



Norfolk County Council

Greater Norwich Physical Activity and Sport Strategy

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Equality Impact Assessment – Findings and Recommendations

Version Number	Publication Date	Prepared By
V1	21/09/2022	Tom Cushan
V2	17/10/2022	Tom Cushan
V3	25/10/2022	Tom Cushan

Equality impact assessments enable decision-makers to consider the impact of proposals on people with protected characteristics.

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1. Proposal for a new Greater Norwich Physical Activity and Sport Strategy

- 1.1 The Greater Norwich Growth Board has commissioned a new [Greater Norwich Physical Activity and Sport Strategy \(PASS\)](#). This will supersede the Greater Norwich Sports Strategy previously published in 2015. The strategy follows [Sport England's Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance](#).
- 1.2 The strategy will adopt a more inclusive understanding of physical activity. It shifts the focus away from just sport and recognises that there are a wide range of ways people can be physically active. The strategy will also recognise individual differences in physical activity, and that being physically active means different things for different people.
- 1.3 The strategy will inform the strategic direction for the provision of playing pitches and sports halls in the Greater Norwich area over the coming years. However, unlike previous strategies it goes further than just focusing on the provision of infrastructure, it identifies key work areas to be delivered in partnership across Greater Norwich. The key objectives of the strategy are:
- Supporting a strong and sustainable sector
 - Supporting the recovery from Covid-19
 - Reducing inequities in our communities
 - Tackling social isolation
 - Enhancing our residents mental and physical wellbeing
 - Reducing our impact on the environment
 - Supporting & encouraging people to live active & healthy lives.
- 1.4 These are underpinned by the following guiding principles:
- Acting throughout people's lives
 - Adopting a collaborative approach
 - Tailoring to local places and people
 - Addressing inequities in our community
- 1.5 Eight key areas of work are identified to improve the health and wellbeing of all residents:
- Active environments
 - Active systems
 - Active health
 - Active travel
 - Active workplaces
 - Active education
 - Workforce development
 - Raising awareness
- 1.6 A public consultation of over 4500 residents was undertaken to inform the strategy, as well as direct engagement with local sports clubs. [A full report on the consultation is available here](#).
- 1.7 The mission and vision of the strategy are laid out below:

- **Our mission:** To work with a range of partners to address reasons for inactivity by supporting the development of facilities and encouraging active lifestyle behaviours for all
- **Our vision:** To enhance the health, wellbeing and quality of life of our residents by creating opportunities for and inspiring people to become more active.

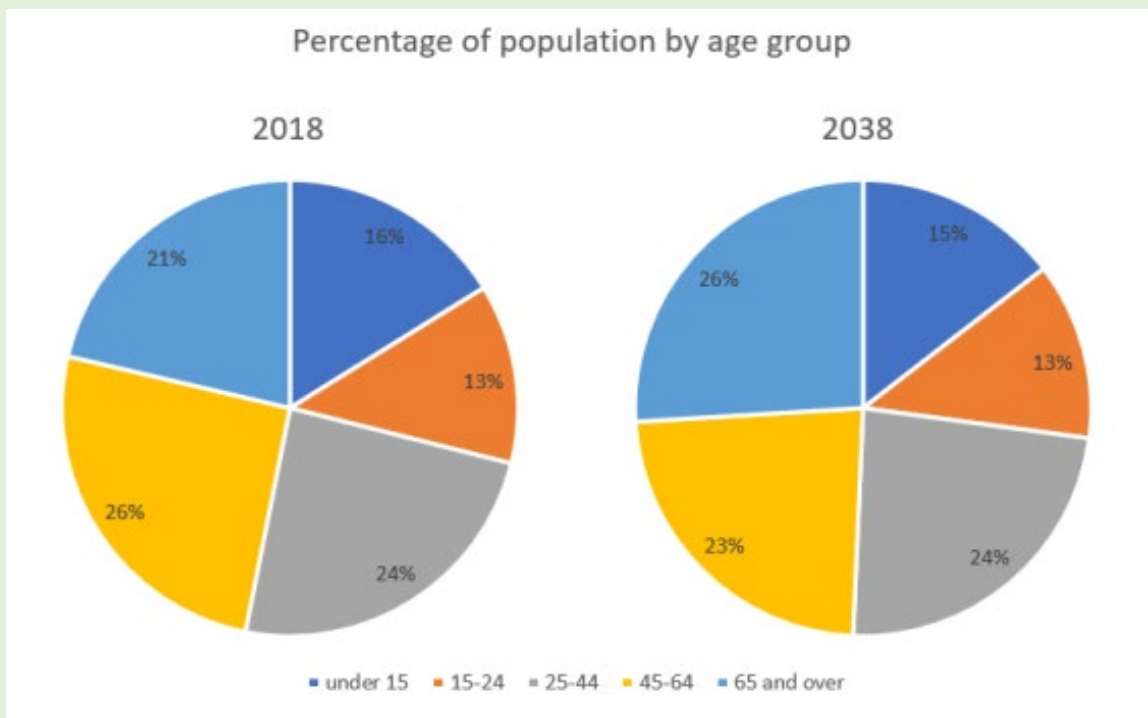
2. Legal context

- 2.1 Public authorities are required by the Equality Act 2010 to give due regard to equality when exercising public functions¹. This is called the 'Public Sector Equality Duty'.
- 2.2 The purpose of an equality impact assessment is to consider the potential impact of a proposed change or issue on people with protected characteristics (see Annex 1 for information about the different protected characteristics).
- 2.3 If the assessment identifies any detrimental impact, this enables mitigating actions to be developed.
- 2.4 It is not always possible to adopt the course of action that will best promote the interests of people with protected characteristics. However, equality assessments enable informed decisions to be made that take every opportunity to minimise disadvantage.

3. Information about the people affected by the proposal

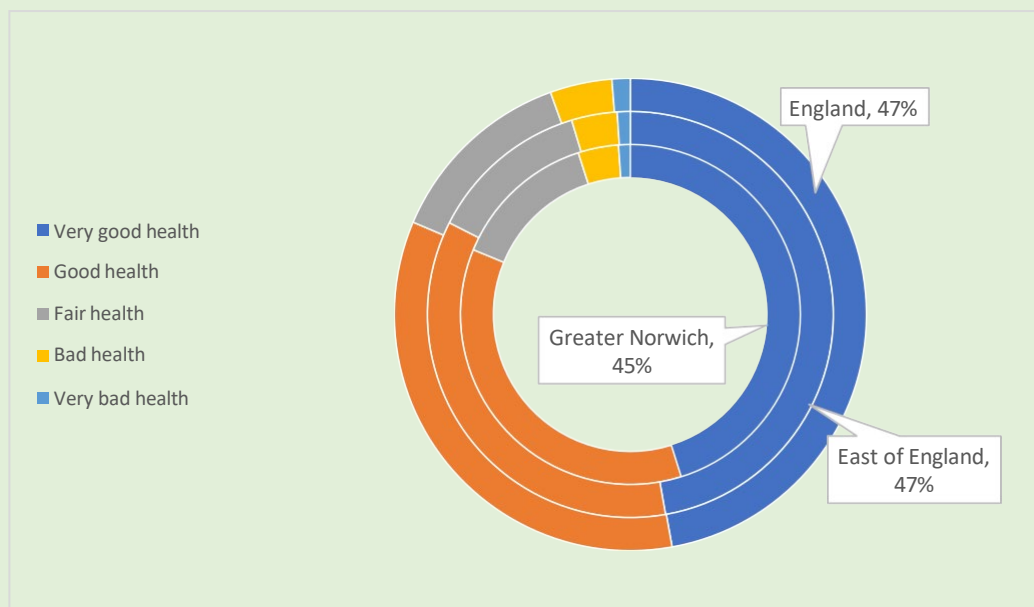
- 3.1 This proposal will impact on everyone who lives in the Greater Norwich area.
- 3.2 This includes residents, service users and staff with a range of protected characteristics, in relation to disability, sex, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion/belief, age and sexual orientation.
- 3.3 The census 2021 found that Norwich had a population of 132,500, South Norfolk a population of 141,900 and Broadland a population of 131,700. The Greater Norwich area therefore has a population of 406,100. The Greater Norwich Local Plan reports that the population of Greater Norwich could be as high as 470,000 by 2038. This means that the potential impact of this strategy is significant, and people with a range of protected characteristics are represented.
- 3.4 **Age** - The population of Greater Norwich has relatively high proportions of older people compared to national figures and this pattern is set to increase to 2038 as shown in the charts below. Broadland and South Norfolk have proportions of older people significantly above the national average.

Figure 1 Percentage of population by age group in Greater Norwich. Source: Greater Norwich Local Plan



3.5 **Disability and people with long term health conditions** - Census respondents were asked to assess whether their health was very good, good, fair, bad or very bad. Figure 2 below show that Greater Norwich is broadly consistent with the national and regional results, although a slightly lower proportion of residents of Greater Norwich believe they are in 'very good health'.

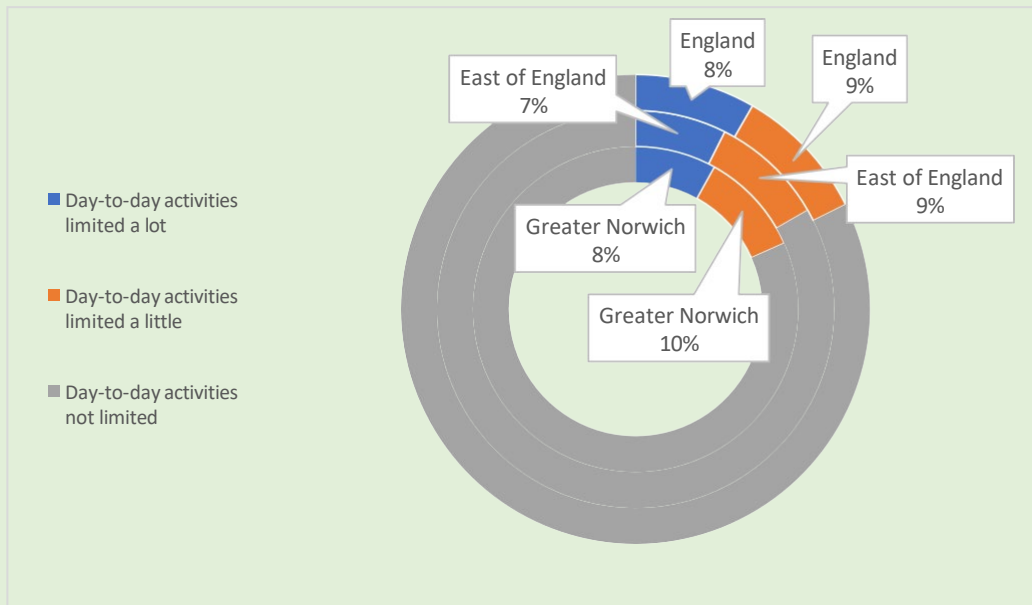
Figure 2 Quality of Health (Greater Norwich, East of England, England) Source: 2011 Census ONS Crown Copyright Reserved



3.6 Another Census question asked whether residents had a long-term (12 months +) health problem or disability which limited their day-to-day activities. Figure 3 below

shows that 8% of Greater Norwich residents have a severely limiting health condition, and 10% have a condition which they consider limiting their day to day activities a little. This equates to the national average of 18% but is slightly higher than the regional average of 16%.

Figure 3 Long Term Health Problem or Disability (Greater Norwich, East of England, England) Source: 2011 Census ONS Crown Copyright



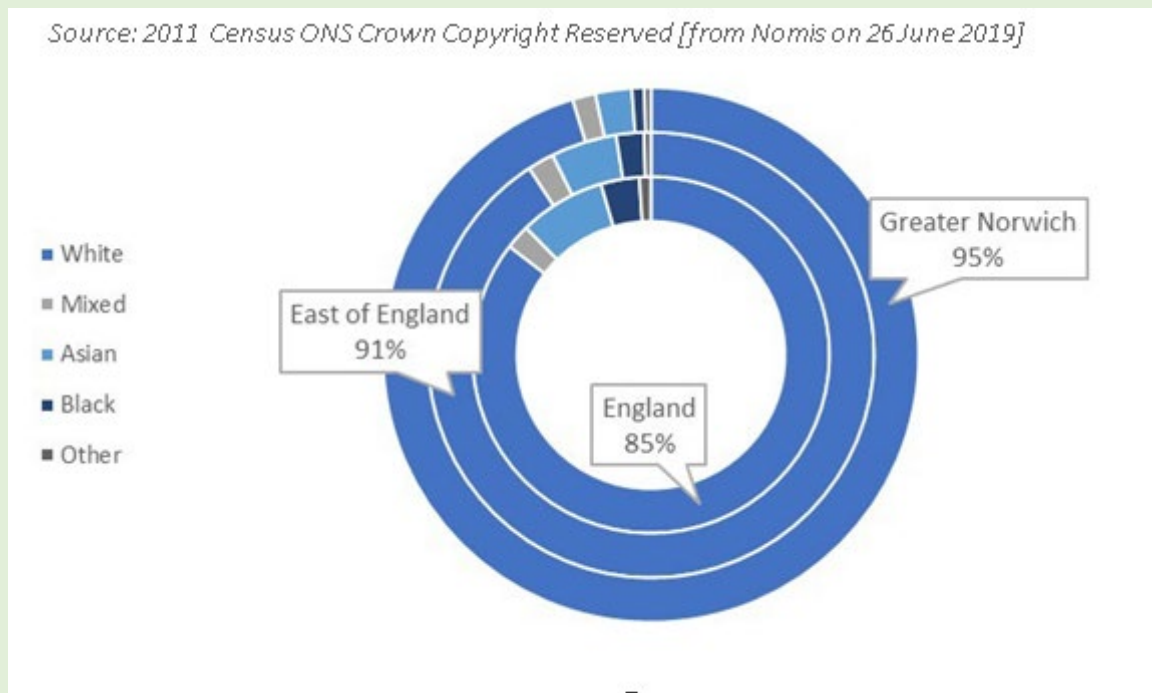
3.7 The Census does not provide a specific breakdown of reported disability types by region, so it is difficult to provide direct proportions of disability groups in Norfolk and Greater Norwich. Figure 4 shows the Family Resources Survey 2020/21 which provides a breakdown of these groups at a national level, however direct comparisons to Greater Norwich cannot be drawn.

Figure 4 Impairment types reported by disabled people, 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21, United Kingdom (Family Resources Survey 2020/21)

Impairment type	2018/19 %	2019/20 %	2020/21 %
Mobility	6.8	7.0	6.8
Stamina/breathing/fatigue	5.1	5.1	4.8
Dexterity	3.7	3.5	3.3
Mental health	3.8	4.1	4.3
Memory	2.3	2.3	1.6
Hearing	1.8	1.9	1.4
Vision	1.7	1.7	1.3
Learning	1.9	1.9	1.6
Social/behavioural	1.3	1.3	1.2
Other	2.6	2.4	3.3

3.8 **Race** - In the 2011 Census 95% of Greater Norwich residents identified themselves as white. This is a higher percentage than regionally or nationally. Within this group, 0.1% identified themselves as a Gypsy or Traveller. Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised as having a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. Of the 5% identifying as other than white, there is a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds represented, as can be seen in the table below.

Figure 5 Population by General Ethnic Origin (Greater Norwich, East of England, England)



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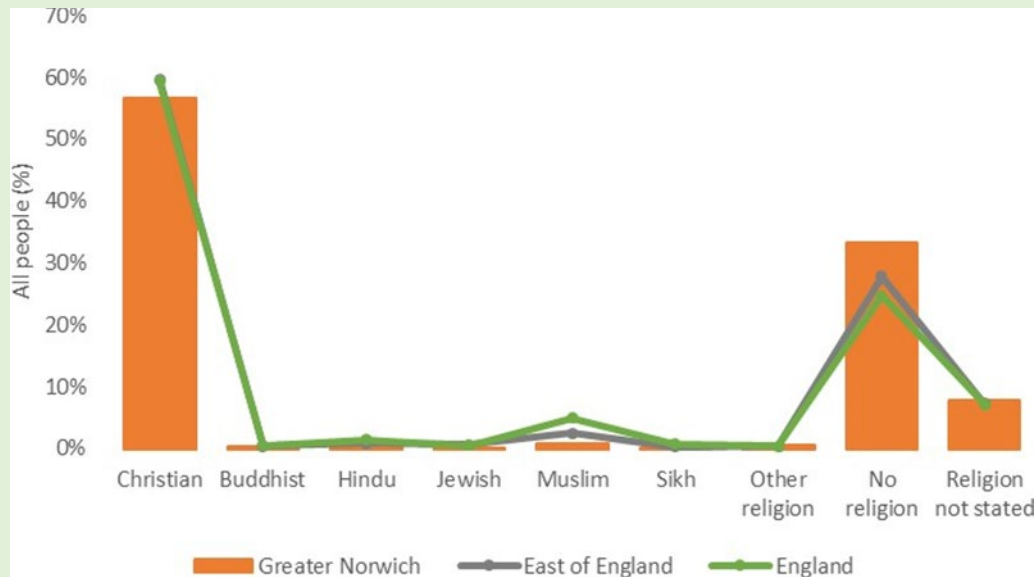
Figure 6 Population by Specific Ethnic Origin (Greater Norwich, East of England, England)

Ethnic Group	Greater Norwich	East of England	England
White	95.3%	90.8%	85.4%
Mixed	1.4%	1.9%	2.3%
Asian	2.2%	4.8%	7.8%
Black	0.7%	2.0%	3.5%
Other	0.4%	0.5%	1.0%

3.9 **Religion/belief** - In the 2011 Census, 59% of Greater Norwich residents identified themselves as having a religion. The Census did not ask about religious activities or practices, only about respondents' identities. The graph below shows that the most popularly identified religion in Greater Norwich is Christian, although this is slightly lower than the regional or national figure. The proportion of those who were members of other religions was lower when compared to the rest of the region and the country, particularly in the case of respondents identifying themselves as Muslim. A higher

percentage of Greater Norwich residents stated that they had 'other' religion compared to respondents in the East of England and England.

Figure 7 Religious Identity (Greater Norwich, East of England, England) Source: 2011 Census ONS Crown Copyright Reserved



3.10 **Sex** – In the 2021 Census, the population in Greater Norwich was 406,100. There are slightly more women than men in all districts, although this is slightly less pronounced in Norwich. The balance in Greater Norwich is very similar to the national picture, with a higher proportion of women than across Norfolk as a whole.

Figure 8 Male and Female Residents (Greater Norwich, Broadland, Norwich, South Norfolk) Source: 2021 Census ONS Crown Copyright Reserved

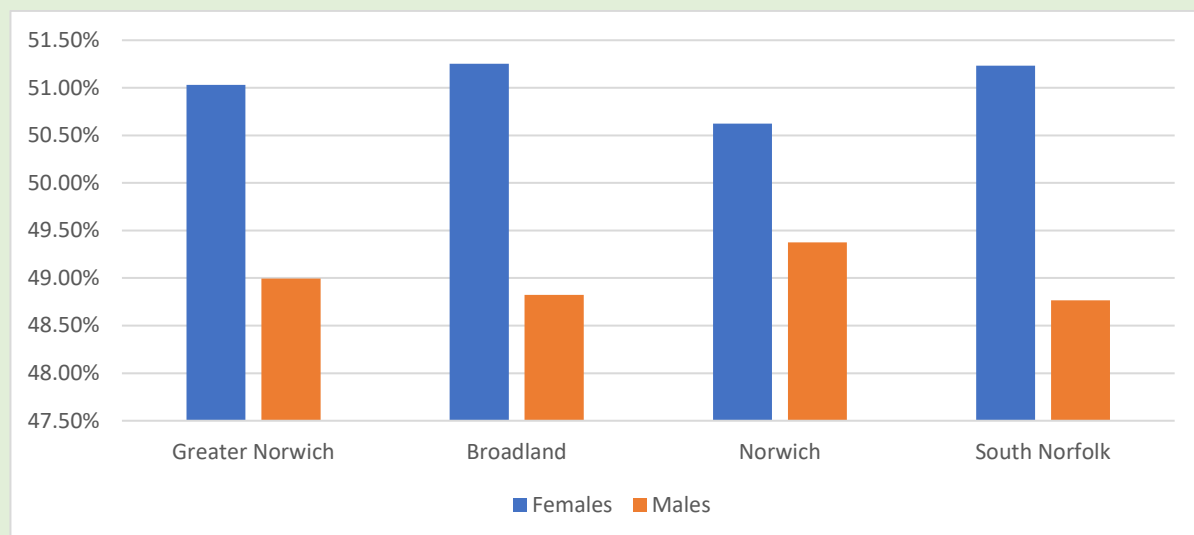
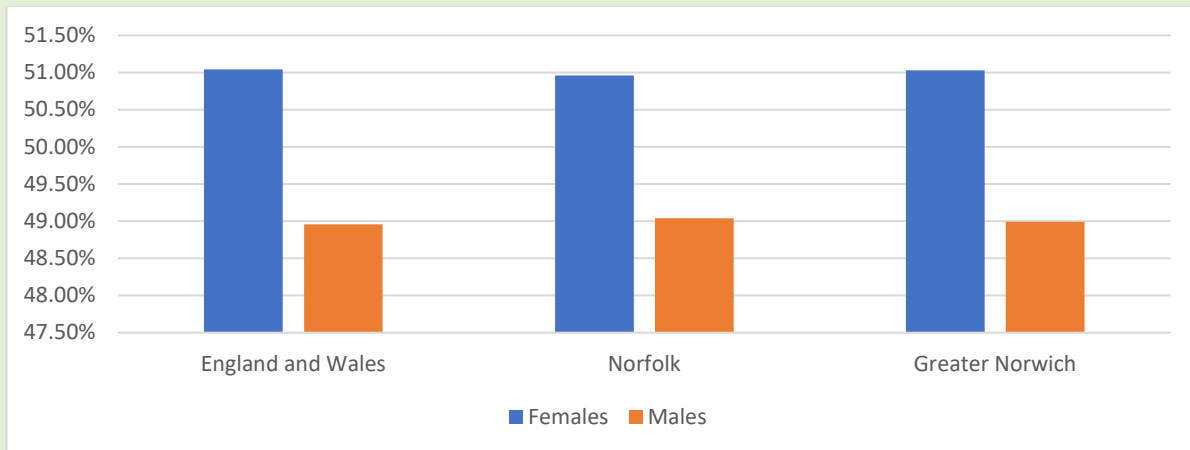


Figure 9 Male and Female Residents (Greater Norwich, Norfolk, England and Wales) Source: 2021 Census
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4. Potential impact

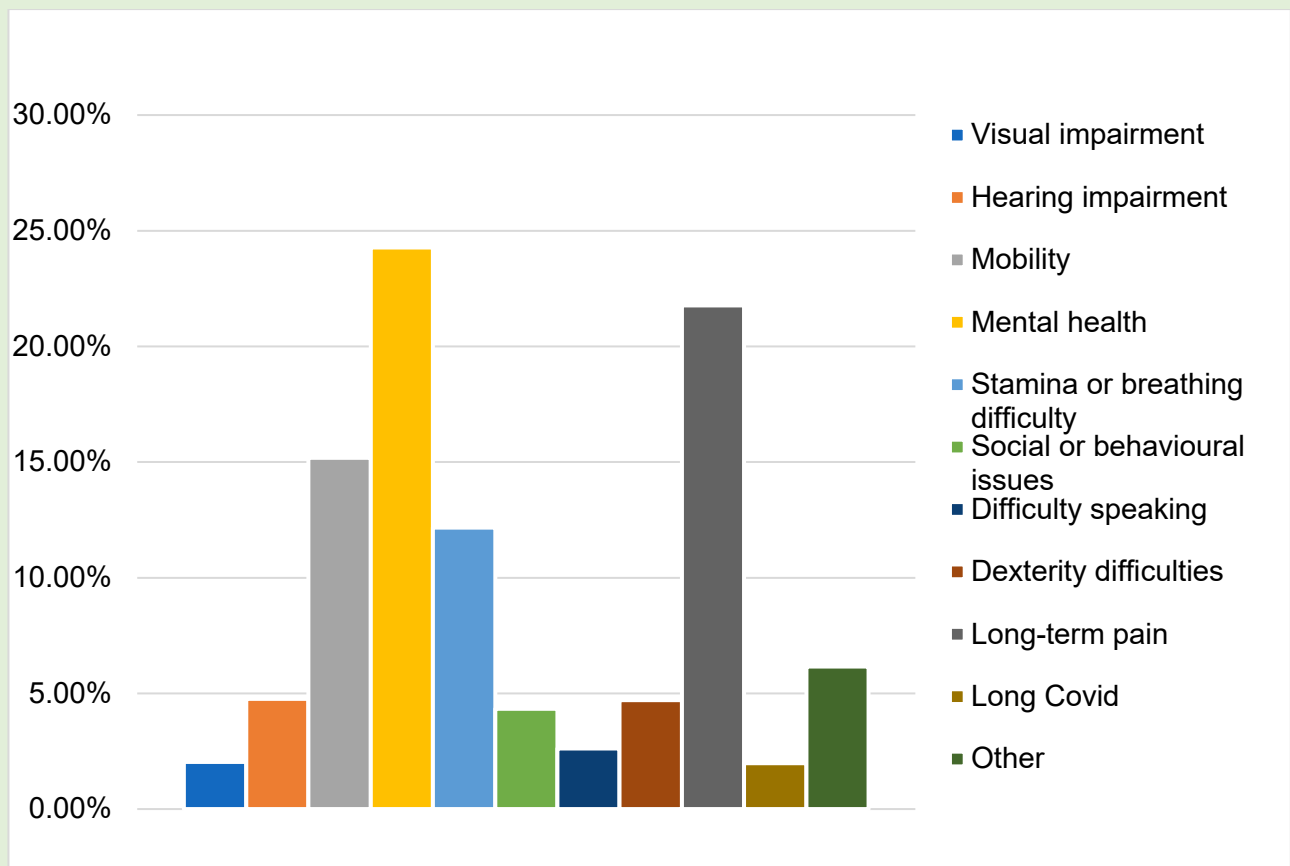
- 4.1 Based on the evidence available, this proposal is likely to have a positive impact on people with protected characteristics living in Greater Norwich.
- 4.2 This is because the strategy has been actively designed to offer a more inclusive understanding of Physical Activity and Sport. It has been produced following a significant public consultation, and aligned with other national, countywide, and local guidance. It has been developed in accordance with [Sport England's Strategic Outcome Planning Guidance](#). It has been produced in partnership with all Greater Norwich authorities, Active Norfolk, the Greater Norwich Project Team, The Greater Norwich Local Plan Team, and the NHS. It offers a holistic perspective on physical activity and focuses on outcomes that improve physical health and mental wellbeing, reduce inequalities, improve community cohesion and support economic development.
- 4.3 It has also been approved by the following Sport National Governing Bodies: British Cycling, England Netball, England Athletics, Basketball England, Badminton England, Swim England, Lawn Tennis Association, England Boxing, Norfolk Cricket Board, English Indoor Bowling Association, The Football Association, England Cricket Board. Engagement was sought throughout the development of the strategy from British Wheelchair Basketball and GB Wheelchair Rugby, however no responses were received.
- 4.4 The strategy recognises that people face different barriers which prevent them from being active and this will require a range of different solutions to address these barriers. It focuses on encouraging people in Greater Norwich to move more and be more active, whatever form of physical activity that may take.
- 4.5 One of the guiding principles of the strategy is Addressing Inequities. The aspiration is for everyone in Greater Norwich to have the same opportunities to be active no matter who they are or where they are born or live. In aiming to reduce inequities the intention is to help all our residents be active but with a greater focus on those most

in need, targeting the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. Promoting equality is therefore embedded throughout the strategy.

4.6 In order to understand the diverse needs of people in the area, a consultation of over 4,500 residents was undertaken. [A full report on the demographics and findings of the consultation is available here.](#)

- **Gender** - The survey received 18% more female responses than male, with a response rate of 58% for women and 41% for men. This represents a slightly higher proportion of women than the demographic for the area.
- **Age** - The responses for age broadly align with demographic data. People aged 60+ represent 23% of survey respondents, and 26% of the local population.
- **Race** - 88% of respondents described themselves as white British, which is lower than the 96.3% demographic for Greater Norwich. This means that people from ethnic minority backgrounds were better represented in the consultation than they are in the population data.
- **Religion** – Survey respondents were asked to state their religious belief. 58% reported no religion, 30% Christian, 0.8% Buddhist, 0.7% Muslim, 0.4% Jewish, 0.4% Hindu, 0.1% Sikh and 3.6% other. Compared to demographic data, around 30% of people in Greater Norwich report no religion, and over 55% report Christianity. Demographics for other religions are broadly in line with the proportions of survey respondents.
- **Sexuality** – 3,546 people answered a question regarding their sexuality. 90.5% said that they regarded themselves as Heterosexual. 3.9% of respondents are Gay or Lesbian whilst 4.4% are Bisexual. Other sexualities represented in the responses are: Pansexual, Demisexual, Asexual and Celibate. This provides strong representation in the consultation compared to demographic data, as ONS data shows that in the East of England 95.5% of people identify as Straight/Heterosexual, 1.3% as gay or lesbian, 1% bisexual, 0.4% as other and 1.8% as don't know/refused to answer
- **Disability and long-term health conditions** – 43% of consultation respondents described themselves as having some form of health condition which significantly impacted on their ability to perform day to day activities. Approximately 18% of Greater Norwich Residents (Figure 3 , above) describe themselves in this way. Figure 11 shows the types of disability reported by consultation respondents.

Figure 10 Consultation Response: Physical or mental health conditions and illnesses significantly impacting daily activities.



4.7 A 170-page report was prepared detailing the findings of the public consultation. This information formed the foundation of the work done on the PASS and supporting action plans. The key take-away from the consultation, relating to people with protected characteristics, were:

- Our residents from ethnic minority groups are significantly less active than the average
- Physical activity levels decrease with age, particularly amongst over 50s
- 45% of our residents with a disability are inactive
- 31% of active people feel that the facilities they use are not accessible for people with disabilities
- 4 out of 5 of the reasons given by residents for being active are due to health and wellbeing benefits.

4.8 The overall outcomes of the strategy are Healthier People, Happier People, More Active People, Reduced Inequalities, and Increased Sustainability. To achieve these outcomes the PASS lays out eight key working areas to be pursued across the partnership, as well as a supporting action plan. The PASS Action Plan has been developed alongside the strategy. It is informed by the findings of the public consultation, engagement with local sports clubs a sports governing bodies, and by the Playing Pitch and Built Facilities Strategies and Action Plans.

4.9 The working area **1) Active Environments** encourages the use of tailored local solutions to target the most inactive people in Greater Norwich. In particular, this will

focus on those living in our most deprived areas, over 50s, those with a disability and ethnic minorities, considering how we can ensure the most appropriate programmes and assets are in place and better utilise existing assets to help people in these areas to become more active. It also supports maximising the potential of our streets, parks, open spaces and waterways in supporting people to become active, this provides a more inclusive offer for those with access issues when compared to a traditional facilities-based model. If successful, this work area will lead to an increase in the physical activity rate of residents, no matter who they are or where they live.

- 4.10 The action plan for this work area includes the following interventions which will directly benefit people with protected characteristics. Measurement of outcomes is not within the scope of this strategy, as delivery plans for actions are prepared, they will refer to best practice guidance.
- **Disability** - 1.5 - Work to ensure that our green infrastructure is as clean, safe and welcoming as possible, in order to provide a welcoming environment for residents. To include clear signage, appropriately-lit car parks, walkways and facilities for people with disabilities. – Projects will be expected to adhere to best practice guidance such as BS8300 or Sport England guidance.
 - **Age** – 1.8 - Expand the School Streets & Play Streets initiatives across Greater Norwich to encourage physical activity and wellbeing in local communities, closing roads on a trial basis to promote active travel and physical activity opportunities in these areas. Target areas with most inactive people e.g. the Reducing Inequalities Target Areas (RITAs) in Norwich.
 - **Disability, Age, Race** - 1.11 - Work with Places Leisure and South Norfolk Council's in-house leisure team to consider ways to encourage leisure centre visits from target groups (focussing on the inactive, those living in our most deprived areas, over 50s, those with a disability and ethnic minorities). Ensure that concessionary schemes (e.g. Go for Less and the South Norfolk Leisure Passport) are targeted to this aim e.g. free access for carers, discounts for people with disabilities etc.
 - **Disability** - 1.13 - Ensure any new facilities are designed with people with mental and physical disabilities in mind, by using design input from pan disability groups and using BS8300:2018 as a baseline.
 - **Disability** - 1.14 - Ensure existing facilities are appropriately reviewed and improvements are designed for people with mental and physical disabilities in mind, by using design input from these target groups. Experts in inclusive design should be consulted to ensure that facilities audits are pan-disability.
- 4.11 The working area **2) Active Systems** seeks to enshrine physical activity within the priorities, plans and policies of our organisations and our partners, leading to an increase in the visibility and prominence of physical activity and sport in our systems. It encourages influencing health and social care policy to ensure resources are allocated to physical activity interventions and working with social prescribers to ensure individuals are signposted to suitable activities. This work area will therefore directly benefit those with the protected characteristics of Disability and Health.
- 4.12 The working area **3) Active Health** encourages working with Norfolk and Waveney's Integrated Care system to jointly promote the health benefits of physical activity, and to ensure it is considered in the design and delivery of all health programmes and initiatives. It aims to tackle physical and mental health inequalities, through

specifically tailored programmes and services designed to help residents make physical activity a part of their regular lives. This workstream will lead to improvements to the health of our residents, and the prevention of long-term health problems from developing.

4.13 The action plan for this work area lists the following interventions which will directly benefit people with protected characteristics:

- **Disability, Health** - 3.2 - Work in partnership (with Public Health, Community Connectors, Housing Associations, Community and Faith Groups, Workplaces, Places Leisure, South Norfolk in-house leisure team, Monument Project etc.) to develop effective approaches to intelligently signpost people towards physical activity opportunities, including:
 - Developing a plan for engaging with the ‘touch points’ around an individual’s life to support in changing attitudes and behaviours, raising awareness of the benefits of physical activity and signposting people to relevant opportunities;
 - GP referrals;
 - Health checks;
 - Social prescribing;
 - Targeted behaviour change interventions for overweight/obese children and adults including building physical activity into healthy weight programmes;
 - Helping those with long-term health conditions to understand how they can exercise and the benefits of it;
 - Supporting those with disabilities to take part in physical activity and sport;
 - Using physical activity to support those with mental health issues.
- **Disability, Health** - 3.6 - Work with our leisure services team to improve the opportunities for partnership working with health partners at our leisure centres.
- **Age, Disability, Race** - 3.8 - Work with key partners to consider a potential programme of rewards for organising and taking part in exercise to be targeted at our least active residents, focussing on those living in our most deprived areas, over 50s, those with a disability and ethnic minorities (could be non-monetary rewards similar to Norwich Notes).

4.14 The working area **4) Active Travel** encourages active travel methods including walking and cycling, creating safe, well sign-posted and affordable routes to workplaces, schools and community facilities. These improvements simultaneously benefit those with mobility issues, by creating routes which are easier and safer to navigate.

4.15 The action plan for this work area lists the following interventions which will directly benefit people with protected characteristics:

- **Health** – 4.2 - Deliver a public awareness campaign (with appropriate partners) to increase the levels of cycling and walking for travel purposes (to work, school, socially), with a focus on targeting those who do not do enough activity for good health.
- **Age** – 4.7 - Work with local schools and institutions to develop a Greater Norwich wide education based active travel intervention.

- 4.16 The working area **5) Active Workplaces** seeks to develop a network of local organisations across all sectors that value the health of their employees and offer opportunities to encourage people to be more active when travelling to work and when carrying out their duties. The action plan for this workstream includes the partner councils exploring ways to improve the activity levels of their own workforces and influencing other organisations to follow suit. This should be in part achieved by developing a Green Transport Travel Plan for council workforces, and by developing a healthy workplace accreditation which should be promoted to local businesses.
- 4.17 The working area **6) Active Education** is focused on supporting all pupils to form active habits which they then retain for life. There will be a particular focus on engaging inactive children. Although this workstream does not directly target people with the protected characteristics of Disability, Health, Race and Religion, it does include them. The action plan for this work area lists 9 interventions which will directly benefit young people.
- 4.18 The working area **7) Workforce Development** aims to ensure that the physical activity and sport sector will have a workforce of well-qualified, well-trained and well-rewarded people with the passion and skills to help more people become more active. This goal would have benefits for all, including supporting those with protected characteristics.
- 4.19 The action plan for this work area lists the following interventions which will directly benefit people with protected characteristics:
- **Age - 7.3** - Develop a coordinated approach to coaching and volunteering, embracing the principles within the UK Coaching Framework and the Volunteering in an Active Nation strategy, in order to increase and retain the numbers actively engaged in the sector, and ensure the workforce is more diverse and representative of society. For example:
 - Supporting young people who live in more disadvantaged communities to volunteer, helping to improve their confidence, skills and life chances;
 - Targeting older people to become volunteers, including those who are soon to be or recently retired, helping their transition to the 'third age' and reducing the risk of social isolation.
- 4.20 The final workstream **8) Raising Awareness** will raise the profile of physical activity and awareness of opportunities to be active. It means that information about existing opportunity for physical activity is better communicated to members of the public; this will represent a particular benefit to those with protected characteristics as it provides a tailored approach to individual needs.
- 4.21 The action plan for this work area lists the following interventions which will directly benefit people with protected characteristics:
- **Gender – 8.3** - Align to national and local physical activity and wellbeing campaigns to maximise their impact across Greater Norwich e.g. This Girl Can.
 - **Health – 8.6** - Rebuild post-Covid-19. Work with partners to develop a campaign to promote opportunities to get out of the house, socialise, be active and try new things. Key focus should be on raising awareness that being

active can take many forms and does not have to involve paying to take part in an activity or travelling to a formal facility.

- **Disability - 8.11** - Work to ensure that any communications about events, programmes or facilities put out by the Councils or their partners clearly identify arrangements for people with additional needs and who to contact for further information about accessibility.
- **Disability – 8.12** - Work to ensure that all locations for physical activity have special education needs (SEN) information sheets on their websites, including use of pictures and social stories rather than words where possible.

4.22 The **Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS)** provides an assessment of the quality of all playing pitches in Greater Norwich. This includes a non-technical assessment of the facilities to identify if accessible facilities are present. The methodology used to conduct this assessment follows the guidance given by the sports national governing bodies, which is informed by Sport England best practice. . Officers having this information in an accessible format is the first step towards officers being able to deliver sufficient facilities which are accessible for all. The playing pitch strategy also assesses supply and demand for playing pitches by age groups and gender, and details improvements needed to accommodate this. The PPS will therefore support in providing a positive impact for residents with the protected characteristics of Age, Gender, Disability and Health.

4.23 The **Built Facilities Strategy (BFS)** assesses supply and demand for playing pitches by age groups and gender, and details improvements needed to accommodate this. The PPS will therefore support in providing a positive impact for residents with the protected characteristics of age, gender, disability and health.

4.24 Any actions taken from the PASS would still be required to adhere to the equality, diversity and inclusion objectives, and projects would still be required to undertake their own Equality Impact Assessments.

5. Conclusion

5.1 There is no legal impediment to going ahead with the strategy. It would be implemented in full accordance with due process, national guidance and policy. Similar strategies have been implemented elsewhere in the UK.

6. Recommended actions

No detrimental impacts have been identified.

- Ensure that there is a system in place to review activities undertaken as part of the strategy, to enable learning to take place, ensure potential impacts can be picked up, and where actions taken to mitigate impacts or enhance offerings, can be monitored.
- The EQIA should be reviewed on an annual basis, alongside the PASS' action plan to ensure it is still relevant.


7. Evidence used to inform this assessment

Reference any other evidence your analysis has drawn upon:

- Greater Norwich Physical Activity and Sport Strategy & Action Plan
- Greater Norwich Playing Pitch Strategy & Action Plan
- Greater Norwich Built Facilities Strategy & Action Plan
- Greater Norwich Physical Activity and Sport Strategy – Survey Data
- 2021 Census ONS
- Greater Norwich Local Plan - Part 1, Section 2 -
<https://www.gnlp.org.uk/regulation-19-publication-part-1-strategy-section-2-greater-norwich-profile/population>
- [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)
- Demographic factors set out in [Norfolk's Story 2021](#)
- [Digital Inclusion and COVID-19](#) equality impact assessments
- Norfolk County Council [Area Reports](#) on Norfolk's JSNA relating to protected characteristics
- Business intelligence and management data, as quoted in this report
- Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty codes of practice

8. Further information

For further information about this equality impact assessment please contact **Tom Cushan** (Thomas.Cushan@norfolk.gov.uk)

 <p>The logo for 'IN TRAN communication for all' features the words 'IN' and 'TRAN' in a bold, sans-serif font. 'IN' is positioned above 'TRAN'. To the right of 'IN' is a solid black triangle pointing upwards. To the left of 'TRAN' is a solid black triangle pointing downwards. Below the text, the phrase 'communication for all' is written in a smaller, lowercase, sans-serif font.</p>	<p>If you need this document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact Tom Cushan on Thomas.Cushan@norfolk.gov.uk or 01603 365784 (Text relay)</p>
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Annex 1 – table of protected characteristics

The following table sets out details of each protected characteristic. Remember that people with multiple characteristics may face the most barriers:

Characteristic	Who this covers
Age	Adults and children etc, or specific/different age groups
Disability	<p>A person has a disability 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.</p> <p>This may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with mobility issues (eg wheelchair or cane users, people of short stature, people who do not have mobility in a limb etc) • Blind and partially sighted people • People who are D/deaf or hearing impaired • People with learning disabilities • People who have mental health issues • People who identify as neurodiverse (this refers to neurological differences including, for example, dyspraxia, dyslexia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, the autistic spectrum and others) • People with some long-term health conditions which meet the criteria of a disability.
People with a long-term health condition	People with long-term health conditions which meet the criteria of a disability.
Gender reassignment	<p>People who identify as transgender (defined as someone who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing, or has undergone a process or part of a process to reassign their sex. It is not necessary for the person to be under medical supervision or undergoing surgery).</p> <p>You may want to consider the needs of people who identify as non-binary (a spectrum of gender identities that are not exclusively masculine or feminine).</p>
Marriage/civil partnerships	People who are married or in a civil partnership. They may be of the opposite or same sex.

Characteristic	Who this covers
Pregnancy and maternity	Maternity refers to the period after birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.
Race	Race refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, or nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins. A racial group can be made up of two or more distinct racial groups, for example a person may identify as Black British, British Asian, British Sikh, British Jew, Romany Gypsy or Irish Traveller.
Religion/belief	Belief means any religious or philosophical belief or no belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour. Denominations or sects within a religion can be considered a protected religion or religious belief.
Sex	This covers men and women. Also consider the needs of people who identify as intersex (people who have variations in sex characteristics) and non-binary (a spectrum of gender identities that are not exclusively masculine or feminine).
Sexual orientation	People who identify as straight/heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual.

Document review

Reviewed and updated:	Reviewer
October and November 2016	Corporate Planning & Partnerships Manager
December 2017	Equality & Diversity Manager
October 2018	Equality & Diversity Manager
May and November 2019	Equality & Diversity Manager
May and November 2020	Equality & Diversity Manager
June and September 2021	Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

¹ The Act states that public bodies must pay due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic¹ and people who do not share it;

- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

[The full Equality Act 2021 is available on legislation.gov.uk.](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)