment (including an assessment of socio-economic impacts) and a Health Impact Assessment. The report to PAC included a detailed assessment of development impacts, including negative impacts. The table below summarises impacts.

Topic	Receptor	Impact area	Duration of impact	Residual Effect (including mitigation)	
Construction Effects					
Employment (jobs created) Direct: average 276 per annum Indirect: 280per annum	Local labour market (construction phase)	Wider	Medium-term, temporary	Moderate beneficial	
Existing uses/ employment	Local Labour market	Local	Short term	Minor adverse	
Operational Effects					
Employment Direct: 288 Indirect:72-186 Uplift on existing: 104(net) Indirect:40-106	Local labour market (operational phase)	Local	Long-term permanent	Moderate beneficial	
		Wider	Long-term permanent	Minor	
Population Approx. 2321 people	Existing population	Local/ wider	Long-term, permanent	~	
Resident expenditure	Local economy	Local	Long-term permanent	Moderate beneficial	

£21.9-36.4m				
Deprivation	Levels of deprivation	Local/wider	Long-term permanent	Moderate-major beneficial
Housing Up to 1100 dwellings	Housing targets/ housing need	Local	Long-term, permanent	Moderate to major beneficial
		Wider	Long-term, permanent	Moderate beneficial
Crime	Residents' safety	Local	Long-term, permanent	Moderate beneficial
Education early years, primary/secondary	Pupil and school capacity	Local	Long-term permanent	Negligible
Healthcare	Capacity of local services	Local	Long-term permanent	Negligible
Community facilities	Provision of community facilities	Local/wider	Long-term permanent	Minor beneficial
Community Cohesion	Existing population	Local	Long term permanent	Minor beneficial
Open-space, sport and recreation	Provision of open-space and facilities	Local	Long-term permanent	Minor beneficial

The overall benefits of development were summarised as follows:

- With developer costs in the order of £280million, the level of investment will be a 'statement of confidence in the city of Norwich and act as a catalyst for wider development by boosting the city's profile and attractiveness to inward investment;
- unlock a large-scale brownfield site for regeneration;

- remove highly prominent underutilised and physically deteriorating vacant buildings, that currently blight the area;
- mitigate contamination associated with previous land uses;
- enhance the physical appearance of the site through the construction of high quality buildings, streets and public realm that have regard to both the historic environment and the unique character of Anglia Square
- boost the city's housing supply through the creation of a highly sustainable residential quarter, with up to 1100 new homes, which will have good connectivity to the existing surrounding community
- by providing at least 10% affordable homes assist in meeting local housing need for social rented and intermediate homes
- through the introduction of new housing and improvements to the quality and viability of the retail offer at Anglia Square, support the long-term role and vitality of the Anglia Square and Magdalen Street Large District Centre (benefiting the businesses and the community it serves)
- create much-needed local employment for Norwich residents including construction jobs with apprenticeship opportunities and skills training in the eight-year building development stage.
- deliver outcomes capable of having a permanent, moderate to major beneficial impact on levels of deprivation in this part of the city.
- supply a much-needed stimulus to rejuvenate other neglected or derelict sites within the city.

These impacts will benefit the population of the local neighbourhood, the city and the wider Greater Norwich area.

Furthermore, in paragraph 781 of the PAC report the following benefits were also identified:

- 10% of new homes to comply to meet 2015 Building Regulations M4(2) for accessible and adaptable dwellings (replaces the Lifetime Homes standard).
- Improved access across the development (currently a split-level precinct)
- The provision of public toilets including the provision of a Changing Places facility
- Public realm planned to be accessible and inclusive.

Will anyone be disproportionately affected by the programme (customers, employees, those with protected characteristics or groups in the wider community)?

The grant of ECR for phase 1 and phase 2 development relieves the developer from payments of CIL, amounting to £2,162,419 (after Social Housing Relief). This amount if paid would be distributed as follows:

- CIL Administration (5%): £108,125
- Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure (NCIL)(15%): £324,322
- Greater Norwich Growth Board Pooled (80%): £1,729,702

In the event of ECR not being granted, there is a high risk that development would not proceed and therefore CIL would not be paid and the identified regeneration benefits would not be realised.

Considering the consequences of development proceeding without the payment of CIL and whether this would impact those with characteristics or groups in the wider community. There is the potential for reduced CIL availability to impact on infrastructure provision and funding of neighbourhood projects. However, at the point where CIL is collected, following the grant of any planning application, the majority of CIL monies go into a general infrastructure pool. It is not ring fenced for infrastructure requirements associated with a specific development and would be spent on projects across the Greater Norwich area. The neighbourhood (Norwich) element of retained CIL (15%) is also pooled and not ring fenced for projects within a particular geographical area of the city. It is spent on projects throughout the city. Information about NCIL, how it is used and allocated is available on the [council's website](#). Projects funded in [2021-22](#) included a wide range of projects, many of which were connected to greenspace improvements. Given that CIL payments are non-specific it is not possible at this time to quantify the impact of ECR on infrastructure/ projects that may benefit particular groups within the community. However, in the event of the development not contributing CIL, this does not preclude groups seeking funding from the NCIL fund, the NCIL fund for 22/23 amounts to £275,000. The same principle applies to any infrastructure improvements found to be necessary and which are funded from the general pool.

Negative consequences of CIL not being paid are therefore minimised and in any event are substantially outweighed by the socio-economic benefits associated with the development. A disproportionate impact of granting ECR upon either the wider community or any particular group in it is therefore unlikely.

If yes, will these be adverse impacts (specify whether high, medium or low impacts)?

In the unlikely event of adverse impacts, the planning decision to approve the Anglia Scheme (22/00424/F) was conditional on the imposition of planning conditions and an agreed S106 obligation. These mechanisms secured infrastructure and funded strategies to both minimise negative impacts of development and secure identified benefits. Social-economic benefits secured via the S106 are set out the table below.

Planning requirement	Details	Cost (where applicable)
Affordable housing provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of min of 10% affordable dwellings 85% social rent, 15% intermediate tenure. 	
EGL (Enhanced Green Infrastructure)	Payment to fund EGL on Wensum and Gildencroft Parks	£61,140
Car club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of car club spaces – min of 3 and subject to review up to 5. Active EV provision. Funding of car club incentives for new (first) households (£100 per household) Management and maintenance arrangements 	£110,000
Under the Flyover	<p>Phase 1 - Delivery of a public realm scheme for land under the flyover</p> <p>Either delivered directly by the developer or by the council with a commuted sum</p>	£284,589 (only payable in the event of the council delivering the scheme)

Public Toilet and Changing Places facility.	<p>Submission and agreement of Management Plan.</p> <p>Requirement for owners to construct, manage and maintain or procure the management and maintenance of the Public Toilets and Changing Places Facility in accordance with the agreed plan</p>		
Community Hub	<p>Submission and agreement of a management plan. To include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of 'village' hall and community hub 		
Anglia Square Management Plan	<p>Agreement and implementation of a strategy: measures to mitigate the impact of the development on existing businesses and tenants.</p>	£30,000	
Employment and Skills Strategy	<p>To optimise the local labour supply chain and procurement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable endeavours to source site-based staff from the Norwich policy area • To liaise with local agencies for eligible staff positions • Covenant to offer training (NVQ or other work-related training) • Monitor and report. • Requirement to apply to subcontractors. 		

	<p>To optimise engagement with education -</p> <p>covenant to liaise with local agencies to arrange for secondary school pupils who are considering choice of GSCEs to visit the Development construction site.</p>		
Sustainable Communities Strategy	<p>Agreement and implementation of a strategy: measures for achieving an inclusive community and encourage social cohesion between the new and existing communities. Strategy to include (but not limited to) arrangements and measures for new residents, proactive marketing of Anglia Square as a shopping and community destination; measures to optimise community use of public spaces (including for events and cultural activities); measures to foster communication and engagement with the existing community (including residents, businesses, local organisations and charities).</p>		
Public access rights	<p>Agreement of a Public Realm Strategy and the requirement to manage and maintain the public realm for the lifetime of the development.</p> <p>Strategy to include: Delivery quality; maintenance and management body; delivery timeframe; construction period; use of the entire public realm (including</p>		

	access rights for the public at large on foot and bicycle and to foster use as a social and civic space); arrangements for carrying out works.		
Healthcare Floorspace Reservation	<p>Blocks J3 (in phase 2) and F (in phase 4) Owner to notify Norfolk and Waveney ICS of commencement of phases 2 and 4</p> <p>Owners to undertake reasonable endeavours to liaise with ICS and enter into contract for lease of units within each phase for medical and health services.</p> <p>Owners to reserve the units for 6 months</p>		

The total payments secured through legal agreement amount to £4.5m.

Planning conditions secure infrastructure improvements to make the development acceptable. These include highway and public transport improvements and the creation of multi-functional public realm comprising a new public square and garden.

The planning conditions and legal agreement are designed to ensure that the socio-economic benefits of the approved scheme are realised.

If yes, can the impacts be	a) justified? Yes (see above)	b) mitigated? Yes (see above)
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What is the reason for the proposal or change (financial, legal etc)? *The Equality Act requires us to make this clear.*

This proposal has been made through concern over the potential negative impact of paying CIL upon the financial feasibility of delivering the redevelopment of Anglia Square. The council have evaluated the benefits of the development going ahead and

understand these to greatly outweigh the potential and unquantifiable benefits of using the CIL funding on projects that have not been identified at the point in which this proposal to waive the CIL funding was made.

Ultimately the reason for this proposal is to ensure that the benefits associated with the approved development scheme for Anglia Square are delivered. The benefits are wide ranging and cover elements such as: job creation, increased accessibility of the developed area, increase in the number of affordable homes, boost in local resident expenditure, provision of new facilities to benefit the community and promote community cohesion etc.

Officer completing EqlA	Tracy Armitage	Date	29/11/2023
SLT sponsor	Sarah Ashurst	Date	29/11/2023
Equality lead (strategy team)	Joe Siggins	Date	29/11/2023