

East Dunbartonshire Council

Equality Outcomes 2025-2029

FOREWORDS

Chief Executive – Ann Davie

East Dunbartonshire Council's Equality Outcomes for 2025-29 help us to meet our legal duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Fairer Scotland Duty, but promoting equality is about more than compliance.

Tackling discrimination, improving access to opportunities, and building strong relationships across our workforce and communities are central to how we work and deliver services.

These Equality Outcomes show how we continue to make equality and diversity part of everyday life within the Council. It also outlines the actions we plan to take to make our services fairer for everyone.

Our aim is to remove barriers, promote equal access, and support positive relationships in all areas of service delivery. This means putting equality, diversity, and human rights at the heart of everything we do. Mainstreaming equality means including these values in all parts of the Council's work and doing so in partnership with local communities and organisations.

I would like to thank everyone who helped shape this report. Your input is helping to ensure that East Dunbartonshire is a place where everyone feels valued and supported.

Leader of the Council – Gordan Low

I'm pleased to share East Dunbartonshire Council's Equality Outcomes for 2025-2029.

These Equality Outcomes explain how we will continue to embed equality, diversity, and inclusion within all our work as a service provider, an employer, and a partner.

As a service provider, our focus on equality, diversity, and inclusion helps us deliver high-quality services that meet the needs of all our residents. Our goal is to make East Dunbartonshire an area where everyone has the chance to succeed.

As an employer, we are committed to building a diverse and inclusive workforce. We aim to create a supportive and healthy workplace where every colleague feels valued, can be themselves, and is supported to do their best.

As a partner, we will continue to work closely with others, including Community Planning Partners, commissioned services, and suppliers, to make sure our shared values of fairness and inclusion are reflected in our joint working.

Systematically integrating equality considerations into our day-to-day functions and statutory duties ultimately supports the realisation of our overarching vision, which is to enhance the quality of life for all who live, work, visit, or conduct business within East Dunbartonshire.



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Legislation

The Equality Act 2010, and the Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010, which came into effect on 1 October 2010, consolidated and replaced over one hundred pieces of equality legislation into a single, comprehensive framework. A key feature of the Act was the introduction of a unified Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), replacing the previous separate duties relating to race, disability, and gender. Its overarching aim is to create a consistent legal approach to preventing discrimination and promoting equality across society.

The Act affirms that everyone is protected from unfair treatment, as each person possesses one or more of the nine protected characteristics defined in law. These characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

Section 149 of the Act, which came into force in 2011, and outlines the core responsibilities under the PSED. It requires public bodies to give due regard to the need to:

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

c) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

These duties support East Dunbartonshire Council in making informed, fair decisions, developing inclusive policies, and improving transparency and accountability in its functions. Ultimately, this helps improve outcomes for individuals and communities across East Dunbartonshire.

To support the implementation of the general duty, the Scottish Government introduced Specific Duties for listed public bodies. These duties, effective from 27 May 2012, include the requirement to:

- Publish equality outcomes and a mainstreaming report at intervals of no more than four years
- Report every two years on progress towards achieving those outcomes
- Assess and review policies and practices for their impact on equality
- Collect and use employee data
- Publish gender pay gap information
- Publish statements on equal pay
- Take equality considerations into account when awarding public contracts

Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015

Legislation introduced in 2015 provides a framework to enhance the role of communities in shaping the decisions that affect them and in taking forward opportunities to manage local assets. The aim is to support more inclusive and collaborative approaches to public service delivery and local development.

A key element of this legislation enables constituted community organisations to formally engage with public bodies to influence decisions or contribute to the improvement of local outcomes. This process, known as a Participation Request, offers a structured route for communities to request dialogue and potential involvement in designing or delivering services. These requests can lead to an Outcome Improvement Process, where both the public authority and the community group work together to address specific local issues.

Additionally, the Act makes provisions for communities to take ownership of public land or buildings, giving local people greater control over spaces and resources that matter to them through Community Asset Transfer. This forms part of a wider ambition to strengthen democratic participation, community-led regeneration, and equitable service delivery.

Human Rights Framework in the UK Context

The Human Rights Act 1998 provides individuals in the UK with a clear set of legal protections based on fundamental rights and freedoms. By embedding the principles of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into domestic law, it enables people to seek redress through UK courts when they believe their rights have been breached.

Since its implementation in October 2000, the Act has placed a legal obligation on public sector organisations, including local authorities and bodies performing public functions, to uphold and safeguard these rights in all aspects of policy development, service delivery, and decision-making. This ensures that respect for human dignity, fairness, and equality is embedded in the way public services operate on a daily basis.

Introduction

At East Dunbartonshire Council, we are committed to making sure everyone is treated fairly. We want to remove barriers, improve access to opportunities, and build strong relationships between people from all backgrounds, both within our workforce and across our communities.

We are working to make equality part of everything we do. This includes considering the needs of people who may face disadvantage because of who they are.

This report also considers our duty under the **Fairer Scotland Duty**, which focuses on reducing inequality caused by socio-economic disadvantage. This means thinking carefully about issues such as:

- Low income
- Lack of wealth or savings
- Poor access to basic goods and services
- Living in areas of disadvantage
- Background and life chances

The Equality Outcomes cover the period from 2025 to 2029, and meet our legal duty to publish our Equality Outcomes and how we are progressing in embedding equality into our work.

The report has been developed using feedback from staff, residents, community planning partners, community and third sector organisations. It reflects the equality work we've done so far and also responds to wider social, legal, and economic changes both locally and nationally.

It sets out how we are meeting our responsibilities under equality. This report shows our ongoing commitment to making equality, diversity, and inclusion a core part of how we work, make decisions, and serve the people of East Dunbartonshire.

Mainstreaming Equality in East Dunbartonshire - Integrating Equality into Everyday Work

Embedding equality into everyday operations involves ensuring that fairness, inclusion, and diversity are considered across all aspects of the organisation's activities. This applies to how we operate as an employer, how we deliver services to the public, and how we engage with communities and partners.

Taking equality seriously in our routine practices helps us to strengthen our organisation, both in how we support staff and in how we design and provide services. Everyone involved with the organisation has a role to play in promoting inclusive practices and encouraging mutual respect among different groups.

In our capacity as both an employer and a provider of public services, we are committed to:

- Challenging and addressing unfair treatment, harassment, or exclusion.
- Creating equal access to opportunities for individuals regardless of their background; and
- Supporting positive interaction and understanding between diverse communities.

As we set our new Equality Outcomes, we have considered how COVID-19 has changed lives in different ways. Some of these impacts are already clear, while others may only become visible over time. It's important that we keep learning, listening, and adapting our work to respond to these challenges fairly.

As we work to rebuild and recover from the impacts, there are more concerns and challenges facing many with the cost-of-living crisis which has pushed many people into lines of poverty and other inequalities to include social and health inequalities.

East Dunbartonshire has seen a change in its demographics because of our collective response to international events that has seen many people being displaced from their home countries into new countries and cultures. East Dunbartonshire has been welcoming and supporting refugees and displaced people.

As part of our ongoing commitment to inclusive communication and accessibility, East Dunbartonshire Council has developed and approved the following strategic plans during the reporting period:

British Sign Language (BSL) Plan 2024–2030

The Council approved the East Dunbartonshire BSL Plan 2024–30 following a robust programme of engagement and consultation.

The plan has been shaped by meaningful input from Deaf BSL users, carers, families, and those with lived experience, ensuring that their voices and priorities informed the development of our commitments.

Gaelic Language Plan 2024–2029

The East Dunbartonshire Gaelic Language Plan 2024–29 was similarly informed by extensive stakeholder engagement. The plan reflects a shared vision for the promotion and support of Gaelic language and culture across our services and communities, aligned with national policy expectations.

Both plans reinforce our commitment to fostering inclusive practices and removing barriers to communication and participation for all communities we serve.

East Dunbartonshire Council – Equality Commitment Statement

East Dunbartonshire Council remains firmly committed to the principles and legislative duties outlined in the Equality Act 2010. We actively work to uphold the core elements of the General Equality Duty by embedding equality, diversity, and inclusion across all aspects of our organisation.

Our commitment includes:

- Ensuring a safe, respectful, and inclusive workplace where all employees are protected from harassment, and victimisation
- Promoting a positive organisational culture where all staff recognise their individual and shared responsibilities to foster respect, dignity, and collaboration.
- Upholding the highest standards of conduct and taking effective action where any form of discrimination or unfair treatment that occurs.
- Conducting equality and socio-economic impact assessments to ensure fairness and accessibility in the delivery of services and decision-making processes.
- Implementing human resource policies and procedures that promote equality across recruitment, learning and development, career progression, and day-to-day operations.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not, through targeted actions and inclusive practices.
- Fostering good relations by actively promoting understanding, respect, and cohesion between different communities and groups.

This statement underpins our strategic and operational approach to embedding equality and reflects our ambition to be a fair and inclusive organisation for all.

Local Context

The data used in this document has been prepared from a variety of sources including input from experts by experience, the 2022 Census, (where available), NOMIS (official labour market statistics website) and *statistics.gov.scot* and has used the most up to date data available at the time of writing. For some topic areas, the 2022 Census is the only source of data and therefore remains the most up to date data available at this time. Due to rounding, numbers presented throughout this document may not add up precisely to the totals indicated and percentages may not reflect the absolute figures for the same reason.

East Dunbartonshire lies to the north of Glasgow and is bound by the Campsie Fells and the Kilpatrick Hills. It is a strategically significant location for economic, social and environmental development between the City of Glasgow and the Highlands through the West Highland Way and eastwards through the Kelvin Valley.

With a population of 109,230, East Dunbartonshire is in the mid-range of Scottish local authority populations and covers an area of 77 square miles. It comprises a mixture of urban and rural areas that include Bearsden, Milngavie, Bishopbriggs, Torrance, Milton of Campsie, Lennoxton, Kirkintilloch, Twechar and Lenzie.

East Dunbartonshire has been recognised as one of the best areas to live in Scotland based on people's health, life expectancy, employment and school performance. Economic activity and employment rates are high, and the level of crime is significantly below the Scottish average. Despite this, inequalities exist across the authority and there are pockets of deprivation where indicators of disadvantage correlate and the quality of life falls below the national average.

The analysis of local data has confirmed a continuing gap in equality between our most and least deprived communities. Over the coming years there needs to be a strong focus on reducing inequality and disadvantage across East Dunbartonshire.

Age

Based on the mid-2023 population estimates the percentage of children in East Dunbartonshire (0-15yrs) was 17.7%, working age adults (16-64yrs) made up 57.7% and those aged 65 and over made up 24.6% of the population. 12.1% of the population in East Dunbartonshire were over the age of 75.

Source: Mid-Year Population Estimates, Mid-2023

The most recent population projections from National Records of Scotland suggest that the population of East Dunbartonshire will increase by 3.3% from 110,794 in 2024 to 114,406 in 2034. By 2043, East Dunbartonshire's population is projected to be 116,536 (an increase of 7.6% since 2018). By 2034, the proportion of children (0-15 yrs) is projected to increase by 2.6%, the working age population is projected to decrease by -1.7%, whilst the pensionable age is expected to rise by 27.9%. The highest population increase is expected to be seen in those aged 75 and over with a predicted increase of 42.2%.

Source: National Records of Scotland, 2018 population Projections

Life expectancy in East Dunbartonshire has been increasing for both males and females over the last 10 years. According to National Records of Scotland, East Dunbartonshire has the second highest life expectancy for males and the second highest for females in mainland Scotland. Males in East Dunbartonshire can expect to live for 80.3 years, 3.5 years longer than the Scottish average. Females can expect to live for 83.9 years, nearly 3.1 years longer than Scotland as a whole.

Source: National Records of Scotland, Life Expectancy for Areas in Scotland 2021-2023

Disability

There is limited information on the number of people who have a disability in East Dunbartonshire. The main source of data for this characteristic is the 2022 Census which asked respondents to report any long-term health problem or disability which limited daily activities a lot, a little or not at all. The 2022 Census shows that 9.4% of people reported their daily activities were limited a lot and 12.1% of people's activities were limited a little.

There is clear geographical clustering for people reporting that their day-to-day activities were limited. The percentage of people 'limited a lot' is higher than the area average (9.4%) in Kirkintilloch East & North and Twechar (14.0%), Bishopbriggs South (10.1%) and Bishopbriggs North & Campsie (10.0%). People whose daily activities were limited a lot was lower than the East

Dunbartonshire average in Bearsden South (7.6%), Bearsden North (6.5%), Lenzie & Kirkintilloch South (7.9%) and Milngavie (9.0%).

Ethnicity (including Scottish Gypsies/Travellers)

The most recent data on ethnicity in East Dunbartonshire is that collected for Scotland's 2022 Census. As at date of collection, the ethnic composition of East Dunbartonshire was as follows:

Ethnicity	Number	% Of Population (at 2022)
White: Total	101,796	93.4%
White Scottish	90,868	83.4%
White Other British	7,453	6.8%
White Irish	1,402	1.2%
White Gypsy/Travelers	15	0.01%
White Polish	274	0.3%
White Other	1,784	1.64%
Multiple or Mixed ethnic group	1,193	1.1%
Pakistani/Pakistani Scottish/Pakistani British	1035	0.9%
Indian/Indian Scottish/Indian British	1,904	1.7%

Bangladeshi/Bangladeshi Scottish/Bangladeshi British	90	0.08%
Chinese/Chinese Scottish/Chinese British	1,240	1.14%
African	398	0.4%
Caribbean or Black	77	0.07%
Other Ethnic Group	758	0.7%

Approximately 83.4% of people in East Dunbartonshire are White Scottish and 6.8% are White Other British. Approximately 4.3% of people in East Dunbartonshire chose 'Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British' that best described their ethnic group or background.

The Asian population is the largest minority ethnic group in East Dunbartonshire. Within this, Indian is the largest individual category, accounting for 1.7% of today's population.

Gypsies and Travellers are protected by the Equality Act 2010 under the characteristic of Ethnicity or 'Race'. Data from Scotland's 2022 Census showed there were 15 Gypsies or Travellers recorded in East Dunbartonshire: 0.01% of the present population.

Transgender

Scotland's Census included a new question on trans status or history in 2022. The question was "Do you consider yourself to be trans, or have a trans history?" People were asked to tick "No" or "Yes". People who ticked "Yes" were asked to describe their trans status (for example, non-binary, trans man, trans woman). Transgender or trans is a term used to describe people whose gender is not the same as the sex they were assigned at birth.

This was a voluntary question for people aged 16 and over. The percentage of people who were trans or have a trans history is calculated using the overall population (aged 16 and over), not just those who answered the question. The majority of respondents in East Dunbartonshire and the Wards answered that they were not trans and did not have a trans history.

Trans Status or History – Census 2022								
All people aged 16 and over								
	East Dunbartonshire	Milngavie	Bearsden North	Bearsden South	Bishopbriggs North & Campsie	Bishopbriggs South	Lenzie & Kirkintilloch South	Kirkintilloch East & North & Twechar
No: Not trans and does not have a trans history	92.9%	92.2%	93.0%	91.8%	92.6%	93.7%	93.5%	93.4%
Yes: Trans or has a trans history	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%
Not answered	6.9%	7.6%	6.8%	8.0%	7.1%	6.1%	6.4%	6.4%

Marriage and Civil Partnership

According to data from National Records of Scotland, 321 marriages were registered in East Dunbartonshire in 2023. This is an 8% decrease from 352 in 2022. In comparison, the number of marriages registered in Scotland overall decreased by 11%.

Source: National Records of Scotland, marriages and civil partnerships 2023

On 16th December 2014 the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014 came into force which allowed same sex couples to be legally married. In 2023, 8 civil partnerships were registered in East Dunbartonshire, these were all mixed sex partnerships. In Scotland overall, there were 719 civil partnerships in 2023, which is an increase of 14.1% from 2022.

National Records of Scotland show that there were 826 births in East Dunbartonshire in 2023. This was a decrease of 2.7% from 849 births in 2022. Of these 826 births, 390 (47.2%) were female and 436 (52.8%) were male. In 2022, East Dunbartonshire was

the council area with the joint 3rd highest standardised birth rate (9.9 per 1,000 population, compared with 8.4 per 1,000 population in Scotland overall).

Source: *National Records of Scotland, Births 2023*

Religion and Beliefs

The most recent data on religion in East Dunbartonshire is that collected for Scotland's 2022 Census.

For the first time in Scotland's Census, the majority of people said they had no religion. In 2022, 51.1% of people in Scotland reported they had no religion. In East Dunbartonshire 43.3% of the population stated they had no religion, as show in the table below.

As at date of collection, the religious composition of East Dunbartonshire was:

Religion	Number	% of Population (at 2022)
Church of Scotland	25,467	23.4%
Roman Catholic	20,535	18.9%
Other Christian	4,767	4.4%
Buddhist	209	0.2%
Hindu	903	0.8%
Jewish	53	0.05%
Muslim	1,441	1.3%
Sikh	869	0.8%
Pagan	180	0.2%
Other Religion	204	0.2%
No Religion	47,128	43.3%
Not Stated	7,157	6.6%

Sex

Data from the National Records for Scotland shows that in 2023, there were more females (51.9%) than males (48.1%) living in East Dunbartonshire. These numbers are very similar to those for Scotland as a whole as there were also more females (51.4%) than males (48.6%).

Source: National Records of Scotland, 2023 Mid-year population estimates

Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation is an umbrella term covering sexual identity, attraction, and behaviour. The term sexual orientation may mean different things to different people. This was a voluntary question for people aged 16 and over. The percentages used are calculated using the overall population (aged 16 and over), not just those who answered the sexual orientation question. In the National Records of Scotland report, the term LGB+ people is used to refer to people who described their sexual orientation as “Gay or Lesbian”, “Bisexual” or “Other minor sexual orientation”.

1.1% of people aged 16 and over in East Dunbartonshire described their sexual orientation as gay or lesbian and 89.0% reported their sexual orientation as heterosexual/straight. Kirkintilloch East & North & Twechar had the highest percentage of people aged 16 and over who described their sexual orientation as gay or lesbian (1.4%).

Sexual Orientation – Census 2022								
All people aged 16 and over								
	East Dunbartonshire	Milngavie	Bearsden North	Bearsden South	Bishopbriggs North & Campsie	Bishopbriggs South	Lenzie & Kirkintilloch South	Kirkintilloch East & North & Twechar
Heterosexual / Straight	89.0%	87.9%	89.5%	87.8%	89.3%	89.7%	89.9%	88.5%
Gay or Lesbian	1.1%	0.9%	0.8%	1.1%	0.8%	1.2%	1.2%	1.4%
Bisexual	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%	0.8%	1.0%

Other sexual orientation	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%
Not answered	8.9%	10.1%	8.8%	10.1%	8.8%	8.1%	7.8%	8.7%

A question on sexual orientation was introduced to the Scottish Household Survey in 2011. However, there is limited data available on the sexual orientation of people living in East Dunbartonshire specifically. The most recent estimates from the UK-wide 2020 Annual Population Survey found that 3.1% of respondents self-identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual, an increase from 2.7% in the previous year (Annual Population Survey 2020).

In the same survey, 3.1% of Scottish participants identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual, which also increased from 2.7% compared to 2019. Similarly, Scottish Surveys Core Questions 2019 (SSCQ) found that 94.2% of the Scottish population identified as heterosexual and 2.9% as LGB or other.

Source: <https://www.scotpho.org.uk/population-groups/sexual-minorities/data/number-in-scotland/#:~:text=In%20the%20same%20survey%2C%203.1,2.9%25%20as%20LGB%20or%20other>

Local Information

Based on the most recent SIMD data, published in 2020, East Dunbartonshire remains relatively less deprived in contrast to other Scottish local authorities with the majority of East Dunbartonshire data zones falling into the least deprived areas of the SIMD. Although East Dunbartonshire, as a whole, is relatively less deprived than other local authorities in Scotland, there are specific areas within East Dunbartonshire that fall below the Scottish average.

Data zones are a commonly used geography across Scotland and are determined by population rather than size, therefore urban data zones have a smaller geographical area than rural data zones. The average data zone has a population of 760 people and there are currently 130 data zones within East Dunbartonshire. East Dunbartonshire has 8 data zones in the most deprived 25% in Scotland. These are located in Hillhead, Auchinairn, Lennoxton, Kirkintilloch West and Keystone and Dougalston in Milngavie. Hillhead remains the most deprived area in East Dunbartonshire according to SIMD. The data zone in Keystone and Dougalstone

in Milngavie has entered the top 25% most deprived. Of the individual domains East Dunbartonshire has the most deprived data zones in the access domain which would be expected given the rural nature of certain parts of the authority.

Further details can be found at [East Dunbartonshire Area Profile - East Dunbartonshire Council](#)

Licensing Board

Governance and Structure

The Licensing Board operates under statutory frameworks that regulates the licensing of alcohol and gambling. Comprised of elected members, the Board is supported by council staff and meets regularly to make decisions in line with legislative requirements. Meetings are held publicly online with decisions transparently reached. Members are appointed by the Council following local government elections, or where a vacancy occurs. Whilst the Licensing Board is appointed by the Council, it is a separate entity with its own legal standing.

Licensing Responsibilities

The Board manages a range of licensing duties in line with national legislation, including the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 (which regulates the sale of alcohol) and the Gambling Act 2005. Key licensing objectives include public safety, the prevention of crime and disorder, the protection of children and vulnerable groups, in relation to alcohol protecting and improving public health and in relation to gambling promoting fair and transparent practices in licensed activities.

Promoting Equality Through Licensing

The Licensing Board has committed to embedding equality throughout its operations and decision-making. The Board has prioritised inclusive practices and recognises its role in eliminating discrimination and promoting fairness.

The Board's mission reflects a commitment to striking a balance between business needs and community interests while ensuring equal access and non-discriminatory service. This includes:

- Proactive outreach to reflect diverse community perspectives in policy decisions.
- Fair and open decision-making grounded in published procedures and legislative criteria.
- Partnership working with other public bodies to ensure cohesive equality standards.

- Use of interpreters and provision of documents in alternative formats to support inclusion at hearings and in correspondence.

Training and Representation

All Licensing Board members and supporting officers receive regular equalities training.

Assessing Impact and Ensuring Equity

Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA's) are routinely conducted as part of policy development and review processes. In recent years, these assessments have been used as part of the process of adopting the Board's Statement of Licensing Policy under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 and its Statement of Principles under the Gambling Act 2005, as well as identifying areas of positive impact and ensuring mitigations where potential negative outcomes are found.

Accessible and Inclusive Licensing Services

Licensing services continue to develop accessible application processes and engagement practices. Applicants can request translation services, and support is available for those with additional communication needs. The Board works closely with Council services to align its practices with wider local authority commitments to equality and inclusion.

Please see attached link for all information on Licensing Board returns. [Licensing Board - East Dunbartonshire Council](#)

Procurement Service

East Dunbartonshire Council is committed to ensuring that its procurement practices reflect high standards of ethical, sustainable, and socially responsible conduct. In line with this, the Council actively seeks opportunities to engage supported businesses by exploring all relevant procurement routes and aligning suitable suppliers with available contract opportunities. Through the inclusion of community benefit requirements in contracts, the Council also encourages suppliers and contractors to consider supported businesses as part of their wider supply chains, supporting inclusive economic growth and contributing to local social value.

Organisational Structure

We continue to place equality and inclusion at the core of how our organisation operates, ensuring our vision, policies, and service delivery are shaped by inclusive principles. This commitment is demonstrated through a range of actions and practices outlined

throughout this report. Please follow link for structure overview: <https://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/about/our-council/about-the-council/chief-officers-and-services/>

Employee Information

Employee Monitoring

Although there has been improvement in employee monitoring within certain categories it is recognised that there is a further requirement to emphasise the importance of collating employee data and education around the purpose and use of the information to the employee base to reduce the 'no response provided';

In particular improved reporting would ensure stronger links between equality monitoring and EDC's Workforce Strategy to enable the Council to prepare for future workforce challenges and inform the development of policy.

Managers and employees who have access to employee self-service are promoted and encouraged to update their details online, and offline copies of the Equality Monitoring form are sent out with contracts.

The introduction of a new HR & Payroll system in 2025 will further roll out Employee Self Service with the hope of encouraging greater reporting.

Workforce Strategy

The Council's Workforce Strategy data is reviewed throughout the year and provides a data set on the structure of the Council and its workforce to ensure the Council can identify and respond to any current and future workforce challenges such as skill shortages considering the workforce demographics.

Integrated Management System & Digitalisation

The self-service aspect of the on-line Management System allows employees to provide and update their sensitive information and the introduction of a new HR & Payroll system in 2025 will allow for further roll out of employee self-service and all employees will be asked to check and update their information held on the system.

An electronic leavers questionnaire is in place which details reason/s for exiting the organisation and this will inform the Workforce Strategy.

Sensitive information is monitored at the point of recruitment and in the new system all new starts will be asked to update their sensitive information into the system, which will remove the requirement for paper-based forms and updating by people other than the employee themselves.

Gender Pay Gap

This has been published separately. Link to the finds is [Gender Pay Gap - East Dunbartonshire Council](#)

Family Friendly Policy

As a Family Friendly employer, the Council recognises the diverse workforce we employ and the different work life balance requirements of employees at different points in their lives. This policy promotes best practice in retaining and supporting employees when they have a lifestyle change

Parental Leave

The majority of parental leave requests continue to be made by females (80.00% in 2020/21, 91.67% in 2021/22, 84.78% in 2022/23, 92.59% in 2023/2024 and in 2024/25 88.88%); with applications from males varying over the year (20.00% in 2020/21, 8.33% in 2021/2022, 15.22% in 2022/2023, 7.41% in 2023/2024 and in 2024/25 11.12%).

Between 2020/21 and 2024/25 the majority of requests came from the 35 to 44 age brackets (40.00% in 2020/21, 54.17% in 2021/22, 43.48% in 2022/23, 51.85% in 2023/24 and 45.83% in 2024/25).

Maternity Leave

Year	Total
2021/22	78
2022/23	63
2023/24	106
2024/25	122

Adoption Leave

Year	Total
2021/22	1
2022/23	0
2023/24	3
2024/25	1

Paternity Leave

Year	Total
2021/22	19
2022/23	13
2023/24	22
2024/25	23

Shared Paternity Leave

Year	Female	Male	Total
2021/22	0	2	2
2022/23	2	0	2
2023/24	0	2	2
2024/25	3	0	3

Policy

Policy Development Framework

The Council assess the implications of proposed policies, strategies, and service changes through our Policy Development Framework, which includes Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA). This ensures that equality, human rights, socio-economic considerations (in line with the Fairer Scotland Duty), and children's rights are meaningfully evaluated and addressed.

Senior officers across the organisation are accountable for ensuring that EQIAs are completed and embedded in decision-making processes. To support this, training and guidance have been provided to relevant staff to strengthen understanding and application of the EQIA process.

All completed assessments are made publicly available, promoting transparency and demonstrating our commitment to inclusive and responsible policy development.

Accessible Information Policy

The policy provides details on the range of alternative methods the Council can provide for access to information or services. It outlines how council staff will go about providing these formats on behalf of members of the public, employees, Elected Members and partners. This includes accessing translations from our membership service Language Line, audio and braille versions, British Sign Language interpreters, hearing loop facilities and building access assistance.

Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Policy

The Council is firmly committed to advancing equality, promoting diversity, and upholding human rights across all areas of its work. This commitment applies to both our role as an employer and as a provider of public services. We aim to foster an inclusive and respectful working environment, free from discrimination, where the rights and dignity of individuals are recognised and protected. Our ambition is to ensure that our workforce and the services we deliver reflect the diverse communities we serve. Our approach to human rights is aligned with the principles and strategic outcomes outlined in Scotland's National Action Plan for Human Rights (SNAP).

Addressing Domestic Abuse

As a responsible employer, the Council recognises its duty of care in ensuring, as far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety, and wellbeing of all employees. We are committed to creating a supportive workplace environment where individuals feel safe to disclose experiences of domestic abuse and can access the necessary support.

In cases where allegations arise involving employees as perpetrators outside of the workplace, these will be managed in line with the Council's disciplinary procedures. Similarly, any instances of domestic abuse that occur within the workplace will be addressed

in accordance with the Council's harassment and bullying policies. This ensures a consistent, fair, and robust response to safeguarding employees and promoting a culture of zero tolerance toward abuse.

Governance

Local Outcome Improvement Plan and Leadership Commitment to Equality

East Dunbartonshire's strategic vision is *Working together to achieve the best with the people of East Dunbartonshire*, creating an inclusive and thriving community by 2027, one in which everyone can prosper, regardless of their personal circumstances or background. Central to this vision is the commitment to removing the barriers that hinder equal access to opportunity and well-being. The focus is on enabling individuals, families, businesses, and communities to thrive by ensuring that the benefits of living and working in East Dunbartonshire are shared equitably.

Embedding Equality in Decision-Making

Equality considerations are embedded into our governance through the mandatory inclusion of Equality Impact Assessments. This process ensures that any policy or strategic proposal presented for approval has been assessed for its potential impact on individuals and groups with protected characteristics. By doing so, officers demonstrate accountability, and Elected Members and senior officers are assured that equality implications are actively considered before decisions are made. This promotes a consistent and transparent approach to upholding equalities in our decision-making processes.

Leadership and Oversight

Strong leadership is essential to advancing equality and diversity. The Strategic Leadership Team holds overall responsibility for ensuring equality principles are reflected in the Council's strategic direction and day-to-day operations. Elected Members play a key role in championing equality, engaging with communities, and scrutinising reports to confirm that equality-related impacts have been properly identified and addressed. Their leadership supports a culture of inclusion and reinforces the Council's legal and moral obligations under equalities legislation.

Partnerships

East Dunbartonshire Violence Against Women and Girls (EDVAWG) Partnership aims to coordinate a multi-agency response to prevent and address gender-based violence, support survivors, and promote equality and safety for women and girls in the community.

EDVAWG brings together a wide range of knowledge and expertise from the following agencies:

- Adult Day Social Work
- Carers Link
- Ceartas Advocacy
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Council Adult Protection Services
- Council Child Protection Services
- Council Children's Services
- Council Community Protection Services
- Council Criminal Justice Social Work Services
- Council Housing Services
- Council Health & Safety
- Deafblind Scotland
- East Dunbartonshire Health & Social Care Partnership
- East Dunbartonshire Victim Support
- East Dunbartonshire Women's Aid
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- Police Scotland
- Rape Crisis Glasgow

In May 2024, EDVAWG held a development session to review its membership, update its terms of reference, and establish an action plan for 2024 onwards. The action plan aligns with the Scottish Government's *Equally Safe* strategy, focusing on the following priorities:

- Promoting a Scottish society that embraces equality, mutual respect, and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls.
- Ensuring women and girls thrive as equal citizens across social, cultural, economic, and political spheres.
- Implementing early and effective interventions to prevent violence and enhance the safety and wellbeing of women, children, and young people.
- Encouraging men to desist from all forms of violence against women and girls, and ensuring perpetrators receive a robust and effective response.

EDVAWG members were engaged in developing programme resources and providing concurrent support services for female partners or ex-partners of men attending the programme.

EDVAWG continues to raise awareness through initiatives including the '*16 Days of Action*' campaign. In 2024 a conference for practitioners and the public was hosted, supporting increased awareness and connectivity. These events saw strong attendance from residents, community representatives, third-sector organisations, and community planning partners.

EDVAWG partnerships are required to submit annual returns to demonstrate progress in preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls across Scotland. Feedback from the Improvement Service, which compiles these returns, indicated that East Dunbartonshire's results closely mirrored national averages, with the exception of the Multi-Agency Working category. This was the only area to show a significant change compared to the previous year, which can be attributed to capacity constraints within the Partnership. Efforts are underway to address this challenge in the coming year.

Community Planning Partnership

The Community Planning Partnership serves as a key platform for engagement and dialogue between public sector bodies and local communities across East Dunbartonshire. It facilitates meaningful two-way communication with a broad range of community

groups, ensuring that local voices help shape decision-making. East Dunbartonshire Council plays a central role in the East Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership, providing leadership on strategic priorities for the area. Through collaborative working, Community Planning aims to enhance the quality, coordination, and impact of public services across the area.

Voluntary Sector

East Dunbartonshire Council currently funds two organisations as Strategic Partnership Agreements, that play a key role in achieving Community Planning objectives. These organisations are:

- East Dunbartonshire Women’s Aid
- East Dunbartonshire Citizens Advice Bureau

Through our Strategic Partner Agreements, these organisations deliver various activities that support individuals with protected characteristics. For instance, East Dunbartonshire Women’s Aid offers a range of services for women, children, and young people affected by domestic abuse, including access to refuge and the implementation of local and national Violence Against Women strategies.

In line with our public sector responsibilities, we will ensure that future developments of these strategic partner agreements clearly outline conditions and guidance that further support the mainstreaming of the equality duty.

LGBT Youth Scotland

The Council continues to maintain a partnership with LGBT Youth Scotland to support both young people and educators across all secondary schools in East Dunbartonshire. Since 2021, every non-denominational secondary school and our all-through specialist school have achieved the LGBT Charter Award. An annual programme of support remains in place, offering training for teachers, awareness-raising activities, and tailored guidance for young people. In 2024/25, we are piloted the Charter Award in two primary schools, further expanding our inclusive practice.

In addition, a local authority-wide Charter Award process is underway, led by a central team. This initiative focuses on developing inclusive tools and processes that can be embedded across services and schools, aiming to enhance staff confidence in supporting diversity and promoting equality. LGBT Youth Scotland continues to deliver professional learning for teaching staff and supports the

creation and growth of Gender and Sexual Orientation Alliances (GSAs) in secondary schools. These youth-led groups empower students to shape inclusive environments, connect with community-based learning, and access support from local partners.

Mentors in Violence Prevention Programme

The Education Service remains committed to delivering the Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) programme across secondary schools. MVP is a bystander intervention initiative aimed at addressing issues such as intimate partner abuse, harassment, bullying, sexting, and coercive control. Initially targeted at senior phase pupils (S4–S6), these students receive training to deliver the programme to younger peers, promoting a peer-led model of prevention and awareness.

The programme equips young people with the skills and confidence to safely challenge and prevent gender-based violence within their peer groups. Delivered through a collaborative, multi-agency approach involving Education, Police Scotland, and East Dunbartonshire Women’s Aid, MVP supports the wider strategic goals around safeguarding and equality. Future developments include exploring opportunities to align participation in MVP with wider achievement awards and formal accreditation pathways.

Setting the Outcomes

An equality outcome is defined by the Equality and Human Rights Commission as a change that results for individuals or communities because of the action the organisation has taken. Actions describe the activity that an organisation produces or delivers and actions must be measurable in order to monitor performance. East Dunbartonshire has adopted a shared structure for its outcomes. Within the structure there are clearly identifiable actions that relate to how the Council, Education Service and Licensing Services will work towards achieving the outcomes

Consultation

The consultation for the draft Equality Outcomes event ran from 7th July 2025- 5th September 2025. In total there were 657 responses

Out of the 657 responses:

340 were from the online survey.

317 were from focus group participation.

Social media posts reached far and wide within our community.

Overall, there was strong engagement, with 340 online survey responses received. Views of the various social media posts topped 20,000 and the consultation was featured in the Glasgow Times, Kirkintilloch Herald and the Milngavie & Bearsden Herald.

In addition, 32 drop-in consultation sessions were held by the service in local venues and direct engagement took place with community organisations, businesses and Council staff where 317 participated.

Officers managed to engage with all of our protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

The consultation demonstrates strong engagement across East Dunbartonshire, with feedback reflecting diverse perspectives from residents, staff, community groups and businesses. Key themes highlight the importance of accessible information and services, safe and welcoming communities, support for New Scots, transparent decision making through EQIA's, workforce diversity and inclusive education and wellbeing services.

Cross-Council Equality Outcomes

The Council has developed new Equality Outcomes 2025-29. This sets out eleven Equality Outcomes covering corporate, education and licensing functions. These outcomes along with associated mainstreaming actions, have been informed by local evidence and community engagement. They focus on tackling the inequalities that matter most to our residents, workforce and businesses, where the greatest positive impact can be achieved. The outcomes are based on extensive engagement and consultation with various community groups, protected groups, businesses, other organisations and council staff

East Dunbartonshire Council will develop and agree a comprehensive Equality Action Plan 2025-29 incorporating clear milestones, responsibilities and timescales. This will support promotion and embedding equality into our service for the next four years from 2025-2029. The below set of equality outcomes reflects the council's commitment to creating a fairer, diverse and inclusive community in East Dunbartonshire. The outcomes will guide the Council's collective efforts to promote and support equality across its services and operations. The Council's commitment to equality is underpinned by the Equality Act 2010, which requires the council to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Outcome 1: All people can access information, services, and participate in decisions that affect them

Why this matters: Ensuring inclusive communication and meaningful participation helps eliminate barriers to services, particularly for disabled people, ethnic minorities, and older residents.

SMART Actions:

- From September 2025, people from equality-protected groups are supported to access employment opportunities.
- From December 2025, people from equality-protected groups can be provided with accessible information about the services provided by the Council including crisis support in the event of an emergency.
- From December 2025, people from equality-protected groups will be supported to digitally participate.
- By March 2026, review and update accessibility standards for all council communications and digital platforms.
- Annually from 2026, deliver inclusive engagement training for staff involved in consultations.
- From April 2027, embed easy-read, options in all public consultations and engagement exercises.

Outcome 2: Our communities are safe for, and welcoming to, people with protected characteristics.

Why this matters: Tackling prejudice and hate incidents is critical to promoting good relations and safety across East Dunbartonshire.

SMART Actions:

- Ongoing, through East Dunbartonshire Violence Against Women Partnership Programme (including 16 Days of Action), support is provided to those at risk of or who are survivors of gender-based violence.

- Ongoing, we will challenge and where necessary report any inappropriate posts in relation to equality and diversity on our social media channels.
- By October 2025, people from equality-protected groups have increased confidence to report hate crime and/or bullying incidents. We will participate yearly in the Hate Crime Awareness Week Campaign 12 – 19 October with community partners.
- Bi-annually, collect and publish anonymised hate incident data, alongside actions taken.
- By 2026, establish Locality Forums which will inform local safety priorities.

Outcome 3: East Dunbartonshire is a welcoming place for New Scots to come to and settle in

Why this matters: Advancing equality means addressing the barriers experienced by refugees and migrants, supporting their integration and access to services.

SMART Actions:

- From 2025, provide annual reporting on refugee resettlement support outcomes.
- By 2026, co-produce a Welcome Pack with New Scots including service and community group information.
- By 2026, deliver intercultural training to key front-line staff in housing, education, and social work.

Outcome 4: We will enhance leadership and decision-making by strengthening EQIA and making them publicly available

Why this matters: Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) are essential for making informed decisions that do not disadvantage protected groups.

SMART Actions:

- On-going, ensure all EQIAs are published online alongside key council reports.
- By 2026, publish a refreshed EQIA toolkit with training for service leads.
- Annual audits will review EQIA quality and feedback to departments.

As an Employer

Outcome 1: Staff are trained and supported to engage inclusively with protected groups

SMART Actions:

- Ongoing, all employees undertake Equality and diversity Moodle Training as part of induction to the council, and there after review regularly.
- Ongoing, all relevant staff participate in Equality Impact assessment Training.
- By 2026 develop and deliver biannual equalities workshops for staff, with evaluation after each session.

Outcome 2: Our workforce reflects the diversity of East Dunbartonshire, with focus on sex, disability, and race

SMART Actions:

- Ongoing annually, publish workforce diversity data and identify action to address under-representation.
- By April 2026, implement targeted recruitment initiatives for disabled and minority ethnic applicants.

Outcome 3: Staff with protected characteristics feel heard and involved in decisions affecting their work and wellbeing

SMART Actions:

- From 2026, run biennial staff equality and wellbeing surveys to inform workplace policies.

As Education Authority

Outcome 1: Pupils with disabilities are actively involved in shaping support services

SMART Actions:

- By 2026, review and co-design a pupil participation framework in all ASN schools to support co-design of services.
- By 2027, collect and act on feedback from disabled pupils in annual wellbeing survey.

Outcome 2: Young people and families can access the right support for mental wellbeing

SMART Actions:

- Ongoing, expand access to school-based counselling and wellbeing hubs in every secondary school.
- By 2026, produce a parent-friendly guide to mental health support services.

Outcome 3: Children and young people understand and promote equality through learning

SMART Actions:

- From 2025, ensure equality and inclusion are embedded in PSE and citizenship curriculums across all schools.
- By 2026, support every secondary school to operate a pupil-led equality or diversity group.

Licensing Board

Outcome 1: People in East Dunbartonshire can take part confidently in Licensing Board decisions

SMART Actions:

- By March 2026, develop plain language guides for the main Licensing Board procedures.
- Annually from 2027, host public awareness sessions to explain how to engage with the Board and submit representations.
- From 2025, ensure EQIAs are completed for all Licensing Board policies and published on the Council website

Contact Details

You can get more information from Community Planning & Partnerships Service

- calling **0300 123 4510**

emailing Communityplanning@eastdunbarton.gov.uk

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