

Sefton Council

Bootle Area Action Plan
Equalities Impact Assessment

July 2024

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This document is an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) of the emerging Bootle Area Action Plan (AAP). Once adopted, the AAP will establish a spatial strategy in for the wider Bootle area up to 2040, replacing and in addition to policies to the Sefton Local Plan (April 2017).

As a public sector organisation, the Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 and the associated Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to ensure that the objectives and options considered through the emerging Bootle rea AAP do not lead to unlawful discrimination (direct and indirect); advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between those with a protected characteristic and all others.

An EqIA is often used by public sector organisations to demonstrate how this duty has been discharged. This report provides a full, standalone high-level assessment of the equality impacts of the proposed policies contained within the Draft Publication (Regulation 19) Bootle AAP.

1.2 Purpose

EqIA is intended to help make decisions by predicting the equality consequences of the implementation of a proposed plan. In addition to assessing the equality consequences, it also produces recommendations as to how favourable consequences for equality could be enhanced and how any harmful consequences could be avoided or minimised. It addresses equality in relation to protected characteristics, as defined in the Equality Act 2010. These are race, age, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy or maternity. Additionally, Sefton have added a further group that it intends to ensure are not being discriminated against; looked after children and care leavers.

EqIA considers whether the implementation of proposed policies could:

- Help to address existing discrimination or disadvantage experienced by particular groups in the population;
- Increase equal opportunities for protected characteristic groups, so that they are able to access opportunities on an equivalent basis to others, particularly for people from backgrounds who have experienced historic disadvantage or inequality;
- Improve relations between groups who have different protected characteristic identities (e.g. between people from different racial backgrounds or age groups); and
- Identify if there is any risk that the policies could give rise to any intended or unintended illegal discrimination.

In summary, EqIA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely effects of a draft plan, and alternatives, in terms of equalities issues, with a view to avoiding and mitigating adverse effects and maximising the positives. The aim is to ensure that the plan

contributes to the achievement of equality of opportunity for all of Bootle's residents. This EqIA will support the Council to fulfil its equality duties in relation to the PSED. It provides a consideration of potential direct and indirect equality impacts (both negative and positive) associated with the draft Bootle AAP.

1.3 Report structure

Following on from this introduction section the remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- Section 2: Policy and legislation review – providing context through relevant national, regional and local policy and legislation;
- Section 3: Equalities baseline – using secondary data sources such as Census 2021 data to form an equalities baseline for Bootle;
- Section 4: Assessment of potential equality effects – an appraisal of potential impacts using the evidence gathered for the policies contained within the draft Bootle AAP; and

2. Legislation and Policy

2.1 Legislation

Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination both in the workplace and in wider society. It replaces previous anti-discrimination laws which include the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The Act ensures that individuals with certain 'protected characteristics' are not indirectly or directly discriminated against. The protected characteristics include:

- **Age:** this refers to persons defined by either a particular age or a range of ages;
- **Disability:** a disabled person is defined as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities;
- **Gender reassignment:** this refers to people who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone a process for the purpose of reassigning their gender identity;
- **Marriage and civil partnership:** marriage can be between a man and a woman or between two people of the same sex. Same-sex couples can also have a civil partnership. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples;
- **Pregnancy and maternity:** pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth;
- **Race:** the Equality Act 2010 defines race as encompassing colour, nationality (including citizenship) and ethnic or national origins;
- **Religion or belief:** religion means any religion a person follows. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief, and includes those people who have no formal religion or belief;
- **Sex:** this refers to a man or to a woman, or to a group of people of the same sex; and
- **Sexual orientation:** a person's sexual orientation relates to their emotional, physical and/or sexual attraction and the expression of that attraction.

In addition, Sefton is committed to the support of children in care and care leavers. This will be treated as an additional protected characteristic within this EqIA.

Under section 149 of the Act, a public authority in the exercise of its functions is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The PSED requires public bodies to have due regard to three aims. Specifically, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Equality Act 2010 explains that the second aim (advancing equality of opportunity) involves, in particular, having due regard to the need to: remove or minimise disadvantages affecting people due to their protected characteristics; take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people; and encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

Relevant guidance on fulfilling the PSED includes:

- Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), The Essential Guide to the Public Sector Equality Duty;
- EHRC, Engagement and the Equality Duty and guide for public authorities;
- EHRC, Equality Act 2010: Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty England;
- EHRC, Meeting the Equality Duty in Policy and Decision-Making England (and non-devolved public authorities in Scotland and Wales); and
- Government Equalities Office, Equality Act 2010: Public Sector Equality Duty What Do I Need To Know? A Quick Start Guide for Public Sector Organisations

2.2 National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023)

This assessment also seeks to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), specifically the paragraphs detailed below:

- Paragraph 16. Plans should be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan-makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees;
- Paragraph 63. The size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. These groups should include (but are not limited to) those who require affordable housing; families with children; older people (including those who require retirement housing, housing-with-care and care homes); students; people with disabilities; service families; travellers; people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.

- Paragraph 96. Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places and beautiful buildings which promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;

2.3 Local Policy

Sefton Vision and Core Purpose

During 2016 Sefton Council led on developing a new vision for the future of the borough.

Working closely with partners, businesses, private sector organisations, the voluntary, community and faith sector and the wider Sefton community, the aim behind the work was to understand and focus on what is important for the borough and its communities in the future.

Imagine Sefton 2030 engaged with thousands of people, local businesses and potential investors to create a vision that collectively promotes shared prosperity, coordinated public investment, and a healthy environment and population.

Vision 2030 was agreed in November 2016, together with the Vision Outcomes Framework and Council's Core Purpose.

The Vision will guide long term planning - helping to stimulate growth, prosperity, set new expectation levels and to help focus on what is important for Sefton. The Core Purpose provides an outline to how the Council will contribute to achieving those ambitions set out in the Vision 2030. The Vision Outcomes Framework is divided into the following topics:

Together a stronger community

In 2030, Sefton residents look out for each other. We focus on our similarities and the strength that comes from diversity, but never on our differences.

We have proactive and supportive communities, aided by a vibrant voluntary, community and faith sector, where everyone has the opportunity to live an independent and active life. We know our neighbours, have high levels of trust in our community and we help each other out in any way we can.

Our communities are strong, knowledgeable and informed.

A borough for everyone

In 2030, Sefton is a borough that has everything we need to live, learn and age well.

From the moment we are born we are part of the community, with parent and baby groups & outstanding nurseries and schools.

Quality apprenticeships, vocational training and university access mean we can follow our dream career path.

We live happy, healthy lives in Sefton. The borough is accessible for everyone and positive approaches are in place for those living with mental health issues and disabilities.

When it comes to enjoying our free time and living socially, there clubs and groups for everyone.

Living, working and having Fun

In 2030, Sefton is the perfect place to enjoy your life.

With a variety of jobs and professions, Sefton has fantastic opportunities for everyone, from full time workers to part time workers. While a range of housing, including affordable and luxury, has made the borough one of the most desirable places to live in the country.

Our children and young people enjoy access to some fantastic schools, colleges and universities, meaning they can go on to fulfil their dreams and follow their chosen career paths.

We enjoy shopping on Sefton's vibrant high streets and being social at one of the many bars and restaurants, plus a wide variety of sports facilities, clubs and events help inspire residents to keep active and enjoy sport.

We are borough that offers it all with many people moving to the area and students returning to lay down their roots following graduation.

A Clean, Green, Beautiful Borough

In 2030, Sefton is internationally recognised for its outstanding natural beauty and commitment to sustainability.

We are a borough celebrated for its fantastic coast line and respected green spaces. Together, we work hard to preserve our assets, such as the marina, woodlands, parks and canals and ensure that all future generations can enjoy them.

Through eco-friendly and green solutions, we have set the bar in sustainability. Everybody works together to keep Sefton clean and green, with a commitment to recycling, low pollution and better air quality.

Visit, Explore and Enjoy

In 2030, Sefton has something to offer residents and visitors of all ages.

We enjoy activities on our beaches and floral greenspaces, while the rush of adrenaline at Southport Air Show brings visitors from far and wide. Sefton is home to a number of great events and festivals, while international sporting events return year after year.

Known for its cultural scene, Sefton has something for everyone.

On the Move

In 2030, Sefton is easy to move around and well linked with the wider city region and beyond.

Night buses, better train links and affordability mean that public transport is safe and available to everyone.

We can also enjoy the use of the many bicycle and walking friendly routes, meaning we can keep active.

Investment into the borough's public transport system and road networks have helped reduce congestion and have made it even easier for residents and visitors to reach homes, businesses and attractions.

Open for Business

In 2030, Sefton is home to businesses of all sizes, from international organisations and small start-ups to social enterprises and community organisations.

We are a borough with a global outlook, exporting many of our services and goods via the port.

Sefton is also a leading coastal tourist destination, with businesses flourishing thanks to our strong visitor economy. While strong support for SME's and Start-ups, coupled with the creative use of commercial space, has resulted in vibrant high streets.

With strong public sector partnerships, an entrepreneurial culture and a strong work force, Sefton is the perfect home for any business and we are flourishing.

Ready for the Future

In 2030, Sefton is at the forefront of technology and research.

Investment in technology means that the borough is covered by comprehensive free Wi-Fi and strong, fast connection speeds.

By embracing change, we are ready to seize any opportunity and Sefton is now known across the world as a centre for advancement and research.

We are well connected to the rest of the world and we are always looking to the future.

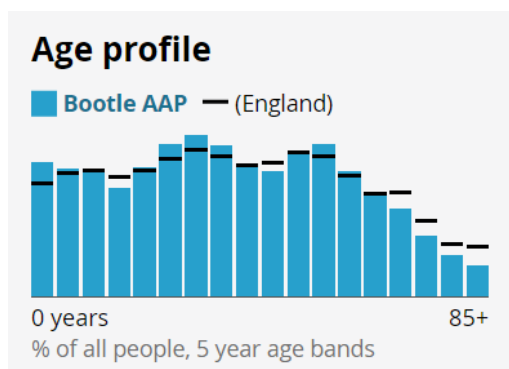
Sefton is a borough connected by people, supported by technology.

3. Profile of protected characteristic groups

Population

According to the most recent census data available (2021), Sefton is home 279,200 people. The Bootle AAP area has an estimated population of 44,000, which is 15.75% of Sefton’s population.

Age



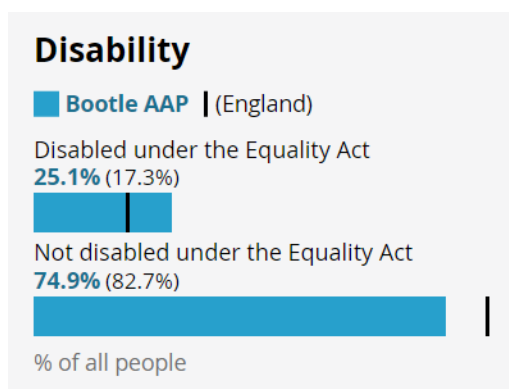
The Bootle AAP area has a slightly younger population profile than England.

In Bootle North, only 13,9% of residents are over 65yo compared to 37.1% in Birkdale, Southport.

Children in Care

The number of children looked after (CLA) by local authorities in England at 31 March 2023 rose to 83,840 - up 2% - continuing the rise seen in recent years. This is a rate of 71 children looked after per 10,000 children - up from 70 at 31 March 2022.

Disability



In the Bootle AAP area, there is a larger proportion of the population with a disability under the Equality Act than in England. Over a quarter of residents in the Bootle AAP have a disability.

Gender reassignment

	Sefton
% of people aged 16 years and over who have a gender identity the same as their sex registered at birth	95.17%
% of people aged 16 years and over who have a gender identity different from their sex registered at birth	0.34%

Not answered	4.48%
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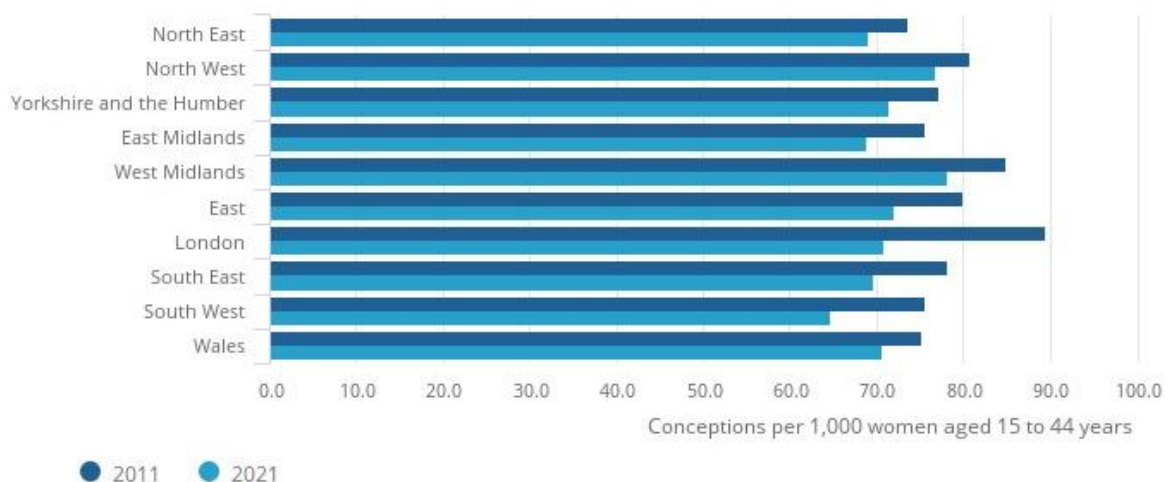
Marriage and civil partnership



In the Bootle AAP area, there is a quite a difference between the proportion of residents who have never married or registered a civil partnership. The data from the census shows that about two thirds of people over 16 are currently single (including those widowed).

Pregnancy and maternity

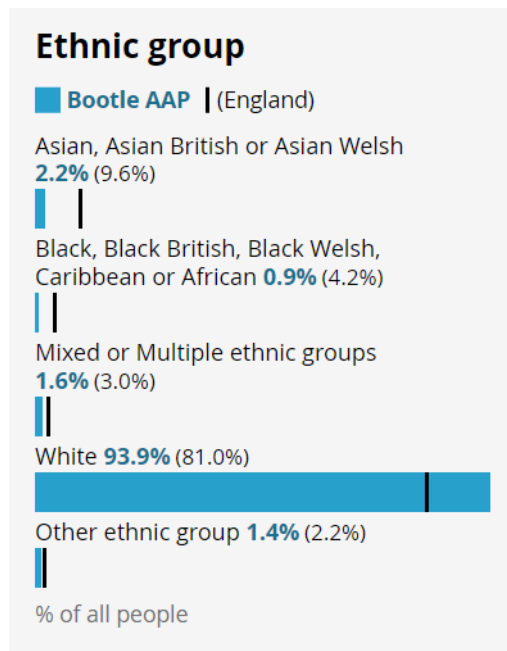
Conception rates for women aged 15 to 44 years, English regions and Wales, 2011 and 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics

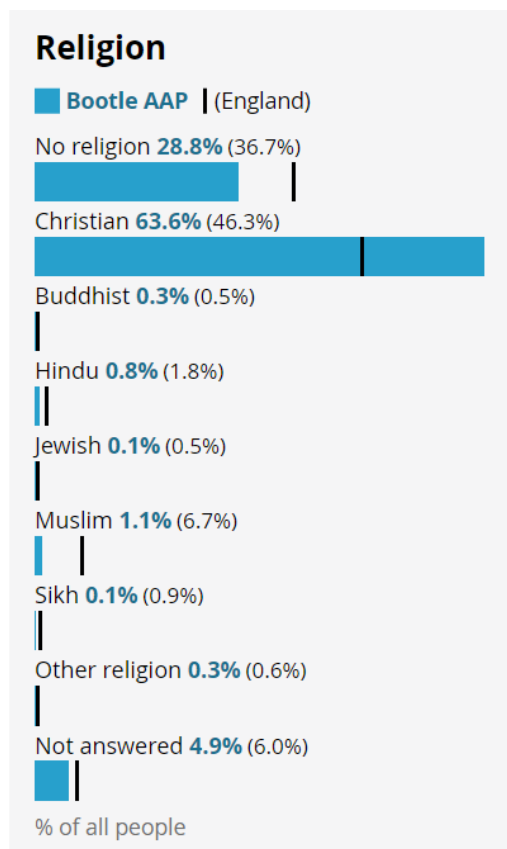
The above data in for conception rates in that year. The data shows that in the North West broadly in c7.5% of women aged 15-44 years get pregnant in a given year.

Race



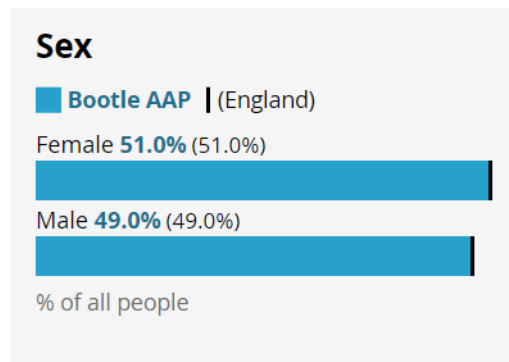
The Bootle AAP area, and indeed Sefton, has a lower proportion of residents that are from non-white ethnic groups. Just over 6 people from every 100 classified themselves as being from a non-white ethnic group in the 2021 census.

Religion or belief



There is a much higher proportion of residents who identify as Christian in the Bootle AAP area than in England as a whole and a lower proportion of those who have no religion or other religions.

Sex



The split between male and females in the Bootle AAP replicates that for England, which slightly more females than males.

Sexual orientation

	Sefton
Straight	91.4%
Gay/lesbian	1.42%
Bisexual	0.87%
Other	0.21%
Not answered	6.09%

4. Assessment of impacts

Approach to assessment The assessment of equality impacts takes into account the information gathered through the policy information and the baseline evidence. A judgement is made as to how the proposed policies contained within the Local Plan could potentially contribute to the realisation of effects for people with protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010. These protected characteristics are set out at section 2.1 above.

The assessment considers impacts of the proposed policies on protected characteristic groups. The assessment considers impacts on groups of people and not those on specific individuals. The criteria used to determine impacts of the Local Plan policies with respect to protected characteristics include where:

- an impact of a policy is predicted where a protected characteristic group make up a greater proportion of the affected resident Bootle AAP area population than their representation elsewhere;
- an impact of a policy is predicted on or associated with a resource which is predominantly used by a protected characteristic group (e.g. primary schools attended by children).
- people who share a protected characteristic form a disproportionately large number of those adversely affected by a policy;
- amongst the population affected by a policy, people who share protected characteristics are particularly vulnerable or sensitive to a possible impact in relation to their specific protected characteristic;
- a policy may either worsen or improve existing disadvantage affecting people who share a protected characteristic;
- people with shared protected characteristics amongst the affected population may not have an equal share in the benefits from the policy. This can be either due to direct or indirect discrimination or where the groups experience particular barriers to realising such benefits, unless suitable actions are proposed to overcome those barriers; and
- the policy may worsen existing community cohesion amongst the affected local population or exacerbate conflicts with community cohesion policy objectives.

3.3 The scoring method for the assessment is as follows:

Potential Impacts	
Positive	+
Negative	-
Both positive and negative	+/-
Neutral	o

