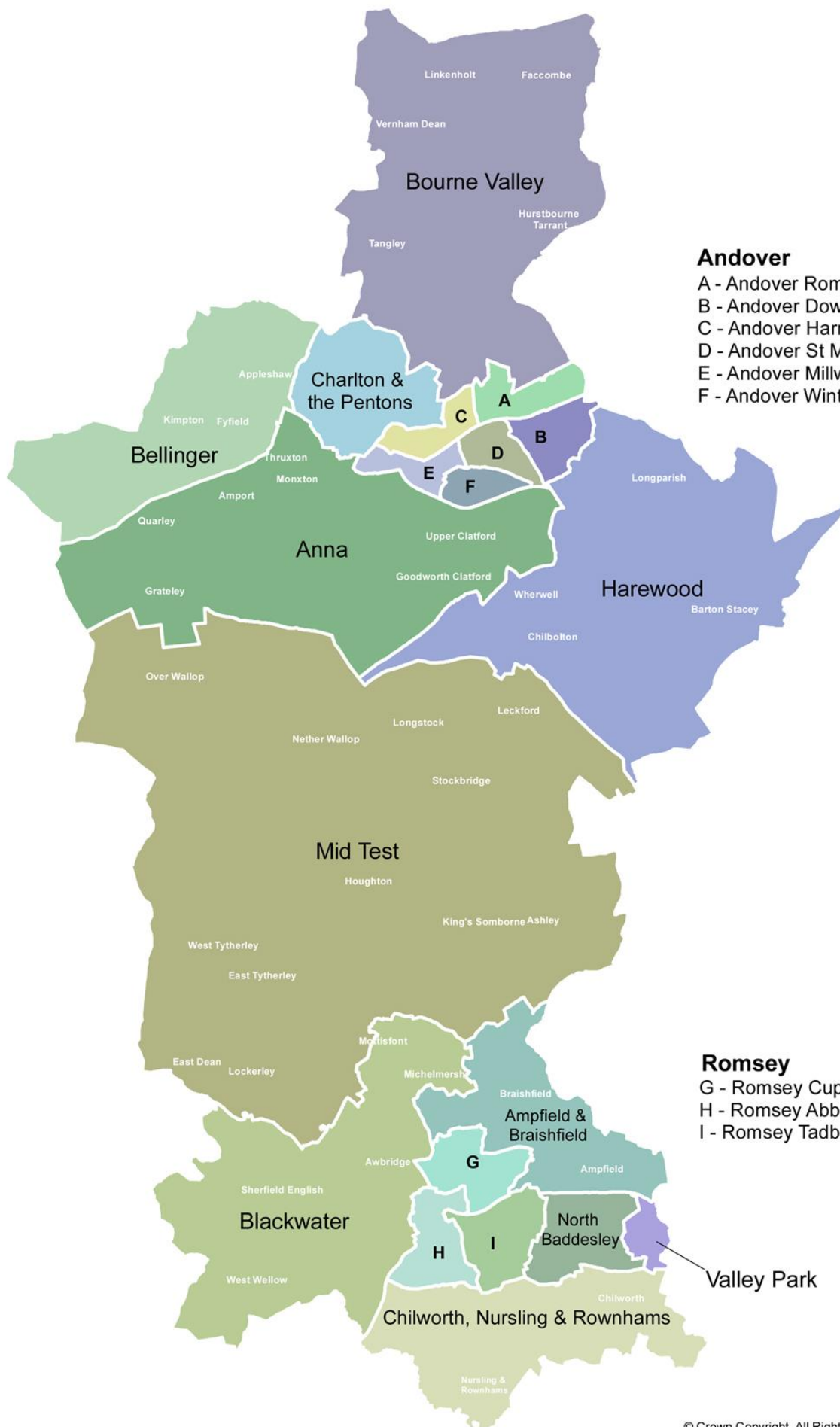


# Equality information

March 2024



**Andover**

- A - Andover Romans
- B - Andover Downlands
- C - Andover Harroway
- D - Andover St Mary's
- E - Andover Millway
- F - Andover Winton

**Romsey**

- G - Romsey Cupernham
- H - Romsey Abbey
- I - Romsey Tadburn

# Equality information

## Our duties under the Equality Act 2010

We are required to publish information that demonstrates our compliance with the Equality Duty as defined by the Equality Act 2010. This means that we have to show that we have had, in the exercise of our functions, **due regard** to the need to:

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

These are sometimes referred to as the three aims of the public sector equality duty.

Having **due regard** for advancing equality involves:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people;
- encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

We must demonstrate that we considered how the decisions we make and the services we deliver affect people who share different protected characteristics:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- sex (gender);
- sexual orientation;
- religion or belief (includes lack of belief);
- race;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- marriage and civil partnership.

There is no explicit legal requirement to collect and use equality information across all the protected characteristics, but to have due regard to the aims of the public sector equality duty, we must understand the impact of our policies and decisions on people with different protected

characteristics. Collecting and analysing equality information is an important way to develop this understanding.

We must publish relevant information by 30 March each year. We must include information about our employees and people affected by our policies and practices (for example, service users). The information should be accessible to the public and does not have to be published in a separate document.

## **Setting the scene in Test Valley**

The council is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all. As a service provider and an employer, we are committed to ensuring fair treatment and equal access to our services, to information and to employment. This means that everyone can expect the same standards of treatment, regardless of their gender, disability, race, ethnic or national origin, age, religion or belief, or sexual orientation.

As a public body we will:

- Ensure equality of opportunity for all.
- Ensure fair treatment for everyone.
- Ensure equal access to services, to information and to employment.
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination on grounds of gender, disability, race, ethnic or national origin, age, religion or belief, or sexual orientation for our employees and for service users.
- Promote good relations between different groups and individuals within our community.
- Ensure quality services for everyone in the community.

In April 2023, the council adopted its new Corporate Plan 2023-2027: *A Place for Everyone – Supporting our Communities to Thrive*. Inclusion is one of the key priorities underpinning the new corporate plan, reinforcing the council's commitment to strengthening and supporting equality and diversity.

Our vision is to work collaboratively, to deliver high quality services that support all communities in Test Valley to thrive. The vision is underpinned by our values: Accountability, Inclusion, Empowerment, Integrity, Ambition.

Our communities told us how important inclusiveness was to them, and we have developed our Plan accordingly - to respond to their most pressing concerns whilst ensuring that we meet the needs of individuals and groups in our communities.

## A snapshot of diversity in Test Valley

<p><b>Gender</b></p>	<p>According to forecasted data, 51.9% of Test Valley residents are women and 48.1% are men.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>17 (36.95%) of Test Valley’s 43 Borough Councillors are women and three of the eight (37.5%) Cabinet members are female.</p>
<p><b>Age – Older</b></p>	<p>According to the Hampshire County Council Small Area Population Forecast for 2024<sup>1</sup>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24.6% of the Test Valley population is over 65.</li> <li>• 55.01% of over 65s are women and 44.99% of over 65s are men.</li> <li>• 63.27% of over 85s are women and 36.73% of over 85s are men.</li> </ul> <p>These figures reflect wider trends of an ageing population and women typically living longer than men. This has implications for services such as benefits, social services, leisure provision, and transport for the older population.</p>
<p><b>Age – Younger</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18.46% of Test Valley residents are 15 years of age and under.</li> <li>• 48.77% of those aged 15 and under are girls and 51.35% are boys.<sup>1</sup></li> </ul>
<p><b>Ethnicity</b></p>	<p>According to the 2021 Census, 88.0% of the population in Test Valley is White British, with 12.1% of the population from Black, Asian, other white or Mixed/Multiple ethnic backgrounds.</p> <p>There are 76 main languages spoken in Test Valley, and 95.8% of residents have English as their first language<sup>2</sup></p>
<p><b>Gypsy, Traveller, Roma, Showmen and Boater (GTRSB)</b></p>	<p>Very little data is available regarding the number of Gypsies and Travellers in the borough at any one time. The latest EMTAS figures record 92 children from GTRSB backgrounds in Test Valley schools.<sup>3</sup></p> <p>At the time of the 2021 Census, there were 259 people who identified as White Roma, Gypsy or Irish Traveller living in the borough.</p>
<p><b>Disability</b></p>	<p>At the time of the 2021 census, 15.6% of the borough’s population were disabled, as defined by the Equality Act, of which 5.8% were limited a lot in their day-to-day activity and 9.8% were limited a little.</p>

All data is taken from the 2021 Census unless otherwise stated.

<sup>1</sup> 2024 Small Area Population Forecast, Hampshire County Council, accessed March 2024. Further information about these forecasts is available from the HCC website:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/facts-figures/population/estimates-forecasts>

<sup>2</sup> Census 2021

<sup>3</sup> Hampshire County Council Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service data, 2022.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/emtas/data>

<p><b>Religion</b></p>	<p>53.7% of people living in Test Valley have a religious belief or faith, whilst 40.6% stated they had no religion (5.7% of people did not state a religion).</p> <p>50.5% of people stated their religion as Christianity, this was the most common religion stated.</p> <p>0.9% of people identified as Muslim, 0.8% of people identified as Hindu, 0.5% identified as Buddhist, 0.4% identified as Sikh, 0.1% as Jewish, and 0.5% as adhering to another religion.</p>
<p><b>LGBT</b></p>	<p>The 2021 Census collected data on the number of people who identified as Gay, Lesbian or Bisexual. In Test Valley, 91.5% were Heterosexual/Straight, and 6.1% did not answer. 1.1% were Gay or Lesbian, 1% were Bisexual and 0.2% stated another sexual orientation.</p> <p>The 2021 Census records 233 same-sex marriages in the borough, and 144 same-sex civil partnerships.</p> <p>At the 2021 Census, data was collected on the number of Transgender people in the borough. 4.7% (5,002 people) declined to answer. 241 people had a gender identity that was different from the gender assigned at birth. Along with all other gender identities, this makes up 0.4% of the borough's population (with 0.1% identifying as Transgender Women, and 0.1% identifying as a Transgender Man).</p>
<p><b>Socio-economic</b></p>	<p>Most of the 71 Lower Super Output Areas within Test Valley are not considered to be deprived, according to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019. However, Andover Harroway Ward has one area which is classified as suffering from deprivation and falls amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England.<sup>4</sup></p> <p>2.5% of economically active people in Test Valley are unemployed, compared with 3.7% in Great Britain as a whole.<sup>5</sup></p>

<sup>4</sup> The English Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019. Accessed March 2024: [http://dclgapps.communities.gov.uk/imd/iod\\_index.html](http://dclgapps.communities.gov.uk/imd/iod_index.html)

<sup>5</sup> December 2022 Annual Population Survey. Accessed March 2024: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/methodologies/annualpopulationsurveyapsqmi>

