Haringey Draft Library Strategy (2026-2030) Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

The Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) form is a template for analysing a policy or proposed decision for its potential effects on individuals with protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010.

The council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard, to the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people and
- Encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.

Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

Contents

Haringey Draft Library Strategy (2026-2030) Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) 1
1. Responsibility for the Equality Impact Assessment 3
2. Executive summary 3
3. Consultation and engagement 3
4. Data and Impact Analysis 4
4a. Age 4
4b. Disability 9
4c. Gender Reassignment 11
4d. Marriage and Civil Partnership 13
4e. Pregnancy and Maternity 13
4f. Race 15
4g. Religion or belief 19
4h. Sex 22
4i. Sexual Orientation 25
4j. Socioeconomic Status 27
5. Key Impacts Summary 31
5a. Outline the key findings of your data analysis. 31
5b. Intersectionality 31
5c. Data Gaps 31
6. Library Strategy 2026/27 Post-Consultation Equality Impact Assessment Update – November 2025 32
6a. Age 33
6b. Disability 33
6c. Gender Reassignment 33
6d. Marriage and Civil Partnership 33
6e. Pregnancy and Maternity 33
6f. Race 33
6g. Religion or Belief 33
6h. Sex 33
6i. Sexual Orientation 33
6j. Socio-Economic Status 33
7. Overall impact of the policy on the Public Sector Equality Duty 33
8. Amendments and mitigations 34
9. Ongoing monitoring 34
10. References 34

1. Responsibility for the Equality Impact Assessment

Name of proposal:	**Haringey Library Strategy**
Service Area:	**Library Service**
Officer Completing Assessment:	**Jessica Russell**
Equalities Advisor:	**Elliot Sinnhuber**
Cabinet meeting date (if applicable):	**20th January 2026**
Corporate Director/Director	**Jess Crowe/Kenneth Tharp**

2. Executive summary

- The decision in question will be to approve a draft library strategy for implementation.
- This EQIA has shown that all groups under the relevant protected characteristics, excluding that of Marriage and Civil Partnership, are likely to be positively impacted by the adoption and implementation of the proposed draft library strategy.
- The EQIA shows that those groups under the characteristic of Marriage and Civil Partnership will be neutrally impacted.
- The EQIA shows that no groups will be negatively impacted.
- The EQIA draws on data that suggests young people with a range of intersectional characteristics living in the centre and the east of the borough may be positively impacted.
- The EQIA draws on data that suggests that women, particularly those who are parents and carers may be positively impacted.
- The EQIA was updated in November 2025 to reflect the results of the public consultation (see p.33 onwards).

3. Consultation and engagement

3a. How will consultation and/or engagement inform your assessment of the impact of the proposal on protected groups of residents, service users and/or staff? Detail how your approach will facilitate the inclusion of protected groups likely to be impacted by the decision.

The draft library strategy development has been rooted in engagement and co-design with a range of stakeholders and residents. The programme of engagement ran between April and September 2025 and included targeted engagement in all libraries, excluding Muswell Hill which was closed for refurbishment, engagement in schools (both primary and secondary), surveys targeted at non-users of libraries, ongoing engagement with Friends of Reading and Education, and Friends of Libraries who were, along with other residents invited to from a co-design steering group with council officers and members. The co-design steering group met on 3 occasions to provide feedback and thoughts on the development of the strategy.

Residents were asked for their views to help shape the strategy via surveys on https://haringeylibraries.commonplace.is/ The wider public consultation will again invite views from residents on the draft strategy which has been informed by these previous engagements.

Ongoing engagement will continue to reach out to relevant stakeholder groups, including users and non-users of libraries, as well as Friends of Libraries groups, schools, and VCS organisations.

3b. Outline the key findings of your consultation/engagement activities once completed, particularly in terms of how this relates to groups that share the protected characteristics

Engagement to date has shown that libraries continue to be seen as a vital service for residents in a range of ways. Engagement emphasised the ways the service can particularly deliver for residents with a range of protected characteristics include:

- The importance of the service to all age groups from infants to older people, whether for education, access to digital services, social connection, or a free place to visit for leisure, learning or work.
- The offer of warm and cool spaces as needed throughout the year, particularly important for those more susceptible to the effects of extreme temperatures whether young, old or with heath conditions.
- Accessibility of buildings with clear signage, ramps, and accessible toilets.
- Spaces that reflect diverse communities, languages, and needs — including neurodivergent users, older adults, and non-digital users.

Further findings from consultation and engagement will be added to this EQIA after the public consultation closes.

4. Data and Impact Analysis

This section considers how the proposed strategy will affect people with protected characteristics.

4a. Age

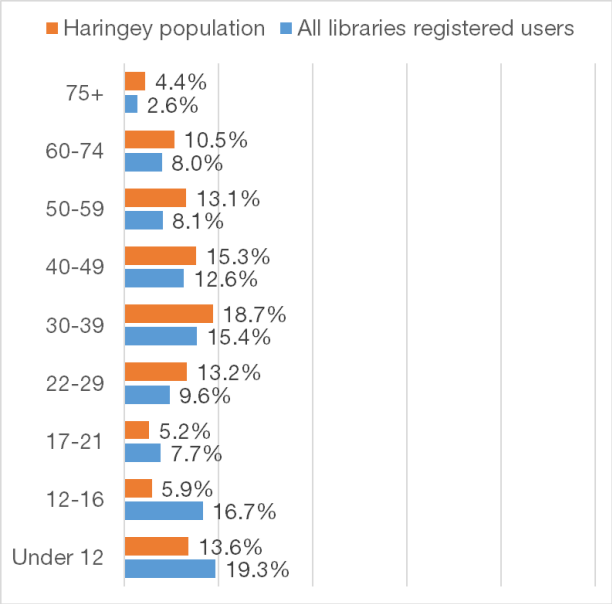
Data

Borough Profile[1]

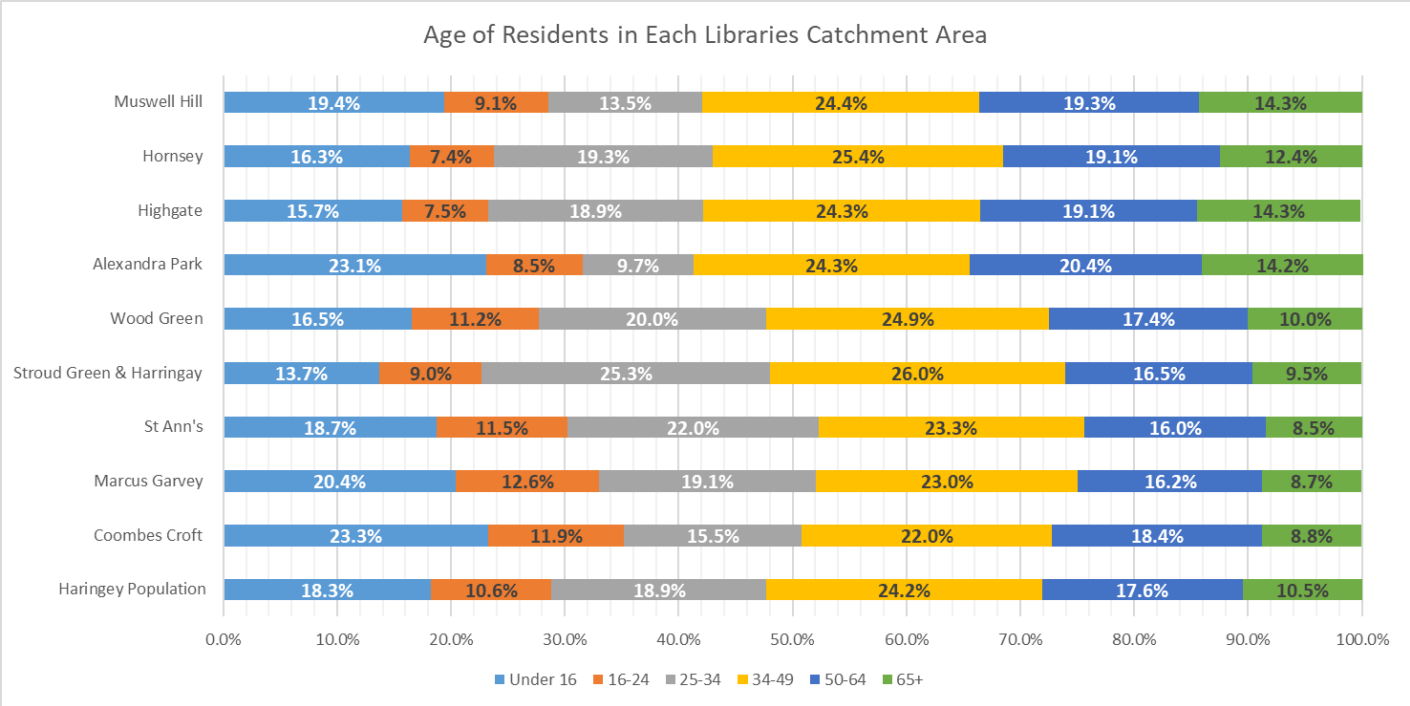
- 54,422: 0-17 (21%)
- 71,660: 18-34 (27%)
- 63,930: 35-49 (24%)
- 46,516: 50-64 (18%)
- 27,706: 65+ (10%)

[1] Census, 2021 – Population and household estimates, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

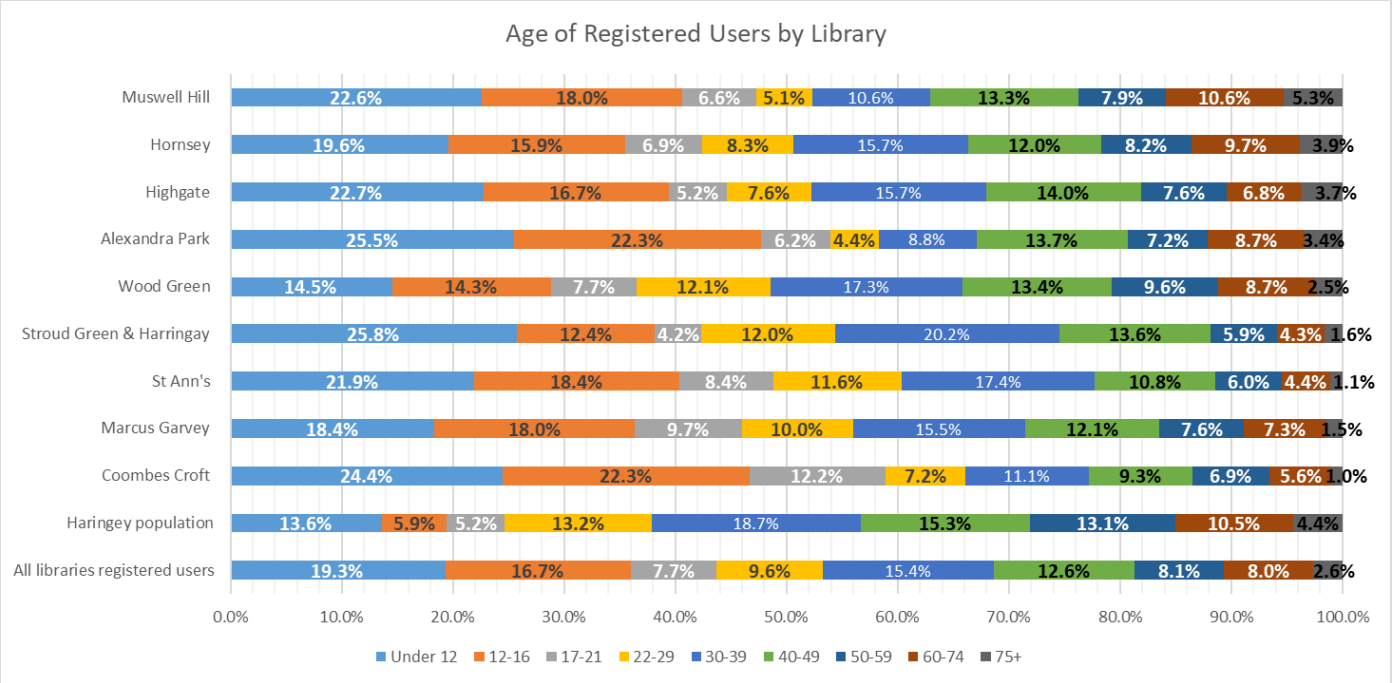
Age profile of all registered library users (members)



Catchment area Age profile by library



Current registered users (member) profile by library



What data sources will you use to inform your assessment of the impact of the proposal on people under this protected characteristic?

The data sources used to inform the assessment here include data from the ONS 2021 Census, as well as footfall, membership and service use data collected by the Haringey library service, which, if not presented in this EQIA, can be found in the accompanying needs assessment. This has been combined with studies produced by various external organisations on the use of libraries nationally and the impact of libraries on the target group (see Appendix 1).

This EQIA uses not just each library's registered user data but also data for their catchment area. There are several reasons for this:

1. Not everyone who uses library services registers at the library.
2. Membership is a much smaller cohort than the catchment area, and using only membership does not consider all residents who are eligible to become registered users and may do so in the future.
3. The library service only collects limited information about the sex, race, age and religion of their registered users. This therefore does not provide a full profile of protected characteristics that may be affected, particularly disability and socioeconomic status.

The catchment area has been calculated by:

1. Converting registered user home postcode data into lower super output areas (LSOA).There are 147 LSOAs in Haringey.

2. Then, for each LSOA, identifying which library has the highest number of users domiciled in that LSOA and allocating that LSOA to the relevant library's catchment area.

Detail the findings of the data.

a) Might members of this group be disproportionately affected by the proposal due to overrepresentation? How does this compare with the wider demographic profile of the Borough?

- For all registered library users, residents under the age of 21 are significantly overrepresented when compared to Haringey's population. Particularly those aged 12-16, which are three times more prevalent.
- At an individual library level, this overrepresentation of under 21 registered users is true for all libraries.
- When compared to Haringey's population, older people are not overrepresented as registered users at any library.
- When considering library catchment areas, those in the east of the borough have an overrepresentation of children and young people and older people are overrepresented in catchment areas for west borough libraries.

b) Might members of this group be disproportionately affected by this proposal because of a need related to their protected characteristic?

Children and Young People

Children and young people are a key audience and user group for Haringey's library services. Libraries provide a quiet space for young people to study, particularly where this is not accessible at home, as well as resources (books, internet, etc.) and homework support to supplement and develop their learning. This is particularly important for young people who may not have access to the internet/a computer at home. This extends to students who are home-schooled and, therefore, may use the library as a primary source of learning.

Libraries also run and host several sessions aimed at children and young people, including stay-and-play and craft sessions. These provide a way for parents/carers to develop their children's speech, language and communication skills, especially during school holidays.

Evidence also strongly advocates for the benefits of children reading for pleasure, including for mental health and literacy and communication skills. A reduction in library services has the potential to restrict access to books and other reading materials for children and young people, making these skills harder to develop. Children and young people, particularly those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, are likely to have their educational development impeded by reduced access to libraries. Libraries run

several programmes, including Biblio-Buzz, to support young people reading for pleasure.

Libraries also host a variety of other skills development sessions for children and young people, including coding, arts and crafts, music, language sessions and holiday camps.

Young Adults

Due to the current national economic environment, young adults are much more likely to live with their parents or in houses with multiple occupations[2]. They, therefore, may rely on libraries to provide a suitable environment and space to study for higher/further education or to work remotely.

Older People

For older people, libraries may act as a crucial source of social interaction for those more likely to experience social isolation, which is key for health and wellbeing. Some research has shown that access to libraries enables older people to remain independent and in their own homes for longer and can support those with age-related conditions, e.g. dementia. The libraries host sessions which are free to attend and give older people the opportunity to socialise in a safe and warm space. Interactions with staff in libraries also represent a significant safeguarding opportunity for older people.

Libraries are a crucial enabler for those who might find themselves digitally excluded, providing access to the internet and digital services, as well as support to use them. This is a key means for older people accessing council and government services, e.g. benefits claims, voter registration, and accessing council services through face-to-face interaction.

A higher prevalence of physical disability and mental health challenges in this group means that many of the factors under the 'Disability' section will also be relevant.

Potential Impacts

This section will considers the potential impacts of implementing the proposed library strategy on this protected characteristic.

The draft strategy is expected to have a positive impact on residents of all ages. Libraries will continue to provide safe, welcoming spaces for children, young people, adults, and older people. The strategy commits to enhancing Early Years provision, supporting school partnerships, and providing study spaces for young people, as well as maintaining accessible environments and activities for older adults. Since young people are over-represented among registered library users and the strategy prioritises services and spaces for them, including an expanded Early Years offer, we anticipate a positive impact on this group.

[2] ONS, More adults living with their parents - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

4b. Disability

Data

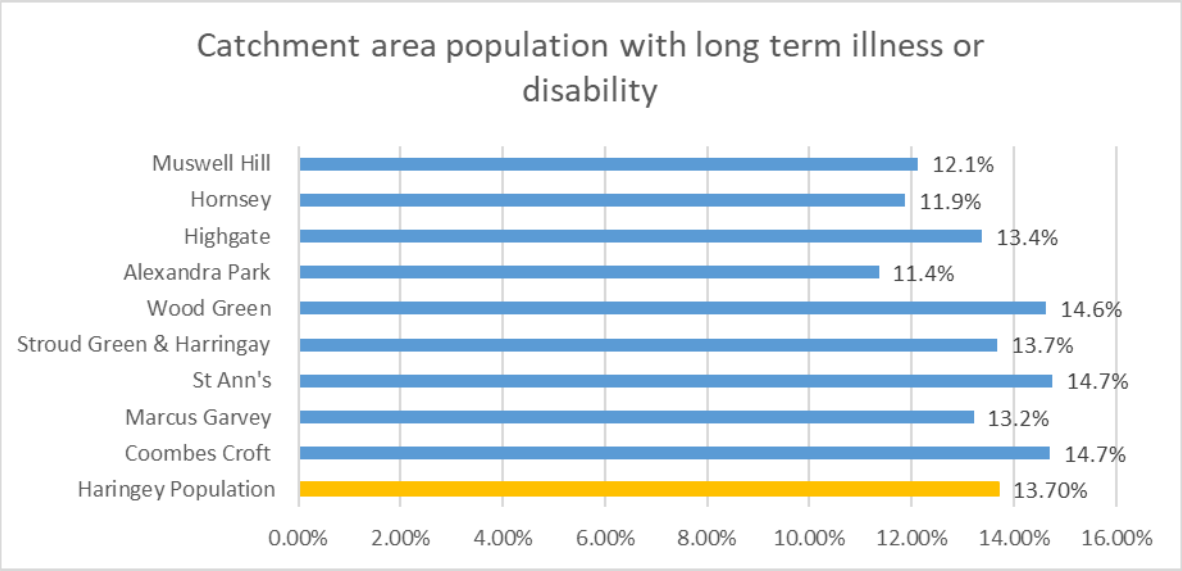
Borough Profile

- Disabled under the Equality Act – 13.7%[3]
    - Day-to-day activities are limited a lot – 6.1%
    - Day-to-day activities are limited a little – 7.5%
- 7.5% of residents were diagnosed with depression[4]
- 1.7% of residents diagnosed with a severe mental illness[5]
- 0.4% of people in Haringey have a learning disability[6]

All registered library users (member) disability profile

The Haringey Library service does not collect data on registered user disability.

Catchment area disability profile by library



Current registered users (member) disability profile by library

The Haringey Library service does not collect data on registered user disability.

What data sources will you use to inform your assessment of the impact of the proposal on people under this protected characteristic?

The data sources used to inform the assessment here include data from the ONS 2021 Census, as well as footfall, membership and service use data collected by the Haringey library service, which, if not presented in this EQIA, can be found in the

[3] Census, 2021 – Disability, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)
[4] NHS Quality Outcomes Framework – Prevalence of diagnosed depression among GP registered population age 18+
[5] NHS Quality Outcomes Framework – Prevalence of diagnosed mental health diagnosis among GP registered population age 18+
[6] PHE Learning disability profiles – https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/learning-disabilities#page/0/gid/1938132702/pat/6/par/E12000007/ati/102/are/E09000014

accompanying needs assessment. This has been combined with studies produced by various external organisations on the use of libraries nationally and the impact of libraries in the target group (see Appendix 1).

This EQIA uses not just each library's registered user data but also data for each library's catchment area. There are several reasons for this:

1. Not everyone who uses library services registers at the library.
2. Membership is a much smaller cohort than the catchment area, and using only membership does not consider all residents who are eligible to become registered users and may do so in the future.
3. The library service only collects limited information about the sex, race, age and religion of their registered users. This therefore does not provide a full profile of protected characteristics that may be affected, particularly disability and socioeconomic status.

Detail the findings of the data.

a) Might members of this group be disproportionately affected by the proposal due to overrepresentation? How does this compare with the wider demographic profile of the Borough?

- Disabled people are overrepresented in the catchment areas of Wood Green, Coombes Croft and St Ann's Libraries.
- We will consider any potential overrepresentation of disabled individuals among library users once we have obtained more data following further engagement and consultation.

b) Might members of this group be disproportionately affected by this proposal due to a need related to their protected characteristic?

Libraries are an important centre for access for disabled people. Disabled people may use the libraries for assistance to access services where there might otherwise be a barrier to accessing. This may also be important in terms of disabled people accessing impartial information and representative forms of media. Libraries also run sessions which contribute to mental health and wellbeing, including arts and crafts, mindfulness and music, as well as support with health and wellbeing more generally, with healthy living drop-ins.

Disabled people can feel assured that the libraries represent an accessible space in central locations which they will be able to use, with staff who have received accessibility training. Many access requirements that disabled residents might need can be catered for in libraries; this includes physical access for those with limited mobility but also quiet spaces for those with sensory processing challenges and aids for those with visual impairments. Libraries are also important spaces for social and participatory opportunities, with many community groups and council services using libraries to reach disabled residents.

Potential Impacts

Overall a positive impact is anticipated for disabled residents. The strategy prioritises accessibility, with commitments to regular accessibility audits, staff training on inclusive service, and the provision of adaptive technology and accessible facilities.

4c. Gender Reassignment

Data

Borough Profile[7]

- 1.2% of Haringey's population report having a gender different to that which was assigned to them at birth.

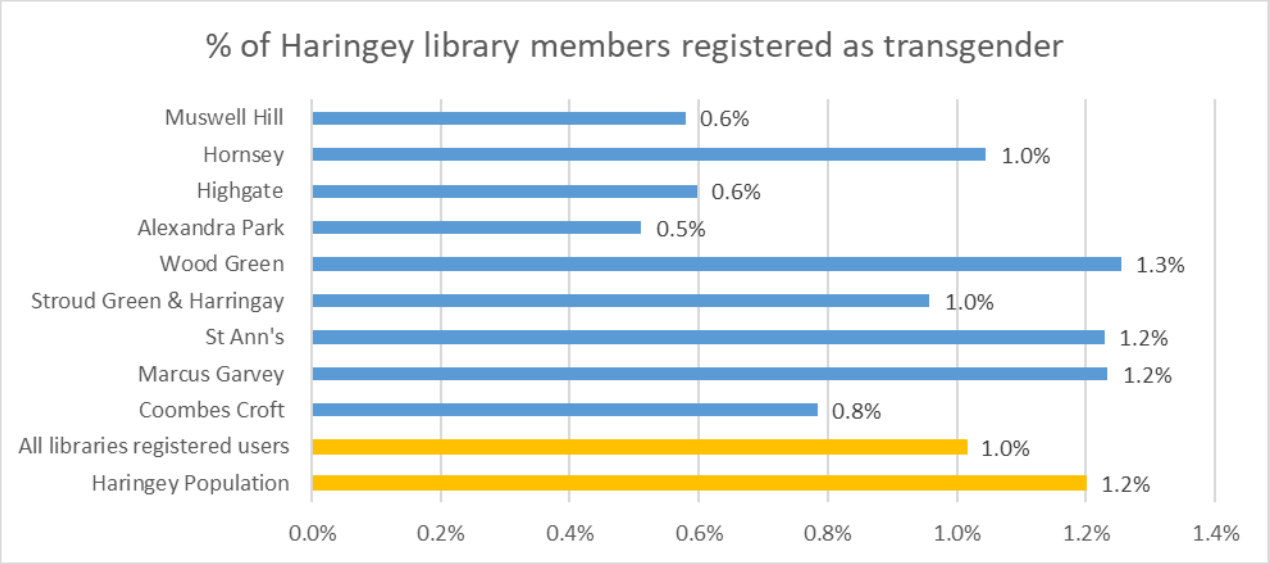
All library registered users (member) gender profile

- 1% of library users have registered as transgender.

Catchment area gender profile by library

The ONS census 2021 does not provide this data to a level of detail that allows us to consider the catchment area profile.

Current registered users (member) profile by library



What data sources will you use to inform your assessment of the impact of the proposal on people under this protected characteristic?

The data sources used to inform the assessment here include data from the ONS 2021 Census, as well as footfall, membership and service use data collected by the Haringey library service, which, if not presented in this EQIA, can be found in the companion needs assessment. This has been combined with studies produced by

[7] Census, 2021 – Gender identity, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

various external organisations on the use of libraries nationally and the impact of libraries in the target group (see Appendix 1).

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3. The library service only collects limited information about the sex, race, age and religion of their registered users. This therefore does not provide a full profile of protected characteristics that may be affected, particularly disability and socioeconomic status.

Detail the findings of the data.

a) Might members of this group be disproportionately affected by the proposal due to overrepresentation? How does this compare with the wider demographic profile of the Borough?

- On average, proportion of registered library users who identify as trans is slightly below the proportion of Haringey's general population.
- There is a slightly higher proportion of registered trans users at Wood Green Library than Haringey's general population. This could be because of specific services offered at this library, which are discussed below.

b) Might members of this group be disproportionately affected by this proposal due to a need related to their protected characteristic?

Libraries are centrally located spaces where residents can feel safe and non-judgemental. Libraries also represent an important community space during significant events, e.g. LGBTQ+ History Month.

Libraries act as an important social and community base, with LGBTQ+ groups such as Wise Thoughts running many of their sessions from Wood Green Library, including social groups and information sessions on sexual health.

Libraries also represent a space for people to access impartial and representative information and media anonymously, where there might not be a safe space to do so elsewhere in their personal lives.

Potential Impact

We expect the library strategy to have a largely neutral impact on this group, although its inclusion measures may yield positive outcomes in the future.

4d. Marriage and Civil Partnership

Note: Only the first part of the equality duty ("*Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act*") applies to this protected characteristic, and this only applies to discrimination in employment because you are married or in a civil partnership.

Data

Borough Profile [8]

- Divorced or formerly in a same-sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved: (9.9%)
- Married or registered civil partnership: (35.8%)
- Separated (but still legally married or still legally in a same-sex civil partnership): (2.9%%)
- Single (never married or never registered a same-sex civil partnership): (45.3%)
- Widowed or surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership: (6.1%)

What data sources will you use to inform your assessment of the impact of the proposal on people under this protected characteristic?

This protected characteristic does not apply to this decision.

Detail the findings of the data.

a) Might members of this group be disproportionately affected by the proposal due to overrepresentation? How does this compare with the wider demographic profile of the Borough?

N/A

b) Might members of this group be disproportionately affected by this proposal due to a need related to their protected characteristic?

N/A

Potential Impacts

The strategy does not propose changes that would affect people based on marriage or civil partnership status. Therefore, we have not identified any evidence to suggest that the strategy will have any specific impacts on individuals with the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership.

4e. Pregnancy and Maternity

Note[9]:

[8] Census, 2021 – Marriage and civil partnership status in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

[9] Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2022 – Pregnancy and maternity discrimination.

- Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby.
- Maternity refers to the period after birth and is linked to maternity leave in the context of employment. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

Data

Borough Profile [10]

Live Births in Haringey 2021: 3,376

All library registered users (member) profile

The Haringey library service does not collect data on registered user pregnancy and maternity.

Catchment area profile by library

As pregnancy and maternity are transient characteristics it is not possible to accurately collect this data. Any data we do have is not available at a detailed enough level to allow us to produce a catchment area profile.

Current registered users (member) profile by library

The Haringey library service does not collect data on registered user pregnancy and maternity.

What data sources will you use to inform your assessment of the impact of the proposal on people under this protected characteristic?

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3. The library service only collects limited information about the sex, race, age and religion of their registered users. This therefore does not provide a full profile of

[10] Births by Borough (ONS)

protected characteristics that may be affected, particularly disability and socioeconomic status.

Detail the findings of the data.

a) **Might members of this group be disproportionately affected by the proposal due to overrepresentation? How does this compare with the wider demographic profile of the Borough?**

- Given the transient nature of pregnancy and maternity, it is hard to come to definitive and long-term conclusions.
- Given the age distribution of library catchment areas presented in the age section of this EQIA, it is possible to assume that due to a higher proportion of residents at or around the average age of maternity, there could be more pregnant women or women with children up to 26 weeks after pregnancy in the east of the Borough.

b) **Might members of this group be disproportionately affected by this proposal due to a need related to their protected characteristic?**

Libraries are an important resource for expectant and new parents, both in terms of accessing information and in terms of encouraging the development of babies and young children. Libraries provide a number of services to this end, including the borrowing of books and other forms of media, space for play and social interaction, and sessions centred around childhood development, including story time and music sessions.

Libraries also provide safe space for parents to access information about pregnancy and parenting, whether digitally or in print. Libraries also provide a core offer for early years.

Potential Impacts

The strategy maintains and enhances the children's core offer, including activities during school hours and on weekends, and supports parents and carers through family-friendly programming and facilities. Therefore a positive impact is anticipated on this group overall.

4f. Race

In the Equality Act 2010, race can mean ethnic or national origins, which may or may not be the same as a person's current nationality.[11]

Data

Borough Profile [12]

[11] Race discrimination | Equality and Human Rights Commission (equalityhumanrights.com)

[12] Census 2021 - Ethnic group, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

Arab: **1.0%**

- Any other ethnic group: 8.7%

Asian: **8.7%**

- Bangladeshi: 1.8%
- Chinese: 1.5%
- Indian: 2.2%
- Pakistani: 0.8%
- Other Asian: 2.4%

Black: **17.6%**

- African: 9.4%
- Caribbean: 6.2%
- Other Black: 2.0%

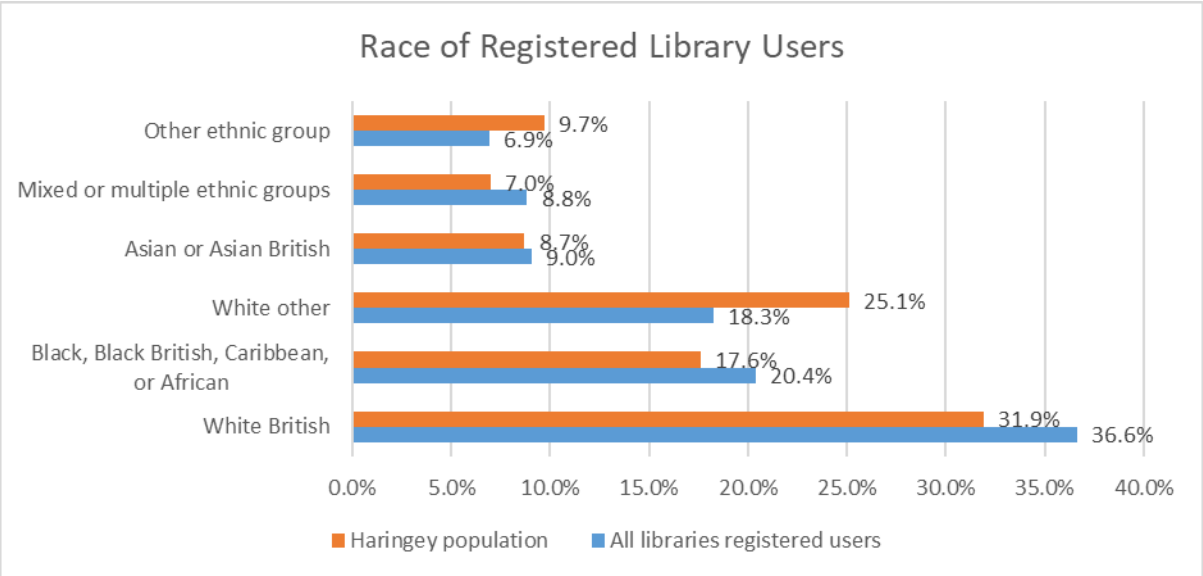
Mixed: **7.0%**

- White and Asian: 1.5%
- White and Black African:1.0%
- White and Black Caribbean: 2.0%
- Other Mixed: 2.5%

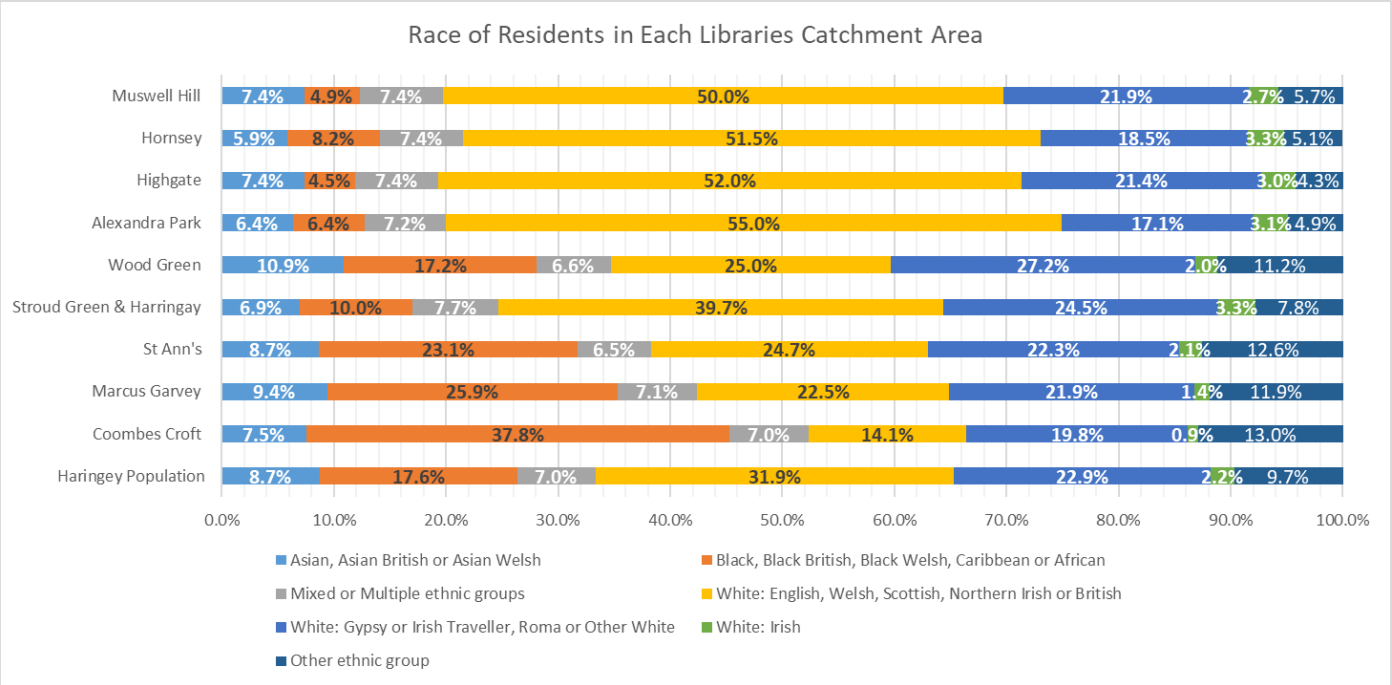
White: **57.0% in total**

- English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British: 31.9%
- Irish: 2.2%
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller: 0.1%
- Roma: 0.8%
- Other White: 22.1%

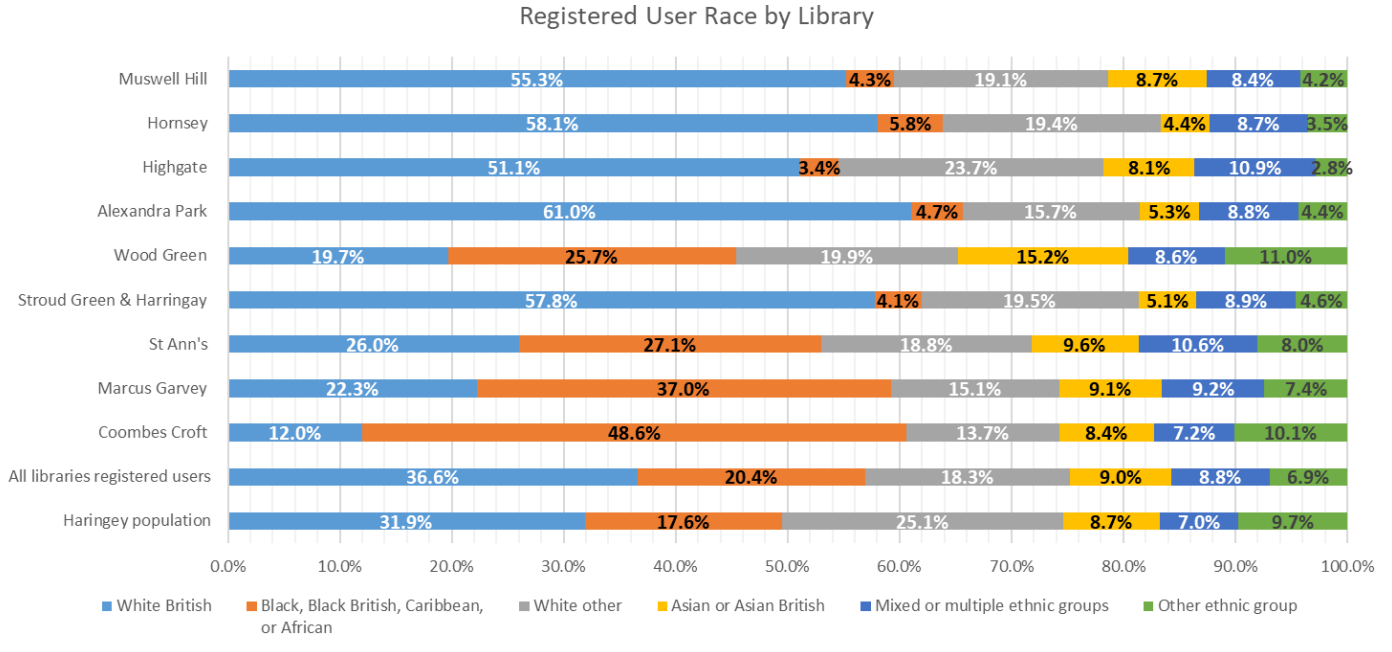
All library registered users (member) ethnicity profile



Catchment Area Profile by Library



Current registered users (member) ethnicity profile by library



What data sources will you use to inform your assessment of the impact of the proposal on people under this protected characteristic?

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3. The library service only collects limited information about the sex, race, age and religion of their registered users. This therefore does not provide a full profile of protected characteristics that may be affected, particularly disability and socioeconomic status.

Detail the findings of the data.

a) Might members of this group be disproportionately affected by the proposal due to overrepresentation? How does this compare with the wider demographic profile of the Borough?

- White British and Black residents are noticeably overrepresented among all registered library users when compared to Haringey's general population. White other is significantly underrepresented among all registered library users.
- Black registered users are significantly overrepresented in libraries in the east of the borough when compared to Haringey's general population. This is most notable for Coombes Croft, where nearly half of registered users are Black.
- White British registered users are significantly overrepresented in libraries in the west of the borough when compared to Haringey's general population. The most notable of which is Alexandra Park, where 61% of users are White British.
- These observations match very closely to the profiles of the catchment areas for each library.
- As with the borough as a whole, the White Other group is significantly underrepresented among registered users when compared to the catchment areas of all libraries.

b) Might members of this group be disproportionately affected by this proposal due to a need related to their protected characteristic?

Haringey has a significant attainment gap amongst children and young people (CYP) following racial lines, with lower attainment most significant among young black residents. Libraries provide an important space where CYP can supplement their study, e.g. through homework support.

For those whose English proficiency is limited, Haringey Learns provides ESOL classes. Libraries can provide support with accessing services, particularly where digital services are inaccessible to those with limited English proficiency. Community-specific groups such as HoPEC (House of Polish and European Community) offer support for immigration, benefits, and community integration through libraries.

Libraries are able to provide a diverse range of materials which are representative of the local community, including resources in community languages. Charities such as Embrace UK, who support refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, also run sexual health sessions out of libraries.

Libraries act as an important community space for events such as Black History Month, increasing representation of Haringey's diverse communities, and host sessions aimed at cultural education, including music and film from around the world.

Potential Impacts

The strategy commits to celebrating Haringey's diversity, maintaining diverse collections, and hosting events that reflect the borough's many communities.
This would be enhanced through targeted outreach and programming in areas with higher proportions of residents from ethnic minority backgrounds. It is therefore anticipated that this group would be positively impacted by the strategy's implementation, with monitoring of event participation and feedback to achieve the strategic priority of equitable access.

4g. Religion or belief

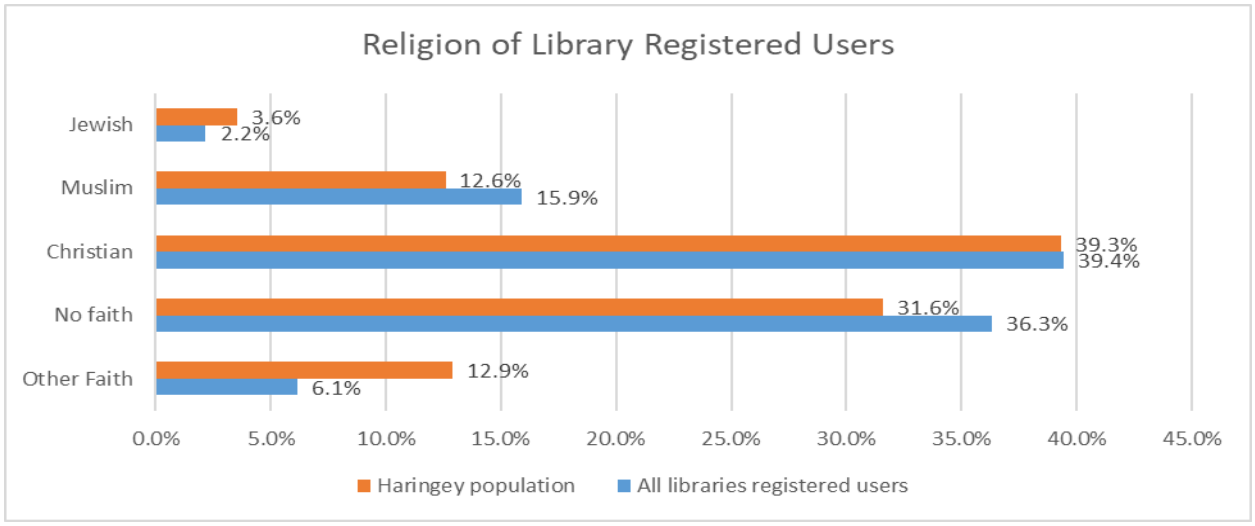
Data

Borough Profile [13]

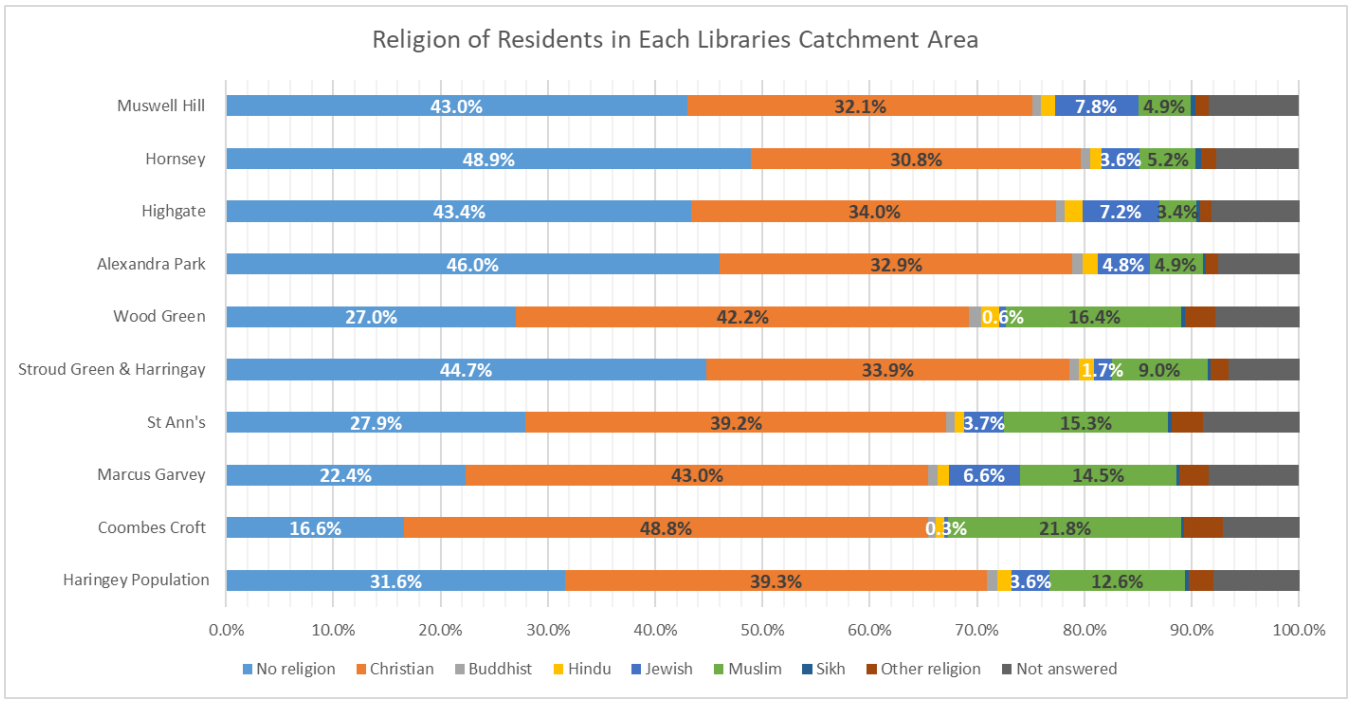
- Christian: 39%
- Buddhist: 0.9%
- Hindu:1.3%
- Jewish: 3.6%
- Muslim: 12.6%
- No religion: 31.6%
- Other religion: 2.3%
- Religion not stated: 8.0%
- Sikh: 0.3%

All library registered users (member) religion profile

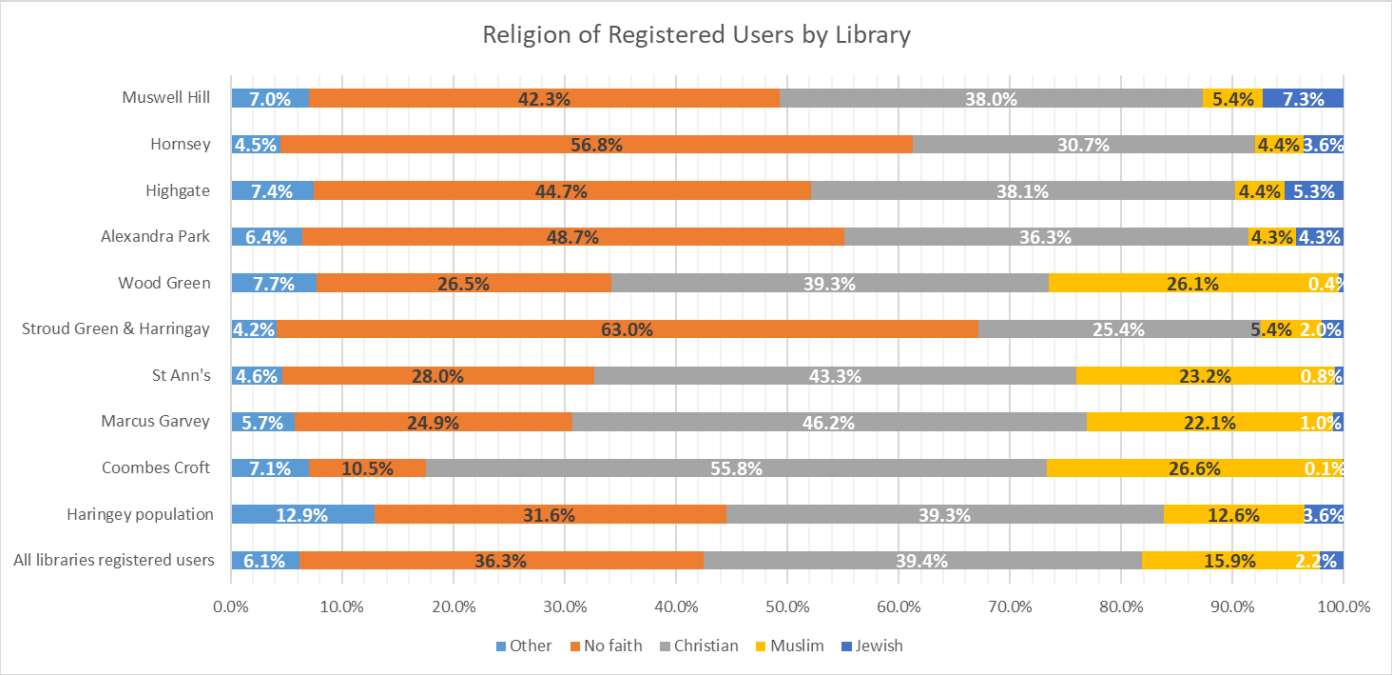
[13] Census, 2021 – Religion, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)



Catchment area religion profile by library



Current registered users (member) religion profile by library



What data sources will you use to inform your assessment of the impact of the proposal on people under this protected characteristic?

The data sources used to inform the assessment here include data from the ONS 2021 Census, as well as footfall, membership and service use data collected by the Haringey library service, which, if not presented in this EQIA, can be found in the companion needs assessment. This has been combined with studies produced by various external organisations on the use of libraries nationally and the impact of libraries in the target group (see Appendix 1).

This EQIA uses not just each library's registered user data but also data for each library's catchment area. There are several reasons for this:

1. Not everyone who uses library services registers at the library.
2. Membership is a much smaller cohort than the catchment area, and using only membership does not consider all residents who are eligible to become registered users and may do so in the future.
3. The library service only collects limited information about the sex, race, age and religion of their registered users. This therefore does not provide a full profile of protected characteristics that may be affected, particularly disability and socioeconomic status.

Detail the findings of the data.

a) Might members of this group be disproportionately affected by the proposal due to overrepresentation? How does this compare with the wider demographic profile of the Borough?

- Registered users who are Muslim or have No Faith are slightly overrepresented among registered library users when compared to Haringey's general population.
- The Other Faith category is significantly underrepresented among registered library users.
- South Tottenham, which is where there is a growing Charedi Orthodox Jewish community, has a noticeably lower number of Jewish registered library users when compared to other wards and the Haringey average, suggesting an underrepresentation of Orthodox Jewish residents amongst library users.
- For both registered users by library and catchment area, libraries in the east and centre of the borough are significantly more likely to have Christian residents than Haringey's general population.
- Library registered users and catchment areas for libraries in the west of the borough are significantly more likely to have residents who have no faith when compared to Haringey's general population.
- Followers of the Muslim faith are significantly more likely to be registered users in the catchment areas of libraries in the centre and east of the borough.

b) Might members of this group be disproportionately affected by this proposal due to a need related to their protected characteristic?

Libraries are able to provide a safe and accepting space, as well as a diverse range of materials which are representative of the local community, including with regards to religion, and may enable residents to access impartial information about religion and culture, as well as through educational events hosted by the libraries service.

Libraries function as private and discreet spaces for people to access information about religion or beliefs that may not be available or safe to access at home or in other settings (e.g. educational or religious spaces).

Potential Impacts

We expect the library strategy to have a broadly neutral impact on people of various faiths and beliefs, although its inclusive programming and collections may deliver positive outcomes. Ongoing engagement with faith groups will ensure specific needs are met and increase the likelihood of any positive outcomes being realised.

4h. Sex

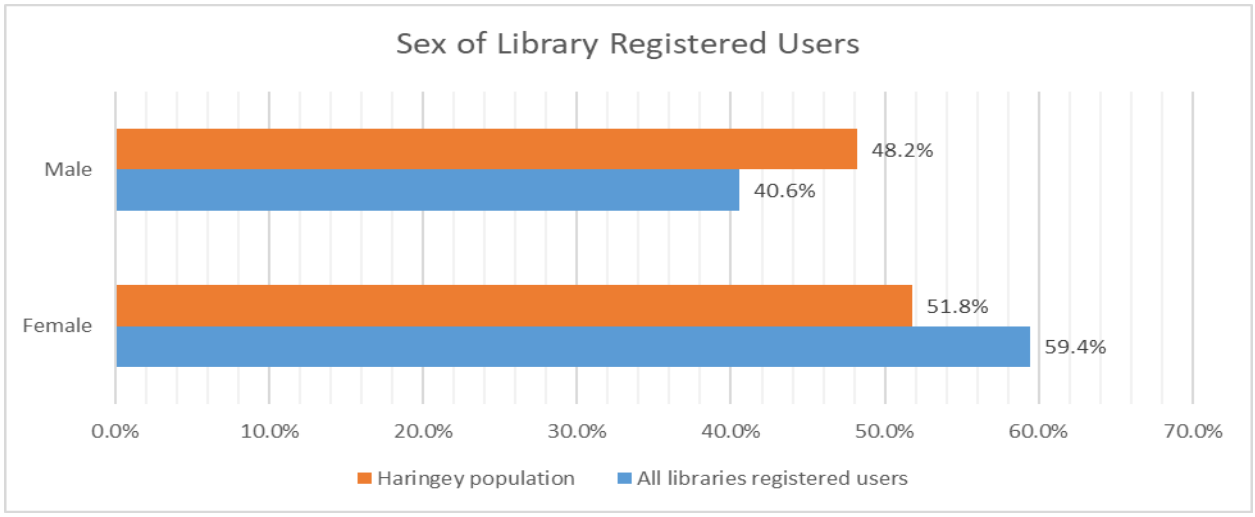
Data

Borough profile [14]

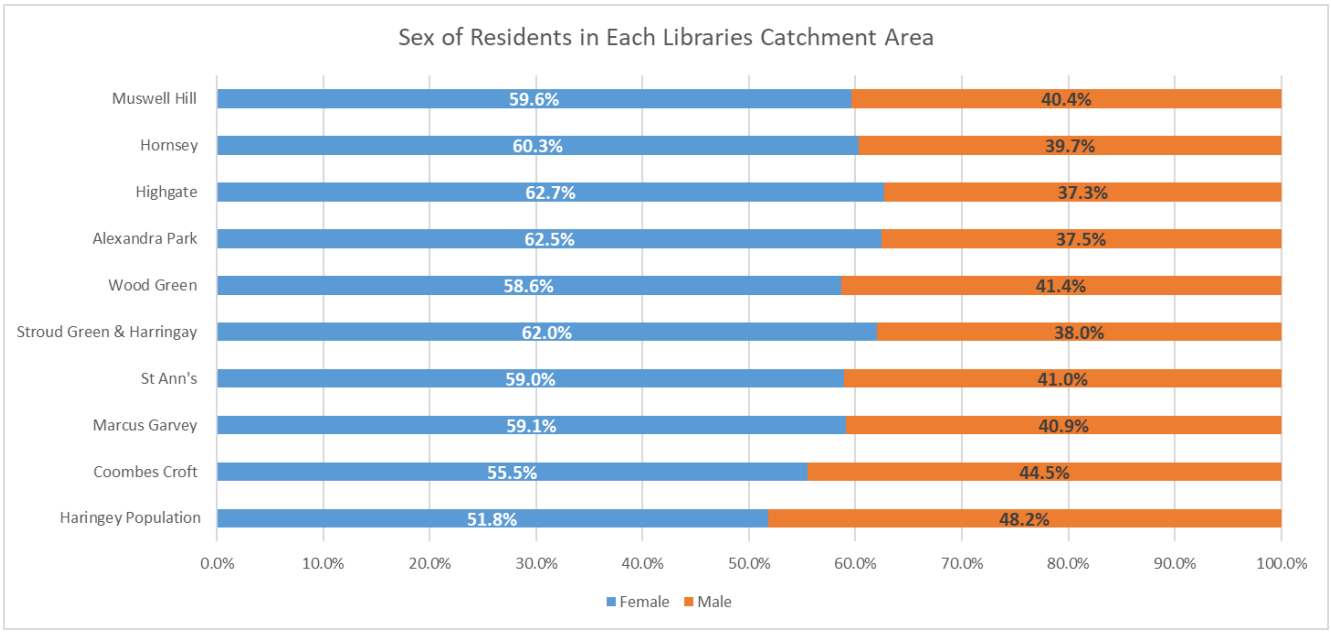
[14] Census 2021 – Gender identity: age and sex, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

- Female: 51.8%
- Male: 48.2%

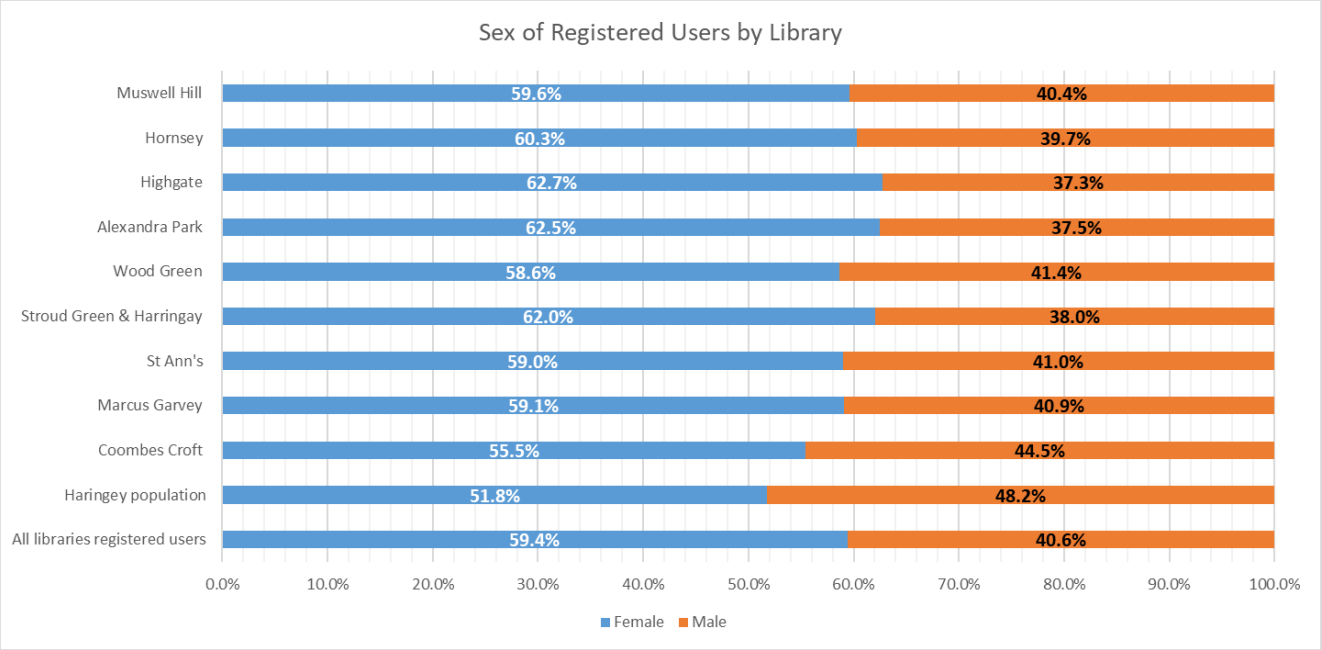
All library registered users (member) sex profile



Catchment area sex profile by library



Current registered users (member) sex profile by library



What data sources will you use to inform your assessment of the impact of the proposal on people under this protected characteristic?

The data sources used to inform the assessment here include data from the ONS 2021 Census, as well as footfall, membership and service use data collected by the Haringey library service, which, if not presented in this EQIA, can be found in the companion needs assessment. This has been combined with studies produced by various external organisations on the use of libraries nationally and the impact of libraries in the target group (see Appendix 1).

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1. Not everyone who uses library services registers at the library.
2. Membership is a much smaller cohort than the catchment area, and using only membership does not consider all residents who are eligible to become registered users and may do so in the future.
3. The library service only collects limited information about the sex, race, age and religion of their registered users. This therefore does not provide a full profile of protected characteristics that may be affected, particularly disability and socioeconomic status.

Detail the findings of the data.

a) Might members of this group be disproportionately affected by the proposal due to overrepresentation? How does this compare with the wider demographic profile of the Borough?

- Females are overrepresented among registered library users when compared to the general Haringey population.
- This overrepresentation is true for the registered users and catchment area of all of Haringey libraries; the overrepresentation is slightly more significant at libraries in the west of the borough.

b) Might members of this group be disproportionately affected by this proposal due to a need related to their protected characteristic?

Libraries are an important community space during significant events such as Women's History Month when events are continuously hosted which are educational and celebratory. Outside of this, libraries are also able to provide a safe space to access impartial information anonymously and offer a range of representative media.

Libraries represent a safe space in central locations for women who may be at risk of domestic abuse/violence or sexual harassment. They can also provide resources for women fleeing domestic abuse and violence, particularly when it comes to accessing support services and where the home is not a safe environment to access information.

There is also an educational attainment gap based on sex in Haringey, with girls performing better than boys overall at the Key Stage 4 level: 68.8% of girls achieved a standard pass compared to 63.2% of boys, and 49.5% of girls achieving a strong pass compared to 46.1% of boys. Libraries provide an important space in which children and young people can supplement their studies, e.g. homework support.

Potential Impacts
There is likely to be an overall positive impact on the groups under this characteristic, with women potentially additionally benefitting by being over-represented in the library registered users data and since they are often accompanying children as parents or carers to the service for events or activities.

4i. Sexual Orientation

Data
Borough profile [15]

- Straight or heterosexual: 83.4%
- Gay or Lesbian: 2.7%
- Bisexual: 2.1%
- All other sexual orientations: 0.8%
- Not answered: 11.0%

All library registered user (member) sexual orientation profile

[15] Census, 2021 – Sexual orientation, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

The Haringey Library Service does not collect data about the sexual orientation of registered users.

Catchment area profile by library
The data from the 2021 ONS census does not go down to the required detail to produce a catchment area profile for sexual orientation.

Current registered user (member) sexual orientation profile by library
The Haringey Library Service does not collect data about the sexual orientation of registered users.

What data sources will you use to inform your assessment of the impact of the proposal on people under this protected characteristic?

The data sources used to inform the assessment here include data from the ONS 2021 Census, as well as footfall, membership and service use data collected by the Haringey library service, which, if not presented in this EQIA, can be found in the companion needs assessment. This has been combined with studies produced by various external organisations on the use of libraries nationally and the impact of libraries in the target group (see Appendix 1).

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3. The library service only collects limited information about the sex, race, age and religion of their registered users. This therefore does not provide a full profile of protected characteristics that may be affected, particularly disability and socioeconomic status.

Detail the findings of the data.

a) Might members of this group be disproportionately affected by the proposal due to overrepresentation? How does this compare with the wider demographic profile of the Borough?

- We will consider any potential overrepresentation of LGBTQ+ individuals among library users once we have obtained more data following further engagement and consultation.

b) Might members of this group be disproportionately affected by this proposal due to a need related to their protected characteristic?

Libraries are centrally located spaces where residents can feel safe and non-judgemental. Libraries also represent an important community space during significant events, e.g. LGBTQ+ History Month.

Libraries act as an important social and community base, with LGBTQ+ groups such as Wise Thoughts running many of their sessions from Wood Green Library, including social groups and information sessions on sexual health.

Libraries also represent a space for people to access impartial and representative information and media anonymously, where there might not be a safe space to do so elsewhere in their personal lives.

Potential Impact

The strategy's commitment to an inclusive approach ensures that LGBTQ+ residents are welcomed and represented in collections and programming. This suggest the potential for an overall positive impact which could be enhanced via ongoing engagement with LGBTQ+ groups and monitoring of any targeted activities

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4j. Socioeconomic Status

Data

Borough profile

Income

- 6.9% of the population of Haringey were claiming unemployment benefits as of April 2023[16]
- 19.6% of residents were claiming Universal Credit as of March 2023[17]
- 29.3% of jobs in Haringey are paid below the London Living Wage[18]

Educational Attainment

- Haringey ranks 25th out of 32 in London for GCSE attainment (% of pupils achieving strong 9-5 pass in English and Maths)[19]
- 3.7% of Haringey's working-age population had no qualifications as of 2021[20]
- 5.0% were qualified to level one only[21]

Area Deprivation

Haringey is the 4th most deprived borough in London, as measured by the IMD score in 2019. The most deprived LSOAs (Lower Super Output Areas or small neighbourhood areas) are more heavily concentrated in the east of the borough, where more than half of the LSOAs fall into the 20% most deprived in the country.[22]

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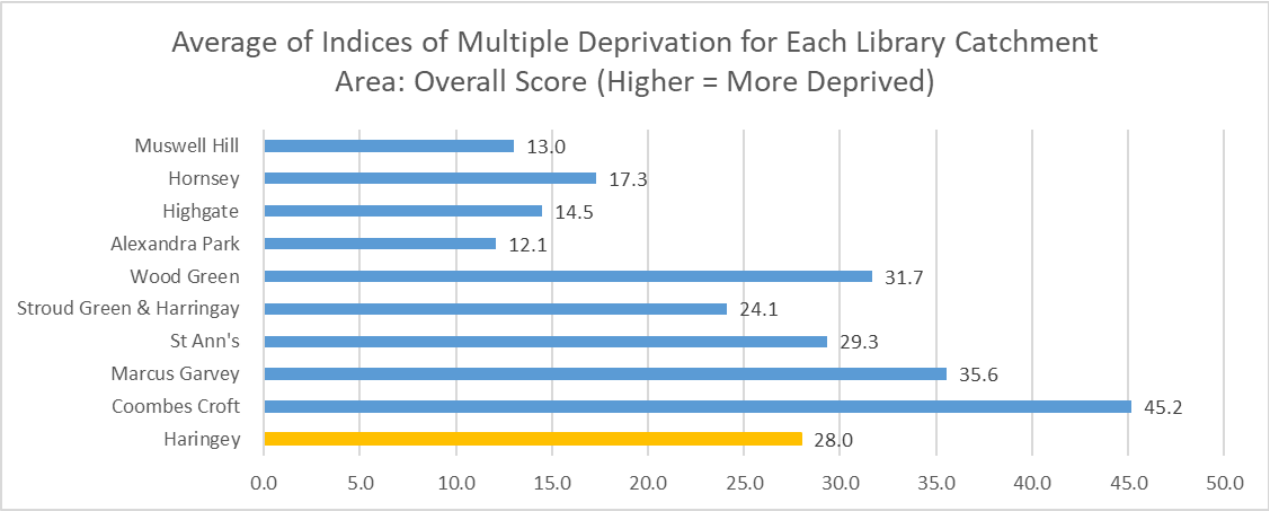
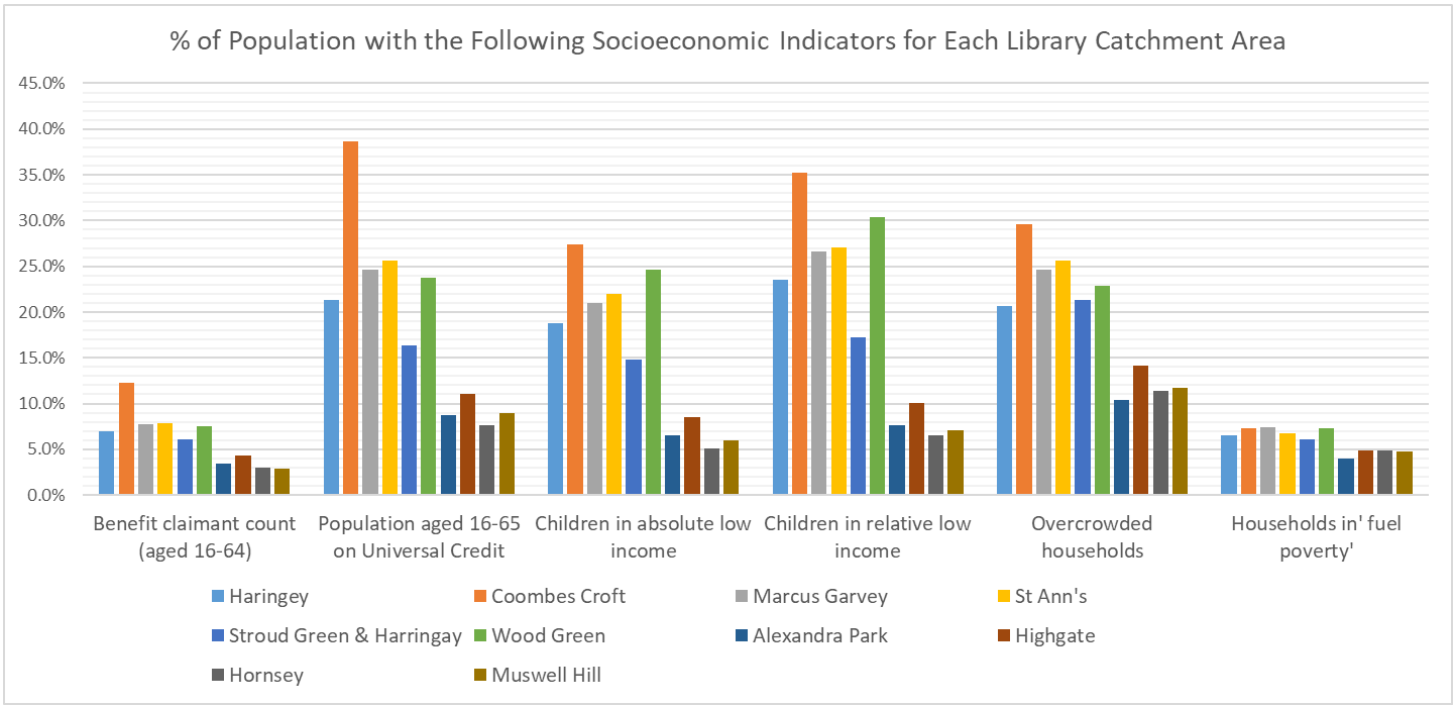
[16] ONS – ONS Claimant Count
[17] DWP, StatXplore – Universal Credit statistics, 29th April 2013 to 9th March 2023 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
[18] ONS – Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) - Estimates of the number and proportion of employee jobs with hourly pay below the living wage by work geography, local authority and parliamentary constituency, UK, April 2017 and April 2018 - Office for National Statistics
[19] DfE – GCSE attainment and progress 8 scores
[20] LG Inform – Data and reports | LG Inform (local.gov.uk)
[21] LG Inform – Data and reports | LG Inform (local.gov.uk)
[22] IMD 2019 – English indices of deprivation 2019 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

All library registered user (member) socioeconomic **profile**

Haringey Library Service does not collect data on the socioeconomic profile of its registered users.

Catchment area profile by library





Current registered user (member) socioeconomic profile by library

Haringey Library Service does not collect data on the socioeconomic profile of its registered users.

What data sources will you use to inform your assessment of the impact of the proposal on people under this protected characteristic?

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3. The library service only collects limited information about the sex, race, age and religion of their registered users. This therefore does not provide a full profile of protected characteristics that may be affected, particularly disability and socioeconomic status.

Detail the findings of the data.

a) Might members of this group be disproportionately affected by the proposal due to overrepresentation? How does this compare with the wider demographic profile of the Borough?

- Wood Green, St Ann's, Marcus Garvey and Coombes Croft library catchment areas have an average IMD higher than the Haringey average. This is particularly significant for the catchment area of Coombes Croft, which has an average IMD of 60% higher than the borough average.
- For the other indicators of low socioeconomic status, the proportion of residents who fall into the categories is highest in the east of the borough and Wood Green, where most indicators are overrepresented compared to the Haringey as a whole; this is particularly significant for the Coombes Croft catchment area.
- It should be noted that while there are far fewer residents in the west of the borough with these socioeconomic indicators, the number is not insignificant. Up to 15% of households in west library catchment areas are overcrowded, and Universal Credit claimants, children in relatively low income, and children in absolute low income are all up to 10%.

b) Might members of this group be disproportionately affected by this proposal due to a need related to their protected characteristic?

Libraries are a crucial central service for enabling social mobility and supporting people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

The digital and internet access provided by libraries is crucial for claiming benefits, job-seeking (upon which access to some benefits depends) and accessing other forms of information and support. Both Haringey Learns and Haringey Works also operate out of Wood Green Library, which supports residents in upskilling and getting into work. Research shows that libraries provide spaces where barriers to job-seeking are removed, removing the sense of stigma and anxiety that job centres can sometimes create[23]

Libraries act as warm spaces and community hubs for those who may not be able to afford to heat their homes/are experiencing homelessness. Many of the sessions that the libraries host are free to attend and offer access refreshments and a social opportunity important for health and wellbeing, particularly for those who may be struggling with the cost of energy or food.

Barclays Bank runs a drop-in session out of Haringey's libraries, which offers advice and support related to personal finances and business finance.
Children, young people and students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to live in overcrowded homes and/or have more limited access to places where they can read study and access information. Libraries support students in supplementing their school education in a way that could be critical to closing attainment gaps, particularly when it comes to reading age, which is closely linked both to socioeconomic status and social mobility.[24]

There are far fewer bookshops in the east of the borough than in the west and people on a lower income will be less likely to be able to afford to buy books, which may mean that access to books through means other than libraries follow deprivation trends across the borough. Reducing library services would make access to books and reading materials much more limited in the east of the borough.

Those who have a lower socioeconomic status are far more likely to need access to council services and much less likely to have the means to do so, particularly digitally. Libraries are crucial in removing these barriers, e.g., through Customer Service Centres and Connected Communities. If libraries have reduced hours and therefore these services are sometimes at a different further away library, some residents may be unable to afford the travel cost to get to them.

It is also important to note here that there is a strong correlation between socioeconomic status and other protected characteristics identified, particularly disability and race. Many of the residents who have a lower socioeconomic status are

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[23] **Arts Council England, (2022a).** ***Helping job seekers help themselves*****.** Helping job seekers help themselves | Arts Council England

[24] **National Literacy Trust and Libraries Connected, (2022).** ***Public libraries and literacy recovery.*** Public Libraries and Literacy Recovery | National Literacy Trust

also likely to face other inequalities, and the impacts listed here apply to them, compounding barriers to access.

Potential Impacts

The strategy prioritises equity and access, with a focus on reducing digital exclusion, supporting residents who face barriers to getting online. The strategy also commits to maintaining free and welcoming cool and warm spaces.

Alongside these strategic commitments, the library service will continue to offer a range of activities and resources that support residents under this characteristic. Overall, a positive impact is anticipated.

5. Key Impacts Summary

5a. Outline the key findings of your data analysis.

This EQIA demonstrates that every group, excluding that of Marriage and Civil Partnership has the potential to be positively impacted by the implementation of the proposed library strategy.

It has also shown that no group is anticipated to experience a negative impact.

5b. Intersectionality

Due to the strategic commitment to improving equity of access for all, the intersectional nature of protected characteristics, and the demographic make up of Haringey and its library catchment areas the implementation of the strategy has the potential to positively impact residents across the borough but particularly in central Haringey and the east which has a younger demographic which is over-represented in the library registered user data.

5c. Data Gaps

Based on your data, are there any relevant groups that have not yet been consulted or engaged? Please explain how you will address this.

The most significant data gap is for sexual orientation, where we currently have no registered user or catchment area data.

A further gap is non-users of libraries in the ‘White Other’ category, where we have fewer registered users.

We continue to make concerted efforts, within available resource, to understand these gaps further through engagement and consultation and will include any further insights in the update of the EQIA post-consultation.

6. Library Strategy 2026/27 Post-Consultation Equality Impact Assessment Update – November 2025

This final update to the Library Service Equality Impact Assessment follows public consultation between 25th September 2026 and 5th November 2026 on the proposed Library Strategy 2026-2030. The consultation received 53 responses.

Consultation feedback highlighted the importance of predictable and extended opening hours, particularly evenings and weekends, to ensure equitable access for older adults, working-age residents, and families. It should be noted that the decision to vary library hours was taken in December 2024, prior to the development of the Library Strategy. This prior decision was subject to its own Equality Impact Assessment which can be accessed here.

Consultation feedback also highlighted that physical accessibility is critical for inclusion with regard to some library visitors, particularly people with mobility issues which may include disabled users and older adults. Other accessibility considerations were emphasised, particularly regarding the benefits of quiet spaces for visitors who may need them—such as individuals studying or reading, as well as those who are neurodivergent

Digital inclusion emerged as a key theme, with respondents stressing that online services must complement rather than replace physical resources. To address socio-economic barriers, the strategy commits to maintaining a comprehensive digital offer.

Consultation feedback flagged the need for equity and equality to be embedded across all strategic priorities and monitored to ensure commitments translate into practice.

In the initial Equality Impact Assessment for the Library Strategy, published alongside the consultation it was noted that positive impacts across all groups could be supported by the Library Strategy's implementation. Such impacts could be further strengthened by the introduction of:

- Metrics for equity and equality, possibly at the individual library level
- Ongoing and regular monitoring at the individual and service level

In light of consultation feedback, further work has been done on the measures of success including those that support equalities. More information is provided on these in section 9 of this document in the section 'Ongoing Monitoring'.

Consultation feedback did not highlight any disproportionate negative impacts on groups sharing protected characteristics as result of implementing the proposed library strategy. Nonetheless, consultation respondents took the opportunity to highlight how the proposed priorities for the Library Strategy could support equality for groups sharing protected characteristics as follows:

6a. Age
Important to maintain consistent opening hours (especially evenings/weekends) to ensure access for older adults and children.

6b. Disability
Physical accessibility is vital. There is a need for quiet spaces/times for neurodivergent and other users.

6c. Gender Reassignment
LGBTQ+ materials and collections could be highlighted all year around, not just during calendar awareness events.

6d. Marriage and Civil Partnership
No feedback was provided under this protected characteristic.

6e. Pregnancy and Maternity
No feedback was provided under this protected characteristic.

6f. Race
Multilingual, offline communication remains essential for inclusion. Cultural programming should reflect community diversity.

6g. Religion or Belief
Cultural programming should respect and reflect diverse beliefs.

6h. Sex
No feedback was provided under this protected characteristic.

6i. Sexual Orientation
LGBTQ+ materials and collections should be highlighted all year around, not just during calendarised awareness events.

6j. Socio-Economic Status
Digital inclusion is important. The offer should be comprehensive and fully operational. However, the digital offer should not take the place of physical resources.

7. Overall impact of the policy on the Public Sector Equality Duty

The overall impact of the strategy is anticipated to be positive across all three parts of the Public Sector Equality Duty, namely:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act

- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not

The strategy embeds building connection between communities and through its commitment to celebrating Haringey's diversity through programming and London Borough of Culture.

8. Amendments and mitigations

No major change to the proposal is recommended. The EQIA demonstrates the proposed Library Strategy is robust, and there is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact. All opportunities to promote equality have been taken.

9. Ongoing monitoring

The Library Strategy has a range of measures of success that will monitor the impact on equalities during its implementation.

These measures appear under the priorities titled 'Upholding Equity' and 'Promoting Visibility and Representation' and include the following:

- Holding annual advisory and co-design forums with young people and underrepresented groups to improve programme and collection relevance.
- Working closely with Friends of Education and Reading (FORE) to achieve annual growth in Library Friends group membership aligned with borough demographics and priorities set out in Individual Library Development Plans.
- Conducting annual surveys on representation, inclusion, and sense of belonging, with positive responses increasing each year above the baseline of 80% starting April 2026.
- Deliver six co-designed programmes per library, each year.
- All staff will complete initial training on inclusive customer service, cultural competency, and safeguarding within 18 months, followed by annual refresher sessions.
- Publication of annual case study reports demonstrating the impact and outcomes of equity initiatives.

Monitoring measures of success which specifically support equalities will ensure that Library Strategy implementation maintains transparency and accountability, while using any insights gained to refine actions and strengthen outcomes for all communities.

10. References

Below are some information sources used to produce this Equality Impact Assessment.

- **Vincent, J. (2018).** ***Libraries welcome everyone: Six stories of diversity and inclusion from libraries in England.*** Libraries welcome everyone: Six stories of diversity and inclusion from libraries in England | Arts Council England
- **Involve and Dialogue by Design (2013).** ***Envisioning the library of the future Phase 3: understanding what people value about libraries.*** https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/19593/download?attachment
- **Department for Culture, Media and Sport, (2024).** ***An independent review of English public libraries.*** An independent review of English public libraries - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
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- **CILIP, (2024).** ***Come rain or shine: Preparing public libraries for the future in an age of uncertainty.*** https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.cilip.org.uk/resource/resmgr/cilip/future_libraries/Horizon_Scanning_Report_-_Co.pdf
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- **Govan Law Centre, (2024).** ***Legal challenge launched against closure of Dundee's Kirkton Community Centre and Library.*** Legal challenge launched against closure of Dundee's Kirkton Community Centre and Library - Govan Law Centre 0800 043 0306
- **BBC News, (29th March 2016a).** ***Book borrowing figures show library habits are changing*****.** Book borrowing figures show library habits are changing - BBC News
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- **Arts Council England, (March 2015).*****The health and wellbeing benefits of public libraries,*****.** The health and wellbeing benefits of public libraries | Arts Council England
- **Renaisi, (2017).** ***Libraries as community hubs: A report for Arts Council England*****.** Libraries-CommunityHubs-Renaisi.pdf (artscouncil.org.uk)
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- **Arts Council England, (2022b).** ***Envisioning the library of the future.*** Envisioning the library of the future | Arts Council England

Age:

- **Sayce, L. (2020). *Inclusive education: a gateway to a more equal society.* Inclusive education: a gateway to a more equal society | EHRC (equalityhumanrights.com)**
- **Libraries Connected (n.d.). *Children's Promise*. Children's Promise | Libraries Connected**
- **Kucirkova, N. and Littleton, K. (February 2016). *The digital reading habits of children*. digital_reading_survey-final-report-8.2.16.pdf (booktrust.org.uk)**
- **National Literacy Trust and Libraries Connected, (2022). *Public libraries and literacy recovery.* Public Libraries and Literacy Recovery | National Literacy Trust**
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- **Shared Intelligence and Arts Council England, (July 2017). *Stand by me: The contribution of public libraries to the wellbeing of older people,* Shared Intelligence and Arts Council England, July 2017. Combined older people report 17 July.pdf (artscouncil.org.uk)**

Disability:

- **Libraries Connected, (2020). *The Vision and Print Impaired People's Promise.* Vision and Print Impaired People's Promise | Libraries Connected**
- **Hunter, I., (2022). *Libraries providing inclusive opportunities*. Libraries providing inclusive opportunities – CLOA**
- **Harris, S. *How libraries can encourage positive community experiences for disabled people*. The Library's Role in Encouraging Positive Community Experiences for Disabled People (urbanlibraries.org)**

Pregnancy and Maternity:

- **Boulton et al, (April 2018). *Library rhyme times and maternal mental health: results of an action research project*. Library_rhyme_times_maternal_mental_health.pdf (artscouncil.org.uk)**

Socioeconomic Status:

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