

THE CASTLE POINT PLAN



Your community. Your views.

Equality Impact Assessment Scoping Report

June 2024



Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Legal Context.....	3
3. Methodology.....	4
4. Establishing a baseline assessment and providing recommendations.....	4
5. Framework for assessing equality impacts.....	19
6. Next steps.....	22

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides the scope for the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) of the emerging Castle Point Plan.
- 1.2 The main purpose of an EqIA is to ensure that a plan, policy or proposal has due regard to the requirements set out in the Equality Act 2010. In particular, the impacts to various groups who are classified as having protected characteristics. It also ensures steps are taken to meet the needs of people whose needs are different from other people and to encourage different groups of people to participate in public life.
- 1.3 This assessment scopes the main issues that are faced by the various groups defined by the Equality Act in the borough of Castle Point. It then provides a methodology which can be used iteratively through the preparation of the Castle Point Plan to ensure that the plan and its contents fully considers its impacts to such groups and advances equality within the borough.

2. Legal Context

- 2.1 As a public sector organisation, the Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 and associated Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to ensure that the objectives and policies within the emerging draft Castle Point Plan provide the following:
 - Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited under the Act;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics 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.
- 2.2 As defined by the Equalities Act (2010) the following are considered protected characteristics:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation

- 2.3 Income and deprivation are not included as a protected characteristic within the Act, however, can cause inequalities within communities and therefore this has been included within this assessment.

3. Methodology

- 3.1 In preparing the scoping report the following process has been undertaken:

1. Establishing a baseline by defining equality issues for different groups in Castle Point. This draws in local evidence and provides a national context to the issues experienced by different groups.
2. Provide recommendations which can be used to assess future proposed policies or proposals.
3. Create a framework which can be used to analyse and assess the positive and negative equality impacts of policies and proposals and provide recommendations on how make positive equality implications.

4. Establishing a baseline assessment and providing recommendations

- 4.1 This section covers part 1 and 2 of the methodology.
- 4.2 An analysis for each characteristic has been carried out below. Each section provides the existing profile within the Castle Point borough, based on the latest datasets. It also draws out the key existing issues for each characteristic based on the best available information, this is drawn from national and local evidence, where possible.
- 4.3 Following the assessment of evidence, a set of recommendations have been included. These should be used in assessing future emerging plans and policies in the Castle Point Plan to see where potential inequalities can be identified and addressed in the area.
- 4.4 The characteristics have been grouped into the following categories to aid analysis:
- Age
 - Disability
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Gender
 - Sexual orientation and relationships
 - Income and deprivation

Protected characteristic	
Age	
Scope	
This refers to a person being a particular age or being within an age group. This includes all ages, including older people, children, and young people.	
Castle Point Borough baseline	
<p>The 2021 Census population figure for Castle Point borough is 89,587 persons in 37,389 households. The Census shows that 16.9% of people are aged 15 years or younger, 57.8% of people are aged 16 to 64 years and 25.4% of people are aged over 65.</p> <p>The median age of the borough's population is 46 years old.</p>	
Existing issues	
Research	Key findings
Cities Alive: Designing for Ageing Communities - ARUP	<p>This piece of evidence highlights four main needs that places should consider in regard to planning for older people, these are autonomy and independence, health and wellbeing, social connectedness and security and resilience.</p> <p>The report sets out strategies and actions that can be undertaken to achieve these needs, including frameworks to create more age friendly places. Planning is paramount to enabling these four needs to be achieved. This can be through multiple ways, such as providing suitable and adaptable homes for an ageing population in the right places to make services accessible, allowing for social integration.</p>
Cities Alive: Designing for Urban Childhoods - ARUP	<p>This work proposes a child friendly approach to planning. It outlines the benefits and challenges of doing so and key actions that can help achieve best planning to be inclusive of children.</p> <p>The five core challenges of urban childhood are defined as traffic and pollution; high-rise living and urban sprawl; crime, social fears, and risk aversion; isolation and intolerance; and inadequate and unequal access to the urban area.</p> <p>There are two key concepts for child-friendly urban areas. The first is everyday freedom, which gives children independent mobility. The second is children's infrastructure, which provides spaces, streets, nature, and interventions to suit children's needs. By incorporating that into placemaking, not only do children benefit but the positive impact can be seen among many other groups creating inclusive areas. Other benefits include health and wellbeing, local economy, safety, stronger communities, nature and sustainability, resilience and a catalyst for improving areas.</p> <p>The report provides several interventions that can help achieve inclusive areas for children, examples include traffic measures, play streets, community gardens and playful encounters (such as public art). It also suggests actions and opportunities for different stakeholders.</p>
Local Housing Needs	In regard to housing the Local Housing Needs Assessment 2023 found that between 2023 to 2043 the older population of Castle Point is projected to grow by 3,527 persons aged 75 years or more. As of 2023,

[Assessment 2023](#)

there were around 46 units of older person housing for every 1,000 older persons in Castle Point aged over 75 years, almost all being sheltered housing. The assessment found that this provision was lower than the national average and suggested that providing new sheltered housing at the national rate (120 homes per 1,000 additional population) would be a realistic target for meeting the needs of older people and creates 423 units of older persons accommodation.

The assessment also considered the needs of those who cannot afford to buy their own homes, in most cases these are first time buyers and usually therefore younger generations. It found that the need of households aspiring to home ownership was 1,579 households in Castle Point. The cause for being unable to afford home ownership is normally due to the cost of homes in the area and saving for a deposit. Affordable housing products such as shared ownership and First Homes can in some cases help to get households into home ownership.

Recommendations for the Castle Point Plan

- The Castle Point Plan should address the four main needs of older people identified in the Ageing Communities ARUP work (autonomy and independence, health and wellbeing, social connectedness, and security and resilience), ensuring that policies assess whether there are further opportunities to incorporate their needs to improve policies. This could include linking to the strategies and actions set out within this evidence.
- Policies should consider from the outset how they can accommodate and plan for children, by strategies set out in the ARUP work. This includes providing everyday freedom, such as child friendly activities/services within walking distances, along safe routes, this can be achieved by interventions such as suitable road crossings. Additionally, policies should seek to provide children’s infrastructure such as multi-functional, playable space outside the playground in the public realm and create multi-generational facilities that open later such as community facilities and allotments.
- Plan to meet the housing needs identified in Castle Point for older people.
- Plan to meet the affordable housing needs identified in Castle Point to allow younger generations to purchase their first home.

Protected characteristic	
Disability	
Scope	
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, e.g., physical, sensory, mental, or learning impairment.	
Castle Point Borough baseline	
<p>The 2021 Census identifies that 17.7% (15,884 people) of people in Castle Point identified as being disabled. This is broken down by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day-to-day activities limited a lot 7.5% (6,734) • Day-to-day activities limited a little 10.2% (9,150) <p>In terms of employment, the Census also shows that 3.3% (1,774 people) of the population in Castle Point are economically inactive due to being long term sick or disabled.</p>	
Existing issues	
Research	Key findings
Dementia and Town Planning - RTP1 2020	<p>This piece of work found that the built environment can have a substantial impact on those living with dementia. Well planned spaces can significantly improve quality of life for those living with dementia in interacting with their community and can lead to them living for longer.</p> <p>The number of people with dementia is growing in the UK and the number of people living within their own home or alone is increasing. Planning for dementia-friendly areas can help keep people in their homes for longer and enable them to live well and safely. Additionally, providing suitable housing in accessible locations can also help promote autonomy for those living with dementia.</p> <p>The built environment can positively affect social interaction. Those with dementia who stay active, physically, mentally and socially can help maintain confidence, ultimately helping to maintain health. The built environment can also provide access to local services, allowing those with dementia to live independently. Design of buildings can play a huge part in those living with dementia in helping with wayfinding and not getting lost, buildings should be clearly defined with clear lines of sight through developments. Additionally, the internal layouts of homes can positively impact dementia sufferers.</p> <p>For those living with dementia, green spaces are a valuable asset in providing spaces to allow for fitness and social interaction, positively impacting wellbeing.</p> <p>The report set out several ways that planning can help improve places for those living with dementia including dementia related design principles, integrated health guidance and appropriate local plan policies. It also sets out that planning for dementia friendly places can have benefits to the wider society, including other protected groups.</p>
The shops were only made for	This research explored the experience of those with Cerebral Palsy in their urban environments within England and impairments that they faced. It found that the experience of those with a disability was profoundly different

<p>people who could walk': impairment, barriers and autonomy in the mobility of adults with Cerebral Palsy in urban England – Bonehill, J, Benzon.N and Shaw.J 2020</p>	<p>to those without a disability in using services. Although mobility is possible, the difference to the non-disabled user can be uncomfortable and at times unsafe, which may lead to implications to a persons autonomy.</p> <p>In some cases, physical barriers to access included pavement blocking, including by cars parking inappropriately, street advertisement, street signs in narrow spaces, bus stops, uneven surfaces and a lack of dropped kerbs.</p> <p>The research found that barriers to accessible spaces to those with disabilities had negative impacts to their emotional wellbeing, independence and impacts to social interactions. It also created safety concerns. The shortcomings in this environment is a consequence of design failures, social stigmatisation and careless behaviour of others that caused barriers to normal use compared to those without disabilities.</p>
<p>Local Housing Needs Assessment 2023</p>	<p>This assessment found that in the plan period, 2023-2043, the need for adapted housing for those with disabilities is expected to be between 1,437-4,018 homes. The broad range is a consequence of uncertainty, this is based on how many will move to existing homes that have been adapted rather than new homes, there is also a cross over with the needs of older people who may seek housing specifically for older people's needs. However, the evidence indicates that planning for a minimum of 29% of housing to be M4(2) category (adaptable homes) or M4(3) category (wheelchair adapted homes) would be appropriate in Castle Point. That equates to 1,437 new homes over the plan period.</p>
<p>Recommendations for the Castle Point Plan</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider how plan-making and policies can impact those with dementia and how it can positively plan to integrate their needs into planning. • Dementia friendly spaces can be achieved through positively prepared design criteria and these should be included within the Plan. • Policies seeking to provide access to key services, provide appropriate housing and access to green spaces and social spaces can help maintain confidence with those with dementia and should be prioritised, this also has mutual benefits for needs of other groups. • Consider the needs of those with disabilities from the creation of policies and through urban design work. This could include gathering information on various needs of different disabilities e.g. physical and mental disabilities. That will enable urban design to take into account different disability needs at an early stage, overcoming potential conflicts. • Policies should seek to provide accessible travel routes to create autonomy for those with disabilities in all aspects of design to ensure inclusivity and reducing barriers. • Understand the disabilities that are affecting those from working within the borough and whether planning could help make employment opportunities more accessible. • Engage with the community to understand barriers that disabled people within the borough are currently facing and how planning can help overcome these issues. • Meet the identified needs of homes suitable for disabled people. With a minimum of 1,437 homes being provided as M4(2) category (adaptable homes) or M4(3) category (wheelchair adapted homes). 	

Protected characteristic	
Race	
Scope	
Race includes colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins. The fact that a racial group comprises two or more distinct racial groups does not prevent it from constituting a particular racial group.	
Castle Point Borough baseline	
<p>Castle Point has a low proportion of people from black and ethnic minority groups. The Census figures show that 3.5% of people in the borough are from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME), or Other ethnic group. Within the borough there is a small Gypsy/Traveller community.</p> <p>In terms of national identity the majority of the Castle Point population identify as one of the UK identities. 2% (1,796 people) do not identify as a UK identity and 0.6% (513 people) identify as a mix of UK and non-UK identity.</p> <p>In terms of household language 0.2% (83 households) have a child (aged 3-15) who speaks English as a main language, but no adults do. Additionally, 266 households (0.7%) have nobody that speaks English as a main language.</p>	
Existing issues	
Research	Key findings
Race Equality and Planning: A Changing Agenda – Thomas.H 2008	<p>This research sought to identify how planning should be contributing to racial equality. This work is superseded by the Equality Act 2010, which seeks to create equality for race which is considered a protected characteristic. However, there are some aspects of this work which appear to be relevant still in how planning can help create racial equality.</p> <p>For example, it highlights the historic discrimination against the needs of the Gypsy and Traveller ethnic groups, highlighting that the housing needs of Gypsies and Travellers haven't always been met.</p> <p>Another example of how places can help promote equality, is the inclusion of different cultures within urban spaces. This allows people to understand the potential cultural differences between races and differences through shared spaces. Allowing different cultures to work cohesively within the same area, such as through cultural events or the use or implementation of different religious buildings, promotes understanding.</p>
Recommendations for the Castle Point Plan	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of shared spaces to allow education of cultural differences to help create cohesive environments. • Ensure the housing needs of Gypsy and Travellers are met within the Castle Point Plan. • Monitor policies and proposals on race equality through the plan making process to improve equality. 	

Protected characteristic	
Religion or belief	
Scope	
Religion means any religion, this includes a lack of religion. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief, a belief also includes a reference to a lack of any specific belief structure.	
Castle Point Borough baseline	
The 2021 Census shows that 48.6% of the borough's population is Christian, 43.5% identified as having no religion. Small proportions of the remainder of the population are Muslim (0.8%), Jewish (0.7%), Hindu (0.5%), Buddhist (0.3%) and Sikh (0.1%). 5.1% of the population did not answer and 0.4% identified with other religions.	
Existing issues	
Research	Key findings
Local Housing Needs Assessment – ORS 2023	<p>Since 2016 Canvey Island has seen a growth of a community of Haredi Jews, who have moved out of London. This evidence document identified specific housing and infrastructure needs amongst the Canvey Island Haredi community to produce higher quality of life, and management of the development of the community. Traditionally Haredi Jews tend to live in close communities because of the need for infrastructure to enable an orthodox religious way of life. They usually have large families and therefore seek larger homes. Certain religious events also require certain design characteristic of homes, most notably additional plumbing for sinks to help with food preparation, in some instances this can include two kitchens. Traditionally and culturally, most Haredi women do not drive, and many men do not drive. Consequently, there is a lower level of car ownership and use in the Haredi community, and a lower need for car spaces.</p> <p>Based on a number of assumptions in the document, it is expected that during the plan period the number of families in the Haredi community could increase by between 250 - 325 families. Based on the 2021 Census data, there were approximately 110 Jewish families (around 600 people) in the borough. There is also potential for more inward migration from elsewhere to increase the Haredi population on Canvey Island.</p> <p>The growth in the Haredi community to 2043 means an increase requirement for larger size housing of all tenures as well as synagogues, schools and maternity services.</p>
Faith Groups and the Planning System – AHRC Faith and Place Network 2015	This document outlines a series of recommendations resulting from discussions with the Faith and Place Network (FPN). This report looked at ways to help different faith groups work together and work with the planning system. Relevant comments include the potential for shared faith spaces, and participation in the planning system from different groups, to understand community needs, and proactive engagement from the local authority can help involve more groups into plan making.
Recommendations for the Castle Point Plan	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek opportunities to provide a mix of housing types and community facilities to meet the needs of the Haredi community. This can include larger homes with internal variations to traditional housing, such as two kitchens. • Population levels of the Haredi community should be monitored through the plan period in 5 year periods, as current population projections are estimates. 	

- Assess the needs of the Haredi community throughout the formation and implementation of policies. Further engagement with the Haredi community should be sought to understand needs further.
- Engage with different religious groups to understand their needs in terms of spaces and how they can integrate further with the community, with opportunities to use shared spaces where possible.

Protected characteristics	
<p>Gender, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex • Gender reassignment • Pregnancy and maternity 	
Scope	
<p>Sex This is someone being either male or female.</p> <p>Gender reassignment A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex. A reference to a transsexual person is a reference to a person who has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.</p> <p>Pregnancy and maternity This includes those who are pregnant, breastfeeding or have recently given birth.</p>	
Castle Point Borough baseline	
<p>Sex The 2021 Census identifies that within the borough 51.6% of the population is female and 48.4% of the population is male.</p> <p>In 2022, it was found that the gross weekly pay of women working in Castle Point was £434.40 per week, compared to men which was £716.70 per week. This highlights a large difference between earnings between genders. Women's weekly pay in Castle Point was also lower than the regional average (£569.40 per week) and the national average (£587.70). (Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics (nomisweb.co.uk))</p> <p>Gender reassignment The 2021 Census asked specifically about gender identity. In response to this, 197 people (0.26% of residents) aged 16 and over selected their gender identity as one of the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender identity different from the sex registered at birth but no specific identity given • Trans woman • Trans man • Non-binary • All other gender identities <p>4.7% of people did not answer this question.</p> <p>Pregnancy and maternity In 2021 there were 9.6 births per 1,000 of the borough's population.</p>	
Existing issues	
Research	Key findings
Cities Alive: Designing Cities that work for Women – ARUP 2022	<p>This research found key four thematic areas that can be used to influence how urban areas can be planned and designed which would make them more inclusive of and welcoming for women. These include safety and security; justice and equity; health and wellbeing; and enrichment and fulfilment. The report provides a variety of strategies and actions that can be utilised to achieve more inclusive places for women, many of these have additional benefits to other groups.</p>

In terms of safety and security, unsafe streets or the perception of unsafe streets can reduce mobility of women, especially during certain times of the day and may cause them to use alternative routes or not travel at all, which can impact their economic and educational opportunities through lack of appropriate safe travel routes. Strategies to improve this through planning could include creating safe streets and public spaces through design, provide safer mobility experiences and increase awareness of violence, this could be through street art and events.

The built environment affects women's experiences of justice and equality in several ways, this report identified that limited gender equality in legislation and urban governance, limited voices in decision making and leadership, gender-blind data and urban planning and unequal access to land tenure all contributed to women's experiences. Strategies to improve the justice and equity of women in urban areas could include mainstreaming gender responsive planning in policies, supporting women participating in urban governance at all levels, support the collection of gender disaggregated data and protecting women's right to land and property.

In regard to health and wellbeing the impacts to women vary from place to place but research found the following main issues that impede women's health and wellbeing. These include inadequate public spaces, green areas, and active mobility; inadequate healthcare facilities and services; inadequate water, hygiene and sanitation facilities; and inadequate accommodation and care homes.

The research also found that green spaces often lack toilet and changing facilities. As well as a lack of privacy and stigma and cultural concerns around breast or chest-feeding can cause many women, non-binary people and transgender men to feel embarrassed when breast or chest-feeding in public, or even to be asked to stop or relocate. In the UK, more than one in three parents avoid breast or chest-feeding in public, and six out of ten attempt to hide the activity where they can. This can lead to isolation, feelings of shame, and a reduction in breast or chest-feeding rates amongst parents.

Strategies for improving health and wellbeing for women in urban areas could include creating inclusive, active and restorative public spaces, increase access to physical and mental healthcare, enhance access to hygiene and sanitation facilities and provide adequate accommodation and housing models.

Lastly, the built environment can hinder a women's enrichment and fulfilment in many ways, the key issues are prejudice and obstacles to education, employment and technology; lack of diverse and flexible uses of public space; inadequate leisure, social and cultural facilities; and poor sense of belonging, identity and freedom. Strategies to help overcome this are recommended as provide accessible and inclusive workplaces and schools, design for diverse and flexible use of public spaces, provide safe and inclusive leisure and cultural spaces and use the built environment to uplift women and recognise their history.

Local Housing Needs Assessment – ORS 2023	<p>In relation to the Haredi community on Canvey Island, engagement was undertaken with the community. This assessment found that due to the high number of births within the community and traditionally the mother staying with their newborn child for a week or two after the birth that improved maternity or a mother and baby unit within the area supporting this would be beneficial. Currently Southend Hospital is the closest maternity unit.</p>
<p>Recommendations for the Castle Point Plan</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to find the views of all genders within the preparation of the Plan to influence policies. • Policies should be prepared and adapted through the plan making process with the aim of delivering on the four thematic areas identified within the ARUP designing cities that work for women (safety and security; justice and equity; health and wellbeing; and enrichment and fulfilment) work by incorporating the strategies set out within the report where relevant. • Further evidence related to pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment should be included within further assessments, where they become available. • Opportunities should be sought to understand the variation in pay between genders within Castle Point and seek to equalise pay where possible, through improving employment opportunities for women. • Potential for improvements to maternity health in the area would be beneficial, particularly in relation to the Haredi community. • Further evidence should be explored for inequalities faced in the gender reassignment characteristic, this should be fed into the full equality impact assessment with recommendations on how to incorporate positive outcomes. 	

Protected characteristic	
Sexual orientation and relationships include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual orientation • Marriage and civil partnership 	
Scope	
<p><i>Sexual orientation</i> Sexual orientation means a person's sexual orientation towards a person of the same sex, persons of the opposite sex, or persons of either sex.</p> <p><i>Marriage and civil partnership</i> A person has the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership if the person is married or is a civil partner.</p>	
Castle Point Borough baseline	
<p><i>Sexual orientation</i> The majority of the population in Castle Point identify with being straight or heterosexual (92.3%). 0.8% (624 people) identify as being Gay or Lesbian, followed by Bisexual (0.6% - 448 people), 35 people identified as pansexual (0.0%), 17 people identified as asexual (0.0%), 2 people identified as queer (0.0%) and 50 people identified as 'other' sexual orientations (0.1%). (Census 2021)</p> <p><i>Marriage and civil partnership</i> In 2021, just under one in two people (49.2%) said they were married or in a registered civil partnership, compared with 53.2% in 2011. The percentage of adults in Castle Point that had divorced or dissolved a civil partnership increased from 8.7% to 9.1%.</p>	
Existing issues	
Research	Key findings
<p>Blog – All spaces should be queer spaces – Simon Shtebunaev 2023</p> <p>Scottish Planner - Safer Places – Kathie Pollard 2017</p>	<p>Simon Shtebunaev reviewed many issues faced by those in the LGBTQ+ community and reflected on how planning can help to create inclusive spaces. Planning for inclusive spaces, which seek to eliminate microaggressions faced by many in the LGBTQ+ community should be sought. This could include spaces which have a clear stance on inclusivity, allowing people to be themselves and providing multiple uses, allowing different groups to mix, without fear of judgement. This could include multi-use facilities such as cafes, bars, working spaces, galleries etc.</p> <p>There are also similarities between the inclusivity of spaces between gender and fears associated with public spaces and safety including sexual harassment and intimidation. Different sexual orientations can face different discriminations in such spaces and well planned, inclusive, safe, LGBTQ+ friendly spaces can help integration between different groups. Not only public spaces can help reduce inequalities but also providing inclusive communal spaces such as community centres and locker rooms.</p> <p>Engagement in planning with various groups in the LGBTQ+ community can help achieve the best possible outcomes for those within this group and achieve more inclusive spaces.</p>
Recommendations for the Castle Point Plan	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was limited information found on the equalities of marriage and civil partnership, further evidence should be explored for this characteristic and fed into the equality impact assessment. 	

- Seek to obtain responses from those in the LGBTQ community throughout the plan making process.
- Seek opportunities to enhance safety in public environments and communal spaces taking into account those with different sexual orientations.
- Provision of mixed use community spaces can help different groups integrate and reduce segregation.

Characteristic	
Income and deprivation	
Scope	
<p>Income and deprivation within areas are ranked by the index of multiple deprivation across areas. The areas within the UK are then ranked with those scoring highly having negative income and deprivation scores, based on multiple factors including income, employment, skills, health, crime and environment.</p>	
Castle Point Borough baseline	
<p>According to the index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2019), Castle Point is within the 50% of least deprived areas in England and ranks as 4th in the county for overall deprivation. Castle Point is one of the 3 areas in Essex which moved down in their rank of average since 2015.</p> <p>Castle Point borough as a whole is less deprived than the national average, however there are pockets of deprivation, notably parts of Canvey Island where child poverty is double the levels for England with 35.9% of children living in poverty. Of the 57 neighbourhoods in Castle Point 5 were among the 20% most income-deprived, these were all located on Canvey Island, most notably to the west of the Island, with more pockets to the south, along the seafront adjacent to Furtherwick Road. The borough also has 7 neighbourhoods that were in the 20% least income-deprived, these neighbourhoods were located around the Benfleet Road area and to the east of Benfleet Station. This data highlights the large disparity in terms of income-deprived areas within the borough.</p> <p>Of Castle Point residents aged 16 years and over, 54.0% said they were employed (excluding full-time students) in 2021, down from 55.4% in 2011.</p> <p>In 2021, just over 1 in 50 people (2.2%) said they were unemployed, compared with 3.1% in 2011. The percentage of retired Castle Point residents increased from 27.9% to 29.1%. In 2021 29.1% of the population were retired and 2.9% were students, the remaining economically inactive (10.3%) were due to long term illness or disability, looking after home, or family or other reasons.</p> <p>The largest employment for residents within Castle Point in 2021 were wholesale and retail (14.9%), construction (14.5%) and human health and social work activities (11.7%).</p> <p>In terms of education, 23.9% of residents aged 16 or over in 2021 had no qualifications, 13% had level 1 entry qualifications, 17% had level 2 qualifications, 6.8% had apprenticeship level, 17% had level 3 qualifications and 18.5% had level 4 qualifications or above. Comparably, Castle Point ranked lower than the national average for those with GCSE's in English and Maths at 72.9% compared to 75.2% nationally. Additionally, the national average for those with level 3 qualifications or above was at 60.4% nationally compared to 44.6% locally, this highlights a huge difference between the local education attainment level compared to the national average.</p>	
Existing issues	
Research	Key findings
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Essex County Council 2019	<p>Essex County Council completed an assessment of the needs within Castle Point on a range of issues which relate to income and deprivation in 2019. It found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2017/18 that 19.2% of pupils in Reception class in Castle Point were classed as overweight or obese. The sample of pupils in Year 6 showed that 33.6% of pupils in this year group were classed as overweight or obese.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of residents aged over 18 years, 65.11% were classified as overweight or obese in 2016/17. This is higher than the whole of Essex (63.56%) and England (61.29%) and was ranked as the 4th highest prevalence across the Essex Districts. • The percentage of current smokers aged over 18 years was 21.49%. This was highest prevalence compared to the other Districts in Essex, and significantly higher than Essex as a whole (13.84) and England (14.87). • Castle Point has the 4th highest estimated prevalence of any mental health disorder among children aged between 5 to 16 years across the Districts of Essex in 2015, with a prevalence of 8.89%. • The prevalence of depression and anxiety among persons aged over 18 years in NHS Castle Point and Rochford CCG in Essex was 12.47%. • In 2017/18 Castle Point had the 4th highest rate of emergency hospital admissions for intentional self-harm among persons of all ages, with a rate of 155.06.
<p>Local Housing Needs Assessment – ORS 2023</p>	<p>This assessment sought to establish the current need for affordable housing. Part of this includes those who cannot afford housing. This includes those who are currently housed in temporary accommodation, those that are homeless and people in a reasonable preference category on the housing register.</p> <p>Those that cannot afford current housing in 2023 is noted at 643 households, this is likely to rise to 1,133 households by 2043.</p>
<p>Recommendations for the Castle Point Plan</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to reduce health inequalities in the borough, in particular areas on Canvey Island where health inequalities are higher. This should include physical and mental health improvements. • Meet the affordable housing needs identified to provide suitable accommodation of those who cannot currently afford suitable housing. • Opportunities to provide more higher paid employment within the borough. • Opportunities to improve and provide access to a wide range of education and skills should be explored. • Opportunities to provide spaces for skills development and entrepreneurial spaces should be explored. • Improve access to healthy foods and enhance education on healthy food choices, especially for younger people. • Improve access and enhance open spaces and recreation opportunities. 	

5. Framework for assessing equality impacts

- 5.1 Section 4 outlines the baseline profile of Castle Point for the different characteristics and sets out recommendations on how the Castle Point Plan can help to reduce inequalities between the different groups. This section provides a framework to assess emerging plans, policies and proposals ensuring that the work set out above and recommendations given can be incorporated into the plan, providing positive outcomes.
- 5.2 This framework should be used iteratively through the plan making process to achieve the best outcomes.
- 5.3 As new evidence emerges the baseline assessment can be updated where relevant. Table 5.1 provides a framework for this allowing for new recommendations to be fed into the assessment. This should be updated at multiple stages in the plan making process.

Table 5.1: Assessment of new evidence

Characteristic	Updated baseline	
	New evidence since scoping report	Further recommendations
Age		
Disability		
Race		
Religion or belief		
Gender		
Sexual orientation and relationships		
Income and deprivation		

- 6.2 It may be unlikely that all the recommendations set out in this document can be incorporated into the plan, however it provides an opportunity for plans, proposals and policies to be amended where necessary to improve equality outcomes.
- 6.3 The framework below should be used to assess equality impacts providing a score. Table 5.2 provides the scoring and judgement which should be used within table 5.3.

Table 5.2: Scoring criteria

Possible impact	Basis for judgement
++	Strong prospect of there being significant positive impacts
+	Strong prospect of there being minor positive impacts
?	Possibility of either positive or negative impacts, or general uncertainty

0	No impact
N/A	Not applicable to the scope or context of the appraised content
-	Strong prospect of there being minor negative impacts and mitigation would be possible
- -	Strong prospect of there being significant negative impacts with mitigation unlikely to be possible (pending further investigation)

Table 5.3: Framework for assessing equality impacts

This table should use the scoring criteria above to assess a policy or proposal.

Key

A = Age

D = Disability

R = Race

R&B = Religion or belief

G = Gender

S = Sexual orientation and relationships

I = Income and deprivation

Policy / Proposal	Possible impact to characteristic							Commentary	Recommendation
	A	D	R	R&B	G	S	I		
<i>Example Affordable housing Policy</i>	++	?	?	?	?	?	++	<i>Policy seeks to meet identified affordable housing needs and has a positive impact to older people and those who have been unable to afford suitable housing.</i>	<i>Affordable housing should include at least 29% for adaptable homes to meet the needs of those with disabilities</i>

6. Next steps

6.1 The diagram below sets out the next stages of the EqlA and the Castle Point Plan process.

Castle Point Plan	Equality Impact Assessment
Evidence gathering and options development September 2023 - June 2024	Stage A: Create and consult on the scope of the equality impact assessment.
Issues and Options Consultation (Regulation 18) Summer 2024	
Developing the Plan June 2024 - December 2024	Stage B: Update and refine the scope or content of the equality impact assessment post consultation, where necessary. Reconsult consultation bodies following changes, if necessary.
	Stage C: Assess draft policies and proposals as they emerge through the plan preparation providing recommendations for equality improvements before finalisation of the draft plan.
Publication of the Plan (Regulation 19) January 2025 - March 2025	Stage D: Seek representations on the equality impact assessment through consultation.
Submission April 2025	Stage E: Submit equality impact assessment alongside the Castle Point Plan to be examined and where necessary update to reflect any proposed modifications
Examination June 2025 - December 2025	
Adoption March 2026	Stage F: Post adoption reporting and monitoring. Assess equality impacts post adoption.