

APPENDIX 1

THE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS AND WEST LANCASHIRE STATISTICS

Age

People of all ages are protected. Older people, particularly in rural areas, can face social isolation and can feel cut off from the wider community. Young people can often feel socially excluded and marginalised within their communities. We try to engage with people of all ages to empower them to participate in their local communities.

In 2020, the age profile of the Borough compared to the Northwest and English Authorities was:

Age	Percentage of the population	North West	UK authorities
Under 18	19.4%	21.3%	21.4%
18 to 64	58.3%	59.9%	60.1%
65+	22.3%	18.8%	18.5%

The borough is home to Edge Hill University which has more than 13,000 students most of whom live in the area. West Lancashire has a generally ageing population and 2.8% are aged over 80 and has on average more of the population of pensionable age than for the Northwest or England Authorities.

Disability

A person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities, when carrying out our functions, we will try to:

- promote positive attitudes towards people with disabilities
- encourage participation by people with disabilities in public life
- promote equality of opportunity between people with or without disabilities
- eliminate disability-related harassment
- eliminate unlawful discrimination; and
- take steps to meet the needs of people with disabilities, even if this requires treatment that is more favourable

The 2011 Census showed that more than 20% of West Lancashire residents consider that their day-to-day activities are limited to some extent by a long-term health problem or disability, which is significantly higher than the national average.

Almost 12,000 residents have a hearing impairment and just short of 2,000 adults have a visual impairment. More than 2,000 resident adults have a learning disability. 12% of the population (12,682) are found to have a common mental health disorder including depression and anxiety.

Gender reassignment

Gender Reassignment includes anyone who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or completed a process (or part of process) to reassign their sex. The Equality and Human Rights Commission notes that the preferred umbrella term is “trans” which encompasses different forms of gender identity, such as people who identify as non-binary. We understand and respect that there can be differences between assigned sex and gender identity and expression, and we value all our staff and customers, including individuals who identify outside of the gender binary.

At the present time we do not have any data for the population that are transgender but, based on a national estimate of 20 per 100,000 head of population, we might expect to have around 20 residents who had a different gender at birth. We hope that when future Census data is available this will inform our practices and decision making.

We do have a working practice statement on Gender Identity and Gender Reassignment available on our intranet.

Marriage and civil partnership

People who are married or in civil partnerships are protected from discrimination. However, single people are not protected.

Within West Lancashire 46.6% of people are married (Census 2011), 34.6% single, 0.2% same sex civil partnership, 2.7% separated, 9% divorced and 6.9% widowed.

Pregnancy and maternity

There are specific provisions of the Equality Act relating to employment rights for women who are pregnant or have recently given birth.

Pregnancy and maternity-related discrimination can also occur outside of the workplace if a woman is treated unfavourably because of her pregnancy or because she has given birth (within the past 26 weeks) and because she is breastfeeding.

Data on the numbers are not available to us but, we report annually on the staff numbers relating to this characteristic.

Race

In the Equality Act, race can mean someone’s colour, or their nationality (including citizenship). It can also mean their ethnic or national origins, which may not be the same as their current nationality. For example, a person may have Chinese national origins and be living in Britain with a British passport. Race also covers ethnic and racial groups. This means a group of people who all share the same protected characteristic of ethnicity or race.

Public authorities must promote race equality and ensure that employment and services (including services provided through other organisations on their behalf) are fair and accessible for everyone.

Both institutional and individual racism “can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and

behaviour which amounts to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, and racist stereotyping which disadvantages ethnic minority people.” We recognise that institutional racism can exist, and that no organisation is immune.

In the 2011 census, the following were the recorded backgrounds of the population, and these are compared to the averages in the North West Region and English Authorities:

Race	Percentage of the population	North West	UK Authorities
White	98.1%	90.2%	85.4%
Asian/Asian British	0.8%	6.2%	7.8%
Black/Black Asian	0.2%	1.4%	3.5%
Mixed Race	0.8%	1.6%	2.3%
Other	0.1%	0.6%	1%

Religion or belief

This characteristic covers any religion or any religious or philosophical belief, including a lack of religion or belief. Faith groups have a positive impact on our local communities. They bring opportunities to create face-to-face dialogue, which supports a greater understanding of shared values, appreciation of distinctiveness and for side-by-side collaborative social action. Employees and job seekers are protected if they have a faith or if they have no faith.

The religious make up at the last census was Christian 76.2%, Buddhist 0.1%, Hindu 0.2%, Jewish 0.1%, Muslim 0.2%, Sikh 0.1%, Other 0.2%, No religion 17.2% and Religion not stated 5.7%.

We have a working practice statement on our intranet, working practice statement 100 Religion and Belief in the Workplace.

Sex

In the Equality Act, sex can mean either male or female, or a group of people like men or boys, or women or girls and you should not be discriminated against because:

- you are (or are not) a particular sex
- someone thinks you are the opposite sex (this is known as discrimination by perception)
- you are connected to someone of a particular sex (this is known as discrimination by association)

We report on our gender pay gap for our employees annually in line with legal requirements. We will take any actions we decide are appropriate should the pay gap information highlights any concerns.

The gender of the borough is relatively balanced overall with 52% of the population identifying as female.

Sexual orientation

The Equality Act 2010 says you must not be discriminated against because:

You are heterosexual, gay, lesbian, or bisexual

- someone thinks you have a particular sexual orientation (this is known as discrimination by perception)
- you are connected to someone who has a particular sexual orientation (this is known as discrimination by association)

In the Equality Act, sexual orientation includes how you choose to express your sexual orientation, such as through your appearance or the places you visit.

Data on the sexual orientation of the residents of West Lancashire is not available. Estimates at a national level vary from 1.5% to 5% which would mean between 1,700 and 5,600 residents of our borough are lesbian, gay, or bisexual.

Data Sources:

Office for National Statistics - Census 2011

Office for National Statistics - Mid-Year Population Estimates:

Components of Change Office for National Statistics - Mid-year estimate